

Staff write/ Jeremiah O'Leary has been a member of The Star-News' Watergate reporting team throughout the 10½ months since police were called to investigate a burglary at Democratic headquarters last June 17. Here is a primer on the progress of the Watergate scandal up to now. This account relies on data that is largely undisputed from official statements, trial records, grand jury and Senate testimony and newspaper reports.

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The Watergate scandal came into being, like a plague of crabgrass, with no particular point of origin and on no specific date.

It was born in an atmosphere of fear mixed with daring at the White House in the pre-election period of 1971-72. Many men were involved some of them at the pinnacle of power, some adventurers, others mere pawns.

But when historians are searching for the beginning of the plot that eroded the credibility of the White House and blackened the Nixon administration, they may well focus on March, 1971.

It was in that month that the Committee for the Re-election of the President opened for business at 1701 Pennsylvania Ave. NW.

THERE HAD been earlier events that figured in the making of the Watergate scandal. But the formal creation of the organization to keep Richard Nixon in the White House provided a symbolic beginning.

Jeb Stuart Magruder, righthand man of Nixon's chief of staff, H.R. (Bob) Haldeman, led an exodus of White House aides across the street to the committee to become titular head of the campaign. Everyone knew, however, that the shots in the effort were being called by Atty. Gen. John N. Mitchell.

At that stage, it was not at all clear that 1972 would produce one of the greatest landslides in American history. The GOP was saddled with an unpopular war, nearly hysterical over the leaking of the Pentagon Papers by Dr. Daniel Ellsberg, and entirely unsure who the Democrats would field.

Nixon's strategists were worried and uncertain. Unable to concentrate on a clear-cut opponent from the ranks of Kennedy, Muskie, McGovern, Jackson, Humphrey and the rest, they launched some scattergun and scatter-brained operations.

MOST OF THIS was done below the surface of public attention. Indeed, much of the story of the Watergate incident and its aftermath is a story of secrecy. Sooner or later, however, nearly all of it was to come out into the open, mainly through the efforts of a federal judge and several newspapers, particularly the Washington Post.

President Nixon has denounced it as a "sordid affair." At a minimum, it has been a succession of dirty tricks, some of which would later be challenged and punished as crimes.

The first of these tricks may have come with the opening of a secret campaign bank account in the name of Nixon's personal lawyer, Herbert Kalmbach, on Jan. 28, 1971, at a Bank of America branch in Newport Beach, Calif. In time, this account grew to half a million dollars or more.

A second maneuver came the following month when an Army captain named Donald Segretti was taken to lunch by a White House

official who sounded him out on a job trying to sabotage the Democrats politically. White House special assistant Charles W. Colson was already trying a few nip-ups to trouble the seeming Democratic front-runner, Senator Edmund Muskie of Maine.

Nixon, by his own account, delegated campaign authority to men whose "zeal exceeded their judgment" while he concentrated on his presidency.

GIVEN CAMPAIGN authority, his men used it. Hugh W. Sloan Jr., who had been treasurer of the 1968 campaign, went over to the campaign committee for a repeat performance. He was a Haldeman man who had worked in the White House with Dwight Chapin handling Nixon's appointments. Nixon's counsel with the collar-ad profile, John Wesley Dean III, did the legal work for chartering the fund-raising organization.

In March, 1971, Kalmbach solicited milk producers for contributions which came to a total of \$417,500 over a period of time. The milk men received from the Agriculture Department an increase in their price subsidy.

Before the campaign committee was a month old, Mitchell, although still running the Justice Department, already controlled another secret fund of between \$350,000 and \$700,000.

In June, 1971, the New York Times and other newspapers began printing the Pentagon Papers despite secrecy labels. Nixon aides John D. Ehrlichman, Haldeman and Colson reacted angrily to the daily sensations and perceived the security breach as a threat to Nixon's candidacy.

Thus it was that the "Plumbers" came into existence. A hastily assembled task force put together in the basement of the Executive Office Building in July, 1971, the "plumbers" were assigned to plug leaks such as the Pentagon Papers. They worked for Ehrlichman.

One of them was E. Howard Hunt Jr., 54, an ex-CIA agent, veteran planner of the Bay of Pigs fiasco, sometime author and dedicated believer in the conspiratorial theory of history, who had been recruited as a consultant by Colson in 1970.

