

Room G308 of the New Senate Office Building is a stuffy, brown-colored, marble-sided auditorium with a seating capacity of 450. In this dreary hall, scores of high-school tour groups have assembled to hear their home-state senators deliver homilies on the virtues of the American System, and here the Senate Staff Club has met for private viewings of second-run movies.

Nowadays, a policeman guards the door to G308, and it is worth your life to try to penetrate the auditorium without the proper credentials or a suitably accredited escort, for the room now houses the staff of the Select Committee on Presidential Campaign Activities, not to mention one of the largest collections of explosive political documents in the world.

Most of the auditorium's padded seats have been ripped out and replaced by a shantytown of tiny cubicles, partitioned off, one from the other, by lengths of greenish, corrugated fiberglass and topped off with white acoustic tile and fluorescent lights. Fenced in by these cubicles are nearly 100 assistant counsels, investigators, researchers and secretaries. The fences are not good enough to make for particularly good neighbors.

The 60-odd staffers for the Committee's Democratic Majority, most of whom reside at the center of the clerical slum, long ago ceased to trust the 25-odd Republican Minority staffers, most of whom work at its fringes or in offices off the main hall. The Minority staffers lose no love on the Majority staffers. Many of the Majority staffers, what is more, can no longer stand the sight of each other, and everybody withholds information from everybody else for fear of leaks. It is this complex, intriguing underworld which feeds interviews, documents, witnesses and questions to the Committee's two main counsels and seven senators—and does so with an ever-decreasing faith that the senators can put two and two together.

But who are these people and where did they come from? The genesis of the Committee staff was only slightly less convoluted than the casting of *Gone With the Wind*, and a good deal more Southern. In the beginning, the Senate Democratic leadership called upon a reluctant Sam Ervin to serve as the chairman of the Select Committee on Presidential Campaign Activities, and the Republican leadership called on a far-less-reluctant Howard Baker to be the Committee's vice-chairman.

Ervin immediately faced the prospect of recruiting the Majority staff, but he was not without advice. Ervin had a young aide named Rufus Edmisten, a bright, good-natured North Carolina farmer's son who had earned his law degree by going to night classes at George Washington University. Edmisten had a friend named Arthur S. Miller, a professor of law at George Washington. Miller had a friend named Sam Dash, a professor of law at Georgetown University. Miller wanted Sam Dash to become the Committee's chief counsel. The story goes that Miller told Edmisten that if Sam Dash got the job, Dash would appoint Edmisten to be the deputy chief counsel. So Edmisten went to Ervin and convinced him to rule out anyone who had applied for the post, which left the way open for Dash. Dash had appeared many times before Ervin's subcommittee on Constitutional Rights as an "expert witness" on electronic eavesdropping, and since Ervin expected that the Watergate Committee would deal mainly with bugging attempts, Dash's expertise made him a logical choice for chief counsel. Once

Senators, Sandbaggers and Soap Operas

By TIMOTHY CROUSE

appointed, Dash immediately hired Rufus Edmisten as his deputy chief counsel and Arthur S. Miller as his chief consultant.

Edmisten, who was a good ole boy, soon went out and hired about 35 other North Carolina good ole boys, ranging from assistant counsels to newspaper-clippers, for the Majority staff. If the good ole boys had a distinguishing trait, it turned out to be a certain benign incompetence.

Sam Dash recruited the key majority counsels—Terry Lenzner, David Dorsen and James Hamilton, about whom more later. These counsels went on to hire staffers of their own, who ran the gamut from brilliant to disastrous. (An example of a disaster was the investigator who managed to provoke a lawsuit from Bebe Rebozo last spring by letting an ABC camera crew follow him into Rebozo's bank. "I'd tell you more about this guy," says a Committee staffer, "but he's so bad that he might single-handedly put the Committee out of business with one of his fuck-ups, and I'd feel badly if I predicted it ahead of time.")

