

Capitol Punishment

Second and 44:

The Best Play Post 4/24/73 Is a Forfeit

By Art Buchwald

have to gain it by deceit. The only honorable thing to do would be for the President to go on national television this week and say, "Because of startling new information that I have just received concerning the Watergate, I am forfeiting the election to my worthy opponent, Sen. George McGovern."

"But, Osgood, if the President forfeits the election now, what happens to everything that has taken place in the last four months such as Peace with Honor in Vietnam, the dollar devaluation, meat prices, the impounding of funds?"

"They would all be inoperative. The President's forfeiture would be the only thing operative. President McGovern would have to start from scratch, which he's used to doing anyway."

"There must be another solution," I protested. "Perhaps rather than forfeit, the President could ask for a new election with an entirely new team of players on the Committee to Re-Elect the President."

"Did the University of Oklahoma ask to replay Penn State in the Sugar Bowl?" Osgood asked.

"But that's different," I replied.

"It may be to some people, but I'm not sure it is to

Has the President done all he can do in regards to the Watergate bugging scandal? Some people think he hasn't. One, a Democrat friend of mine named Osgood Timishoe, announced:

"The University of Oklahoma last week forfeited nine football games plus the Sugar Bowl because someone cheated on their players' grades.

"What has that got to do with the Watergate?" I asked.

"I believe Nixon should forfeit the election."

"Have you gone mad, Osgood?" I said in horror. "The President's been in office for four months. He can't just up and forfeit at this late date."

"Why not? Oklahoma played their games last fall and they just forfeited now. The President's the No. 1 football fan in the country and he should take the lead from the No. 2 college football team."

"But why would he do it?" I asked.

"Because everyone in this country knows that Nixon would never want to win a contest if cheating were involved. He has too much principle for that. The presidency of the United States isn't worth the price if you

Richard M. Nixon. How can he face the public for the next four years knowing he won the election by unfair methods? How can the U.S. Marine Band play 'Hail to the Chief' when the Chief's own people in the White House fixed the election so Nixon would be a sure thing?"

"But surely Nixon knows in his heart that he would have won the election, with or without the tampering of the Watergate."

"There will always be the question," Osgood said. "It isn't good for the country to have a President who will never be certain that he had a *real* mandate from the people."

"Even if you're right are you sure George McGovern still wants to be President?"

"I believe so. He's having a lot of trouble in South Dakota running for senator, so I think he'd accept Nixon's offer."

"Wait a minute," I said, "if Nixon forfeits the presidency what does he do for the next four years?"

"He could become the president of the University of Oklahoma."