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THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

Ron --

Frank Cormier brought this up. Larry Speaks also has a copy. Frank said he wants to talk to you about it next week (I don't think he thinks it is very significant.)

Tom can give you a 5 minute briefing on this sort of thing before you see Frank.

c g

## Hoffa Tipster Gone; CBS Is Out \$10,000

By MARTIN WALDRON

Special to The New York Times

KEY WEST, Fla., Dec. 8—

About 4 o'clock last Friday morning, a tough-talking man who said his name was Chuck Medlin—identified by the Justice Department as an ex-convict—left the downtown Holiday Inn in Tampa, Fla., to try to find his cousin. He has not returned.

In his pocket, Mr. Medlin apparently carried almost \$10,000 that CBS had advanced in return for his promise to lead a television news team to the body of James R. Hoffa, the former president of the International Brotherhood of Teamsters who disappeared last July 30.

Mr. Medlin's disappearance was part of a bizarre series of events—which shed some light

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A Conde Nast Publication

FORD

# Hoffa Tipster Gone, Along With \$10,000 CBS Paid to Find Missing Teamster

Continued From Page 1 Col. 1

on the vagaries of investigative journalism—that began about a week ago when Mr. Medlin persuaded a North Carolina freelance writer that he could produce Mr. Hoffa's body.

Before the story ended, it involved not only CBS but also an editor of Harpers magazine, the Tampa police and the Federal Bureau of Investigation. And it led this last weekend to a fruitless boat search for Mr. Hoffa's body by a crew sent by CBS to film the story.

The New York Times learned of the situation last Thursday night in a telephone call from the freelance writer, Patrick O'Keefe, who said he felt that widespread publication of the story might protect those involved from any efforts at revenge for finding the body. A Times reporter was sent to Tampa early Friday, but when he arrived he found Mr. O'Keefe upset and Mr. Medlin gone.

Mr. O'Keefe had made several hours of tape recordings of interviews he had with Mr. Medlin and of his own negotiations with CBS, and from these tapes and from further interviews the story was unraveled.

## Inquiry About Book

The series of events began at Greensboro, N.C., last Monday when Mr. Medlin called the English department at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro and said that he wanted to talk about writing a book. A secretary referred him to Robert Watson, a poet who teaches creative writing at the university.

Mr. Watson said that there was such an aura of violence about Mr. Medlin that he quickly became terrified of him, and told Mr. Medlin that writing a book about Mr. Hoffa's disappearance could best be

ing to kill everybody in sight.

Mr. Medlin quickly persuaded Mr. O'Keefe, according to the writer, that he knew that Mr. Hoffa was dead and that he knew where the body was. He also persuaded Mr. O'Keefe that he was as tough as he said he was. Demonstrating how quickly he could move his hand, Mr. O'Keefe said, Mr. Medlin accidentally hit him in the left eye, giving him a shiner that turned from red to purple to yellow as the week more away.

Mr. O'Keefe said he took Mr. Medlin to his Tuesday journalism class where Mr. Medlin told a fascinated group of students that he had been a "hit man" for the teamsters union. (A Justice Department source said there were no indications that this was true.)

According to Mr. O'Keefe, Mr. Medlin said that he was in Greensboro to murder a union official who had alienated out of favor with his associates, and he had decided to tell what he knew about the Hoffa disappearance because he had had a strong friendship with the one-time union leader.

Mr. Medlin said the writer recounted that he had learned the details of Mr. Hoffa's disappearance from a professional murderer in Miami. Mr. Medlin said he had "stack a gun barrel down his throat" and that the man had told him that Mr. Hoffa had been shot to death on a fishing trip to Key West.

Mr. Medlin said, according to the writer, that Mr. Hoffa's body was encased in concrete, lying on the ocean floor in 12 feet of water two and a half miles off Key West.

Much of the story attributed to Mr. Medlin is manifestly untrue. The details given by Mr. Medlin do not fit the specifics of Mr. Hoffa's disappearance as reconstructed by federal inves-

Lewis Lapham, a Harpers editor, took one look at Mr. Medlin and suggested, he said later, that Mr. O'Keefe take him over to CBS.

"Lewis Lapham sent him over," said Don S. Hewitt, a CBS news producer, in telling how the television network became involved. Mr. Hewitt said that Mr. Lapham had reported that Mr. O'Keefe had handled two assignments for Harpers and seemed competent.