THE CHIEF "plumber" was Egil (Bud) Krogh, Ehrlichman's deputy, and later under-secretary of Transportation. David Young, from Henry A. Kissinger's National Security Council staff, was assigned to the plumbers and even put up a sign "Mr. Young—Plumber" until Kissinger made him take it down.

But the most spectacular figure on the team was G. Gordon Liddy, an ex-FBI agent and former swashbuckling district attorney, who was hired by Ehrlichman after being dropped for insubordination as a special assistant at the Treasury.

The Plumbers began monitoring State Department cables, eavesdropping on other White House staffers and studying ways to muzzle columnist Jack Anderson. Hunt, particularly, began compiling a dossier on Sen. Edward M. Kennedy and the Chappaquiddick drowning of Miss Mary Jo Kopechne. Hunt also began assembling some forged documents implicating the late President John F. Kennedy in the assassination of Vietnamese President Ngo Dinh Diem.

Not long before that, Ellsberg, a former Marine and Rand Corporation think-tanker, had

come forward as the source of the Pentagon Papers. On June 28, Ellsberg was indicted.

On Sept. 3, Hunt and Liddy allegedly broke into the office of Ellsberg's psychiatrist, Dr. Lewis Fielding, in Beverly Hills, Calif. Hunt did not forget to submit vouchers for his \$100-a-day consultant fee and Colson's office approved it.

EHRlichman said he instructed Liddy and Hunt to make a psychological profile of Ellsberg through a Pentagon Papers leak investigation ordered by Nixon himself. But Ehrlichman insisted he did not learn of their burglary of the psychiatrist's office until later. He told the FBI he had advised the two operators not to do it again. Ehrlichman did not report the burglary to the President when he first heard of it.

By this time, Hunt had already gotten in touch with an old acquaintance, Bernard L. Barker, a Cuban-born American, Miami real estate operator and a man who had played a prominent role in recruiting the anti-Castro brigade for the CIA's Bay of Pigs operation.

Meanwhile, on Sept. 1, Chapin and Haldeman aide Gordon Strachan hired Segretti, who was getting out of the Army, and told him to go to work on sabotaging Democratic candidates. Haldeman reportedly okayed Segretti's hiring. He was instructed to recruit other political saboteurs, indulge in tricks against Democratic meetings and travel schedules, and report directly to Chapin in the White House. Chapin, by his own account, got useless written reports as Segretti skittered around the country. He also got 28 phone calls of equal utility.

Kalmbach was paymaster for Segretti. Chapin told Kalmbach to pay Segretti but reportedly never informed the attorney why. The Justice Department said Segretti got more than \$35,000 from March 1, 1971, to March 15, 1972, mainly for reckless attempts to infiltrate the campaign organizations of Muskie and Sen. Henry Jackson of Washington.

THE PLUMBERS and the Segretti affairs were noticeably inept — serious in purpose but clumsy forerunners of the real cloak-and-dagger work that was to come. Taken together, they set the tone for the accelerating campaign.

Liddy shifted to the campaign committee on Dec. 10, 1971, mainly because Haldeman told Mitchell that some White House operations

President Nixon has denounced it as a 'sordid affair'

should be done there. Magruder and Herbert L. Porter, scheduling director at the committee, assigned Liddy to a "security" task, trying to probe plans for demonstrations to disrupt Republican campaigners and ultimately the GOP convention then scheduled to be held in San Diego.

Magruder and Porter said they had nothing illegal in mind but they allotted \$250,000 for Liddy's operations and in time he was paid \$235,000 of that amount by Sloan and Porter. Sloan said he had no idea what Liddy was doing with the money.

Liddy by this time seemed to have evolved a master plan not only to ferret out violent disruptions of GOP functions but also to discover everything the Democrats were to do. Magruder introduced him around the campaign organization as a man with special responsibilities and he had his own budget.

IN SEPTEMBER, 1971, James W. McCord Jr., an ex-CIA agent who was operating a private security firm, got a call from John Caulfield of the White House staff about working on campaign security. He had been recommended by Secret Service Agent Alfred Wong. After talking with McCord, Caulfield said he would send a memo to Dean. Two months later, McCord was hired.

Liddy, on Dec. 10, 1971, was named general counsel of the committee on Dean's recommendation at a salary of \$22,800.

It was at about this time that Mitchell, still attorney general, became involved in the complex affairs of financial wheeler-dealer Robert Vesco. Mitchell telephoned the U.S. Embassy in Switzerland and helped obtain Vesco's release from jail. He would make other calls to the Securities and Exchange Commission on behalf of Vesco's financial adventures. Vesco would later make a \$200,000 contribution to the Nixon campaign — in cash as requested by Stans and confirmed by the President's brother, Edward Nixon.