In the meantime, the Republican Minority had been setting up its own shop. Howard Baker passed over the White House's list of suggestions for chief minority counsel to choose Fred Thompson, a 30-year-old Tennessee lawyer who had managed a crucial area of Baker's 1972 senatorial campaign. Then Baker and Thompson hired a tall, silver-haired, sharkskin-suited ex-FBI agent named Donald Sanders as their key assistant minority counsel. Sanders, says a Committee staffer, was "everything an FBI agent should be—fair, methodical, pretty bright, and he follows orders. Altogether, he's a lot more competent than most of the people on the Majority staff." Thompson hired the remainder of the Minority staff and his choices did not, for the most part, give Sanders much competition in the field of competence.

Once the staffs were hired, they quickly fell into a working procedure. The Majority staff always took the initiative, finding all the witnesses, furnishing all the evidence, and building up the whole case concerning the Watergate bugging and the subsequent White House cover-up. The Minority staff did no more than monitor the Majority staff, keeping tabs on each new development and trying to check out the Majority's case whenever possible. Or, as Rufus Edmisten put it, "The Majority laid out the buffet and the Minority tried to pick at it." Each witness was supposed to be interviewed by a team of Majority and Minority staffers, and then the staffers were supposed to write a summary of the interview. This system gradually fell apart. "The Minority people are spread too thin," says a staffer, "and the Majority

people just don't tell them about the interviews that the Majority doesn't want them to come to. The Minority people didn't have anyone at the interview where Hunt implicated Colson, and they've never met Bebe Rebozo or any of Hughes' people. They seem to be getting a little concerned, because they've assigned a couple of research assistants to shadow some of the Majority staffers and see what they're up to."

Some of the big witnesses, like John Dean, were questioned by all the senators in executive session. "But we've been trying to avoid that," says a staffer. "Because if you get into an executive session, all the senators are there, and it means that all the testimony will be leaked the next day."

Aside from the Majority personnel hired by Dash and Edmisten, and the Minority personnel hired by Thompson, there was yet another category of staffers: Each senator was entitled to hire a man of his own. Although most of these appointees were technically attached to the Committee as assistant counsels, they were really meant to serve as senatorial squires. In theory, at least, they were supposed to provide an independent channel of information so that the senators did not have to rely solely on the summaries of staff interviews. In point of fact, however, Lowell Weicker was the only senator who ever bothered to do much independent preparation. Weicker's man on the Committee was a short, high-strung assistant counsel named Bill Shure who managed to alienate almost everybody when he walked away from questioning a witness on nationwide TV and proudly announced that the exposure had been worth \$150,000 to his law firm in New Haven. Nevertheless, Shure was widely considered to be one of the few competent and perceptive members of the Minority staff.

But Weicker had more going for him than Bill Shure. At the outset of the hearings, he set up his own investigative team, which at one time included five men and which came to be known as the Third Front. Weicker's investigators put in 16-hour days, and by April they had found enough evidence so that Weicker could confidently drop two bombs. First he called a press conference and implied that his fellow senators were focusing on pawns like Liddy and McCord and overlooking bigger fish like Mitchell and Haldeman—which was precisely what the White House hoped the senators would do. At another press conference, Weicker called for Haldeman's resignation, since he had been the man responsible for supervising the people who planned and covered up the Watergate break-in. Weicker's fellow senators immediately blasted him for speaking out of turn, but Weicker had achieved his goal, which was to

up the ante of the investigation.

It was Weicker's people who first contacted John Dean and decided he would make a viable witness. Weicker's people turned up the Enemies List; they unearthed the tape of the phone conversation in which John Ehrlichman described Patrick Gray as "twisting slowly, slowly in the wind"; they brought to light the domestic spying activities of the Justice Department's Internal Security Division. They discovered the existence of the memo on which Bob Haldeman had penciled "Good" and "Great" next to a sentence predicting that demonstrators at a Nixon rally would be "violent" and "obscene." Having found the memo in the Committee's files, they insisted that Weicker be given a copy, and Weicker sprung the memo on Haldeman before Sam Dash had a chance to do so. Since Dash's staff had prepared a detailed line of questioning on the memo, they were furious when Weicker stole their thunder. In fact, some Majority staffers dispute Weicker's claim to all these scoops, saying that the Majority always got there before Weicker. But no one disputes the fact that Weicker does his homework.

