

# Real Watergate Heroes Were FBI, Prosecutors

By Jack Anderson and Les Whitten

Still hidden in secret grand jury transcripts and locked prosecutors' files is the dramatic story of how the Watergate case was broken.

We have spent weeks interviewing FBI sources, government prosecutors and defense attorneys to get the details that never came out at the public hearings.

The real heroes of Watergate, we have concluded, were the FBI agents who wouldn't let the White House obstruct their investigation, and the original Watergate prosecutors who painstakingly fitted the jigsaw pieces into a criminal conspiracy.

The three unsung prosecutors — Earl J. Silbert, Seymour Glanzer and Donald Campbell — handed the case on a silver platter to the special prosecutor and his staff of 90.

They had no way of knowing in June, 1972, that President Nixon personally had issued the order to cover up the trail of break-ins, bag jobs, forgeries, frame-ups, rough-ups and buggings that we now know as Watergate.

The FBI agents, therefore, encountered incredible obstacles from the moment they started down the Watergate trail. The key witnesses either lied or withheld vital information.

As an example, the G-men for weeks couldn't identify the two chief culprits, G. Gordon Liddy and E. Howard Hunt, who were known to them only as George Leonard and Ed Warren.

The notorious pair were well known, of course, inside the White House, which paid them blackmail to lay low. The Central Intelligence Agency, which provided the phony identities, also knew them.

Late in the morning of the Watergate arrests, Liddy sought out then-Attorney General Richard G. Kleindienst on the Burning Tree golf course. Thus, the Attorney General met one of the ringleaders whom the FBI was seeking.

On July 6, the CIA delivered

a memo to the acting FBI director, L. Patrick Gray, revealing that Liddy and Hunt had been furnished false identities. Gray locked the memo in his safe, without breathing a word of it to his agents.

Not until November, 1972, did the prosecutors learn the true identities of George Leonard and Ed Warren. And it was April, 1973, before they found out about Liddy's meeting with Kleindienst on the golf course.

Meanwhile, John W. Dean telephoned Gray daily from the White House to find what progress the FBI was making. On several occasions, Dean slipped through a private door in Gray's office to pick up FBI teletypes, transcripts and raw reports on the Watergate investigation.

Dean also prepared White House witnesses for their FBI

interviews and sat in on their questioning. For awhile, he was permitted to attend the prosecutors' interviews.

The prosecutors also gave their superior, Assistant Attorney General Henry E. Petersen, progress reports. He passed on the key developments to Dean and, sometimes, to the President.

James McCord, under threat of a long prison term, was the first to break. When one of the White House conspirators, Jeb Stuart Magruder, received a lofty new appointment, McCord complained bitterly to Dean: "I'm going to prison and Magruder's getting his picture in the papers."

McCord began to spill what

he knew. The prosecutors immediately summoned Liddy, who was tight-lipped as ever about his Watergate role. But they deliberately detained him and engaged him in idle conversation.

This generated alarmed whispers inside the White House that the unpredictable Liddy was talking. A panicky Magruder flew to Bermuda in search of a lawyer who had been recommended. And the President dispatched Dean to Camp David to write a Watergate report.

The cool, calculating Dean suspected the President was setting him up. For if Dean committed the White House cover story to writing, he might make himself the prime scapegoat. He, therefore, put nothing on paper. Instead, he telephoned his lawyer, Thomas Hogan, from Camp David.

Hogan recommended trial lawyer Charles Shaffer, who met Hogan and Dean secretly in an apartment in the Washington suburbs. It took Dean seven hours to summarize the conspiracy. "It has to end," he concluded. "I'm ready to end it."

"Don't run into the machine guns yet," Shaffer advised. He sought out the prosecutors to see what kind of deal he could make. Silbert refused to grant Dean immunity.

Arrangements were made, nevertheless, for Dean to tell his story so the prosecutors could judge what kind of a witness he would make.

There followed a series of secret meetings with the prosecutors, sometimes lasting most of the night, in Shaffer's Rockville, Md., office.

Magruder, meanwhile, tried to lie to his lawyer, James Sharp, who finally told him bluntly: "Jeb, pretty soon you're going to have to tell me the truth."

When Magruder finally told the truth, Sharp advised him: "Jeb, you've got no choice. We should go to the prosecutors and make the best deal we can."

One by one, Silbert hauled the witnesses before the grand jury. Before he was finished, the Watergate case had been cracked.

(1975, United Feature Syndicate, Inc.)