Mr. Lapham, who said he did not believe Mr. Medlin's story, said he felt uneasy in Mr. Medlin's presence because of an air of barely controlled violence. He said that when he called Mr. Hewitt he suggested that CBS make as many checks as it could on Mr. Medlin.

Mr. Hewitt said that the only check CBS had made was with Mr. Lapham about Mr. O'Keefe's competence as a newsman. He also said he had thought Mr. Medlin very persuasive and that there might be truth to his story.

From Mr. O'Keefe's tape recordings, it appeared that news executives at CBS were terrified but at the same time fascinated by Mr. Medlin, just Greensboro had been. At one point, Mr. Medlin demanded beer, and a young woman secretary said, "I'd have to send out for it, we don't have it in the cafeteria."

"End out, send out," her terrified boss said.

On Wednesday night, Mr. Medlin was interviewed on videotape by Morley Safer of the "60 Minutes" program. He said he was leading CBS to the body of Mr. Hoffa because he wanted to have the satisfaction of calling Mr. Hoffa's murderers to tell them that the body had been found; then, he said, he wanted to have an hour in which to flee before CBS called

women were who occasionally came into the room at CBS, and said that if any word of what he was doing leaked out, "I'll come back and kill everyone of you."

Once, seemingly piqued at some delay, Mr. Medlin began retracted Mr. O'Keefe to come with him. But he allowed himself to be placated by the announcement from CBS executives that the additional \$9,000 was on the way, according to Mr. O'Keefe's tapes.

The contract with Mr. O'Keefe had provided that the final \$9,000 would be paid only if Mr. Hoffa's body was found where Mr. Medlin said it was, and if CBS had an exclusive beat on it. But CBS pressed the money on Mr. Medlin in advance, giving it to Mr. O'Keefe, according to the tapes, to avoid direct payment to a participant in a new event. The network had been criticized some months ago for having paid H. R. Haldeman, former chief of staff to President Nixon, for an interview.

## Travel to Florida

Because of heavy airline travel out of New York, Mr. O'Keefe and Mr. Medlin were unable to get reservations to Florida on the same plane as the producer and crew assigned to the project. They agreed to meet the news team at the Holiday Inn in Key West last Friday.

Mr. O'Keefe and Mr. Medlin went to Florida on a flight that stopped at Tampa. Mr. Medlin decided he wanted to spend the night there and he and Mr. O'Keefe checked into the downtown Holiday Inn. Before leaving New York, according to Mr. O'Keefe, Mr. Medlin said he would hold the \$9,000 that CBS had given Mr. O'Keefe, explaining that it would be safe with him because people were just

phone in the motel room rang at several different times, but no one ever spoke on the phone. He thought it might be Mr. Medlin checking to see if he was still there.

## Reports Disappearance

Friday afternoon, he called CBS in New York to report Mr. Medlin had disappeared. Remembering Mr. Medlin's threats to kill everybody, Mr. Hewitt said he became alarmed for Mr. O'Keefe's safety and directed him to take refuge at the Tampa Police Department.

Mr. O'Keefe did, arranging through the motel manager for a police car to pick him up at the rear door of the motel. Mr. O'Keefe, who resembles the actor Michael Pollard, said that he was not afraid of Mr. Medlin. He said he believed Mr. Medlin's story.

But he went to the police department, nevertheless, and stayed there for several hours. Meanwhile, CBS had called the F.B.I. in New York City. Two agents interviewed CBS officials in New York and Mr. O'Keefe by telephone at the Tampa police station.

When the F.B.I. said in New York that it did not feel that Mr. O'Keefe was in immediate danger, Mr. Hewitt said, he told Mr. O'Keefe to call the Tampa office of the F.B.I. Mr. O'Keefe refused. He said he thought Mr. Medlin might return and that he did not want to put the F.B.I. on his trail.

## Flies to Key West

The Tampa police told Mr. O'Keefe that he could spend the night at headquarters if he wanted to, but that they would not investigate. He decided to return to the motel.

On Saturday, Mr. O'Keefe flew to Key West, where the CBS news team was waiting to begin looking for Mr. Hoffa's

ocean off Key West on Saturday afternoon. It did not find Mr. Hoffa's body.

Mr. Hewitt said then that the F.B.I. had identified Mr. Medlin as an ex-convict named Clarence Newton Medlin, in his 40's, and had said he had connections to the teamsters' union and had been at the Federal prison at Lewisburg, Pa., when Mr. Hoffa was.

A Justice Department source confirmed that Mr. Medlin had been in the Lewisburg prison in 1970 while Mr. Hoffa was being held there, but the source did not know the charge on which Mr. Medlin had been convicted.