"Weicker does what you and I would hope would be the bare minimum for any senator on that Committee," says a Majority staffer, "and he's the only one." Ervin never looks at a summary. "The Senator says that when he was a judge, he always listened to the witness first, before making up his mind and he wants to operate the same way in the hearings," says Rufus Edmisten, who is Ervin's man on the Committee. But Ervin sometimes displays an almost mystical knack for asking the right questions. "Ervin somehow picks up the thread of Dash's questions and takes the moralistic part and drives it home," says a Majority staffer. "I can never understand how he does it, because he doesn't talk that much to Dash, and Rufus doesn't help him that much, either."

Talmadge's aide is a young mustachioed Atlanta lawyer named Barry Schochet, who arrives at the office around seven o'clock every morning to help the senator prepare his questions. Schochet sometimes goes to Majority staffers to ask for questions, and they give him questions they think Sam Dash won't get around to using.

Inouye also confers every day with his aide, an amiable, middle-aged Humphrey Democrat named Eiler Ravenholt. "Ravenholt prepares very narrowly, sticking to a couple of issues, which is smart," says a staffer. "I think he's a bad choice for Inouye, though, because Inouye could say pretty flamboyant things, and I think we need that. I think if he had a more dynamic guy, someone who was willing to work harder, we'd be in much better shape. Inouye could become another Weicker. He could become the Fourth Front. But that just ain't happening."

Montoya's questioning, of course, has made him the butt of a thousand jokes. Ervin wanted him on the Committee because he was a decent man and a sure vote, but no amount of preparation has made him quicker on his feet. Nor has he received much help from his aide, Jed Johnson, a former Oklahoma congressman and a man of legendary incompetence. "Johnson is a consultant to the Committee and he was supposed to investigate the Muskie Canuck letter at one point," says a Majority staffer. "He ran around New Hampshire, causing all kinds of crap. He got himself in the papers and managed to piss off Bill Loeb, the publisher of the Manchester Union Leader. And at the end of it all,

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Anna Steadman

Backstage at the Watergate



Samuel Dash, 48, Chief Counsel to the seven-member Select Committee, is on leave as Professor of Law and Director of the Georgetown University Institute of Criminal Law and Procedure. He is a former District Attorney of Philadelphia and has a lengthy record as a criminal trial lawyer. Author of *The Eavesdroppers*, a nationwide study of electronic surveillance, he is also past Chairman of the Board of Trustees, District of Columbia Public Defender Service; past President of the National Association of Defense Lawyers in Criminal Cases; and was a trial attorney for the Criminal Division of the Department of Justice.



Fred D. Thompson, 47, Chief Minority Counsel, will oversee a third of the committee staff. A thoughtful, slow-talking Tennessean with an exceptional record as a federal prosecutor of bank-robbers and moonshiners, Thompson was tapped by Senator Baker to be minority counsel because, as Baker commented, "I needed a man who could look the facts square in the face, a man who was reliable." Thompson left the US attorney's office in Nashville in 1972 to enter private practice with the law firm of Butler, McHugh, Butler, Tune and Watts.



Rufus L. Edmisten, 45, Deputy Chief Counsel, is also Chief Counsel and Staff Director of Senator Ervin's Subcommittee on Separation of Powers and former Counsel for the Senate Judiciary Subcommittee on Constitutional Rights. Edmisten has been closely associated with Senator Ervin for over nine years and has been a trusted adviser on many matters of special concern to the Senator. In his work with the Separation of Powers Subcommittee, Edmisten has been Chief Counsel for over 20 hearings and has gained a reputation as an expert on many issues that may arise during the course of the Watergate investigation, including the doctrine of executive privilege.



Arthur S. Miller, 48, Chief Consultant, is Professor of Law at the National Law Center, George Washington University. A noted author, Miller has served as editor of the *Journal of Public Law* at Emory University, and has authored several books and numerous magazine and law review articles. He was a consultant to the Senate Subcommittee on Separation of Powers for a number of years and has been a lecturer at Brookings Institution.



