

Advertising: Views of Watergate

By PHILIP H. DOUGHERTY

Advertising, probably because of its visibility and persistence, could be the most criticized facet of American business.

Its practitioners are constantly on the defensive. If the attack wasn't from the Government, then it was from consumerists, united mothers or psychologists.

Then along comes Watergate.

Now the politicians, who quickly hire ad agencies to help their candidacies, have gotten into the act.

Commenting on the scandal at a recent talk to the Fordham University student body, Senator Hubert H. Humphrey, Democrat of Minnesota, said, "In fact those so far implicated are not the professional politicians, they are the so-called technicians, lawyers, public relations and advertising men, who often expressed disdain for politics and the political process."

H. R. Haldeman, the White House chief of staff who has resigned, was the head of the Los Angeles office of J. Walter Thompson, you'll recall. And there is a generous sprinkling of other ad men around the scene.

Well, is there anything in the marketing - advertising method of operation or business ethic that might help to explain Watergate?

That question was put to a number of people in the business, or observers of it, and generally speaking they thought not.

"I have never experienced anything like it," said Shep Kurnit, chairman of DKG, Inc., "I think we're more ethical than those guys. People who outright lie are the exception rather than the rule."

At least three agency executives remarked that Los Angeles was the least successful of the J. W. T. offices.

"The essential demand," David B. McCall, president of McCaffrey & McCall, "was for total loyalty to a man rather than country or Constitution. If you get that you're down to mediocrity."

"The men who are good in this business," he added, "are not the cold-eyed functionaries."

Prof. John A. Howard of the Columbia Business School hadn't really thought about the question before it was asked.

"We could philosophize," he responded, "that it has something to do with this thing you see in advertising—the tendency to fudge a bit on the truth—this is a manifestation of the general view of current society."

Another respondent said, "Could this happen in the marketing world, in business? Hell yes, particularly in the new product area."

A top agency executive remarked, "Anybody who's got a lot of authority and little responsibility can get you in

Record '73 Is Forecast at Ogilvy

A less-than-booming first quarter is not preventing Ogilvy & Mather International from predicting a record 1973.

That was the firecast made yesterday at the agency's annual meeting, at which John Elliott Jr., chairman of O. & M., U.S.A., presided.

The meeting, held at the agency, also marked the second appearance at a New York agency stockholders' meeting of Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett, West Coast physician and black newspaper association official.

And, as at the Wells, Rich, Greene meeting in March, he appealed for more women and minority group representation in the management of the company and more advertising support for the black press.

In his prepared report, Mr. Elliott, among other things, noted that the agency not only had an active program for recruiting and training minorities, but also maintained eight scholarships at New York University for blacks and Puerto Ricans. His latest weekly report, he said, showed that minority groups accounted for 11.43 per cent of the employees.

And, he added, while there was only one woman vice president at the agency five years ago, today there are nine.

He also said, for the record, "We are bullish on Ogilvy & Mather."

a lot of trouble." Here he was talking about the brand manager on the advertiser side, a person often criticized by agency people.

Most critical was Jack Byrne of Jack Byrne Advertising.

He said he recognized in some White House aides qualities he found in some business schools graduates on the client side, an unemotional ruthlessness in getting a job done, a single dedication to the bottom line or the idea that it is all right to lie in an ad if it will get a consumer to buy a product that is really good for him.

Another aspect of Watergate that could have a bad effect on the business was noted by Robert S. Marker, chairman of McCann-Erickson, in a speech last week in Toronto.

The Washington event, he said, was the latest of a series that test the credibility of the population, "all of which fans the flames of cynicism toward advertising and the businesses which use it."

Credibility and Youth

Members of the American Advertising Federation, at their annual convention in New Orleans yesterday, heard Barton A. Cummings, chairman of the executive committee of Compton Advertising, call for action to overcome "the credibility gap between the business community and the youth of America." He said youth believed "that profits are the sole motive of business today. They see management as a stark, cold mechanical thing which forgets the public interest in its obsession for profits."

Goodness, how would they get a crazy idea like that?

Misplaced Mountains

One of the series of ads in

the current campaign for American Express credit cards has the headline, "American Express takes pleasure in exposing the Rocky Mountains." It is accompanied by a beautiful color photograph of snow-specked peaks and some wonderful copy on Denver.

Well, an outdoors-oriented co-worker takes pleasure in exposing American Express—the mountains are in fact the Grand Tetons in northern Wyoming.

The agency is Ogilvy & Mather, the shop that shot the original "Bullish on America" commercials in Mexico.

* Ex-Newswoman Zebra Chief

Joan Murray, the former WCBS-TV newswoman and a co-founder of the Zebra Associates ad agency, has been named acting chief executive officer of Zebra following the resignation of Raymond A. League, co-founder and president, the agency announced yesterday.

* Phillips Units to Barickman

Tracy-Locke may be getting the Phillips Petroleum Company's gasoline advertising business, but the industrial products, packaging and agricultural materials advertising is going, as of June 1, to Barickman Advertising, Kansas City, Mo. Go west, young man.

Accounts

Central Federal Savings & Loan Association to Wordworks, Inc.

People

Howard M. Kamin has joined Richard K. Manoff, Inc., as vice president and director of media.

ONLY THE
NEWS