

Our man hoppe

by ARTHUR HOPPE

Now that Mrs. Onassis is being called a home-wrecker in the headlines for writing four thank-you notes to a married gentleman, the flaming sex scandal of the Calvin Coolidge Administration can no longer be withheld from public scrutiny.

The scandal is well documented in a hitherto-secret letter found in the rumble seat of a Model A Ford roadster.

It is signed, "Grace (Mrs. Calvin) Coolidge." It is addressed to Cyrus Hocking, the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Agriculture who cut a dashing figure at The First Presbyterian Church's Baked Bean Suppers in Washington during the Coolidge years.

The first hint we have of the scandal appears in the salutation of the letter: "Dear Mr. Hocking."

The word, "dear," is defined by the dictionary as "highly esteemed, cherished, loved." And what are the first three words Mrs. Coolidge addresses to her cherished, loved Mr. Hocking?

"I desire you . . ."

Proceeding with guilty haste from this shocking declaration, Mrs. Coolidge quickly adds, ". . . to know of my gratitude to you . . ." (Here, in the first two lines, we find Mrs. Coolidge confessing not only her passionate desires for Mr. Hocking's future favors, but her gratitude for who-knows-what romantic interludes in the couple's hidden past.)

Pressing girlishly on, she writes, ". . . for sending me that slim volume (Ah! We all know what comes in slim volumes, don't we?) entitled, 'A Statistical Abstract of Fiscal 1924 Maple Syrup Production in Vermont.' It brought back many pleasant memories."

(Many pleasant memories of what? We can only speculate. But let it be remembered that Mrs. Coolidge's intimates invariably described her as "gay and charming." "She's a real sex pot," said one, "compared to Cal.")

The letter continues: "Thank you for the inscription in the fly leaf . . ." (What mad, insane words of love did that inscription employ? We know not. The book is unfortunately lost.) ". . . and in return allow me to convey my best wishes to you." (Her best wishes for what? And how does she plan to convey them? Ah, love's sweet secrets!)

But by now she is overwrought with emotion she can no longer contain. And in her two closing words she reveals all — pledging that she is, in truth, his with all the sincerity of an impassioned heart. In an outburst of inflamed ardor, she writes:

"Sincerely Yours."

The only puzzle is how Mrs. Coolidge could have been so indiscreet. Surely, all public figures know that every private word they write will be eagerly read by us multitudes sooner or later.

They can only try to make the best of it. But, never fear, we'll make the worst of it.

Where have all the issues gone?

by FRANK MANKIEWICZ and TOM BRADEN

It is a fashionable cliché in this city to say that Richard Nixon has pre-empted the issues, and the Democratic response to the program set forth in the State of the Union was so weak as to make this cliché — like all clichés — a statement of surface truth.

"I am particularly pleased to have such strong presidential support" was Sen. Edmund Muskie's response to the President's statements on the environment. It will not make a good campaign slogan.

And former National Democratic Chairman Fred Harris' plea that the President's welfare reform is not enough merely focuses attention on the fact that it was Mr. Nixon who proposed the reform.

Mr. Nixon has even succeeded in seizing the inflation issue. He never mentions the word without reference to his predecessor and leaves the Democrats with the easy choice of espousing waste and price controls or shutting up.

Pollution, Vietnam and race are issues which remain to be seized if only there is boldness to seize them — not matters on which parties should only jockey for position.

It is startling that no one rises to ridicule a President who tells his government agencies — military and civilian — to do something about their own pollution of air and water in three years. One is reminded, but not by the Democrats, of the girl who said "I'll give you just 15 minutes to get your hand off my knee."

For the most part, the Democrats walk

around the Vietnam issue as though it were say, calendar reform. Yet the percentage of Americans who want immediate withdrawal is 35 per cent and rising.

It is Vietnam which is a root cause of inflation. Yet the President concealed its cost in the budget with no complaints from the Democrats. Can anyone imagine the response of Gerald Ford or Melvin Laird if Lyndon Johnson had come up with a budget concealing the cost of the war?