Charles H. Rogovin, 42, Consultant, is presently a fellow of the Institute of Politics at Harvard. Rogovin has been an Assistant District Attorney

in Philadelphia, a member of President Johnson's Commission on Law Enforcement and Administration of Justice, Assistant Massachusetts Attorney General, the Administrator of the Justice Department Law Enforcement Assistance Administration, and President of the Police Foundation.



Jed Johnson, Jr., 38, Consultant, is a former US Representative from the Sixth District of Oklahoma. He has also been a special assistant to the director of the Office of Economic Opportunity, and was director of the Education Program, Division of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission.



David M. Dorsen, 38, Assistant Chief Counsel, came to the Select Committee from the second position in the New York City Department of Investigation, a department composed of 120 individuals who investigate official misconduct. Dorsen also was an Assistant United States Attorney under former New York District Attorney Robert Morgenthau, the famed prosecutor of official corruption and organized crime.



Terry Falk Lenzner, 38, Assistant Chief Counsel, was also an Assistant United States Attorney under Morgenthau. Like Dorsen, Lenzner helped indict credit-card thieves, loan sharks and Bill Bonanno, the crime syndicate heir. Lenzner was also a Justice Department investigator on civil rights cases in 1964.



James Hamilton, 38, Assistant Chief Counsel, has been a trial attorney with Covington and Burling, one of Washington's most respected law firms, since 1966. Hamilton's legal work has included antitrust, securities, banking, constitutional, civil rights and criminal litigations. In addition, Hamilton is an expert on international law, and received an L.L.M. degree from the London School of Economics in 1966.



Carmine Bellino, 42, Chief Investigator, spent 11 years with the FBI, and has earned a near-legendary reputation over the last 25 years as an investigator for several congressional committees. For the Hoffa investigation, he reconstructed a year of the Teamster leader's activities, almost hour by hour. "Hoffa said I knew more about his life than he did," Mr. Bellino recalls, "and I did, because I had the documents." Robert Kennedy called Bellino his most valuable aide and wrote of him in *The Enemy Within*: "He has the greatest knack for knowing when something is wrong and where the error lies, that I have ever seen."



Judy Moreland, 32, Research Assistant, is a student at Georgetown University Law Center. A Phi Beta Kappa, Ms. Moreland is also a magna cum laude graduate of Duke University.



H. William Shure, 38, Assistant Minority Counsel, was a New Haven, Connecticut lawyer and former Judge Advocate in the Air Force. Shure also served on the Connecticut field staff of Senator Lowell P. Weicker, Jr., a member of the Select Committee.



Marc Lackritz, 32, Assistant Counsel, is a graduate of Harvard Law School. A Rhodes Scholar, Lackritz is also a graduate of Princeton's Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International Affairs.



Barry Schochet, 32, Assistant Counsel, practiced law in Atlanta previously to joining the Select Committee with the firm of Smith, Cohen, Ringel, Kohler, Martin & Lowe.



Joan Carmichael Cole, 32, Secretary to the Minority, has been assistant to the Staff Director for the Public Works Committee, and a departmental assistant for former Senator Lyn B. Jordan.



Phillip Haire, 32, Assistant Counsel, has been a partner in the Sylva, North Carolina law firm of Haire. A graduate of the University of North Carolina Law School, Haire was a captain in the United States Air Force Judge Advocate Corps. He is a director of the First Union National Bank of Sylva, Chairman of the Jackson County Industrial Development Team, and Director of the Smokey Mountain Mental Health Center.



Lucy M. Presnell III, 32, Assistant Investigator, is a 1973 graduate of the University of North Carolina with majors in journalism and political science. A recent delegate to Asia for the United States Youth Council, Presnell served as a research assistant for the Subcommittee on Separation of Powers during the summers of 1970, 1971

and 1972. Presnell is a former vice chairman of the North Carolina Democratic party, and has been a research assistant for the North Carolina General Assembly and the North Carolina House of Representatives Committee on the Judiciary.



Carolyn Andrade, 32, Office Manager, has been executive assistant to a senator and representative, an administrative assistant to two congressmen, and Secretary to the General Counsel of the Post Office and Civil Service Committee of the Senate, as well as administrative assistant to the Chairman of the Price Commission.



