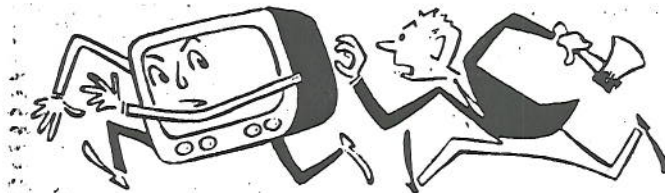


Terrence O'Flaherty



The Men Who Opened the Gate

THESE are perilous times for those who tend the fires closest to the President. They have learned that you cannot fool all of the people all of the time. But this does not mean they didn't come awfully close.

Did they conspire to fool the President or was he in it all along? That is what two Washington



John Ehrlichman

Post reporters Bob Woodward and Carl Bernstein called "the swing question" on NBC yesterday morning. They did not say WHO will do the swinging, but they did bring out some interesting facts about the Watergate stew which was first stirred up by the pair.

"We knew all along that history books would vindicate this reporting, but we didn't

realize it would be so fast," said Bernstein.

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THEY WERE interviewed on the "Today" show by this year's Peabody Award winning newsman Bill Monroe. The interview was preceded by a film clip of Clark MacGregor, then chairman of the President's Committee for reelection, who lashed out at the Washington Post:

"Using innuendo, third person heresay, unsubstantiated charges, anonymous sources, and huge scare headlines, the Post has maliciously sought to give the appearance of a direct connection between the White House and the Watergate, a charge which the Post knows — and half a dozen investigations have found — to be false . . ."

"That was October 16 and we've learned a lot about Watergate since then," observed NBC's Frank McGee.

"The Watergate bugging is part of a much broader campaign of political espionage and sabotage that was a basic strategy of the President's 1972 campaign. All we need to do is to quote the President when he said 'when I am the candidate I run the campaign,'" said Woodward.

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MOST CITIZENS are now more interested in the administration's attempts to cover up the bugging than in the bugging itself. "The evidence of those involved keeps going higher," said Bernstein. "We have learned from sources we consider reliable that John Dean is going to say that Mr. Haldeman, the President's Number One aide, was engaged in the cover-up, knew about it, and orchestrated it—as well as Mr. Ehrlichman the President's top domestic adviser."



H. R. Haldeman

Woodward referred to the President's inner sanctum of Haldeman and Ehrlichman as "loyal people — ones who have always stuck together. They have not talked to the press before but now they are talking either directly or indirectly.

"Some people feel that the government — at least the top decision-makers — are paralyzed, that people in Congress, for instance, don't know whether to call Mr. Haldeman or not to ask about some issue. They don't know who's in and who's out — or who's going out. The lines of authority in the White House are very unclear right now even for routine matters of business . . ."

Last night ABC presented a special report titled "In The Matter of Watergate" and other networks are sure to follow. Perhaps the deepest wound of all was inflicted by the announcement that PBS — the public broadcasting voice the White House is so intent on silencing — will cover the Senate hearings next month. Et tu, PBS?

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UNUSUAL TONIGHT: "Five Presidents On The Presidency" (9 p.m., Channel 5) . . . "You And The Commercial" a CBS Report (10 p.m., Channel 5) . . . "ABC News at Ease," a look at the Smith and Reasoner Report (11:30 p.m., Channel 7).