

WXPost

Gentlemen CREEPsters Off on a Spree

A Commentary

By Nicholas von Hoffman

Senator Sam and his colleagues are doing a work of fearful destruction in the Old Senate Caucus Room. They have set fire to Howdy Doody land, snipped the ears off the Mousketeers and worked an intimidating devastation on the Decade of Johnny Unitas, the cool, well-behaved, crew-cut years of precision and technique.

In calling to the witness stand this long string of young men, each of whom grows his sideburns to the regulation mid-ear length, they have shattered the myth of the American Good Boy, Mom's Boy and Pop's Pride. Porter, Sloan, Magruder and the rest with the indistinguishable, interchangeable faces are the first full suburban generation to take all their moral nourishment from Walt Disney. But Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs, Sleepy, Sneezy, Happy, Dopey, Grumpy, Bashful and Doc have, in real life, turned into Black Dick and the Seven CREEPS: Sneaky, Sneezy, Greedy, Tacky, Dirty, Awful and Shlock.

Senator Sam and his brethren have labored to maintain the myth. They assured Jeb Stuart Magruder, the California Nightingale who was singing his erstwhile buddies into the pen, that he had the solace of his blonde, blue-eyed wife and his 2.5 children. That tender thought won't dispel Magruder's narrative of him and the Attorney General of the United States sitting around a Florida resort debating whether to outfit a yacht with cameras and call girls to run the badger game on the more important delegates at the Democratic Convention.

He said they decided not to, apparently because it was "inappropriate," that strange word that White House aides and CREEPsters favor. Ziegler stands in his press room refusing to tell the truth because it's "constitutionally inappropriate," and Magruder says he finds blackmail inappropriate too.

Whether you can believe Magruder's testimony that they chose not to go with the blackmail scheme is another question. The man has admitted he's committed perjury twice. They may have decided to go ahead with it and then "goofed" it, to use the verb he employed to describe the hash they made out of the Watergate job. Like everything else about the CREEPsters, their reputation for efficiency is a legend without foundation. They may be the only bunch of males in America who can't find a hooker in Miami. But demonstrations of ineptitude shouldn't surprise us in an administration that has now signed two peace agreements to end one war which we continue to fight.

Magruder, who is without question the cutest, best looking perjurer we've had on the stand to date, appears to have difficulty getting his story straight. The only reason he took part in the cover-up, he said, was because he wanted to make sure his President was re-elected; yet he committed his perjuries after the election.

But then again, he also said that he was drawn into his life of crime by the bad examples set for the White House and the Justice Department by lawless hippies and other peaceniks. His testimony indicated that it was the Nuns' Plot to kidnap Henry Kissinger which brought him and Mitchell to consider putting the snatch on the likes of Abbie Hoffman and Joan Baez and hide them in Mexico during the Republican convention.

At length, though, he did get around to the real motives which were predictably the ancient ones of money and power: "... we were particularly concerned about the ITT situation. Mr. (Larry) O'Brien had been a very effective spokesman against our position on the ITT case and I think there was a general concern that if he was allowed to continue as Democratic National Chairman... he could be very difficult in the coming campaign. So we had hoped that information might discredit him."

There has been one hero among the CREEPsters, however. Hugh Sloan, the best of the bunch, but what a bunch. Sloan was the one who refused to perjure himself, and if he didn't come forward and blow the whistle on the gang of liars, thieves and blackmailers he was in with, well, standards of conduct are relative.

But if we give Sloan, the former treasurer of CREEP, a B+ for integrity, we gotta flunk him on brains. Here is a nice young fellow trundling bales of cash and loading them on trucks and he never asks why. He has to pay a \$2,500 fee to get those Mexican laundry checks cashed when the bank downstairs on the first floor of his own building would have done it for free, and he doesn't smell anything.

Either they were crooked or they were stupid, but they were all good guys who got high marks for penmanship and obedience, and the best of them obeyed all the little rules.