

Courts Busy With Watergate

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"The time has come to turn Watergate over to the courts," said President Nixon last month as he appealed to the country to direct its attention to other urgent business.

Without any special prodding from the White House, the Watergate affair has indeed been turned over to the federal and state courts, which seem likely to be preoccupied with the scandal for years to come.

Quite apart from the Senate hearings that resume here later this month, criminal trials and investigations related to Watergate are pending in New York, Washington, Los Angeles, Houston, Tampa, Annapolis and Baltimore.

And despite Mr. Nixon's plea that the American people not harbor a "backward-looking obsession" with Watergate, any or all of the judicial proceedings could lead to new disclosures and keep the controversy before the public.

These are the pending cases:

New York—Former Attorney General John N. Mitchell and former Commerce Secretary Maurice H. Stans are scheduled to go on trial Tuesday on charges that they sought to impede a Securities and Exchange Commission probe in exchange for a secret \$200,000 contribution to the 1972 Nixon campaign by financier Robert L. Vesco, and that they lied to a federal grand jury about the matter.

Harry L. Sears, a former New Jersey Republican state senator who allegedly served as an intermediary in the Vesco affair, is also charged in the case and has been granted a separate, later trial.

Vesco himself, now living in Costa Rica, is being sought as a fugitive and could also be tried later if apprehended by U.S. authorities.

