

If the TV play is any indication, this story may yet bloom. It was quiet this morning, but that was before the cameras could find something besides the front page of the Post. When I spoke to Loeb and Egan I learned cameras had been there much of the day. (Egan did not tell me what NBC reported, that Morrison, while saying he did write the "Canuck" letter, would not execute an affidavit.) NBC opened with it and spent a full third on it, including an interview with Shipley. Sequence on Patman's continuing efforts had a subtle one with a racist Republican from Georgia saying this is all irrelevant. Today was the right day for that line. In anger yet. CBS had about half as much time but they added Nixt (nice pun) to Shipley...For NBC to devote so much time to one story is a bit unusual, except for features and longer shows. It came on like gangbusters. Now if the Post can have a followup in a couple of days, after this one has a chance to lick the lips of the glass it which it swirls for a while, maybe it can foam over.

All of this coincides with yesterday's lead editorial in the Post praising Grey for being the new broom that is sweeping hard in the FBI. They've had long and not unfavorable stories on what he did to Grapp and a few others as they happened and praised in this ed.

It has long been clear that Bernstein and Woodward have had some inside sources. I know that while the Post and Hoover were feuding, George Lardner had some inside sources. He is still on the Post, not this story. (Which is just as good.)

The FBI has been put in a bad position in this case. There ought be those there who do not like it. More likely in career end of Justice, like lawyers. Some of them have had much to hold down in recent years.

I hope it is enough for Nixon to lose his cool.

One of the newscasts said Klein said "no comment" 23 times when asked about the Post story today. Indicates persistent questioning.

This could force some policy changes, esp. with respect to accepting VN demands. McG's speech tonight - neither newscast I saw said when it would be but it followed Cronkite on CBS - was not apt, with or without this development. He was too careless in some of his formulations and laid himself wide open for a blow from any major development. He should have said that the situation has the President so desperate he is being forced by popular reaction to McGovern's pushing to do what he has refused to for four years, to say that if the President who told the people he had a secret plan when he had none but immediate escalation, first of American blood, then of all blood, and of all those billions, does now what he could have done four years ago, he will have learned a lesson from a history professor. He could properly and easily take credit for any development, honestly enough, and he didn't even try. He restricted himself too much to the war, closing on domestic things, then largely in terms of the vets. Throughout, I think, he should have juxtaposed the war and what has happened in the country. There were occasional Kennedy touches, but he delivered then flat.

His people just are not pros at politics. Those he took from others, like Hanckiewicz, still are not...One interesting development is the possibility that this newly-disclosed Dept Dirty tricks may have influenced Meany. A call he insists he did not make was said to have been made to Meany's secretary, an offensive call supposedly by Gary Hart. I know Virginia Texas. Her dedication to Meany can't be doubted. She has been his secretary for years. (Used to be a customer when we farmed.)

What nobody I've seen or heard has pointed out is that what the Post outlined this a.m. is the classic intelligence method. In recent years it has been adopted and adapted a bit by the FBI. All those CIA types make a bit more sense now. On thing else I don't remember from the story but may have been in it is the statement part of the operation was convention disturbance. If it wasn't, then they added in later editions.

Haven't had time to listen to the radio.

I guess we can both look back (rather, all THREE) with a certain amount of satisfaction. We failed only in underestimating the capacity for evil and the capacity for pursuing it. Otherwise, a rather good record.

I'm sorry Bernstein hasn't sent me the pages from the city directory he promised. I think I could help him if he would do it. This may also indicate, however, that that is about the time they got onto this. They've done some work on it.

I have a notion that really getting caught on top all those lies and denials will have some internal consequences. Can they all be crooked, all accept such things?

And I have a hunch that this may yet turn the press on. This is pretty hard stuff for even the most partisan to accept. If Art Egan does as I think he might, given his and his boss' attitude toward the Times, he may get to where the first hum steers came from. Szulc accepted and retailed what he of all Times reporters should have questioned. Only Art has not been on the story and may think it has gotten too big to get into. Best regards,

*HW*