

The Nixon Boys At Crime School



Arthur Hoppe

SO FAR 32 eager members of the President's Watergate Boosters' Club have been found guilty of assorted felonious peccadilloes. Worse, flint-hearted judges keep clapping them in the pokey — sometimes for months on end.

This gross miscarriage of justice must cease. Everyone knows that our nation's prisons are not only already overcrowded, but they are vicious breeding grounds of crime.

Think for a moment, if you will, of these handsome, clean-cut, respectable presidential aides being tossed into cells with hardened, desperate, con-wise criminals. The outcome is inevitable.

Take the case of White House aide Emil (Bud) Magruder, who found himself sharing a cell with the notorious hit man, Salvatore (Potatoes) O'Gratin.

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"WHATCHA in for kid?" said O'Gratin, picking his teeth with a shiv.

"Plea bargaining, sir," said Emil Magruder, truthful to the end.

"Ain't we all?" said O'Gratin. "They nailed me on three counts of violating the civil rights of Crabs Newberg, one for each hole, and dumping his remains on his front steps. But the fix was in and I'm only doing one-to-five for littering."

"That's nice, sir. They charged me with breaking and entering, perjury, wire-tapping, bribery and obstructing justice. But once I promised to tell all I knew about my boss, they let me off with a sentence of four-to-ten for violating the 1812 Overture Act."

"You squealed on your boss, kid?" said O'Gratin, hefting his shiv.

"Yes, sir. I told them all I knew was that he was an honest, decent, courageous, great American."

"You got what it takes in this business, kid," said O'Gratin admiringly, "loyalty. Your problem, from what I seen in the papers, is that you got in with the wrong bunch — nothing but stupid, bumbling amateurs. When you get out, how'd you like to go to work for a gang of real pros?"

"Meaning you, sir?"

"That's right. We could use a kid with your brains and loyalty. Now we got an Apprenticeship Training Program right here in this crime breeding ground. We'll teach you the ropes."

"Well, I don't know, sir . . ."

"Think of whatcha get for turning pro. You ever drive a flashy car, kid?"

"Well, no, sir. I always had a chauffeured limousine at my disposal."

"And trips, kid, to Miami Beach and Vegas. You ever fly first class?"

"No, sir. We always took Air Force One to Key Biscayne and San Clemente. They met us with helicopters and..."

"Think of the dough, then. Crime don't pay, kid, like it used to. But you could pull down 20 grand a year easy."

"Gosh, sir. I was making \$32,500 in my old job."

"Well, kid, money ain't everything. Look how your mob let you down. Me, I'll be out in '76 with time off for double occupancy. But you're doing ten years."

"Not years, sir. Months."

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O'GRATIN scratched his head. "Well, there ain't no use wasting our valuable time in stir, kid. We gotta have little talks about how to make a life of crime pay."

"Yes, sir. What do you want to know?"

"Well, first, kid," said O'Gratin, "how do you get to be one of them White House aides?"