GOP FUND-RAISING got into high gear in January, 1972, when Stans resigned as secretary of Commerce and took over as campaign finance chairman. Stans proved to be a spectacularly successful fund raiser. The committee's war chest swelled quickly to well beyond \$10 million.

Some of the cash was going into a safe at the committee's offices, and from there a portion would be transferred out for some interesting uses. Liddy had plans for particularly novel uses.

He was then emerging as a principal figure in the Nixon committee's cloak-and-dagger corps. On Jan. 24, 1972, he went to Atty. Gen. Mitchell's office with Magruder and Dean and openly discussed plans for bugging the Democrats. In all, according to Mitchell, there were two such meetings in January and February and a third that took place after Mitchell was out of the Cabinet.

Mitchell has said he vetoed the eavesdropping proposals. But he did nothing as the government's chief law enforcement officer to deter Liddy and Magruder from raising the idea and evidently they did not fear to repeat it in his presence.

COLSON, WHO had hired some people to pose as Gay Liberationists for McGovern, allegedly called Magruder in February to ask when "Liddy's operations" were going to be funded and launched — apparently a reference to the bugging operation, among others. Frederick La Rue, a former White House counsel and subsequently a special assistant at the campaign committee, was in the room when Colson reportedly made the call.

Meanwhile, McCord had so impressed Magruder and Robert C. Odle, the committee's director of administration, that he was made a full-time employe and assigned to liaison work

with law enforcement agencies on possible violence in the campaign.

Mitchell, on March 1, 1972, resigned as attorney general and became head man at the committee in name as well as in fact. After considerable delay, his place at the Justice Department was taken by Richard G. Kleindienst. And Liddy, who bristled at having to take orders from the younger Magruder, changed jobs again to become counsel to the campaign's finance committee.

In March, Hunt stepped up his contacts with the Bay of Pigs veteran, Barker, in Miami. He wrote Barker on White House stationery. He was now looking for men to bug the Watergate and he told Barker, "It's got to be done. My friend Colson wants it. Mitchell wants it."

BARKER AND his confederates, Frank Sturgis, Virgilio Gonzalez and Eugenio Martinez, may or may not have thought Hunt was still speaking with the authority of the CIA. In fact, Hunt had left the CIA in 1970. Hunt sold them on the Watergate bugging conspiracy on the basis of their own hatred for Castro and their concept of love for America. Privately, Hunt was not optimistic. He said later, "I had cased the (Watergate) situation thoroughly and I'm good at it. I appraised the risk as high and the potential return as very low."

But by the spring of 1972, top officials of the campaign committee apparently had ordered a broad political espionage operation and the Liddy-Hunt team was committed to executing it.

Early in April, Sloan paid Liddy \$83,000 on Magruder's authorization. He also gave Liddy \$114,000 in checks to "launder." Four of the checks were drafted on a Mexico City bank and had to be converted into cash totalling \$89,000. Another for \$25,000 also needed "laundering" because it had come into the campaign committee's hands from businessman Dwayne Andreas after the new federal election campaign reporting law went into effect on April 7.

THE MEXICAN drafts had come from wealthy Texans who wanted their identities concealed. The Andreas check was not handed over to Stans until April 11, four days after the new law became applicable. Stans gave the checks to Sloan. Sloan gave them to Liddy. Liddy sent them to Barker in Miami for conversion into cash. The idea, Sloan said, was to break the contributions down to the legal limit on contributions. The Mexican checks were illegal down the line since they came from a corporation.

By May 1, the planned electronic surveillance operations were underway. McCord, who had acquired thousands of dollars worth of telephone bugs and listening devices from a firm in Chicago, first tried to bug the telephones of Gary Hart and Frank Mankiewicz at McGovern headquarters.

He had a committee "plant," take him to McGovern's headquarters twice but was never able to install his devices. McCord also hired an ex-FBI agent, Alfred C. Baldwin III, on May 1 by means of an innocuous notice in the publication of the society of former agents. Baldwin was initially assigned as a bodyguard for Martha Mitchell, who was no longer entitled to FBI protection with her husband out of official life.

But on May 26, McCord and Liddy took Baldwin to Room 419 in the Howard Johnson Motor Lodge, across the street from the Water-

gate, and informed him he was to monitor telephone taps on the Democratic headquarters only a few hundred feet away.

