

Recalling Those Post-Aquarian

By Art Buchwald

Capitol Pu

A group of us were sitting around the dining room table the other night when suddenly someone asked, "What did people talk about in this country before Watergate?"

There was shocked silence. It was hard for any of us to believe there was *anything* before Watergate.

"Didn't we talk about meat?" one of the men asked.

"I think we did," one of the ladies replied, "but I can't remember what we said about it."

"I believe it had to do with the price of it. Wasn't there something about a boycott?" someone added.

"That's correct," a man said. "We kept saying the price of steak was too high. But surely we talked about other things besides meat."

We all started wracking our brains.

"Wait a minute!" a friend shouted. "Wasn't there something about amnesty?"

"You mean for people involved in Watergate?"

"No, stupid, we talked about amnesty *before* Water-

gate. It had to do with draft dodgers."

"It's funny," a woman said, "I always get amnesty and immunity mixed up."

"So does the President. If it hadn't been for Watergate President Nixon planned to make a big issue of amnesty."

"I don't recall talking much about amnesty," another person said. "In our family we talked about how McGovern blew the election."

"Who's McGovern?" someone asked.

"He was the Democratic candidate who ran against President Nixon in the election."

"What election?"

"The presidential election of 1972. If it hadn't been for the election we wouldn't have had a Watergate."

"Now it's coming back to me. McGovern ran with an Indian named Eaglefeather," a lady said.

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"Eagleton," her husband corrected her. "And he wasn't an Indian. He was treated for shock."

"He was not treated *for* shock, he was treated *with* shock. That's why what's-his-name dropped him from the ticket."

"Well then who ran with McGovern?"

Nobody at the table could remember.

"It wasn't Humphrey," a man said with assurance.

"And it wasn't Sparkman."

"Oh well, it's not important. Say, I just remember something we talked about before The Watergate—impounded funds. The President said he was impounding money Congress had allocated, and Congress said it was illegal. It was a pretty hot debate as I recall."

"Didn't we talk about what kind of FBI director Patrick Gray would make?"

"I thought the big argument was how much financial aid we should give to North Vietnam."

"They were great days," someone said nostalgically. "I wonder if we'll ever see the like again?"

"Do you think Watergate will be over before the football season starts?"

"Are you kidding? They're predicting it will go on for 20 years."

"That's a shame because I'm going to miss talking about the Redskins."

"Not as much as President Nixon will."

"Let's make a pact not to talk about Watergate for the rest of the evening."

Everyone agreed. We ate our food silently. Finally someone asked, "Has anyone seen 'Deep Throat'?"

No one had. We returned to our food. Every guest tried to think of another subject besides Watergate, but no one could come up with one.

So we all left hurriedly after coffee.