Polly Dement, 32, Research Assistant, was brought on as the first staff member by Deputy Counsel Edmisten to lay the ground work for organizing the Committee's operations and staffing. A former State Judiciary Committee staff member, Ms. Dement also has been Partner and Operations Director for the Congressional Monitor, a private legislative news service. Her specialty is in-depth research and writing.



Scott Armstrong, 32, Investigator, has worked in the field of criminal justice, specializing in the planning and delivery of correctional services. A former systems analyst for the Washington State Criminal Justice System, Armstrong most recently was Director of Massachusetts Halfway Houses. Armstrong also conducted a series of investigations of poverty programs under contract with OEO.



William T. Mayton, 32, Assistant Counsel, came to the Select Committee from the Washington, D.C., law firm of Shea & Gardner. A 1972 graduate of Columbia University Law School, Mayton was also a Navy pilot in Vietnam.



Mary B. DeOreo, 32, Research Assistant, is a graduate of Northwestern University and The Institute for Paralegal Training. She has worked for the National Trust for Historic Preservation, Seventeen Magazine, and Pillsbury, Madson, and Sutro in San Francisco.



Robert M. McNamara, Jr., 32, Assistant Counsel, was research assistant to Sam Dash from September, 1972, until he recently received his law degree from Georgetown Uni-

versity. Symposium Editor of the *American Criminal Law Review*, McNamara is a former legal researcher for Chief Judge Harold Green of the D.C. Superior Court.



Ronald D. Rotunda, 32, Assistant Counsel, came to the Select Committee from the law firm of Wilmer, Cutler and Pickering where he specialized in securities litigation, especially civil and criminal securities fraud. Rotunda is also a former clerk for Judge Walter Mansfield of the Second Circuit Court of Appeals.



Linda R. Satterfield, 32, Research Assistant, is a George Washington University law student. Ms. Satterfield has worked for the National Bureau of Standards, the Southeastern Institute of Research, the American Civil Liberties Union, and the Public Defender Service.



John C. Etridge, 32, Research Assistant, was formerly a Foreign Affairs Analyst at the Library of Congress. Specializing in International Organizations and Treaties, Etridge was assistant to well-known international affairs specialist Marjorie Browne. Etridge has also written feature articles on political and foreign affairs for the *Los Angeles Times*.



Robert Silverstein, 32, Assistant Minority Counsel, was a Senior Assistant United States Attorney in Miami from 1968 until he left in April to join the Select Committee staff. Silverstein served as a trial attorney with the Internal Security Division of the Department of Justice in Washington, D.C., from 1963 to 1968.



Mark J. Biros, 32, Research Assistant, is a 1973 graduate of Georgetown University Law Center. A cum laude graduate of Princeton, Biros has written for the *American Criminal Law Review* and has written two chapters of a police manual.



Patrick F. O'Leary, 32, Research Assistant, is also a student at Georgetown University Law Center. A graduate of the Air Force Academy, O'Leary was in the Air Force for six years and resigned to enter law school as a captain.



Wayne H. Bishop, 32, Investigator, is a 25-year veteran of the Connecticut State Police Department. The Commanding Officer of the Criminal Intelligence Division when he retired from the Department, Bishop was Chairman of the Eastern US Zone Members of the Law Enforcement Intelligence Unit; Chairman of the New England State Police Administrations Conference's Intelligence Committee; a

member of the National Advisory Committee on Organized Crime, Law Enforcement Assistance Administration; and advisor to the Connecticut Governor's Commission on Illegal Organized Gambling.



Laura Matz, 32, Administrative Assistant, was one of five WAVES chosen to help set up the Supreme Headquarters, Allied Powers in Europe, under General Eisenhower in 1951. After 20 years service with the Navy, the retiring Senior Yeoman was asked to be personal secretary to Senator Joseph Tydings, where she held vast organizational responsibilities for six years.

Donald G. Sanders, 32, Assistant Minority Counsel, spent ten years as a special agent for the FBI before becoming Chief Counsel for the Committee on the Security of the US House of Representatives in 1969. A graduate of the University of Missouri Law School, Sanders did general Courts Martial work in the Marine Corps and practiced law in Columbia, Missouri.