The espionage gang moved from conspiracy to action on Memorial Day weekend. McCord told the grand jury he and seven "Cubans," recruited by Barker, broke into the Democratic headquarters. The span of the illegal intercepts was from May 25 to June 16. McCord handled the electronics, implanting a bug on the phone of Robert Spencer Oliver, executive director of the Democratic state chairmen's organization.

Sturgis and two or three other Cubans acted as lookouts in the dark-hours break-in. Barker and the other Cubans busied themselves going through Democratic files, photographing anything that looked interesting. Hunt was on the scene and called McCord, after a Cuban locksmith opened the front door to the Democratic offices, and told McCord it was safe to go in.

Baldwin, instructed by McCord on how to use the listening equipment on May 26, began monitoring from the room at the Howard Johnson.

LIDDY HAD prepared for the eavesdropping by having some secret stationery printed with the code word "Gemstone" at the top of the page. The conversations intercepted by Baldwin, he said, were typed in the motel room.

Liddy's secretary, Sally Harmony, said she retyped reports on the "Gemstone" paper. Once, on June 6 or 7, Baldwin said, McCord called him from Miami and instructed him to deliver the listening logs to someone at the campaign committee. Baldwin claimed he wrote the name of the recipient on an envelope and took it to the committee's offices, where he left it with an elderly guard. He couldn't remember the name.

On Friday, June 16, 1972, Barker, Sturgis, Gonzalez and Martinez flew in from Miami, rented a car, drove to the Watergate Hotel, registered and sat down to a fine lobster dinner. Their mission was to reenter the Democrats' office, repair or replace a faulty transmitter near the office of Democratic chairman Larry O'Brien, examine and photograph more Democratic campaign files.

With them they brought surgical gloves, rolls of tape, a wig, tear gas pens, a can of Mace, cameras, lock-picking equipment and walkie-talkie radios. Shortly after midnight, they set out.

Baldwin was manning his post, this time in Room 723 from where he could also see what was happening across Virginia Avenue. Hunt and Liddy also were somewhere in the Watergate complex, evidently on watch. McCord, with Barker and his men, jimmed the door to a stairwell, taped the door open and went up to the sixth floor offices of the DNC.

IN THE TWO hours they were there before the conspiracy began to fall apart, they did some work on the bug concealed in a wall panel at O'Brien's office, filled some boxes with documents, photographed other papers. But a private guard at Watergate, 25-year-old Frank Wills, making his post-midnight rounds, had his suspicions aroused by a door of the stairwell that had been taped open.

He called the police and, on the sixth floor, they found their quarry.

As Virginia Avenue filled with other responding police cars, Hunt and Liddy walked casually out of the hotel like respectable men.

Baldwin said Hunt rushed into the room at the Howard Johnson and called a lawyer. "Well, they've had it," Hunt said. Baldwin was told to pack up his gear and get lost.

FEW REALIZED at the time that the Watergate burglary would precipitate a great domestic political crisis. It took police a while to check out McCord. The four Miamians were an initial bafflement to police. But when their rooms in the next-door hotel were searched, police found pocket phone books belonging to Barker and Martinez which bore the initials "W.H." and "H.H." and telephone numbers that proved to be those of Liddy and Hunt. "W.H." meant "White House."

Within 24 hours, the FBI was taking the possessions of the suspects off the hands of the relieved Metropolitan Police. Later in the day on June 17, Sloan saw Liddy at committee headquarters. (Odlé also saw him that day on the third floor, carrying a foot-thick wad of documents to be destroyed in a paper shredder.)

"My boys got caught last night. I made a mistake using someone from here when I told them I would never do it," Liddy reportedly told Sloan. "I'm afraid I'm going to lose my job."

Liddy, as yet unknown to the police or FBI, called the West Coast where Mitchell, Magruder, LaRue and Robert C. Mardian, political coordinator of the campaign committee, were visiting. A number of snap decisions were made. Mitchell ordered Mardian back to Washington immediately to "investigate." The former attorney general, hearing of O'Brien's demand for an FBI probe, denied any connection of the Nixon committee or the GOP with what some were then calling "the Watergate Capers."

MARDIAN, LARUE and Odlé set to work assessing the damage to their cause and allegedly completing the job of erasing the trail between Watergate and the committee. In the White House, Haldeman and Ehrlichman allegedly directed Dean to block any linkage of the burglary with the Executive Mansion.