CBS urged the F.B.I. to dredge off Key West. The F.B.I. did not dredge.

Yesterday, the CBS news team was back in its boat on the ocean looking for the body once again. It did not find it.

Today the CBS team made another search off Key West, and Mr. Hewitt said it would spend at least one more day searching. A member of the team said a skin diver had been hired to help.

Mr. Hewitt, asked if CBS had any regrets, said: "I wish I hadn't given the money in advance to Pat O'Keefe." He said he should have realized that Mr. O'Keefe would be traveling with a man who could exert enough pressure to get the money away from him.

He said that the experience would not deter CBS from trying to develop news exclusives from tipsters.

He said that he did not feel CBS had been "taken."

"The New York Times thought enough of this man's story to send a reporter to Tampa and Key West," he said.

The F.B.I. declined comment about the extent of its interest in the situation.

A Justice Department source said in Washington that the department believed that CBS

the freelance writer, Patrick O'Keefe, who said he felt that widespread publication of the story might protect those involved from any efforts at revenge for finding the body. A Times reporter was sent to Tampa early Friday, but when he arrived he found Mr. O'Keefe upset and Mr. Medlin gone.

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Mr. Watson said that there was such an aura of violence about Mr. Medlin that he quickly became terrified of him and told Mr. Medlin that writing a book about Mr. Hoffa's disappearance could best be done by a journalist. Mr. Watson said that he had given Mr. Medlin the names of a couple of newsmen, including Mr. O'Keefe, a 33-year-old journalism teacher who had worked for The Associated Press in New York, Chicago and Rome and later for The Greensboro Record.

The feeling of terror that Mr. Watson said he felt was reported by others who came into contact with Mr. Medlin last week. Until he walked off into the pre-dawn darkness in Tampa on Friday, people around Mr. Medlin leaped to do his bidding, even trying to anticipate his wishes, while he coldly issued orders. He frequently uttered oaths, they said threaten-

ing that he was a "hit man" for the teamsters union. (A Justice Department source said there were no indications that this was true.)

According to Mr. O'Keefe, Mr. Medlin said that he was in Greensboro to murder a union official who had alienated him out of favor with his associates, and he had decided to tell what he knew about the Hoffa disappearance because he had had a strong friendship with the one-time union leader.

Mr. Medlin said the writer recounted that he had learned the details of Mr. Hoffa's disappearance from a professional murderer in Miami, Mr. Medlin said he had "stuck a gun barrel down his throat" and that the man had told him that Mr. Hoffa had been shot to death on a fishing trip to Key West.

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Much of the story attributed to Mr. Medlin is manifestly untrue. The details given by Mr. Medlin do not fit the specifics of Mr. Hoffa's disappearance as reconstructed by federal investigators and by newsmen who covered it.

#### Uneasy Feeling Recalled

Nevertheless, Harpers magazine, which Mr. O'Keefe had called about the story, was sufficiently intrigued to advance \$700 toward an article about it, and Mr. O'Keefe and Mr. Medlin flew to New York last Wednesday. Lewis Lapham, a Harpers editor, took one look at Mr. Medlin and suggested, he said later, that Mr. O'Keefe take him over to CBS.

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that CBS make as many checks as it could on Mr. Medlin.

Mr. Hewitt said that the only check CBS had made was with Mr. Lapham about Mr. O'Keefe's competence as a newsman. He also said he had thought Mr. Medlin very persuasive and that there might be truth to his story.

From Mr. O'Keefe's tape recordings, it appeared that news executives at CBS were terrified but at the same time fascinated by Mr. Medlin just Greensboro had been. At one point, Mr. Medlin demanded beer, and a young woman secretary said, "I'd have to send out for it, we don't have it in the cafeteria."

"Send out, send out," her terrified boss said.

On Wednesday night, Mr. Medlin was interviewed on videotape by Motley Safer of the "60 Minutes" program. He said he was leading CBS to the body of Mr. Hoffa because he wanted to have the satisfaction of calling Mr. Hoffa's murderers to tell them that the body had been found. Then, he said, he wanted to have an hour in which to flie before CBS called the authorities.

CBS paid \$1,000 for the interview, Mr. O'Keefe said.

#### Hired as Consultant

The next day, the network hired Mr. O'Keefe as a consultant, agreeing to pay him a total of \$10,000 to lead a CBS news team to the body. There was no direct contract with Mr. Medlin.