Stephen Leopold, 32, Research Assistant, will be a second year law student at McGill University Law School in Montreal. The youngest voting delegate to the Canadian Progressive Conservative Party Leadership Convention in 1967, Leopold has also been a researcher for the Automobile Protection Agency of Montreal and the Canadian Government.

Eugene Boyce, 32, Assistant Counsel and Assistant Staff Director, was senior partner in the Raleigh, North Carolina law firm of Boyce, Mitchell, Burns and Smith. A Phi Beta Kappa, Boyce was a magna cum laude graduate of Wake Forest University Law School and a captain in the Army. Before becoming a partner in his own firm, Boyce was a law partner of Hon. I.B. Lake, now an Associate Justice of the North Carolina Supreme Court, and a law associate of Hon. Robert B. Morgan, now Attorney General of North Carolina.

Michael S. Friach, 32, Research Assistant, is a Georgetown University law student. Friach is Associate Editor of the *American Criminal Law Review*.

John Walz is on special assignment to the Select Committee from the Government Printing Office.

Also on the staff are Gail Walker, Research Assistant; veteran Hill employee Barbara Kennedy, Secretary; Louise Garland, Research Assistant, who recently worked with the Senate Judiciary Committee on the L. Patrick Gray nomination; Carol Anderson, Secretary; Dorinda Roberge, Secretary; Carol Mullins, Secretary; Julie H. Smith, Secretary; Gregory Church, Staff Assistant; John Elmore, Staff Assistant; Marianne A. Brazier, Secretary; Florence L. Thoben, Secretary; Phyllis Balen, Secretary; Elizabeth L. McCulley, Receptionist; Andre L. Henretta, Staff Assistant; Daniel C. Higgins, Staff Assistant; Mark Geneau, Secretary; Deborah M. Ferguson, Secretary; I. Herbert Hoell, Staff Assistant; Carolyn E. Cohen, Secretary; Jonathan Blackmer, Staff Assistant; Phyllis Britt, Secretary; James W. Copeland, Staff Assistant; and Linda A. Beverluta, Secretary.

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wrong column. Herbert Kalmbach, the President's bagman, reportedly turned state's evidence upon hearing that Bellino was on his trail. He could face almost anything, he reportedly told his friends, but not an investigation by Carmine Bellino.

Some time in the spring of 1972, a tough, nasty Republican lawyer named Jerris Leonard, a man who has been described as a "Chuck Colson in the rough," undertook a private investigation into Bellino's past. To check out Bellino, he hired John "Fat Jack" Buckley, a man whom he knew had spied on the Muskie campaign for E. Howard Hunt. Buckley obtained several affidavits accusing Bellino of having attempted to hire men to bug Richard Nixon's Washington hotel room during the 1960 campaign. Leonard gave the affidavits to George Bush, the Chairman of the Republican National Committee, who waited several weeks before making them public. Only one of the affidavits contained concrete, damaging charges, and its author died of a chronic heart ailment while Bush was waiting. "It now appears that the whole thing may have been falsified, though I'm not sure we'd ever be able to prove it," says a Majority staffer. "For all I know, they knew this guy was dying and they said, 'Write down this lie—what the fuck do you care?'"

Bush called a press conference on July 24th, and presented the affidavits with great fanfare. He was not releasing the documents to "justify Watergate," said Bush, but in the interest of "fair play." On July 27th, 22 Republican senators called for Bellino's suspension from the Committee. On August 2nd, Senator Ervin asked Senators Talmadge, Inouye and Gurney to form a special subcommittee to investigate the charges against Bellino.

Not long after the subcommittee was formed, Clark MacGregor, former head of CREEP, met in private session with the Minority staff. MacGregor told the Minority, among other things, that a man named John Buckley had: a) spied on Muskie for Hunt, and b) investigated Bellino for Jerris Leonard.

Now here was a spy whom no one had ever heard of before. (From Howard Hunt's June testimony in executive session, the Committee knew of the existence of a spy with the code name of "Fat Jack," but they had never been able to learn his real name.) Did the Minority inform the Majority of this new lead, or try to investigate the matter themselves? No.