To bow to the President as the Democrats have done with their mild rejoinder engineered by former Ambassador Averell Harriman — "Bring home the troops in 18 months" — is another way of saying that for the next year 3,000 to 5,000 American deaths will be acceptable. The decision leaves millions of Americans with no means of political expression on what they regard as a great moral issue.

Meantime, the problem of race confronts Americans with another such issue. The President and Vice President appeal to our basest instincts while Democrats fearing a party split stand mute.

It is strange to reflect upon a party so bemused by the apparent success of its opposition that Vice President Agnew's question, "Would you want to be operated on by a doctor admitted to school under a (racial) quota?" is considered smart, short-term politics.

The nation grew great in a religious tradition that taught us not to yield to prejudice but to overcome it and in a political tradition that faced problems rather than toyed with them. At least one political party ought to say so.

EDIT EDITORIAL

★ ★ ★ RAPPING ★ ★ ★

DEAR EDITOR:

Occasionally, in journalistic circles, a pseudo-columnist decides to launch an attack without even a few facts on which to base his opinions. Congratulations, Mr. Bruce Cochrane, for you have beaten everyone to the punch this year.

In reference to his "Times Are Changing?" column on page four, I must say that either Mr. Cochrane was not in possession of true facts or does not know how to recognize true facts.

His disgruntlement arises over a bill introduced by me at the Feb. 17 Council on Student Life meeting. Mr. Cochrane bases his entire attack on the assumption that the measure was designed to get a certain fraternity off the hook. He is wrong.

THE NATURE of the punishment being considered against the fraternity prompted me to urge the CSL to consider disciplinary measures assessed groups and organizations at the University. At the previous meeting (Feb. 10), the CSL held a hearing on student discipline and courts. At that time, one CSL member suggested that fines are an inappropriate form of punishment, and indeed may be contrary to civil law.

As are most bills, my motion was introduced to open discussion on the nature of punishments assessed at the

University

FURTHER, I was fully cognizant that no action would be taken on the motion immediately, but that it would be placed on a future agenda. I asked for no immediate action; instead I expected the question of discipline of groups of students to be placed on a future agenda with the question of individual discipline.

I also recognized the fact that IFC action against the fraternity will be decided long before any decision is made by CSL. And we do not make retroactive policy, Mr. Cochrane.

Further, Mr. Cochrane, I consulted Vice Chancellor Ross following the meeting and agreed with his suggestion that action should not be taken on a measure such as mine until the specific incident to which Mr. Cochrane refers is resolved.

FURTHERMORE, I told the CSL that I will disqualify myself from consideration of the specific incident if an appeal reaches the CSL. I explained my concern with the specific incident to the CSL to insure openness in any future discussion.

Now, sir, my realization of the nature of punishments at the disposal of University organizations (and not just IFC, but Panhel and ASUN and every frat house on campus) prompted the motion. If that is "dishonest", you are full of it. All legislators, at any level,

deal with matters of importance to themselves — for they are the representatives of their constituents.

It is not my purpose to "strike a crippling blow at the Greek system." I stand by my record of personal and editorial work (and not just words) to help the Greek system shake the vestiges of its past. What have you done, Mr. Cochrane?

ALSO, MR. COCHRANE, not only did I support the strong pledge contract, I actually helped write the thing. I doubt that I would try to eliminate it now.

If my bill is enacted, IFC will still retain sufficient and appropriate disciplinary tools — revocation of the pledge contract, for instance.

Finally, the contention in Cochrane's final paragraph is the verbalization of a child's tantrum. I never have challenged the right of two thousand men to live with their system. I am one of those two thousand. I am not trying to throttle anything (although there is at least one person who, if throttled, might by his quietness help the Greek system).

Mr. Cochrane, next time — at least attend a meeting of that group which you plan to criticize. And at least find out one or two facts before launching your fleet of idiocy before 18,500 students.


Ed Icenogle

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