

'I Am the President' and

By Art Buchwald

Capitol

The most interesting information about President Nixon having all his offices in the White House bugged was that the tape machines were "voice activated"—that is to say they automatically went on when someone started to talk.

Not all the conversations in the Oval Office had to do with the President and his visitors. I have in my possession a tape of two cleaning women who did not know the office was bugged. The time of the taping was 12:05 a.m.

(Sound of vacuum cleaner. Voice singing: "Carry Me Back to Ole Virginny." Vacuum cleaner stops.)

"Okay, Mathilde, it's my turn to be President of the United States."

"You were President last night, Clementine. It's my turn to be the President."

"I was off last night. Bethlyn must have been President last night. Now I'm going to sit in the big chair behind the desk. Who you want to be, Mathilde?"

"I'll be the Queen of England."

"Don't be so smart. Why don't you be Sammy Davis Jr.? Now come over to my side of the desk and hug me."

"I don't want to be Sammy Davis Jr. I think I'll be Henry Kissinger."

"Okay, Henry. I want you to go to China."

"What for Mr. President?"

"I want two orders of won ton soup, six egg rolls, a container of chop suey and a dozen fortune cookies."

"Who you want to be now, Mathilde?"

"I'll be the former Attorney General of the United States of America."

"Okay, Mr. Former Attorney General. Now I got to ask you this question. You know anything about this Watergate mess that everyone's been talking about?"

"No, sir, Mr. President. I don't know nothing about nothing, and if I did know I wouldn't tell you."

"That's no way to talk to the President of the United

Other Recorded Conversations

Punishment

States of America. I want to get to the bottom of this affair. Send in my loyal, devoted and trusted assistants."

"Who am I now?"

"You be John Dean."

"Okay, Mr. President, I am John Dean. What you want to know?"

"What's going on with this Watergate business, John?"

"You really want to know?"

"What for am I President of the United States if I didn't want to know?"

"Okay, Mr. President, I'll tell you."

"Get out of here. I don't want to know."

"Now who am I?"

"You be Haldeman."

"Hi, Mr. President. I am Bob Haldeman, your loyal and able chief administrative assistant."

"Bob, I think John Dean knows something and he isn't telling us."

"We'll send him to Camp David and get him out of here. I never trusted him since he went on his honeymoon."

"One more thing, Bob. I need four more golf carts for San Clemente, a new volleyball court and a gazebo for Key Biscayne."

"You got them, Mr. President."

"Now you be John Connally, Mathilde."

"Yessir, I'm John Connally, reporting to help you out of your troubles."

"John."

"Yessir, Mr. President."

"Get out of here." (laughter)

"Well since I'm the President I think I'll make a proclamation. I hereby free all the slaves."

"That's President Lincoln, not President Nixon."

"I didn't say which President I was, did I?"