

Family Faces A 'Teapot Dome'

It's going to take a Philadelphia lawyer (which reminds me, I'd better hire my own counsel, but quick) to untangle the financial snarl in which members of this family are enmeshed.

Most of the legal complications, which are beginning to make the Teapot Dome scandals of the '20s resemble a Sunday School treasury report, have to do with our kids settling accounts incurred in purchasing Christmas presents. What happens each year is that oftentimes they pool their funds in order to buy one good present. (How else could I have received the latest Beatles' album, "Rubber Souls," which I so dearly wanted?)

Inevitably, a few names get signed to the card before they forked over their share of the expense. However, a decent bookkeeping system, doesn't feel she should repay the money, because B's pre-

sent to A wasn't as expensive as the one A gave to B.

I noticed, too, that I have been used as "security" by those of my kids who wanted to borrow money from Elaine, Miss Moneybags of the family. The "security" being that I would make good the loan because I "owed" them money. Somehow I find it hard to understand how children who bring home rather mediocre arithmetic papers from school, seem to know the penny how much I owe them.

But rather than argue, I've re-paid Elaine, who, incidentally, has memorized the "Jackie Coogan Law," regarding parents mis-appropriating minors' funds, and quotes from it freely.

What is sorely needed in this household is a more efficient bookkeeping system, instead of the process we use now which reads like a chap-

\$18.47 to various parties drawn in crayola with Jan as the payee.

Moreover, why do I for some reason owe Diane and Sharon 83 cents each? Was it their share of the Beatle being waved in my face — bum?

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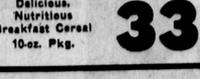
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