

10/11/72 Bombing French Honoi. The one who put the CBS TV net news together tonight found a cute formula around the inability to say U.S. officials, esp. Laird, as dirty liars. Laird was aired. First a Saigon source was aired, after the report of the hurt, saying that the SAM's are made to self-destruct. Then pious Laird suggesting it could have been fall ~~001 14 1972~~ #16 anti-aircraft shells (!) and a Sam. Then a Canadian correspondent was quoted as saying he saw the while thing, beginning with a deliberate and thereafter repeated run by three planes, saw the dive and the falling bombs, and knows the area in which they fell is where the French Bldg is... Question is why is military, knowing there are so many observers there, doing such stuff in daylight? If it was clear enough for the planes to be seen, it surely was clear enough for them to see they were not over the alleged railroad yards of which Laird spoke, holy as he could. I find myself wondering if this is part of a last-ditch effort to frustrate a feared space, as I also wonder if the scandals may not force Dirtydick to yield some on peace and war. I think the question of the war is past the point where any politico really has to worry about retaliation - except from war industry... If this kind of bestiality is senseless, that doesn't make it pointless. HW

10/11/72 On the hunch that they might want to do more, phoned Dick Harwood, national editor of the Post this a.m. to suggest that the Dean report was not legally available under FOI, Nixon's earlier and now Ziegler's reference to it effectively waiving the exemption under such decisions as American Mail. Reminded him that when the Post and Times printed Pen ~~001 14 1972~~ Papers Klein had said they should have used FOI. He seems to like the idea and to want FOI used. Told him to whom on staff I had given copies AG's memo on law, of the exemptions, who has copy American Mail. Explained how FOI cases go to head docket, etc., that Justice is uptight on them and so arrogant it is possible to get summary judgement, as I had. Told him of my unanswered FOI request to Clawson and why I asked for each kind info. The odd situation on this story is that a national story is being handled by the metro staff, perhaps because it began as a local story, an arrest by local police on a local, not a federal charge. As with the NYTimes on the Attica story, if for a different reason, this is good. Post's national staff too small. How many are working on it I don't know, but there have been more than six by-liners. Bob Woodward had other assignments for a while, but from the time Bernstein came onto it, I don't think either has been on anything else. HW