

abetting the enemy." Haldeman became enamored of Nixon as a result of his handling of the Alger Hiss case, and as early as 1951 offered his services and loyalty to Nixon, working in his campaigns throughout the 1950s and 1960s. Sally Quinn of *The Washington Post* quotes a former White House intimate as describing Haldeman as "a dangerous man." Indeed, Haldeman's attitude is not much less extreme than that of convicted Watergate burglar Bernard Barker, who said he happily joined the espionage expedition because "I saw the Communists in Cuba doing what McGovern is suggesting be done in this country," or of that other Watergate burglar Frank Sturgis who, his attorney explained, was motivated by the belief that "some people who are Communists have infiltrated the Democratic Party to carry on their evil design."

And then there is the ultimate of this group, G. Gordon Liddy, reputedly the "brains" of the Watergate gang, who was so rabid a defender of the National Rifle Association that even his colleagues at the U.S. Treasury Department were afraid of him and induced the White House to hire him. There he helped cook up the entire espionage apparatus and at one point went to a gun dealer in Virginia, flashed his White House card, and said he was there to buy enough guns to outfit the White House staff. Robert Mardian, who was political coordinator of the Committee for the Re-election of the President (CREEP), had earlier held a top post in the Justice Department where he launched frantic investigations into the activities of alleged "subversives" and "radicals" and led the Justice Department's crackdown on newspapers that published portions of the Pentagon Papers. Mardian has been accused of helping to destroy some of the papers at CREEP that showed its espionage activities. In other words, these guys are hard-line, ideological nuts. It's normal for most citizens to hesitate before assuming that Nixon himself is one of the nuts, but it is also understandable that the public is quickly swinging toward that belief. According to a Harris poll released April 29, just about half those with an opinion were convinced that "President Nixon personally knew about the attempt" to commit espionage against the Democrats.

The assumption is plausible for a number of reasons. First of all, the three people closest to Nixon in recent years have been H. R. Haldeman, John Ehrlichman and John Mitchell, former Attorney General and head of CREEP, which was headquarters for the espionage effort. If those three knew about the espionage activities, it is reasonable to assume—considering their loyalty to Nixon—that he knew of these things.

Did they know? James W. McCord, one of the convicted Watergate burglars, named four top White House personnel as having had advance knowledge of the burglary. One of the four was Mitchell; the other three were present or former members of Haldeman's staff. Most of the top jobs at CREEP were held by Haldeman appointees. Dwight L. Chapin, Nixon's appointments secretary and a key assistant to Haldeman, hired political saboteur Donald Segretti, who received money from, among others, the President's personal attorney, Herbert Kalmbach. Gordon Strachan, Haldeman's former top political aide, has testified before the grand jury that

Haldeman approved the hiring of Segretti. Ehrlichman has been fingered by White House colleagues as having joined Haldeman in attempting to mislead Watergate investigators; Ehrlichman has been identified as the person who persuaded former FBI acting director, Patrick Gray, to destroy several files relating to the investigation. Ehrlichman was the one who approved the hiring of convicted Watergate conspirator E. Howard Hunt, Jr., for a White House position, and of outfitting him with a direct-line telephone—the only one in the White House—for communicating with his espionage network.

However, the fellow who initiated the hiring of Hunt was Charles W. Colson, who reported directly to Haldeman and Nixon. Among other jobs assigned to Hunt were (1) the hiring of spies to put together a dossier on Sen. Edward Kennedy and (2) the planting of a spurious State Department document with *Life* to "prove" that President Kennedy had had complicity in the murder of Diem. Acting under instructions from Ehrlichman to get personal data on Pentagon Papers defendant Daniel Ellsberg, Hunt and Liddy burglarized the offices of Ellsberg's psychiatrist. Hunt must have found his association with Colson highly congenial, for Colson enjoys that sort of horseplay. He is allegedly the fellow who wrote the bogus advertisement supporting the bombing of Haiphong harbor; the ad pretended to be the work of a citizens' group but actually was paid for by CREEP. A former official with the re-election committee said he thought Haldeman had cleared the ad because "everything we did was cleared through Haldeman first." Colson was also the behind-the-scenes coordinator of the Rev. Carl McIntire's "win the war" rallies in Washington. As for John Mitchell, after taking an oath that he had never heard of any bugging plans before they were carried out, he now concedes that he had not told the truth and that in fact he had heard of such plans several times. He also admits knowing that a great deal of money was paid to the convicted burglars after they were caught, but of course he denies that this was done to keep them quiet. Jeb Stuart Magruder, a Haldeman man, has allegedly told a grand jury that Mitchell and White House attorney John Dean III, a Mitchell loyalist, had advance knowledge of the espionage and bugging.

The above can be considered only the sketchiest outline of the profound involvement of Nixon's top advisers and assistants in the political espionage of 1972. But even with those clues alone, and bearing in mind the kind of total loyalty these fellows have to Nixon, it is difficult, if not impossible, to believe that each and all of them hid what was going on from their esteemed leader.

Columnist Jack Anderson on March 29 reported, "Our own White House sources say the President certainly did not authorize anyone to send a burglary-bugging team into the Democratic lair. But they acknowledge that he approved the overall espionage-sabotage operation. . . ." Anderson's sources have seldom been wrong in their Watergate revelations.

In any event, the notion that Nixon was involved, or at least had knowledge of what his gang was up to, is further supported by history. Sabotage has been his way of political life. He moved into Congress in 1946 not by straightforwardly defeating but by sabotaging Jerry