Will Nixon Cancel '72 Elections?

Fifth Estate Collective

1970

from *Old Mole*, New York — President Nixon has hired the RAND corporation to investigate the possibility that disruption by "radical elements" may make it "unsafe" to hold national elections in 1972.

William Howard, a reporter on the Washington, D.C., staff of the conservative Newhouse newspaper chain, uncovered the story April 5. On April 24, the *Wall Street Journal* made it front page news.

RAND is a research and "think tank" corporation, originally created by the Air Force. According to Howard's sources, RAND's study would "envision a situation where rebellious factions using force or bomb threats would make it unsafe to conduct an election." The study would "provide the President with a plan of action."

The study was ordered because the President's advisers are "increasingly concerned about the country's internal security..."

The *Wall Street Journal* almost came right out with what that means: "Nixon men find a rumor hard to spike—that the RAND corporation is studying the idea' of canceling the 1972 elections if radicals threaten to disrupt it." Those who remember 1968—Chicago, Gene and Bobby and Wallace—might think the 1972 elections won't be much anyway.

Some may remember Adolph Hitler, who in 1933 outlawed all German parties after Nazis burned down the legislature (the Reichstag); he blamed it on the agitating Communists, and a year and a half later, elections were suspended.

The RAND study, at least, is Top Secret, and reporters have not yet discovered exactly what it is about. For instance, will it determine what conditions would allow or encourage Nixon to cancel elections; or will it decide what Nixon could do if the electoral process is discredited amid general protests against the actions of the government.

In any case, newsmen in Los Angeles and New York talking with people from RAND have confirmed Howard's "good" sources that some study relating to elections and levels of protest is being made for Tricky Dicky.



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