

By ISRAEL SHENKER

The Committee on Public Doublespeak will present its first annual "Doublespeak Awards" in New Orleans today.

To be honored for their signal contributions to semantic distortion are: Col. David H. E. Opfer, former air attaché at the United States Embassy in Phnom Penh, Cambodia; Ronald L. Ziegler, former President Richard M. Nixon's press attaché at San Clemente in California; Donald Jay Willower, professor of education at Pennsylvania State University; and the entire M&M/Mars candy company.

The Committee on Public Doublespeak was set up in 1972 by the National Council of Teachers of English—37,000

members guarding the verbal ramparts—to fight obfuscation by public officials, candidates for office, political commentators and all who transmit through mass media.

In voting by the 33 members of the committee, Colonel Opfer and Mr. Ziegler were selected almost unanimously.

Colonel Opfer's award is for his complaint last year to reporters in Cambodia:

"You always write it's bombing, bombing, bombing. It's not bombing. It's air support."

Safeguarding the Tapes

Mr. Ziegler, who served as President Nixon's White House spokesman, earned his award with a statement

about the safeguarding of Watergate tapes:

"I would feel that most of the conversations that took place in those areas of the White House that did have the recording system would, in almost their entirety, be in existence, but the special prosecutor, the court, and, I think, the American people are sufficiently familiar with the recording system to know where the recording devices existed and to know the situation in terms of the recording process, but I feel, although the process has not been undertaken yet in preparation of the material to abide by the court decision, really, what the answer to that question is."

An earlier announcement

by Mr. Ziegler that "all previous White House statements about the Watergate case are inoperative," was judged hors concours — a French phrase that suggests that the coinage is of a standard defying competition.

Mr. Ziegler's contributions to the art form have been so outstanding that Doublespeak itself turned up in the New Republic, last April 13, dubbed Zieglerrata. Other terms are: gobbledygook, State Departmentese, Pentagonese, Strangeloveism, bureaucrat, bureauquack, bureaucratic indirect, linguistic pollution, officialese, Nixonese, Ovaloid, marshmallow prose, Prosa Nostra, and of course Doublespeak's half-brother — Doubletalk. Representative Robert F. Drinan,

Democrat of Massachusetts, calls it unlanguage.

For Educationese

Professor Willower won his ward for educationese. "Yet, the most basic problems that arise in connection with knowledge utilization may be those that stem from the social and organizational character of educational institutions. A few university adaptations already have been highlighted. Public schools display a myriad of normative and other regulatory structures that promote predictability, as well as a host of adaptive mechanisms that reduce external uncertainties."

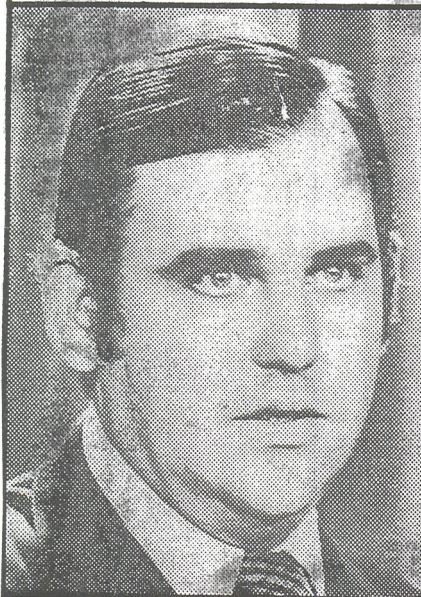
The M&M/Mars company was singled out "for skillful

use of the language of silence" in a commercial for children. The commercial said that the "bad guy" in tooth decay is plaque, and that the "super cops" are toothbrushes and dental floss. The company also announced that the presentation was reviewed by the American Dental Association.

As Advertising Age pointed out on Oct. 7, what the company did not say was that permission to use the A.D.A.'s "statement of scientific accuracy" was refused. The A.D.A. urges avoidance of sweets, and says that cavities are caused by the interactions of bacteria in plaque film and sugar.

Daniel J. Dieterich, chairman of the Committee on Public Doublespeak is to announce the awards to the annual convention of the National Council of Teachers of English, in New Orleans. He complained that the American public had been inundated with Doublespeak, and that the task of choosing winners had been arduous.

The awards are symbolic. Winners will not be given certificates, loving cups or money, and they will not be encouraged to respond to the honor.



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