

Time 1-26-70

CRIME

Blotter for the First Year

In his campaign for the presidency, Richard Nixon touched a responsive chord when he promised voters an all-out war to make the nation's streets safe again. He also found a convenient target in the incumbent Attorney General, Ramsey Clark, who Nixon implied was to blame for much of the soaring crime rate. "If we are to restore respect for law in this country," Candidate Nixon told cheering Republicans in 1968, "there is one place we are going to begin. We are going to have a new Attorney General."

That new Attorney General was dour John Mitchell. His message was soon clear: less permissiveness and more punishment in federal law enforcement. Instead of Clark's philosophizing on individual rights, the nation would have aggressive prosecution of offenders. Whereas Clark had felt that his department should be concerned as much with social justice as with law enforcement, Mitchell took a narrower view of his job—simply as a lawyer for the Government. Clark was dismissed by Mitchell's deputy, Richard Kleindienst, as "a sociologist, not an aggressive prosecutor." Said Kleindienst condescendingly: "He would have been better at HEW."

Watchdogs and Guards. After a year in office, how does the new Administration's police blotter look? While Nixon and Mitchell have made some notable efforts against organized crime and drug traffic, they have discovered that crime in the streets is no respecter of party. Violent crimes are more numerous than ever. Nationwide, they jumped 12% during Nixon's first nine months

in office—faster than the 85% rise in eight years under the Democrats. Forcible rape was up 17%, robbery 15%, murder and aggravated assault 9%.

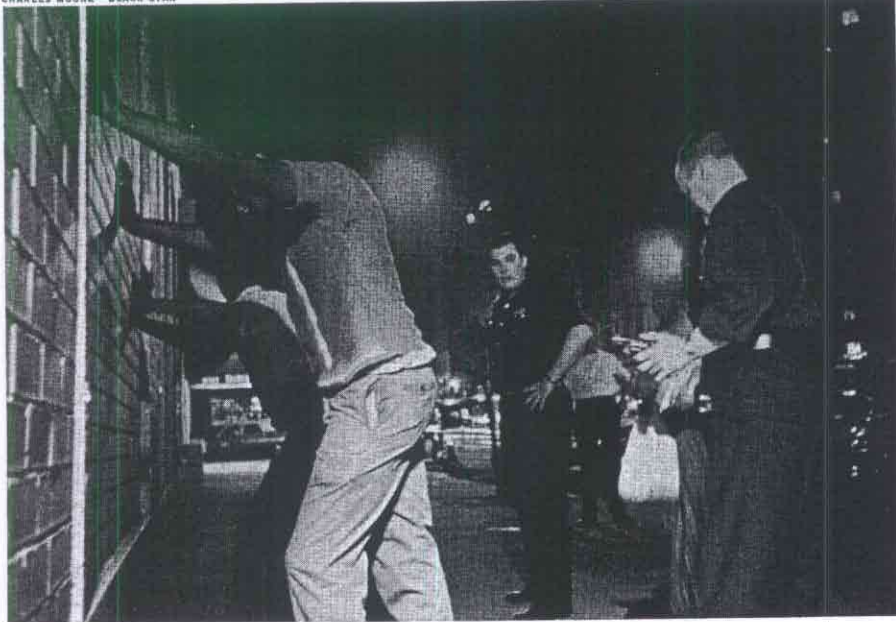
Each day brings more new evidence that the U.S. urban dweller conducts his life as though in an armed camp. In New York last week, a court ruled that a woman tenant could keep a watchdog in her apartment, in violation of her lease, because of "the present circumstances of rampant crime." Schools around the U.S. have been hiring guards to protect students. In Washington, D.C., a 15-year-old junior high school student was shot to death recently in his school by a classmate.

Largely Hyperbole. It is the nation's capital, in fact, that supplies the most embarrassing evidence of the Administration's inability to curtail crime. The federal city is the one area where the Government can put its precepts directly to work. Yet in the first ten months after Nixon took office, serious crimes in the capital rose 29% over the previous year. The Administration has submitted to Congress an ambitious anticrime package for Washington, but its key provision is preventive detention of potentially dangerous defendants, a concept of such dubious constitutionality that even law-and-order conservatives are reluctant to endorse it.