Mr. Medlin maintained that he had killed numerous persons over the years, according to the tapes made by Mr. O'Keefe, and said he had been implicated in seven murders. He said that he had been diagnosed by Federal psychiatrists as being a schizophrenic psychopathic killer.

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and if CBS had an exclusive beat on it. But CBS pressed the money on Mr. Medlin in advance, giving it to Mr. O'Keefe, according to the tapes, to avoid direct payment to a participant in a new event. The network had been criticized some months ago for having paid H. R. Haldeman, former chief of staff to President Nixon, for an interview.

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Mr. Medlin said, on the O'Keefe tapes, that he could terrify people just by looking at them. "It was something I was born with," he said.

At the Tampa motel, Mr. Medlin began drinking vodka, and during the evening a young woman who he said was his cousin came to the motel, Mr. O'Keefe said.

Mr. O'Keefe said that the young woman became upset at suggestions Mr. Medlin had made. Mr. O'Keefe said, Mr. Medlin said he was going to bring her back, and departed.

Mr. O'Keefe waited in vain for him to return. During the day in Friday, he said, his tele-

phone call to the police department, nevertheless, and stayed there for several hours. Meanwhile, CBS had called the F.B.I. in New York City. Two agents interviewed CBS officials in New York and Mr. O'Keefe by telephone at the Tampa police station.

When the F.B.I. said in New York that it did not feel that Mr. O'Keefe was in immediate danger, Mr. Hewitt said, he told Mr. O'Keefe to call the Tampa office of the F.B.I. Mr. O'Keefe refused. He said he thought Mr. Medlin might return and that he did not want to put the F.B.I. on his trail.

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Using directions provided by Mr. Medlin before he disappeared, the news team searched the

did not dredge. Yesterday, the CBS news team was back in its boat on the ocean looking for the body once again. It did not find it.

Today the CBS team made another search off Key West, and Mr. Hewitt said it would spend at least one more day searching. A member of the team said a skin diver had been hired to help.

Mr. Hewitt, asked if CBS had any regrets, said: "I wish I hadn't given the money in advance to Pat O'Keefe." He said he should have realized that Mr. O'Keefe would be traveling with a man who could exert enough pressure to get the money away from him.

He said that the experience would not deter CBS from trying to develop news exclusives from tipsters.

He said that he did not feel CBS had been "taken."

"The New York Times thought enough of this man's story to send a reporter to Tampa and Key West," he said.

The F.B.I. declined comment about the extent of its interest in the situation.

A Justice Department source said in Washington that the department believed that CBS had been "ripped off."

REMEMBER THE NEEDLEST!

# Times' Check Finds Errors in Its Viet Bombing Story

BY GEORGE McARTHUR

Times Staff Writer

WASHINGTON—After the traumatic evacuation of Saigon 12 weeks ago, The Times published a story quoting an unnamed American official as saying U.S. planes from Thailand had engaged in a last round of bombings in South Vietnam.

The story was denied in unequivocal terms by both the White House and the Pentagon.

The Times story of June 8 said a significant number of planes from Thailand made bombing raids in South Vietnam on the day the Americans were being evacuated from Saigon. The story said the raids almost certainly had White House approval since they challenged congressional strictures on military operations and

were additionally certain to increase the wrath of already sensitive Thai authorities.

The Times, after a lengthy investigation, now believes that parts of that story were wrong and other parts open to question.

In Los Angeles, Times Editor William F. Thomas said the June 8 story "never should have been published, in light of the strong denials, without further checking."

"The reporter (George McArthur) had every reason to believe his source, who was in a position to know and who had not been wrong before, but we here should have alerted McArthur that the specific

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# Check Finds Errors in Bombing Story

Continued from First Page

nature of the denials demanded more investigation," Thomas said.

("That alert was not delivered, McArthur was left out on a limb, and the blame is entirely The Times for publishing what appears to be at least a misleading story.")

The large number of military, diplomatic and intelligence officials contacted in Washington almost unanimously support the White House and Pentagon denials. The Times is convinced that the White House did not know of any significant bombing raids that day and certainly did not order them. It is equally convinced, however, that a great deal happened that day that the White House did not know about.

The Times' principal source was an official who had no reason to mislead, had been candid in the past and was in a position to have a great deal of information across a broad range of activities. He relied in part on information from other people. In this case these people included American officers who dealt with military matters of top security.

These officers had photos of bomb damage in the Saigon area, around Cam Ranh Bay, near the air base town of Phan Rang and in the large base area some 100 miles above Saigon where the Communist Central Office for South Vietnam was headquartered.

