

# Only the Names Have Been Changed . . .

## Washington

Scene: President Walter Monckton talking to anti-war demonstrators at the Lincoln Memorial.

Monckton: "Hi. Where are you from?"

Girl: "Columbus, Ohio."

Monckton: "Oh? Looks like Ohio State's got themselves another fine football team. Probably go to the Rose Bowl."

—From the script of "Washington," starring Jason Robards as the President.

Crews from Paramount Television are winding up their filming of Washington scenes for ABC's nine-part fall series based on John Ehrlichman's novel, "The Company."

Paramount Pictures originally bought Ehrlichman's novel with the idea of making a feature film, then dropped the idea. But Brandon Stoddard, a West Coast ABC vice president, with the blessing of Fred Silverman, president of ABC Entertainment, thought the novel would make good television.

The title has been changed to "Washington," and will open with a



JOHN EHRLICHMAN  
A novel idea

two-hour episode followed by eight one-hour segments.

Ehrlichman's novel was based on a conflict between President Walter Monckton (Richard M. Nixon) and his Director of Central Intelligence, William Martin (Richard Helms).

Monckton will be played by

Jason Robards, who, ironically, played the role of Washington Post executive editor Ben Bradlee in the movie "All the President's Men." Martin is played by Cliff Robertson, and the cast also includes Robert Vaughn, Andy Griffith, Barry Nelson and Stephanie Powers.

Other characters in "The Company" include Dr. Carl Tessler (Henry Kissinger), Frank Flaherty (H.R. Haldeman), T.T. Talford (Charles Colson), Bob Bailey (Herb Klein), Elmer Morse (J. Edgar Hoover) and outgoing President Esker Anderson (Lyndon Johnson).

Writers David W. Rintels and Eric Bercovici say the script of "Washington" is based in part on Ehrlichman's novel.

They have included the basic Ehrlichman conflict between the President and the CIA director and have added other characters who will seem familiar: Roger Castel, who resembles John Dean, and Hank Ferris, who seems patterned after Jeb Magruder. The series is now a rather broad fictionalized view of the events leading up to Watergate.

Some of the dialogue is uncar-

## 'Taking some recognizable events and dramatizing them'

ny in the way it evokes the Watergate tapes.

Monckton and Flaherty are discussing a state dinner at the White House.

Monckton: "And now the salad. How are they going to do the salad tonight, Frank?"

Flaherty: "I don't know. It doesn't say. Shall I find out? I presume they'll pass it in the big crystal bowls like they usually do."

Monckton: "Frank, do you know why I bring it up? Do you know how long that takes?"

Flaherty: "No sir. Not exactly. A few minutes, I suppose."

Monckton: "One night it took

12 minutes. Another time it took 17. Do you know what I will be doing during those 17 minutes? Have you ever thought of that Frank? I'm through with my dinner. I eat very sparingly, as you know. The Prince speaks only Arabic. One of those prissy little state department interpreters will want to sit behind us. But there's only room for one waiter to slide by, back of the head table. So I will just sit beside the little Prince and we will smile at each other on and off for 17 minutes, saying nothing. Of course, I'm willing to do that, you understand, if it's necessary. But I wonder if you could find out if they could dish up the salads out in the kitchen — could you do that, Frank? We could shorten the whole thing by ten to 15 minutes. It would be a good example to the country, in a way. People in the United States spend too much time eating, you know. I only take five minutes for breakfast and sometimes less than that for lunch. Everyone would be better off if they did that. We're becoming an obese people in this nation. Does the press know that I spend less than ten minutes a day on breakfast and lunch, Frank? It would be a good thing to get that out to the press in one of your 'Day



JASON ROBARDS  
As the President

in the life of the President' interviews, wouldn't it?"

Flaherty: "I don't give interviews, sir."

Monckton: "Well, give it to Hank Ferris to put out. He doesn't do anything else around here. He could at least do that, couldn't he?"

Rintels, who won an Emmy last year for his dramatization of the John Henry Faulk story. "Fear on Trial," said recently that he and Bercovici were "taking some recognizable events and dramatizing them as close to the feel of the events as we can."