Magruder called from California to tell his assistant, Robert Reisner, to remove sensitive files from his office. One of these files was a blue folder marked "Gemstone." Reisner later gave this folder to Odlé, who testified he gave it to Magruder. Magruder's orders to Liddy were to destroy any incriminating evidence and then report the arrests to Atty. Gen. Kleindienst.

Kleindienst was playing golf at Burning Tree Country Club, on the 17th hole, when Liddy found him. Kleindienst heard Liddy out and then called his assistant, Henry Petersen, in charge of the criminal division, with orders to treat the suspects like anyone else.

AT THE WHITE House, Dean was already at work, although the public did not know of his role as Nixon's "investigator." The day after the arrests, when Hunt's anonymity was beginning to crumble, someone cleared Hunt's desk. Dean also reportedly ordered Hunt to leave the country.

The Nixon committee announced on June 19 the firing of McCord. And White House press secretary Ronald L. Ziegler that day sneered at the Watergate as a "third-rate burglary attempt." The five suspects were not talking but they needed money and Haldeman's man, Strachan, reportedly became the go-between for funneling cash to them.

A cover-up operation seemed to be in high

gear.

THE HEAT increased on June 20 when O'Brien and the Democratic party slapped a \$1 million damage and civil rights suit against the Nixon committee, later upping the ante to \$6.4 million.

McCord, moving fast while the full dimensions of the conspiracy were unknown, took advantage of his bail freedom and buried a quantity of electronic equipment somewhere in the Virginia countryside. This gear had been intended, he said, for placement in the Miami Beach hotel headquarters of Democratic front-runner McGovern during the July convention.

On June 22, 1972, Nixon told a press conference there was "no involvement whatever by the White House in this matter." But not until four days later—eight days after Hunt's desk and safe had been cleaned out—did Dean hand over the contents to the FBI. Even then, Dean didn't give the agents everything.

On June 28, acting FBI chief L. Patrick Gray met with Dean and Ehrlichman at the White House and was given two of Hunt's folders. "They must never see the light of day," Dean told Gray. "They are political dynamite." Gray said he was never told what the documents were and believed he was being ordered to destroy them. Ehrlichman said he gave no such order, but another source said Ehrlichman told Dean, "You go across the river every day. Why don't you drop them in the river?"

The files were indeed hot stuff. They were Hunt's assembled case on the character of Teddy Kennedy and a series of crude forgeries of State Department cables implicating President John Kennedy in the murder of South Vietnamese President Ngo Dinh Diem. Pat Gray, in the end, took the folders home with him and a week later threw them in the burn bag at the FBI—he said without looking at them.

MEANWHILE, Mitchell fired Liddy on June 28 for refusing to talk to the FBI. On July 1, Mitchell himself quit the campaign. He cited family reasons, an ultimatum from his wife, Martha, to "get out of that dirty business." Clark MacGregor took Mitchell's place.

Sloan resigned from the finance committee and began referring all queries to his attorneys. Hunt, still an obscure figure except to those in the know, got wind that he was going to be abandoned by his leaders. He wrote a three-page letter demanding to contact someone at the White House. His veiled threats produced an unknown sum of thousands for himself from one of the three GOP cash funds. McCord got \$45,000 for salary and expenses.

In August, with the Watergate still not a major national issue, sleuths from the FBI and General Accounting Office were finding that the case was a "caper" no longer. FBI men seeking to interview White House staffers found themselves doing so with Dean sitting in on the questioning. Pat Gray was sending the White House verbatim reports of interrogations and even raw FBI files—82 in all.

THE DEMOCRATS, meanwhile, nominated McGovern and fell into vast confusion of their own over the selection of Sen. Tom Eagleton for vice president. Nixon, as yet untouched by the Watergate scandal, breezed to his renomination. But his campaign treasury was beginning to

develop problems. In Miami, Dade County officials decisively linked Barker with the checks sent to him from the campaign committee to be cashed.

Galvanized by the revelations of Barker's manipulations of committee funds made by State's Attorney Richard E. Gerstein and his investigator Martin Dardis, the federal GAO on Aug. 26 reported 11 "apparent" violations of the campaign law based on the \$114,000 in Barker's account. GAO sent its report to the Justice Department, but not before a delay during which a GAO investigator was sent to the Republican convention to show it to Stans. Stans denounced the GAO report and said any records on funds which came in before April 7 had been destroyed.

