

Through Politics

George's Double Dragon and Watergate

By Carl Oglesby

Arthur St. George is a higher investigative journalist noted for well-informed views of the Atlantic intelligence and espionage network and its components, notably the CIA. As we payroll he is said to have sometimes ornamented. In the November *Harper's*, St. George presented the following theory of Watergate:

"On the morning of June 17, 1972, the watch officer at CIA headquarters in Langley, Virginia, wore director Richard Helms a little after seven to tell him about the arrest of 'the White House crew' for that was how the intelligence professionals had come to think of the agents hired by John Mitchell and John Ehrlichman and the other Nixon aides. Both the CIA and the FBI had long known, of course, about the existence of the Hunt-Liddy team. The CIA had infiltrated it with a confidential informant, just as if Hunt and Liddy had been foreign diplomats, and the informant, an old company informant named Eugenio Martinez, code-named 'Rebando,' who had reported in advance on the Watergate project, was in fact at the moment himself under arrest for his part in the break-in.

"Ah, well," Helms said, "They finally did it." He chatted for a few moments with the young watch officer, who said it was a pity about McCord and some of those guys. "Well, yes," Helms said. "A pity about the President, too, you know. They really blew it. The end thing is, we all think of that's the end of

it" and it may be just the beginning of something worse. If the White House tries to ring me through central don't switch it here, just tell them you reported McCord's arrest already, and I was very surprised."

This column proposed a similar theory, not based on inside information, back in spring (*Phoenix*, April 3), but in connection with McCord, not Martinez. McCord seems to me still much the likelier candidate for the role of Watergate double agent, but instead of repeating what I have already said about this, let me call attention to an article in the Sunday *London Times* of June 3, 1973, by special investigators Lewis Chester, Cal McCrystal and Stephen Arts. "Was James McCord a CIA Double Agent?" Minus my Yankee-Cowboy trappings, this article takes a position on McCord identical to the one I outlined in April: basically, that Nixon's side got trashed at the Watergate by hostile forces he may not even have realized were on the move, and that the leading instrument of this trashing was a double agent, McCord, who set up the bust at the Watergate.

Besides the St. George and *London Times* pieces, further support for this speculation is offered by Miles Copeland, more or less St. George's counterpart on the right, who wrote in the September 14 *National Review* that "with or without explicit instruction from someone in the Agency, McCord took Hunt and Liddy into a trap."
My constant theme is that

Watergate is only secondarily a crime. Primarily, it is a clash in an on-going power struggle at the top of the national pyramid. I stress again that it was the most expert McCord who taped the doors of the Watergate in such a way as to arouse the security guards' suspicions necessarily, that it was McCord who insisted on continuing with the entry even after the Plumbers knew the guards were alerted, that it was McCord who constantly resisted White House attempts at coverup, and that it was McCord's decision to tell what he knew last March that finally blew Watergate into its present epic proportions.

When McCord stepped out of the ranks of the Plumbers to turn against the White House, he switched lawyers. His first, recall, was Gerald Alch of the Boston firm of F. Lee Bailey. Alch made the presumably embarrassing mistake of treating McCord like any other Plumber and appears to have been confused by McCord's refusal to play along with the most elementary cover-up spy games. Still murmuring resentfully, all but caught himself in the coils of presidential evasion, he faded out and was replaced, lo, by the founder and director of the Committee to Investigate Assassinations, Bernard Fensterwald.

Now comes the story that Senator Stuart Symington is interested in St. George's double-dragon theory. All to the good, say I, even if St. George has his own reasons for fingering the

wrong man. It's the idea that counts. But what is the character of Symington's interest? Can one actually hope he wants to get the truth out? Or as is more likely, is he only playing his old role of guarding the CIA at all costs?

In any case, background impediments such as these make it only all the more fascinating to find that St. George's attorney for the appearance before Symington is who but our old buddy Fensterwald himself.