These officers were speaking of American planes—though they could have been confused by the last day operations of the South Vietnamese air force. They related that the Americans who flew that day were under orders not to shoot unless they were shot at, but these officers said it was common knowledge among pilots that day that they would not be judged too strictly.

The Pentagon will not reveal the precise "rules of engagement" applied that day on the grounds that similar situations might arise in the future and that potential enemies might find such knowledge useful. The Pentagon says, however, that the orders "clearly limited the expenditure of ordinance to circumstances of self-defense. No offensive operations were authorized and none conducted."

On that day U.S. Air Force planes and helicopters from bases in Thailand flew about 200 sorties as "cover" for the evacuation of Saigon. Naval jets from carriers in the South China sea were also in the air in force. Of the Air Force sorties, 125 were by tactical jets loaded with rockets and bombs.

The Pentagon stated that this armada "expended ordinance" on only a few relatively insignificant occasions that day.

There was one helicopter strafing attack near the Saigon oil depot at Nha Be and a bombing raid by two Phantom jets near Bien Hoa in which four bombs were dropped, according to the Pentagon.

The Pentagon version is borne out indirectly by the silence from North Vietnamese sources. Hanoi has never publicly complained of any bombing on that last day.

On the other hand, an American officer who was in Thailand at that time and in a ranking position admitted, "There was a lot going on that didn't get into any written report, I can tell you that." This officer, however, had no direct knowledge of Air Force planes bombing in South Vietnam.

There are other aspects of that day which add to the confusion. These include:

—The fact that giant blockbuster bombs were brought into Saigon's Tan Son Nhut air base by American planes

in the last days of the South Vietnamese operation.

—That perhaps 100 South Vietnamese planes and helicopters landed in Thailand on the final day of the evacuation. Many of the planes took off from South Vietnam with bomb loads. They landed in Thailand without them, according to military sources.

Nevertheless, the most persistent investigation has failed to turn up any hard evidence that any significant number of bombs were dropped in South Vietnam.

Ron wants this stuck in his FYI / READING

for maybe Saturday....he wants to read



Some items in this folder were not digitized because it contains copyrighted materials. Please contact the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library for access to these materials.

ADV FOR 6:30 P.M.

TERHORST

WASHINGTON (AP) -- JERALD TERHORST SAYS AIDES OF PRESIDENT FORD, WHOM HE SERVED FOR A MONTH AS PRESS SECRETARY, FIND IT FRUSTRATING AND EVEN DEMEANING TO HAVE TO WORK THROUGH NIXON ADMINISTRATION MACHINERY.

BECAUSE OF THE SUDDEN SHIFT OF PRESIDENTIAL POWER, TERHORST SAYS, DECISIONS OF THE NEW ADMINISTRATION COULD BE TRANSLATED INTO REALITY ONLY THROUGH THE ORGANIZATION CONTROLLED BY WHITE HOUSE CHIEF OF STAFF ALEXANDER HAIG.

"THE FORD MEN NATURALLY FIND THAT FRUSTRATING AND EVEN DEMEANING," TERHORST WRITES. "AND IT IS ESPECIALLY SO WHENEVER FORD MOVED TO CHANGE A NIXON-HAIG POLICY."

HE MADE THE COMMENTS IN A NEW COLUMN COPYRIGHTED BY THE DETROIT NEWS AND UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE. THE SYNDICATE SAID TERHORST WILL WRITE THREE COLUMNS A WEEK FOR THE NEWS AND THAT MORE THAN 40 NEWSPAPERS SUBSCRIBED TO THE COLUMN IN THE FIRST 24 HOURS AFTER IT WAS OFFERED.

TERHORST RESIGNED AS FORD'S PRESS SECRETARY A WEEK AGO AFTER THE PRESIDENT GRANTED A FULL PARDON TO FORMER PRESIDENT RICHARD NIXON.

IN A SEPARATE INTERVIEW WITH THE DETROIT NEWS, TERHORST SAID HE WAS DISTURBED BECAUSE HE HAD NOT BEEN CONSULTED BY FORD PRIOR TO THE PARDON DECISION, SAYING HE COULD HAVE CAUTIONED THE PRESIDENT ABOUT THE PROBLEMS IT WOULD CAUSE.

HE TOLD THE NEWS ALSO THAT PRESIDENTIAL COUNSEL PHILIP BUCHEN HAD MISLED HIM ABOUT THE PARDON, WHICH LED HIM EARLIER TO GIVE FALSE INFORMATION TO NEWSMEN. WITHOUT GIVING DETAILS, HE SAID HE HAD BEEN MISLED TWICE BEFORE ON DIFFERENT TOPICS BY DIFFERENT STAFF MEMBERS.

