

Chicago Is Having Its Own Watergate

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Reuter

Part 4/20/74



JAMES THOMPSON
... Republican U.S. attorney

CHICAGO, April 18—It is being called the Chicago Watergate. Here, as in Washington, political party members and former aides are being indicted.

But, in Chicago, it is the Democrats, not Republicans, who are facing charges and the aides worked not for President Nixon but for Mayor Richard Daley, one of the most powerful Democrats in the United States.

Prosecutor James Thompson—a Republican who is expected to oppose Daley in the election for mayor next year — has announced indictments against a former state governor, an alderman and two former aldermen, two former top aides to the mayor and other Daley stalwarts.

Members of the U.S. attorney's office, headed by Thompson, said more indictments can be expected as the investigation into official corruption continues.

Daley maintains the affair is a vendetta. Thompson dismisses such claims as "political bunk."

No one has accused the 71-year-old mayor of any wrongdoing, but the Chicago Tribune said in an editorial: "The filing of Democratic kingpins into the federal dock has become a procession. . . . The list is long and getting longer."

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RICHARD DALEY
... Democratic mayor

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It is also getting nearer to the center of power."

The Chicago Daily News said: "The plain fact is that the odor of corruption is far too strong and enduring to permit any conclusion that there is an uncommon lot of it around, and that the corruption, or a lot of it, originates in the political system administered by the local Democratic organization."

The latest in the line of accused is Matthew Danaher, 47, Daley's former administrative assistant and a long-time friend and neighbor of the mayor.

Danaher is charged with conspiring to defraud the U.S. government, to receive illegal

profits and to evade income tax payments in connection with an alleged \$400,000 bribery scheme concerning building projects.

He is now a circuit court clerk but the charges relate to when Danaher was working for the mayor.

Other prominent Democrats who have been United States Attorney include:

Former Illinois Governor Otto Kerner and Theodore Isaacs, a key member of the Kerner administration, convicted on charges of tax evasion, mail fraud and bribery in connection with an alleged racecourse scandal; and Edward Barrett, former county clerk, convicted on charges of tax evasion in connection with

alleged illegal payments on voting machine contracts.

Earl Bush, Daley's former press aide, awaiting trial on charges of mail fraud.

Alderman Paul Wigoda, awaiting trial on charges of extortion and tax evasion.

Former Alderman Joseph Jambrone, found guilty of tax evasion. The charges were dismissed when he died while appealing against his conviction.

Former Alderman Fred Hubbard, who pleaded guilty to a charge of embezzling funds from a jobs program.

Democratic district committeeman Frank Kuta, awaiting trial on bribery charges.

John Clarke, a City Hall investigator, who has pleaded

guilty to charges of tax evasion and obstructing justice.

The ability of Daley to avoid scandal within his Democratic machine, which can guarantee a big vote-turn out for a Daley candidate. Remained untarnished until Thompson became United States Attorney here.

Thompson maintains he has a 100 per cent conviction rate on political corruption.

Many people believe he will leave his office next year in an attempt to become mayor. Thompson, who, at 37, is one of the city's most eligible bachelors, refuses to say he will challenge Daley, but he does not deny it.

Daley has not said he will seek re-election, but he is expected to seek an unprece-

ded sixth four-year term.

Thompson addresses numerous meetings and appears to be already campaigning. Comedians in city night clubs can already win a laugh with such jokes as: "Big Jim is in favor of housing rezoning. He wants all Democrats in one big house, called jail."

Thompson, whose crusade against official corruption has also led to 40 policemen being convicted on a variety of charges, points out his office has obtained indictments against republicans as well as democrats, but in a city controlled by Democrats, the big names have been democrats.

Daley said recently that to call the series of indictments a vendetta would be putting it mildly. Asked at a press con-

ference if he felt Thompson was trying to smear him and if he believed Thompson was already running for mayor, Daley replied: "Undoubtedly."

Thompson heatedly denied that he was waging a vendetta. "It is political bunk," he said. "It is simply not true. I don't intend to spend my time in office sitting on my hands and ignoring corruption."

Referring to Daley's advice to reporters in the past to remember that an indictment is not a conviction, Thompson said: "What always amazes me is that the mayor sometimes seems to forget that a conviction is a conviction. He's always willing to comment after an indictment, but never after a conviction."

But the smart money at the

moment, Thompson admits, is on Daley winning a sixth term as mayor. Many people in Chicago say that under Daley the city works.