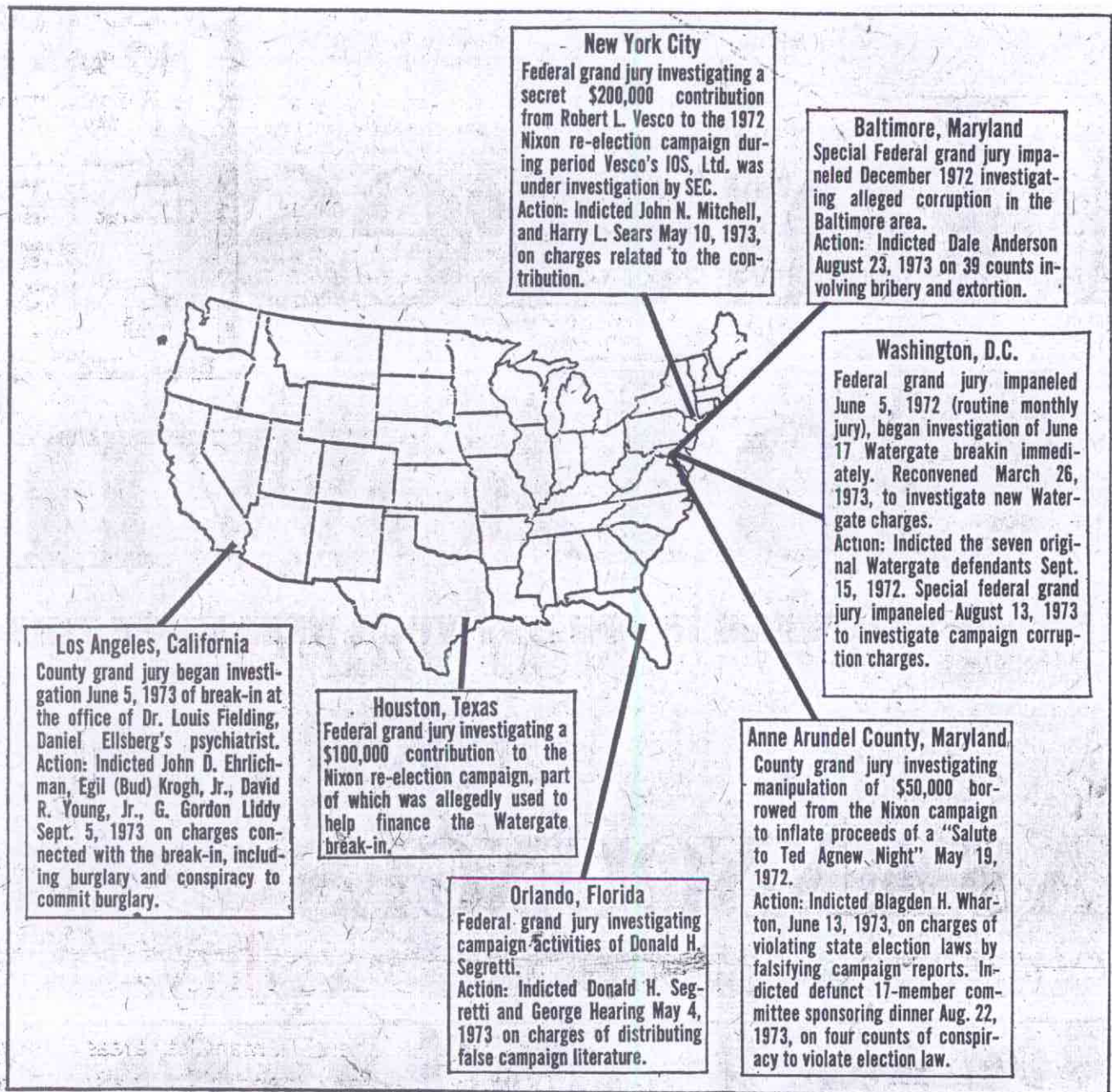
In addition, the grand

Cases

jury that indicted Mitchell, Stans, Sears and Vesco last May has never been dismissed and could hear further evidence connected with the case.

Washington—Under the supervision of Watergate Special Prosecutor Archibald Cox, two federal grand juries are sitting, one focusing on the break-in at Democratic National Committee headquarters at the Watergate on June 17, 1972, the other on Republican "dirty tricks" and financing during the 1972 presidential campaign, the controversy involving the International Telephone and Telegraph Corp. and the burglary by the White House "plumbers" at the Los Angeles office of Daniel Ellsberg's former psychiatrist.

As a result of the renewed investigation that followed the conviction of the original seven Watergate conspirators last January, two former Nixon campaign offi-



Courts in five states and the District of Columbia are working on cases growing out of Watergate

cials have entered guilty pleas, Frederick C. LaRue to a count of conspiracy to obstruct justice and Jeb Stuart Magruder to a count that includes that charge, defrauding the United States and wiretapping.

LaRue and Magruder could, as a result of their guilty pleas, testify for the government at a new, major Watergate trial.

The scope of the new Watergate indictments may depend on whether Cox succeeds in obtaining release of secret tape recordings of the President's conversations in his office and on the telephone.

Mr. Nixon has refused to honor subpoenas for the tapes issued by Cox's grand jury and the Senate Watergate committee, and the Supreme Court is expected to receive the constitutional dispute on the tapes early in its new term.

Also pending in federal court are several civil lawsuits growing out of the Watergate burglary, including those brought by the Democratic National Committee against the Nixon campaign and by Stans against former Democratic National Chairman Lawrence O'Brien.

Several separate indictments could emerge from

the grand jury probing the "dirty tricks" and other matters.

Los Angeles—Former White House domestic affairs chief John D. Ehrlichman and three others, including Watergate conspirator G. Gordon Liddy, were indicted by a Los Angeles County grand jury last week on burglary and conspiracy charges in connection with a break-in two years ago at the office of a psychiatrist who had treated Daniel Ellsberg, the man who disclosed the top-secret Pentagon Papers.

Their trial in state court is expected to focus attention on the Nixon administration's view of what conduct, ordinarily illegal, can be justified in the name of "national security."

Houston—A federal grand jury is investigating a \$100,000 contribution to the Nixon re-election campaign, part of which was allegedly used to finance the Watergate break-in.

Tampa—Donald H. Segretti, a "dirty trickster" in the Nixon campaign, is scheduled for trial in October on two counts of fabricating and distributing a letter designed to undermine the campaigns of three Democratic aspirants in the 1972 Florida presidential primary.

The grand jury in Orlando which indicted Segretti and a lawyer who assisted him is still in session, and Segretti's activities are also under scrutiny in Washington.

Annapolis—Blagden H. Wharton, a Maryland banker, is scheduled for trial later this month in Anne Arundel County Circuit Court on charges of perjury and falsification of campaign reports concerning a fund-raising dinner for Vice President Spiro T. Agnew in May, 1972.

Baltimore—A federal grand jury investigation is continuing into allegations that several present and former Baltimore County officials, possibly including Agnew, accepted bribes and kickbacks from engineering and consulting firms.

Dale Anderson, who succeeded Agnew as county executive in 1966, has already been indicted on charges that include conspiracy, and President Nixon has asked U.S. Attorney Genral Elliot L. Richardson to rule on the constitutionality of a judicial investigation of a sitting Vice President.

Also pending in Washington, and perhaps other cities, are federal investigations of illegal corporate and personal contributions to the Nixon and other presidential campaigns in 1972.

New York investment banker John L. Loeb pleaded no contest and was fined \$3,000 in June for violating the new federal election law by coercing employees to contribute to the effort of Sen. Hubert H. Humphrey (D-Minn.) to win the Democratic presidential nomination last year.