

AND NOW SIRICA

No governmental scandal in U.S. history has been more widely and repeatedly publicized than Watergate. Since 1972, some 60 nonfiction books have been published on all its known aspects.

Almost all the leading characters linked to Watergate have written books on the subject. Only John Mitchell, who accepted a five-figure advance from Simon & Schuster, has failed to deliver his book as of this writing.

One of the most admired Watergate celebrities—and one of the last to break into print with his memoirs—is John J. Sirica, 74, chief judge of the U.S. District Court, whose book "To Set the Record Straight" is scheduled for publication April 24.

The publishing houses of Norton and the New American Library (NAL has the

paperback rights) paid Sirica \$500,000 in advance for his book. He in turn paid Time magazine staffer John Stacks an undisclosed percentage to help with the writing.

In January 1973, when the seven original Watergate defendants were brought under his jurisdiction, Sirica made the most fateful decision of his professional life: Instead of assigning the case to any of the 15 judges in his district, he assigned it to himself. He felt at the time that if he—a Republican appointed to the bench by President Eisenhower in 1957—conducted the case fairly, no one could charge that political partisanship had swayed justice.

Sirica was to learn differently, however, as he quickly became a controversial figure. For example, columnist William F. Buckley Jr. reproved Sirica for his harsh sentences, suggesting that the judge "just keep a

big noose in his courtroom, saving himself and the court of appeals no end of time."

Sirica, however, earned general acclaim for his conduct of the trial and for his ruling—upheld by the appellate courts—that Richard Nixon's concept of Executive Privilege did not absolve him from turning over tape recordings subpoenaed by Special Prosecutor Leon Jaworski.

Judge Sirica, an ex-prizefighter and longtime bachelor, was married in 1952 at age 48 to Lucille Camalier (Jack Dempsey was his best man). The Siricas, churchgoing Roman Catholics, have a son Jack who's a Washington correspondent for the Nashville Tennessean. Sirica has no strong love for Richard Nixon and his ways, is apparently content to let "To Set the Record Straight" do just that on his own long, hectic and memorable life.

Parade 4/8/79

INTELLIGENCE *continued*



JUDGE JOHN J. SIRICA, LATEST TO ENTER WATERGATE BOOK BRIGADE

Wide World