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TENTATIVE
DESCRIPTION
OF A DINNER
GIVEN TO PROMOTE
THE IMPEACHMENT
OF
PRESIDENT
EISENHOWER

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Ferlinghetti

LAWRENCE
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TENTATIVE DESCRIPTION OF A DINNER GIVEN TO PROMOTE THE IMPEACHMENT OF PRESIDENT EISENHOWER

After it became obvious that the strange rain would never stop
And after it became obvious that the President was doing everything
in his power

And after it became obvious that the President's general staff
was still in contact with the President deep in the heart
of Georgia while deep in the heart of South America the
President's left-hand man was proving all the world loves
an American

And after it became obvious that the strange rain would never stop
and that Old Soldiers never drown and that roses in the rain
had forgotten the word for bloom and that perverted pollen
blown on sunless seas was eaten by irradiated fish who spawned up
cloudleaf streams and fell onto our dinnerplates

And after it became obvious that the President was doing everything
in his power to make the world safe for nationalism
his brilliant military mind never having realized
that nationalism itself was the idiotic superstition
which would blow up the world

And after it became obvious that the President nevertheless still
carried no matter where he went in the strange rain the little
telegraph key which like a can opener could be used instantly
to open but not to close the hot box of final war if not to
waylay any stray assinine action by any stray assinine second

lieutenant pressing any strange button anywhere far away over an
arctic ocean thus illuminating the world once and for all
And after it became obvious that the law of gravity was still
in effect and that what blows up must come down on everyone
including white citizens
And after it became obvious that the Voice of America was really
the Deaf Ear of America and that the President was unable
to hear the underprivileged natives of the world shouting
No Contamination Without Representation in the strange rain
from which there was no escape- except Peace
And after it became obvious that the word Truth had only a comic
significance to the Atomic Energy Commission while the
President danced madly to mad Admiral Straus waltzes wearing
special atomic earplugs which prevented him from hearing
Albert Schweitzer and nine thousand two hundred and thirtyfive
other scientists telling him about spastic generations and
blind boneless babies in the rain from which there was no
escape- except Peace
And after it became obvious that the President was doing everything
in his power to get thru the next four years without eating
any of the crates of irradiated vegetables wellwishers had
sent him from all over and which were filling the corridors
and antechambers and bedchambers and chamberpots in the
not-so-White House not to mention all the other various
Golf Houses scattered thruout the land of prosperity
And after it became obvious that the Great Soldier had become
the Great Conciliator who had become the Great Compromiser
who had become the Great Fence Sitter who actually had heard
of the Supreme Court's decision to desegregate the land of
the free and had not only heard of it but had actually

read it

And after it became obvious that the President had gone to
Gettysburg fourscore and seven years ago and had given
his Gettysburg Address to the postman and so dedicated
himself to the unfinished task

Then it was that the natives
of the Republic began assembling in the driving rain from which
there was no escape - except Peace

And then it was that no
invitations had to be sent out for the great testimonial dinner
except to politicians whose respected names would lend weight
to the project but who did not come anyway suspecting the whole
thing was a plot to save the world from the clean bomb from
which there was no escape - except Peace

And women who still needed
despair to look truly tragic came looking very beautiful and
very tragic indeed since there was despair to spare

And some men also despaired
and sat down in Bohemia and were too busy to come

But other men came whose only
political action during the past twenty years had been to flush
a protesting toilet and run

And babies came in their
carriages carrying irradiated dolls and holding onto crazy strings
of illuminated weather balloons filled with Nagasaki air

And those who had not left
their TV sets long enough to notice the weather in seven years
now came swimming thru the rain holding their testimonials

And those came who had never marched
in sports car protest parades and those came who had never been
arrested for sailing a protesting Golden Rule in unpacific oceans

And Noah came in his own Ark looking
surprisingly like an outraged Jesus Christ and cruised about
flying his pinion and picking up two of each beast that wanted
to be preserved in the rain which was raining real cats and
dogs and from which there was no escape - except Peace

And peddlers came in lead jockstraps
selling hotdogs and rubber American flags and waving petitions
proclaiming it Unamerican to play golf on the same holy days
that clean bombs were set off on time

And finally after everyone who
was anyone and after everyone who was no one had arrived and after
every soul was seated and waiting for the symbolic mushroom soup
to be served and for the keynote speeches to begin

The President himself came in
Took one look around and said
We Resign

-----Lawrence Ferlinghetti
(5/5/58)

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