

What's This Bug Doing in My Soup?

By Art Buchwald

There is no doubt in my mind that the Justice Department has conducted the most thorough investigation into the Watergate bugging affair that was humanly possible. The fact that they were unable to trace any of the money in the case to any higherups in the Committee for the Re-election of the President was good news to all of us who hate to think that any of our political leaders would be involved in such a sordid affair.

Of course, there are certain psychological factors at work in such an investigation which no one can control. When the President's own Attorney General is asked to look into a scandal in the President's own party, there is always the suspicion that something was covered up.

The person I feel the most sorry for is the poor bureaucrat in the Justice Department who was called into his superior's office one day and told, "Hapless, the President of the United States of America wants you to investigate the Watergate bugging affair and all its ramifications."

"The President wants me to do that?"

"That is correct, Hapless. He has given specific instructions that he wants to leave no stone unturned in his effort to root out the evildoers who would have the audacity to bug the offices of the Democratic National Committee."

Capitol Punishment

"Gosh, that's a big assignment."

"The President of the United States, who happens to be President of all the people, as well as the leader of the most powerful country in the world, expects you to treat this as just another case."

"He does?"

"That is correct. He has instructed the Attorney General that even if his own political party is involved, and his own close personal friends are to be investigated, and his re-election is at stake, he still wants the truth to be made public at the earliest opportunity."

"Even before Nov. 7th?"

"The President is more concerned in the illegal uses of wire-tapping and bugging than he is in what happens on Nov. 7. You owe it to the President and the Attorney General to see that every bit of evidence in this case is available to the grand jury."

"Why me?"

"Because the President feels that you are the best man for this job. He knows that you will not let personal considerations or your loyal feelings towards him and the great party which he leads interfere with your objective investigation of this dastardly deed."

Eavesdropping

"He feels, as does the Attorney General, that you will do the job, regardless of jeopardy to your upcoming promotion or the consequences to your future with the Justice Department."

"Is that how they feel? I didn't even know the President knew me."

"He might not know you personally. But he knows that the Attorney General would not assign anyone to this case unless he was certain that this person could not be intimidated by men in high government positions."

"I might add that as your superior I am proud that the Attorney General has selected someone from my staff. I have as much at stake in this thing as you do, Hapless. Whatever you turn up will personally reflect on me as well as this department. We shall all be watching you closely."

"Don't you have a Mafia case I could have instead?"

"No, Hapless. Anyone in this department can investigate a Mafia case. But there are very few men we can trust to handle an investigation this explosive. It is your duty to our President, and the Attorney General whom you will be working for, God willing, for the next four years, to give us the truth and nothing but the truth, so help you God."