



The Final Days

William Hogan

IF YOU were placing a bet on what the big book for spring '76 will be you could do worse than check "The Final Days." This is what Washington Post reporters Bob Woodward and Carl Bernstein have done for an encore following last year's "All the President's Men" (320,000 hardbound copies exclusive of book clubs).

"The Final Days" bears down on what went on in the White House in the period leading up to the Nixon resignation. Simon & Schuster will publish it in May (with a 30,000-word preview to appear in Newsweek in late March).

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SIMON & SCHUSTER is keeping the manuscript under lock and key. No one is allowed to take the manuscript out of its offices, no advance galleys will be distributed.

"It's more than page one news," Dan Green, a Simon & Schuster executive said in a telephone interview. "It's a series of page one stories; you couldn't tell it all in one."

Newsweek had to send an editor to the publishing house to see the guarded manuscript before he could make an offer for the preview material.

How did the Washington Post lose out on this "hot" material by its own investigative reporting team? Woodward and Bernstein were on a leave of absence from the Post while working

on the book. They were not obligated to turn in running news stories as details on the final days developed.

The team interviewed about 300 people who were either inside or close to the White House. The result is "dynamite," Green said, emphasizing that his lips were further sealed at this time. Beyond that, he added, "it is a far better, a tighter book than 'All the President's Men'."

The Washington Post still may get first crack at the story. A Post executive was quoted as saying the paper may get to the Newsweek material first (both are owned by the same company) and will publish news accounts simultaneously with release of the magazine.

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STOCKING STUFFERS: For fans of P. G. Wodehouse, Penguin Books has issued six quality paperbound titles by the master, (\$1.95 each). Published between 1924 and 1957, they include "The Inimitable Jeeves," "Carry On, Jeeves," "Very Good, Jeeves," "Right Ho, Jeeves," "The Luck of the Bodkins," "Lord Emsworth and Others."

You know . . . "Somewhere between the Romantic Revolution and the Great Victorian Exhibition of 1851 in England, suet pudding entered the English soul, after which it became almost impossible for that country to produce a pure artist . . ."