Two days after that, Kleindienst and then Nixon issued statements. On Aug. 28, Kleindienst said the FBI investigation would be the most comprehensive since the Kennedy assassination. "No credible fair-minded person is going to be able to say we white-washed or dragged our feet," said the attorney general.

And Nixon, disclosing Dean's investigative role for the first time, said after Dean's probe results were in that he could say "categorically no one on the White House staff, no one in this administration presently employed, was involved in this very bizarre incident." And Nixon went on to say, "What really hurts is if you try to cover up."

ON SEPT. 8, Ziegler told the press, which did not then know that Dean had never submitted a written report to Nixon, that Dean's report would not be released. And the Republicans went fully on the defensive with Stans calling the Watergate allegations "a senseless pack of lies" and MacGregor labeling them "vicious and contemptible."

Liddy and Hunt were haled into court with McCord and the Miamians. On Sept 15, a federal grand jury indicted the seven of them on charges of conspiracy, burglary and wiretapping.

Mitchell, giving a sworn deposition in the civil cases at that time, said that there had never been any discussion in his presence of any form of surveillance of the Democratic National Committee. By the end of September, the newspapers were claiming that Mitchell personally controlled a fund for intelligence activities against the Democrats.

NIXON SPOKE again on Oct. 5, 1972, expressing confidence in the FBI probe. He said it made the 1948 Alger Hiss case look like a Sunday school exercise. But FBI men were increasingly outraged at Dean's interference and were letting it be known that middle-level White House officials were hampering them.

The Washington Post brought Segretti to the surface on Oct. 10, and the campaign committee called the story a "collection of absurdities." But the Segretti story was a major break, indicating that there had been a much broader scope to GOP political sabotage. When Segretti was linked to Chapin, the Republicans attacked the Post for the "false" charge.

Haldeman's connection with the political espionage schemes began to come to light in the press late in October when he was named one of five men with authority to approve secret fund payments. By now, MacGregor was admitting the cash funds existed but claimed no illegality

existed. Ziegler raged that the Haldeman story in the Post was "character assassination and the shoddiest kind of journalism."

As election day approached, Chapin admitted to the FBI he had hired Segretti to disrupt the Democrats. And Chapin quietly resigned during the post-election tumult of Nixon's wipe-out victory over McGovern.

On Dec. 8, 1972, Howard Hunt's wife, Dorothy, was killed in a plane crash in Chicago and in her purse was found \$10,000 in \$100 bills. It turned out she had taken out flight insurance policies totalling \$250,000 before boarding the fatal flight. It also developed — later — that since the June arrests, she had been the courier bringing money and advice to McCord, and to the Miamians. McCord said she told him there would be no more money unless "you fellows plead guilty and keep your mouths shut."

THERE WERE signs, too, as Christmas approached, that the wall of silence in the White House was eroding and that the efforts of Nixon's close advisers to stand aside from the conspiracy were failing.

Eight days into the New Year, Federal Judge John J. Sirica opened the trial of the Watergate Seven. Before a witness took the stand, Hunt pleaded guilty to all six charges against him. Prosecutors Earl J. Silbert, Seymour Glanzer and Donald E. Campbell thereupon sent away Segretti, who was waiting to testify against Hunt.

On Jan. 15, the four Miamians also pleaded guilty, denied they were pressured or paid for doing so and prepared to take their punishment in silence. That left only McCord and Liddy facing trial.

Sirica struggled repeatedly on the bench to obtain the central answers in the conspiracy: Who was a party to it? How high in the administration did it go? Why was it done?

Repeatedly he took over the questioning from the prosecutors, who stuck doggedly to the burglary and put aside the larger question of the scope of the whole political espionage apparatus.

ON JAN. 30, the jury of eight women and four men deliberated for 90 minutes and found Liddy and McCord guilty.

In the interval before sentencing, the campaign committee sent back to Vesco his \$200,000 contribution and it was learned that depositions had definitely linked the contribution to Mitchell, Stans and Edward Nixon. And the Senate voted 70 to 0 to set up a seven-member Select Committee to investigate not only Watergate, but also the entire spectrum of espionage-sabotage operations in the 1972 campaign.

Meanwhile, Pat Gray appeared before the Senate Judiciary Committee on Feb. 28 for hearings on his nomination to become permanent director of the FBI. Several senators closed in on Gray and he handed over FBI records to the Senate as readily as he had done for John Dean.

