

Capitol
Punishment

*Waterbugs:
Close But
No Cigar*

part 4/29/73
By Art Buchwald

The forgotten men of the Watergate Affair are the four Cuban refugees who were among the seven men convicted of bugging the Democratic headquarters on June 17, 1972. To this day, these men think they were hired to strike a blow against Fidel Castro.

At this very moment, they are probably sitting in their Washington, D.C., jail cells discussing how they have contributed to Castro's downfall.

"Well, amigos, it will just be a matter of time until we will be back home in Havana."

"That is true, dear friends. Even though we have been caught, Castro must be shaking in his boots knowing we could get into the Watergate without his stopping us."

"I spoke to G. Gordon Liddy in the mess hall yesterday and he told me the President is very proud of us for what we did to halt communism from spreading to South America."

"Si, he told me the same thing. He said if it hadn't been for us Cubans, Fidel would now be sleeping in the Watergate hotel."

"I must be dumb, amigos, but I still don't understand what we were doing in the Democratic National Headquarters."

"Stupido! We were putting in a bug so we could listen

in on the Democrats' telephone line to Havana. Mr. Liddy said the Democrats did nothing during the election without first checking with Fidel. It was essential to the Republicans to know what the Democrats were cooking up."

"But who paid us all the money?"

"The Committee for the Re-Election of the President and to Defeat Castro. They had a special espionage fund set aside for this purpose.

"It was in cash because the committee was afraid that if they used checks, Castro would find out about it and abort our revolution."

"But why do we have to keep going in front of the grand jury all the time?"

"You don't know why? Because the Democrats are trying to prove our bugging had nothing to do with Cuba. They say it had to do with the American election."

"Caramba! Everyone knows we wouldn't be in on a bugging if it didn't have to do with Cuba. Those Democrats are real crazy people if they think we would be involved in something like this if it wasn't to get Castro."

"I read in the newspapers where high people in the White House were behind the bugging of the Watergate."

"Why shouldn't they be? They hate Fidel as much as

we do. Mr. Liddy told me the White House got reports on everything that happened at the Watergate. He said once they got enough information, the President was going to launch an attack at the Bay of Pigs."

"But if the White House approved of what we were doing, why are we still in jail?"

"To lull Castro into a false sense of security. He thinks the Justice Department is mad at us for what we did. Once Castro lets his guard down, they will fly us to Southern Florida and let us lead the invasion against the beaches."

"But the judge said we could get up to 40 years in jail."

"Mr. Liddy said not to pay any attention to the judge. He was just mad because he thought the bugging had to do with the elections. Once he finds out it was against Castro, he will give us all medals."

"I don't know why I have a bad feeling about all this. There are too many people involved who weren't Cubans. Maybe there was more to it than we know."

"Imbecile! Do you think the highest officials in the President's own party would lie to Cuban refugees?"

"I guess not. But if I had it to do all over again, I would stay in my hacienda in Miami."