IN HIS COLUMN, TERHORST WROTE THAT HAIG AND HIS ASSOCIATES WERE NOT USED TO FORD'S STYLE, WHICH HE DESCRIBED AS OPEN AND CANDID AND NOT GIVEN TO BEING IMPRESSED BY LENGTHY MEMOS AND POSITION PAPERS.

"HARDEST HIT BY FORD'S STYLE WAS HAIG," TERHORST WROTE. "NIXON'S PREOCCUPATION WITH WATERGATE HAD TREMENDOUSLY MAGNIFIED HAIG'S AUTHORITY IN THE WHITE HOUSE AND THE EXECUTIVE BRANCH OF THE GOVERNMENT."

"FOR MOST OF THE FINAL NIXON YEAR, AS HAIG HIMSELF WOULD AGREE, HE WAS THE ACTING PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES. WITH A TROUBLED PRESIDENT DRAWING MORE AND MORE WITHIN HIS SHELL, EVERYONE IN GOVERNMENT, WITH THE POSSIBLE EXCEPTION OF (SECRETARY OF STATE HENRY) KISSINGER, WAS WORKING FOR AL HAIG."

TERHORST SAYS THAT AS A RESULT OF FRICTIONS, FORD IS SPENDING AN INORDINATE AMOUNT OF TIME SOOTHING THE FEELINGS OF HIS LOYALISTY AND PLACATING HAIG'S SENSITIVE FEELINGS -- TIME HE COULD BETTER SPEND ON SUBSTANTIVE PROBLEMS OF HIS ADMINISTRATION.

"TENSIONS BETWEEN THE FORD MEN AND THE NIXON HOLDOVERS WOULD MAKE A QUANTUM LEAP IN INTENSITY ... ON SOMETHING DEALING WITH WATERGATE," HE WRITES, "SAY THE DISPOSITION OF NIXON TAPES AND DOCUMENTS, OR EVEN THE REMOVAL OF THE DISCONNECTED -- BUT STILL PRESENT -- HIDDEN MICROPHONES IN THE PRESIDENT'S OFFICE."

"SMALL WONDER THEN THAT SOME FORD MEN SUSPECT HAIG OF UNDULY INFLUENCING FORD TO ISSUE HIS PARDON TO RICHARD NIXON THE GROUNDS THAT THE FORMER PRESIDENT'S PHYSICAL AND EMOTION WELL-BEING WAS AT STAKE."



*press*

NATIONAL NEWSPAPER SYNDICATE

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*Sarah: note  
Page 3  
next to  
last  
paragraph*

October 3, 1974

REV. LESTER KINSOLVING  
RELIGION COLUMNIST  
AND  
WHITE HOUSE CORRESPONDENT

MRS. JOHN PRISLEY  
ASSOCIATE

Mr. James Deakin  
President, White House Correspondents Association  
The White House



Dear Jim:

I do appreciate the courtesy and candor you manifested this afternoon during our conversation following the press briefing. I trust that the length of this letter will evince the fact that I have given careful thought to your remarks, even though I have mixed reactions as to their substance.

My questions are, admittedly, lengthy -- but I do believe the record will show that ~~I am by no means alone in asking lengthy questions.~~ In regard to reasons why my questions are lengthy, I have no particular lust to give a speech, as I to am represented by a lecture bureau. I think rather, that the reasons my questions have been extended include the following:

- 1) The White House Correspondents Association has never managed, to the best of my knowledge, to formulate even a recommendation for a procedure which could end the present chaos, by which the daily press briefings often resemble an Arkansas hog calling contest, or (as The Boys On The Bus observed) The French Chamber of Deputies.
- 2) The Press Room podium is still the city hall of Credibility Gap -- although to be sure in nothing of the measure it was during the Zeigler Era.
- 3) I have seen what The Boys On The Bus have done to such nonconformists as Sarah MacLendon and Clark Mollenhoff, by way of refusing to follow up even the most appropriate question they may ask, or letting them face official wrath alone, or even laughing or groaning at them.

Hence we of the White House Press Corps Ishmaelite Squad are obliged, when we can obtain recognition, to ask questions with built-in follow ups -- ~~xxx~~ as well as enough qualifiers as to expose evasive answers.