The documents he produced showed that Kalmbach had told FBI men he and Chapin had arranged for the pay of Segretti; that the campaign committee had impeded the FBI investigators; that Dean insisted on monitoring all White House interviews by FBI agents; that Liddy and Hunt had traveled the country looking for ex-CIA men to use in their sabotage

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plans, and that Gray had handed Dean 82 raw files on the case.

But the blockbuster came when Gray acknowledged that Dean had probably lied to FBI agents who came around asking on June 19 whether Hunt had an office at the White House. Dean had already had Hunt's office cleaned out, but he told the FBI men he would have to check and see if Hunt had an office there.

THE SENATORS immediately asked for Dean to testify but the President's lawyer refused on the grounds of "executive privilege." While the Senate and the President engaged in a public duel of words over the constitutional issue of their privileges and powers, Colson, denying prior knowledge of the Watergate conspiracy, resigned from the White House staff.

On the financial front, the Nixon committee suffered another setback when the GAO charged four new violations of the election law and referred them to the Justice Department. Vesco's \$200,000, the GAO declared, was delivered to the committee after the new disclosure law went into effect, and thus should have been reported.

On March 19, James McCord privately reached a decision that started tumbling the whole structure of deception and silence, and set off a panic in the White House. On that day, McCord handed his probation officer a letter to deliver to Judge Sirica before he sentenced the Watergate Seven on March 23.

The letter said McCord wanted a private interview with the judge because he lacked confidence in government representatives, including the FBI. McCord told Sirica that others had been involved in the bugging operation and that pressure had been used on the seven defendants to get them to plead guilty and to remain silent.

Sirica saw in McCord's letter an opportunity to take action that might bring out the whole story. Sirica opened his court on sentencing day and first read McCord's letter aloud. He said he

would meet with McCord later, but would feel free to pass on to a grand jury and the Senate Select Committee everything that McCord told him.

Then he proceeded to sentence the others. Liddy got 6 to 20 years in jail and \$40,000 in fines from the judge whose courthouse nickname is "Maximum Sentence" Sirica. Liddy, resolutely keeping his secrets, to this day is the one conspirator who has not talked, and he is not expected to do so.

THE FOUR Miami men and Hunt got "provisional" sentences — subject to change later — of the maximum terms allowed by the law. For Hunt, that was 35 years and a \$40,000 fine; for the Miamians, it was 40 years and \$50,000. Sirica in effect told Hunt and the Miamians that if they decided to cooperate with the grand jury and the Senate, he would consider more lenient sentences.

Meanwhile, Dean also had reached some decisions and reportedly told Nixon in mid-March that to save the presidency, Haldeman and Ehrlichman would have to tell all and face the consequences.

Nixon decided on March 21 to launch a new probe of the Watergate conspiracy upon learning of new and serious developments, but the public did not learn of this development until

April 17. McCord, meantime, having had his sentence delayed with his sensational letter to Sirica, went to Capitol Hill on March 23 and 24 to confer privately with Samuel Dash, counsel to the Select Committee.

Leaks began to spring in the Senate committee's investigation. The major disclosure was that McCord told Dash that he understood that Dean and Magruder had prior knowledge of the bugging, that perjury had been committed and that White House higher-ups were indeed involved.

THESE DEVELOPMENTS caused prosecutors Silbert and Glanzer to reconvene the grand jury while the papers were full of the newly re-

ported involvement of Dean and Magruder. Nixon, at Camp David, made a point of calling Dean and expressing full confidence in him.

But the dam was beginning to crumble. Hunt went before the grand jury and on March 28, granted immunity by Sirica, he began to spill. Martha Mitchell rallied to her beleaguered husband with a call to a newspaper, saying: "I fear for my husband. They are not going to pin anything on him. I won't let them and I don't give a damn who gets hurt."

The very next day, McCord did implicate Mitchell, reportedly telling the Senate committee that he understood that Mitchell personally approved the bugging. McCord also told of a White House offer of executive clemency to the Watergate Seven if they would plead guilty and keep quiet.

On March 30, Liddy was offered immunity by Sirica to testify before the grand jury and refused it with the same resolve he had demonstrated all along. The Miami group, given the immunity offer, accepted it and began talking.