Elsewhere, Mitchell has authorized wider use of wiretaps, ordered federal prosecutors not to concede a case simply because a suspect received inadequate warning against self-incrimination, and allocated \$236 million to finance a new program to help localities fight crime. So far, his tactics have not paid off.

The main reason is that there is very

CHARLES MOORE—BLACK STAR



COPS FRISK HOLD-UP SUSPECTS IN NEW YORK

Living in an armed camp.

little the Federal Government—under Republicans or Democrats—can do about the problem. Police powers belong to the states and they have jealously protected those prerogatives from federal incursions. Nixon's campaign comments were largely hyperbole, of the same ilk as John Kennedy's "missile gap" alarms of 1960. Mitchell admitted as much when he first met Clark at a cocktail party after the election and apologized for the personal campaign attacks. They were made, said Mitchell, only to personalize the crime issue.

Bailing Out. Ramsey Clark accepted the apology as part of politics, but he does not accept continuing law-and-order rhetoric now that Nixon and Mitchell are in office. He believes that loose promises delude people into thinking something is being done about crime while the real troubles, such as unemployment, housing and education, are ignored. "Law enforcement can only deal with the symptoms of crime," Clark says. "It's like bailing out the basement without turning off the water."

Indictments for Two

There was a time when they were familiar figures around official Washington; but neither Dr. Martin Sweig nor Attorney Nathan Voloshen has been seen around much lately. Sweig, administrative assistant to House Speaker John W. McCormack for 24 years, was suspended from his \$36,000 job after he was linked with the shadowy, 71-year-old Voloshen in an investigation of high-level influence peddling. Voloshen went quietly underground.

Last week the pair made an enforced public appearance in New York. Studiously avoiding looking at each other, they appeared before Judge Edward McLean in federal district court. There they pleaded innocent to charges that they had used the Speaker's name and position to defraud the Government.

Special Favors. The charges stem from a seven-month investigation during which more than 100 witnesses were heard and a deposition taken from McCormack himself. Sweig and Voloshen are accused of improperly using the office, telephone, secretarial staff and good will of Speaker McCormack to secure fees, some as high as \$50,000, from people with matters pending before various Government agencies. According to the indictments, Sweig and Voloshen used the power and prestige of McCormack's office to seek reduced sentences for convicted racketeers, to try to persuade the Securities and Exchange Commission to lift the suspension on the trading of Parvin/Dohrmann Co. stock, to influence a tax-evasion case, and to appeal for special favors for a firearms company. In addition, both men are charged with perjuring themselves before the grand jury by denying that they knew several of the people on whose behalf their influence was exerted.

Handed up earlier in the week by a

federal grand jury, the Sweig-Voloshen indictments were a fitting climax to the nine-year career of U.S. Attorney Robert Morgenthau, who left office last week after objecting unsuccessfully to the Nixon Administration's attempt to relieve him of his job. Now the case may become a source of embarrassment to Morgenthau's successor, Republican Whitney North Seymour. Continuing investigations into Voloshen's actions in another matter could involve some prominent members of the G.O.P.

Vindication. Beyond reminding questioners that both men must be presumed innocent unless and until they are convicted, Speaker McCormack has thus far declined comment on the plight of his former assistant and friend. He has also strongly denied knowledge of the pair's activities or any wrongdoing

ARTHUR SHAY—LIFE



ACCUSED FIXER VOLOSHEN
Not seen around much lately.

on his own part, and has received support from Morgenthau, who took care last week to emphasize that the Speaker was not a subject of his recent investigation. Still, McCormack feels that his image has been tarnished and plans to seek vindication through re-election as a Congressman and as Speaker.

His prospects are good. McCormack is assured the support of his South Boston constituents. Nor are his Democratic colleagues in the House likely to deny him the leadership position he has held since 1962. Though the party's liberals, who failed in their attempt to replace him in 1968, still hope to oust him from the speakership, Southerners and old-line Democrats want McCormack to stay. And they, not the Young Turks, constitute a Democratic majority.