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In This Issue

Jacques Maritain: 1882-1973 JOHN W. DONOHUE	436
The Left Hand of Sheed WALKER PERCY	438
Bonhoeffer, Luther and Community JOSEPH F. BECKMAN	440
Pop Culture: Gold in Garbage? MARY PATRICIA HALEY	443
Editorials	
The Watergate Comes Down	434
Religious Education and Father Brown	434
Current Comment	
'The Year of Europe'	430
Neither Black nor White	431
A War of Philosophies	432
Washington Front	
Words and Deeds EDWARD GLYNN	433
Theatre	
The Greeks Revisited CATHARINE HUGHES	441
Book Reviews	
Group Portrait With Lady	445
Gravity's Rainbow	446
The Autograph Hound	446
The Press	
Saving the People S. J. ADAMO	447
The Word	
Vine and Branches VINCENT P. MC CORRY, S. J.	iii

Of Many Things

As April gives way to May this year, the very name Watergate has come to have an unwelcome sound. One hears it everywhere and from everyone. As shock follows shock in the unfolding serial thriller, Watergate itself evokes the image of a huge, darksome bird of prey hovering over the heads of us all and blotting out light from the heavens.

In the editorial pages of this issue, we return once again to Watergate and the matters of public and private morality that it raises. I, for one, hope we will now see the swiftest possible pursuit of the two major investigations demanded by the scandal. At the same time, however, we may have to accept the inevitability of lengthy research by both judicial and legislative investigators before the Senate select committee hearings or the court's proceedings can begin. One of the most corrosive aspects of the entire Watergate affair thus far has been the repetition of claims by public officials at the highest levels that completely exhaustive investigations had been made. We now know certainly that the results of these investigations in some instances did not receive proper airing. We are justified in supposing, moreover, that the investigations did not in fact go nearly deep enough. This time, the public interest demands the uncovering and presentation of nothing less than the whole truth.

Having said all that, I find it pleasant to reflect on one positive note

about Watergate sounded by the London *Observer*. The weekly remarks that "if Watergate has shaken confidence in Mr. Nixon on the home front, the way this scandal is now being relentlessly exposed should also strengthen America's claim to be the most open society: political skulduggery has happened in many countries but in few could it have been exposed as publicly as now in the United States."

* * *

There is another pressing reason for wishing that we could wind up the Watergate affair with the greatest speed. It is the need to turn national attention to Dr. Henry Kissinger's proposed review by the United States and its traditional European allies of the bases for effective Atlantic unity. I would hope, for instance, that such a review will explore the delicate matter of using trade and other contacts to encourage everywhere a certain respect for basic human rights. (That would also mean, happily, prodding ourselves on the effectiveness of our own commitment to those same rights.) I think, particularly, of the opportunities—and corresponding obligations—now available to American businessmen, as well as diplomats, to register uneasiness with their counterparts in the Soviet Union or China over continuing restrictions on religious freedom.

D. R. C.