Here was evidence that could help to vindicate Carmine Bellino. The case against Bellino had been put together by a highly impeachable man, a Republican campaign spy. Did the Minority ever pass along this good news to the Majority or to the subcommittee? Never.

The subcommittee, eventually, found that the charges against Bellino were totally unfounded, and the Majority, thanks to its own digging, eventually discovered that "Fat Jack" and John Buckley were the same person. When the Majority staffers found out that the Minority had known both these things all along, they were furious, and they went to the press with the story of how the Minority had sat on the evidence. But bigger stories were breaking, and the press could find no space to report the Minority's negligence.

"But it didn't end there," says a Majority staffer. "When we finally called Buckley as a witness, Howard Baker played a cat-and-mouse game, trying to get Buckley to bring up the Bellino charges again without asking him specifically about the case. Baker said things like, 'I know this Committee has

Weicker's staff put in 16-hour days, and by April they had found enough evidence so that Weicker could confidently drop two bombs

no mandate to investigate the '60 and '64 campaigns, but is there anything about those campaigns that you would like to tell us?" Buckley, fortunately, didn't bite. But there was Carmine Bellino, sitting right behind Sam Ervin, being tortured with the prospect of having the whole smear brought up again."

Howard Baker isn't very popular with the Majority staff, and Weicker's office hasn't much use for him either. "You never know where Baker stands," a Weicker aide complains. "Gurney's a shill for the White House, but at least he's pretty straightforward about it. But with Baker, the problem is one of duplicity." Back in February, Baker, Gurney and Weicker met in a small chamber off the Senate floor to discuss the possibility of getting in touch with the White House. They decided that if they did contact Nixon's people, they should be entirely open about it, and make no attempt to hide the content of any meetings that took place. But after further discussion, they agreed that contacting the White House would be a bad idea . . . it wouldn't be "productive."

Baker went right out and met with Nixon anyway—and he kept the meeting secret until the press pressured him into disclosing it. He told the Washington Post's Woodward and Bernstein three different stories. First, he denied ever having met with Nixon. Then he admitted having met with the President, but claimed they had not discussed the Watergate hearings. Finally, he said that he had tried to persuade the President to waive executive privilege and allow his aides to testify. When Weicker confronted Baker with the fact that he had broken the Minority pact, Baker offered no defense.

Which is not at all like Howard Baker, a man who can explain almost anything to almost anyone, including Mike Wallace of CBS News, the most remorseless interviewer in the business. Wallace went to interview Baker over the summer, reportedly "loaded for bear." But he came away empty-handed. Later he told a friend on the Hill that Baker was just "too good, too slick."

Baker's staff is not bad at explaining things away, either. They hardly blinked an eyelash when John Dean testified that "a member of Senator Baker's staff was very desirous of a meeting to get guidance." Baker's staff cheerfully admits that the Senator's key aide did call Nixon's people, but they claim that all he wanted was a little advice on how to obtain an updated list of White House personnel. Weicker's staff finds this explanation hard to swallow. "They weren't calling the White House for lists, they were calling for political advice," says a Weicker aide. "We've called the White House for information too, but they didn't think that we wanted 'guidance.' And you don't call White House higher-ups when you're just looking for personnel lists. No one would mind that Baker was trying to get political advice, if he would just admit it. But as usual, he was trying to keep all his options open."

Other staffers claim that Baker's man was telling the White House exactly what transpired in executive sessions. "The White House always seemed to know what we were going to do and to have a response before we did it."

By all accounts, Baker is by far the quickest wit on the Committee, a past master at parliamentary shell games and the smoothest talker at the policy-making executive sessions that take place in Sam Ervin's file-cluttered office. "Baker usually tries to get the floor after only one or two of the other senators have spoken," says a Majority staffer. "He immediately says, 'There are a couple of points I'd like to make and then I'd like to sum this thing up.' And the rest of the senators are lucky to get in a comment after that."

"Another thing Baker does is to say, 'Well, it's perfectly clear that . . . ' and then go on to say something that isn't clear at all. And he gets away with it a lot of times. Ervin has run out of steam objecting to Baker's points."

