

THE NATION

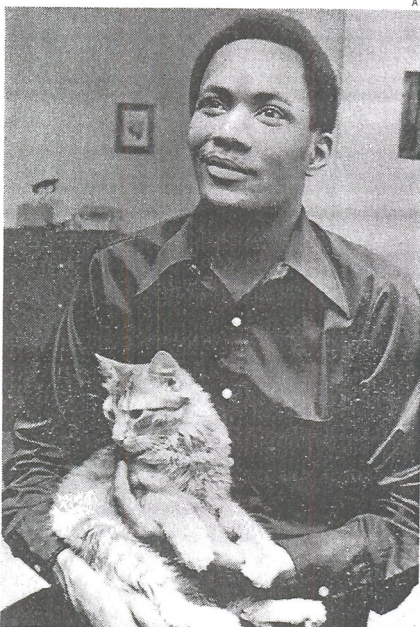
AMERICAN NOTES

The Forgotten Man

On the night of June 17, 1972, Frank Wills was working as a security guard at Washington's Watergate complex. He noticed on his first round that the latch of a basement door had been taped open. Wills assumed workmen that day had done it; so he removed the tape and continued his patrol. When he came around again, however, he found that the tape had been replaced. Wills called the police. The five Watergate burglars were arrested, and the episode became part of the currently traumatic American history.

Wills alone gained an instant obscurity from the episode. He received a *pro forma* letter of commendation and a \$5-a-week raise. He was also sufficiently unnerved by the event that he quit his job. Now he is back on the beat again in another Washington building, making \$85 a week.

The incident left him with enough reflections to make him want to run for political office himself some day. "There is a breakdown in the political system," says Wills, who is now 25. "The American people are not aware of what is really happening. I've seen it firsthand, and it's opened my eyes real wide. I feel sorry for the people who look at Watergate and say it's just politics."



SECURITY GUARD FRANK WILLS
An instant obscurity.

Tear for the Onion

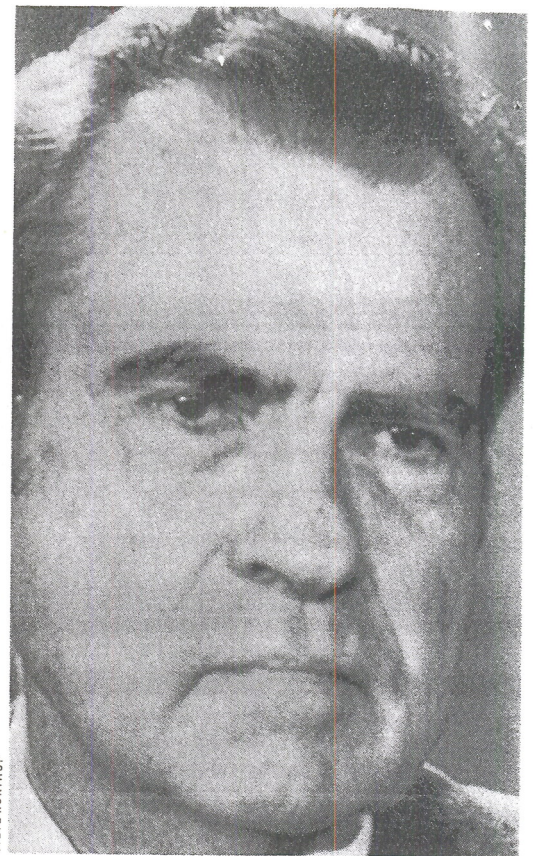
The high cost of eating is something to cry about. Even the lowly onion. Last year a 50-lb. sack of Spanish or white onions cost around \$6. Now, due to flooded crops and poor harvests, they run as high as \$23 per sack in Chicago and \$30 in Los Angeles. The result: for the first time in memory, lunch-counter customers cannot depend on free onion slices with their hamburgers.

Manhattan's Bun & Burger chain has removed sliced onions from its lunch counters, keeping instead an emergency supply of chopped onions hidden away and given only to those customers "who insist they cannot eat a hamburger without them." Customers have generally been cooperative because, as one short-order cook put it, "they are not buying onions for their homes either." At Manhattan's Soup Burg, they claim that the cost of raw onion per hamburger is up to 7¢ or 8¢. "It's getting to be the most expensive part of the hamburger," says one of the waiters. The National Press Club in Washington has eliminated the thick onion garnish from the top of its \$2 hamburger. Says the club chef, "You have to know somebody these days to get an onion."

You Can't Take It with You

Before he began serving a sentence for parole violation at Minnesota state prison at Stillwater, Richard C. Jackson had never been considered an artist. But in 2½ years, the 53-year-old printer developed a keen aesthetic eye as well as an appreciation for shading, contrast and tone. Working laboriously in the prison's printing shop, convict Jackson came up with an amazingly good portrait of Andrew Jackson, a nice rear view of the White House and passable reproductions of the filigree found on a U.S. \$20 bill. When his sentence expired in March, he loaded up a cardboard box with \$16,000 in phony 20s, asked the guard to hold it while he signed out, took back the box, and walked off a free and rich man.

Jackson was finally rearrested three weeks ago after he had spent a part of his bogus fortune. "Actually, the bills he turned out were pretty good," said Assistant U.S. Attorney Thor Anderson in appreciation of the artistry. "The major failure was that the paper he had to work with just wasn't suited for a really good counterfeit."



PRESIDENT RICHARD NIXON

THE ADMINISTRATION

It Gets Worse: Nixon's Crisis Of Confidence

WITH each passing hour the Government crisis in Washington grew more tense. A federal grand jury was meeting secretly to consider indictments of high Nixon officials in the Watergate wiretapping and its cover-up. The President was spending long days considering what to do about the scandal. The dismissal or suspension of some of his closest aides was not only anticipated, but overdue. Around the capital, the suspense was complicated by a pervasive air of unreality, a sense of something gone disastrously wrong very near the center of the nation's power. Yet there was no word from Nixon. All of Washington, not to mention the country, wondered: What was the President waiting for? Why didn't he act?

Only a few weeks ago, Nixon had seemed at the very peak of his power. Now he was suddenly besieged. The economy seemed mismanaged, prices still out of control. The peace in Southeast Asia was precarious. Above all, Watergate—which once could be dismissed as a pointless political caper—not only impugned the character of the top men around Nixon, but raised deeply troubling doubts about the President himself, clearly affecting his abil-