I doubt very much if this would be necessary if only the White House regulars were willing to help formulate some orderly procedure. But I doubt if this will be done, because if it were done for press briefings, it would logically be in order for Presidential News Conferences. And any system in which we proceeded in an orderly manner, such as drawing numbers, would deny these regulars their built-in advantage of reserved seats up front.

The daily press briefings could even be conducted with a system of numbers, which reporters could pick off a large hook, as is the case in some physicians offices. A second group of numbers, on another hook could be used by anyone wanting to follow up.

MORE

October 3, 1974

But as I say, I doubt very much if the regulars would allow such order. And in the absence of such, we nonconformists will have to do the best we can.

I am under the added burden of the fact that I must cover the religion beat as well as the White House, which scintillating, albeit intricate combination I imagine that no one else in the press corps approximates. Hence my questions may well seem irrelevant to some or even many. Well, there are often questions raised which seem irrelevant and exceptionally boring to me -- but I think of the Indian aphorism about walking in the other man's moccasins, and apply this to the fact that I don't write for their editors or broadcast for their general managers.

Moreover, I am not entirely assigned to the White House. On the other hand more of my morning commentary each day for WAVA News is expected to be political than religious.

Having ~~the~~ tried to explain why I ask unusual questions, in response to your information that there ~~is~~ are unnumbered members of the White House press corps who are angry at my questions, let me assure you that I am angrier than they are.

I think Hell Week should last no longer than one year, if that, Jim. On the first day I attended a briefing (and you very kindly followed up my question in your very amusing manner) I was, at the close of the briefing very brusquely interrogated by John Osborne, who demanded to know my identity and the papers I represent.

In trying to be polite, I answered this elderly but still singularly arrogant bully, who acts as if he has not yet gotten over the heady perfume of being a hatchet artist for ~~himself~~ Henry Luce.

I don't know if it was Osborne who spread the rumor that I was a CIA agent, but Dan Rather was kind enough to tell me about this, and the fact that some of our colleagues not only demanded to examine my credentials, but apparently fed this slime to Father McLaughlin, who refined it in his inimitable way and announced it on TV.

At one Nixon press conference, when -- along with 50 or 75 others -- I called for recognition by Nixon, Osborne took ~~upon~~ himself to tell me to shut up and to call me a jackass, and then feeding his side of this episode to a wire service. (This delighted the Scientologists -- who as you know are suing The Post-Dispatch) but there was virtually no other reaction.) I tried very politely to reason with Osborne, but what do you do when he explains his actions in terms of "I don't like you,"? -- except to find it easy indeed to reciprocate, along with the realization that I am not on either of these beats to win popularity contests.

One of my editors, who is regarded as one of the very best political writers in the West, advised me: "Be friendly with everyone-- and friends with no one." I thought this was to apply only to the Nixon administration. ~~Perhaps,~~ it has to apply to other newsmen as well, although I rarely found that to be the case when I worked as a reporter on two of the biggest dailies in the U.S.

MORE



October 3, 1974

When Dan Rather suggested that my voice was reverberating at that Nixon press conference, I tried another way: a sign reading "MR. PRESIDENT." While some people were amused, Marty Schram growled: "What do you think this is, a circus?"

I thought this was a rhetorical question! Of course it was a circus, with Marty and the regulars given ringside seats where they don't have to call or hold up signs. ~~What do you think this is, a circus?~~

Then, on one occasion after a press briefing, I was in the middle of a question to Jerry Warren when Carey of Copley interrupted, saying "Stand aside for a question of substance!" And he kept up this fantastic behavior until I had to instruct him to get his damn hands off me.

Just recently, Philip Buchen issued a rhetorical invitation to me, during a press briefing, suggesting that I come up to the podium and lecture on the theology of mercy. After the press briefing, I began one question on this when I was abruptly interrupted by Knight Newspapers who angrily told me to stop preaching and to take my collar off -- which diverted me from Buchen, on whom I was writing a column for 230 secular newspapers. And I just do not intend to put up with anyone of this stuff.

Knight Newspapers was senoded By John Herbers and Ted Knapp. While these three are usually pleasant, I still wonder which of their editors instructed them to discuss the vesture and to make pronouncements of judgment upon the questions asked by other reporters. I asked if they had proffered the same advice to Congressman Drinan, who wears his collar at all times, even though some of his Republican colleagues think he is preaching and dislike same.

The afternoon following this incident, I discussed it with my general manager at WAVA News, who responded in Latin, which roughly translated means "Don't let the bastards grind you down."