So who is this Fensterwald? What is he? Sherman Skolnick of Chicago, at the recent Washington conference of political assassination watchers convened and sponsored by the Fensterwald Committee, accused Fensterwald of CIA connections. Skolnick does this to lots of people and Fensterwald (who knows that) might have toughed it out with a shrug, but he left the hall and wouldn't come back and so added to the whispering.

If Fensterwald truly does not want such suspicions entertained about himself and his Committee, why does he constantly retel them? Why does he take to such shadowy corners of the Watergate if he does not want to be regarded as a creature of the Watergate shadows? And why would he choose a touchy moment like the weekend of the conference to announce his intention of donating his Committee's massive files on the Kennedy, King, Kennedy, and Wallace shootings to the library of a well-

known CIA mill like Georgetown University, his alma mater, where the conference was held?

One does not necessarily wish to harm the causes of Fensterwald, even if they are, as Skolnick may conceive them, CIA causes. The U.S. espionage community is not a monolith, neither ideologically nor organizationally. But the time for elitism around the questions Fensterwald has associated himself with—the presidential assassinations and Watergate which are of a piece—is well behind us; and Fensterwald's style has been nothing if not elitist. Nothing can save American democracy anymore but democracy. And among many other things, that means that Fensterwald should start telling what he knows.

Enter Specter. Students of the JFK assassination were startled by the late report that Philadelphia attorney Arlen Specter will replace the resentful and despondent Fred Buzhardt as Nixon's chief Watergate counsel. Specter is recognized as the creator of the so-called "single-bullet theory," basic to the lone-assassin verdict reached by the Warren Commission. The problem was that Oswald could have fired no more than three rounds, that one of these definitely went astray, and that Kennedy and Connally had three hits between them. How to get three hits out of two rounds?
Specter's answer was a powerful work of the
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imagination. One of the bullets, he argued, entered Kennedy's back on a downward slant from the sniper's nest on the sixth floor of the Texas Book Depository building behind him, somehow turned upwards from its downward path through Kennedy to exit at the neck, coming out through the knot of his tie, then resuming its downward flight to bore through Connally's arm, then his thigh, and finally come to rest in the stretcher, where it was discovered by one of the cop types at the hospital — showing no weight loss and no distortion, for all its terrible travels.

This single-bullet theory is an inexplicable part of the lone-Oswald theory of the killing. If a bullet cannot do the things Specter said bullet 309 did to Kennedy and Connally, then Oswald could not have been shooting alone.

Specter is the third Warren Commission member to be summoned by Nixon to the Watergate crisis. Like Leon Jaworski from Houston, who helped cover up Oswald's connection to Navy Intelligence, and Gerald Ford from Detroit,



Att. Bernard Fensterwald (left) and client James McCord.

who has been an active defender of the Warren verdict, Specter must be assumed to be knowledgeable about Dallas: to know something about who did it really and how it was covered

up. A Washington friend and correspondent observer, "This clinches it. What's really got Nixon worried is Dallas. The whole wild scuffle over the tapes must be to hide this."

Continuing Mysteries of Hughes. The November *Esquire* generously noted my Watergate speculations but objected to my idea that Hughes is a key figure in the game on the grounds that

there was no proof. Between *Esquire's* presstime announcement, of course, the Ervin committee and the Cox Jaworski staff both discovered the Hughes trail and encountered immediate intense resistance from Hughes Tool (Chester Davis) in their efforts to see where it led.

My delight in predicting a real outcome from theory and a few splinters is irrepressible even though the affair is such a dismal one. The darker side of it is that at the same time the Ervin committee's energy seems to be falling off. We are reminded that no one has even yet succeeded in writing and getting published a full-length political-economic portrait of the Hughes empire. The Senator Brewster committee tried at the end of World War II, but Hughes treated it with contempt. Countless writers tried and failed, either to write their projected books or to get them published. And if the report is true that it was Cox's curiosity about Nixon's Hughes connection that ultimately got him sacked, and not the tapes dispute as such, then one must wonder at the coincidence that has the Ervin investigators, too, like all those who went before them, first stumbling onto the Hughes' path, then starting to falter and lose the thread.