SIRICA SLAMMED Liddy with 8 to 18 months more in jail for contempt in refusing to talk to the grand jury. On April 3, Colson, now a lawyer in private practice here, voluntarily took a lie detector test. His attorney said he passed it. Haldeman began to come under fire anew and Sen. Lowell P. Weicker, R-Conn., demanded Haldeman's resignation. But Sen. Sam Erwin, D-N.C., and Howard Baker, R-Tenn., leaders of the Select Committee, said the panel had received no information linking Haldeman to the Watergate case.

On April 5, Nixon withdrew the nomination of Pat Gray.

It was in early April that Nixon's White House aides broke their solid front and began scrambling for ways to survive the clamor for a house-cleaning. Dean, feeling betrayed and exposed, began feeling out the prosecutors for immunity. David Young resigned.

Nixon, meanwhile, went to California to attend a Hollywood festival for film director John Ford and to meet with President Thieu of South Vietnam. While there, the White House sent the Secret Service to bring Federal Judge William Matthew Byrne Jr. down to San Clemente in

stealth to offer him the FBI job. Byrne, in the midst of the trial of Ellsberg, conferred for two hours with Ehrlichman and met Nixon briefly. Defense lawyers, when they learned of this through The Star-News, construed the offer as a bribe.

ON APRIL 13, Ehrlichman reportedly confronted Dean with the charge that he had advance knowledge of the bugging plans dreamed up in the mind of Liddy. Next day, Dean accused Haldeman, Ehrlichman and Magruder of forcing the White House cover-up. Prosecutor Silbert thereupon called in Magruder and Magruder reportedly told all he knew.

The prosecutors, hearing Magruder implicate Dean, Mitchell and himself for having advance knowledge of the Watergate bugging plans, decided the President should be told. Kleindienst and Peterson told Nixon on Sunday, April 15, whereupon Kleindienst disqualified himself from any part in the investigation because it involved people close to him. Mitchell was called to the White House and got the news from Ehrlichman.

At 4:30 p.m., April 17, Nixon announced to the press that there had been "major developments" and that he had launched his own investigation of the Watergate case on March 21. The President relented on the executive privilege he had claimed for his assistants, said that no immunity would be granted and that anyone indicted would be suspended.

MAGRUDER TOLD the prosecutors on April 19 he was ready to testify he had helped plan the Watergate bugging with Dean and Mitchell. Dean relayed word to newspapers that he would not be a scapegoat.

The White House abandoned all pretense of support for Dean.

Mitchell's testimony to the grand jury the next day was that he had been at three meetings in early 1972 where bugging was discussed, but that he had never approved. Nixon, meanwhile, met with his shaken Cabinet, a rare session in itself, and assured them he would get to the bottom of the scandal. Then he flew off to Key Biscayne, pointedly leaving Ehrlichman and Haldeman behind.

On Easter Sunday, Nixon phoned his embat-

ted aides, Haldeman, Ehrlichman and Dean, to offer "Happy Easter" greetings. But there was little for any of them to be happy about. Jack Anderson was printing the grand jury testimony as fast as it was given. The whole process of government seemed to be coming to a halt because of the crisis at the top.

Magruder resigned as assistant to the secretary of Commerce on April 26 and the next day Nixon requested the resignation of Pat Gray and got it. William Ruckelshaus was named acting FBI director.

In California, on April 27, Judge Byrne heard for the first time from the Justice Department that the White House "Plumbers" had burglarized the office of Ellsberg's psychiatrist. Remembering Nixon's offer to him of the FBI job earlier in the month, Byrne's reaction to this intelligence can only be imagined. But he did not divulge the offer.

On Saturday, April 28, Nixon went back up onto the mountain and made his final decisions. He had ignored or had been kept ignorant of what his men had done but he could ignore it no longer. After a day alone, he summoned a speechwriter and his secretary, Rosemary Woods.

It was cool and tranquil at Camp David. In that atmosphere, away from the turbulence in Washington, Nixon made up his mind.

RON ZIEGLER announced the decisions for the President on Monday, April 30. Dean was fired, evidently without regret. Haldeman and Ehrlichman, Nixon's right and left hands, were out but with regrets. Kleindienst's resignation was accepted since he could hardly prosecute Mitchell whose protege he was.

That night, Nixon went on national radio and TV and tried to explain it all. He was a shaken man, near tears. He could not bring himself to explain any of it. He accepted the responsibility but not the blame.

He made a plea for sympathy, as a man who sees his place in history undermined by foolish, dotting subordinates. He said he had turned over the Watergate matter to subordinates again, so that he could resume his "larger duties." But he did not seem to be a man convinced that the worst was over.