

# Terrence O'Flaherty



## Dirty Tricks for Transylvania

FRIDAY NIGHT the CBS network cancelled "Dracula" to give viewers the replay of a more contemporary horror classic from the East Room of the White House — the spectacle of a laughing President replacing a crooked vice president with a second choice for the job. Not even Bram Stoker could have envisioned this grim a story.

It is difficult for me to recall a shabbier moment in television's Live History of American Politics than that provided by Representative Gerald Ford in his acceptance of the nomination when he said that Spiro T. Agnew has his "affection and respect." Such a pledge indicates that we are in for three more years of watching the nation's leaders patting each other on the back at the expense of the American ideal of honesty.



Spiro Agnew

The Watergate hearings continue to open viewers' eyes to the desperate need for an end to false political rhetoric and a return to blunt honesty. Why haven't the politicians also read this handwriting on the nation's TV sets?

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TODAY we are in for the additional spectacle of the former vice president being given air time on the nation's networks to pitch us one more time. (Live at 4:30 p.m. according to the latest advice from the networks, but subject to change). While it is impossible to know what his 15-minute speech will say, it is quite easy to recall his televised deceptions of recent weeks and such a recollection raises the question of the suitability of allowing him further access to a national audience without awarding equal time to the Department of Justice as well as every Sunday school teacher and parent in the country.

The former vice president has had his hearing and luckily he got one of those "liberal judges" he has so often blamed for making a mockery of justice. Now the medium of television which he has also decried is giving him a platform. So far, no one on TV has had the honesty to stand up and say that he's a thief who has stolen from all of us. That's what commentators have said of other men now serving time in prison for tax evasion.

As a man who has called so often for honesty from the television news medium, I am certain that Spiro would want it that way.

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Gerald Ford

HOWARD K. Smith came the closest to it last week when he noted that Agnew had sold out cheap. "He never did think big," observed Smith in a commentary which was all the more significant coming from the TV newsman who has been more favorable to the White House than any other during the current scandals.

At the time of this writing, Count Dracula, the noted vampire of old Transylvania, has not been rescheduled by CBS in what appears to be a clear case of network favoritism amongst the available blood-suckers.

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UNUSUAL TONIGHT: "The Mystery of Nefertiti," a film documenting the manner in which Egyptologist Ray Smith used computers to reassemble 35,000 blocks to make the temple of Queen Nefertiti (8 o'clock, Channel 9) . . . "You're Not Elected, Charlie Brown" a cartoon rerun (8 o'clock, Channel 5) . . . "Dr. Seuss on the Loose," a new cartoon (8:30, Channel 5) . . . Country Music Awards hosted by Johnny Cash (10 o'clock, Channel 5) . . . "Tomorrow," the debut of a new late-night NBC program with Los Angeles newsman Tom Snyder which will follow the "Tonight" show Tuesday through Friday at the early hour of 1 a.m. on Channel 4.