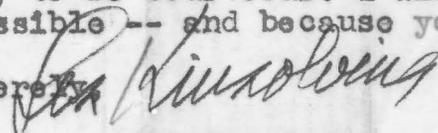
I don't think these three are bastards -- but the rest of this statement about not letting ~~thax~~ oneself get ground down is apropos, and it emanates from one of those for whom I work. I do not share the apparently widespread low esteem of the White House Press Corps we see regularly on our bulletin board from assorted editors and columnists. Neither will I be overawed by them.

I have written at this length not for publication, Jim, but in order to try to chronicle my thoughts with regard to any of those unnumbered and ~~not~~ unidentified backbiters who may continue to bitch to you and say nothing to me. I plan to carry a copy of this letter for anyone who doesn't like what I am doing and who wants to discuss it. As for the others, they can take a flying leap into the Potomac, as I regard such with the same contempt as those many who write me anonymous letters.

One final consideration: your mention of the fact that you didn't want to see Sarah or me "barred from the press room." If anyone is serious about such a scheme, they had better have a damn good lawyer.

I do appreciate your courtesy and I will always try to be courteous. I will even try to reduce the length of my questions, if possible -- and because you asked, not because anonymous critics growled.

Sincerely,



Les Kinsolving

cc  
Sarah Maclendon  
File



~~Sarah Mc Clendon~~  
~~Kinsolving~~

**WAVA**  
WAVA ALL NEWS TOWERS  
190 FT. MYR DRIVE  
ARLINGTON, VA. 22209

Mr Ron Nissen

~~Sarah McClendon  
2829 Connecticut Ave.  
Washington, D.C.~~

FC

accepting the attached at face value, seems to me we ought to pro  
to nessen re news services being disadvantaged. I mean, of course,  
you see it that way. pls let me know for reply to joe.

mla 10/21

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

STAR-NEWS BUILDING

P. O. BOX 1950 - B

INDIANAPOLIS, INDIANA 46206

October 16, 1974

Chief of Bureau Arrowsmith  
Washington

Dear Marv:

Just FYI, we had an awful lot of trouble as a result of things done by two White House advance people on the visit by President Ford Oct. 16.

The local Republican officials say arrangements were set up and ordered by one Andy Combs and one Eric Rosenberger who said "things will be this way and no exceptions."

Among the things they did was set up a "pool" for the pre-dinner reception which included the Indianapolis Star, Indianapolis News, one radioman and one TV man, but excluded wire services.

They also had the press at tables BEHIND the speakers table, where there was NO line of sight out to the speakers or the audience. The local Republican people told newsmen privately that they could slide their chairs sideways as far as possible to try to see a bit.

One of the state's top Republicans told me Combs appeared to have a very obvious anti-media bias, saying such things as "those guys don't need to eat and they don't need to see."

Sincerely,



JM:h

cc: Mr. Boccardi, NY

copy file

Handled  
w/ Cormier by RU  
Press

THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

10/28/74

NOTE FOR:

Ran

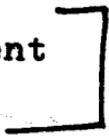
FROM:

TOM DECAIR

Cormier should be told--and I'll be glad to tell him--that the wires are always represented on ALL pools, regardless of their size, and the fact that local wire people ~~WERE~~ weren't on a pool simply reflects the fact that logistical limitations made it impossible for us include everyone traveling with us-- let alone allow double covering by any agency.

Also, it was Indianapolis where the press area was so goddam big that the GOP lost mucho \$\$\$ because so many seats were wiped out by the platform.

In ~~sum~~ sum, the complaint is most unfounded since Indy was one of the places where we went out of our way to help locals. Local wires can't separate themselves from their parent organizations.



## Office of the White House Press Secretary

NOTICE TO THE PRESS

The Washington Star News has broken the embargo on the budget. As a consequence, the Economic Report of the President to Congress will not be given to the Washington Star News until noon tomorrow, the release time, and the Washington Star News will not be allowed to attend tomorrow morning's briefing on the Economic Report of the President.

In addition, Fred Barnes of the Washington Star News, who was scheduled to ask a question at the President's news conference in Atlanta tomorrow will not be allowed to ask his question.

News organizations which break a release time are unfair to all their colleagues who live up to the embargo. If news organizations start ignoring embargoes, we will have an impossible situation in which there will be a race to get into print or on the air first and everyone will lose. In addition, breaking an embargo on a message to Congress puts the President in the position of showing discourtesy to members of the House and Senate because members read about the President's message or hear it broadcast before they receive the official copy.