

All Ready to Go

President Nixon expects to eat the whole thing in November. Despite their stern warnings to each other about the folly of over-confidence, his men are talking about a landslide. Beyond that, they are dreaming of taking control of the Senate—only a switch of five seats is necessary—and of institutionalizing the gains they anticipate in every voting bloc in such an authoritative way that they will become the majority party for the rest of the century.

Think what it would mean to them, for instance, if former Postmaster General Winston Blount were to unseat veteran John Sparkman of Alabama. The business community has been fairly generous to Senator Sparkman. He has been able to elicit their support without much trouble. In some cases it has only been necessary to point out that, were he to be defeated, the chairmanship of the Senate Banking and Currency Committee would pass on to Sen. William Proxmire of Wisconsin, who is far less sympathetic to their interests and concerns.

But in these halcyon days for Republicans in all regions, challenger Blount has been asking the financiers to ask themselves how they would feel if they should wake up on November 8 and find that the conservative Sen. John Tower of Texas was the new chairman. Confident Republicans at the recent convention talked of it as a possibility.

The unity in the party was glowingly, if somewhat tediously, presented during the three-day convention. Even had there been nothing to argue about, the Right and Left would have been in a subdued frame of mind. The Right has seen that the public, in spite of their disapproval, overwhelmingly favored the China trip, and that the President's peregrinations will be a large plus for all Republicans campaigning this fall.

As for the Left, it could see before its eyes what happened to Rep. Paul McCloskey, who dared to challenge the President on the war and came to naught.

So there was little disposition to follow the Democrats down the dangerous and exhilarating paths of reform. Just as there was little discernible sentiment for breaking up the winning combination of Richard Nixon and Spiro Agnew.

From the President down to the youngest volunteer, everyone seemed ready to go forth, secure in the knowledge they were on the brink of an Eisenhower-type victory.

Surely, nothing George McGovern had done while they were busy congratulating themselves could have given them the slightest pause. Only one small nagging doubt could be discerned. They are nervous about the Watergate Five, who were caught red-handed stealing into Democratic headquarters last June and who seem to have received large amounts of money from the Committee to Re-Elect the President for no reason that anyone has yet explained. MARY MC GRORY

Ready to Be Served

The Watergate affair has been sitting on the back burner all summer, like a covered stew simmering and occasionally sending forth a promise of contents deliciously spicy. Although all the ingredients have been working their savoring effects from the beginning, only the master chefs who created the dish know fully what they are.

When James W. McCord Jr., a security consultant employed by the Republican National Committee and the Committee to Re-elect the President, was caught at the Watergate in the Democratic National Committee's headquarters with four other men in an early morning, gunpoint arrest on

June 17, questions immediately arose as to the real brains behind the bungled bugging operation.

It now turns out that those five men apparently were not alone in their Watergate caper that fateful night. Federal investigators have reportedly discovered that two Administration employees equipped with at least one walkie-talkie were also actually inside the Watergate complex at the time of the break-in. One was G. Gordon Liddy, at that time counsel to the Finance Committee to Re-elect President Nixon. E. Howard Hunt, who during the past year had periodically worked as a White House consultant with a desk in the Executive Office Building, was the other.

Liddy and the Committee to Re-elect the President are also linked financially with Bernard L. Barker, one of the men who did not escape. The recent report of the General Accounting Office—the auditing and investigative agency of Congress—that charged the Committee to Re-elect the President with “apparent and possible violations” of the federal campaign-financing law also mentions that \$114,000 given to the Nixon campaign fund passed through Liddy's hands on their way to a Miami bank account controlled by Barker.

The \$114,000 originated, according to the GAO report, from a \$350,000 fund that had been kept in an office safe of Maurice Stans, President Nixon's campaign finance chief. (The GAO charges the committee with failure to “keep and maintain adequate books and records.”) Only former Commerce Secretary Stans and Hugh W. Sloan Jr., the re-election committee's since-resigned treasurer, reportedly had access to it.

Liddy was fired by John N. Mitchell, at that time the Republican campaign chairman, on June 28 for refusing to co-operate with FBI investigators of the case.

The stew is now just about ready to be served. So, too, are the indictments shortly to be handed down by the Federal grand jury investigating the case.

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