

# 'An Datsa da Way It Is, or I'm Not Don Walter of the Media Family'

By Art Buchwald

The people who work in the White House are convinced that there is a concerted conspiracy by the media to get Richard Nixon. Until now it has just been conjecture that this conspiracy was well organized and financed by the press and TV networks. But it was hard to prove.

The big break for the White House came last week when Eberhardt Shroeder, a reporter with the Daily Gemstone, was arrested for not revealing his sources in a piece he did on the improvements on King Timahoe's doghouse in San Clemente. Rather than go to jail Eberhardt agreed to turn state's evidence and reveal the truth about the media organization which has pledged itself to get the President.

This is a partial text of Eberhardt's confession:

D. A.: Who is Mr. Big in the organization?

Eberhardt: Walter Cronkite. Every newspaperman and TV reporter and commentator reports to him.

D.A.: How does the conspiracy operate?

Eberhardt: There are cells all over the country. There is the White House Press Corps Cell, the Camp David Cell, the Key Biscayne Cell and the San Clemente Cell. Cronkite's orders are dispatched to us every morning by Telex. He might assign Joe Alsop to call for Nixon's resignation, or he might order Tom Wicker to do a favorable piece on Archibald Cox, or he could order Bill Buckley to write

a column on the President's lack of credibility.

D. A.: Cronkite does this all alone?

Eberhardt: No, he has a staff. John Chancellor and Howard K. Smith are in charge of plotting against Nixon for television. Hugh Sidey of Time magazine handles all periodicals. Evans and Novak pass on assignments to the columnists. And there is a special cell of editorial writers from The Washington Post, The New York Times and Detroit Daily News who make sure the anti-Nixon line is adhered to in editorials.

D. A.: Who puts up the money for the conspiracy?

Eberhardt: Walter Cronkite pays for most of it out of his own pocket. Our newspapers and television stations might chip in if we have to fly to Key Biscayne and get the goods on Bebe Rebozo or to L.A. to find out what gives at San Clemente. We also get financing from the Ford Foundation, the Brookings Institute and Masters and Johnson.

D. A.: How did you use Watergate to embarrass Nixon?

Eberhardt: We made the whole thing up. There is no James McCord, Jeb Magruder, John Mitchell, Maurice Stans or G. Gordon Liddy. We concocted the whole thing.

D. A.: Including the resignation of Spiro Agnew?

Eberhardt: Yup. We take full credit for that one.

D. A.: Why Agnew? He had nothing to do with Watergate.

Eberhardt: I guess we just got carried away.

D. A.: What about the President's tapes?

Eberhardt: We made that up, too. It really threw the White House for a loop: We didn't know they had any tapes at the time. But it turned out they did. When they revealed that some tapes were missing, they played right into our hands. It was quite a coup for us. Cronkite sent out a "well done" telegram to everyone.

D. A. It's obvious you people are well organized.

Eberhardt: We have to be if we're going to be members of the press—any breakdown in discipline and the White House could get the upper hand.

D. A.: Suppose a newspaperman or TV commentator won't play ball?

Eberhardt: Cronkite puts out a contract on him. We bring in reporters from the Chicago newspapers and take the guy for a ride along the Potomac River. It's all very neat and clean.

D. A.: Well, thank you very much. This documents what the White House has been saying all along.

Eberhardt: Hey, what about me? Now that I've blown the whistle on the conspiracy my life isn't worth yesterday's Wall Street Journal.

D. A.: Don't worry we'll give you 24-hour protection and find a job for you.

Eberhardt: Doing what?

D. A.: How would you like to be a Nixon speech writer?