"But Baker's favorite trick," says the staffer, "is to try to get a sense of which way the Committee is going to go, so that he never gets caught dissenting on a crucial vote. He always tries to make it look as if he's in perfect harmony with the rest of the Committee."

For instance, there was the executive session with Chuck Colson, who allegedly engineered many of the White House's dirtiest tricks. Fred Thompson begged the Committee to give Colson immunity, but to no avail. Finally, Senator Inouye moved that the Committee vote to deny all of Colson's requests which were: a) that he be excused from appearing before the Committee in open session, b) that he receive immunity if he did appear, and c) that if these first two requests were denied, the senators wait two weeks before making a final decision. Baker moved that these three requests be voted on first in *amendment fashion*. Baker and Gurney voted for all three requests; all the other senators voted against them. Then the real vote was taken. Baker and Gurney, seeing that they could not win, voted against the requests with all the other senators.

"Baker's done that again and again," says the Majority staffer. "He and Gurney fight until the very last second, and then they turn around and vote with the Majority. Then Baker goes out into the hall with Ervin to meet the press and he smiles and nods and says that the vote was unanimous, never letting on that he's just been engaged in a vicious battle with the rest of the Committee."

Whether or not Baker and Gurney tried to obstruct the hearings during the first phase may be a moot point, because nothing they did seemed to have much effect. Some Majority staffers like to grumble that the two Republican senators tried to close down the whole show in August, but the same charge could be laid against other senators as well. On August 8th, Woodward and Bernstein wrote in the Washington Post that "a majority of senators on the panel appears ready to vote that public hearings be terminated by October 15th." The Post said that the majority consisted of Baker, Gurney, Weicker and Talmadge. Most of these senators later explained that they had been afraid that the last two phases of the hearings (Dirty Tricks and Finances) might prove anticlimactic, and thus take the edge off what the hearings

had already accomplished.

But Woodward and Bernstein quoted a "key staff attorney" who put a different interpretation on the matter. "The senators are getting bored with the hearings," said the source. "The Watergate bugging (and cover-up) involved a narrow and definable group of people in an extraordinary crime . . . but the 'dirty tricks' and campaign financing touch every politician . . . we detect a new shyness on those subjects." Obviously, some staffers had grown alarmed at what they thought was an imminent sellout, and leaked the story to Woodward and Bernstein. And it worked. "If it hadn't been for the Post article," one staffer said in early October, "the Committee would be out of business by now."

When the Minority returned to the hearings in September, they faced a decidedly ugly prospect. The Majority had a line-up for its Dirty Tricks case—"Fat Jack" Buckley, Donald Segretti and a couple of his operatives were nothing spectacular, but at least they were warm bodies. The Minority, on the other hand, had . . . nobody. The Minority staffers had run around the country during the summer recess in search of Democratic Dirty Tricks and come back without a speck. They had gone out to show that the Century Plaza demonstration had been violent and found out that it had been totally decorous. They had combed California in search of a cop whom H.R. Haldeman claimed had been stabbed in another demonstration outside the Palace Hotel in San Francisco. There was no such cop.

Without witnesses to use against the Majority, Baker and company tried out a new tactic. They began to ask agonizingly dull questions.

"It's part of a strategy to make sure the public is bored," a Committee staffer told John Lang of the New York Post. "The Republicans are trying to get the press disgruntled so coverage will drag and the Democratic senators will say, 'You're right, let's stop.'" Questioning E. Howard Hunt, the first witness to appear after the recess, Baker, Gurney and Thompson managed to empty the press tables by pursuing theories of double-agency and CIA involvement that the Committee had long ago discarded. "All this has been thoroughly explored and discredited," a Committee source told the New York Post at the time. "We interrogated Hunt for 90 hours in 12 executive sessions, covering 2000 pages in the transcript and none of this checked out. We don't need a fishing expedition on the stand."

During the summer, the Minority had questioned about 15 witnesses to try to establish that Democratic Chairman Larry O'Brien and a variety of other people knew in advance that the Republicans had an "espionage capability" and were considering bugging the Watergate headquarters of the Democratic National Committee. After a relentless and time-consuming investigation, they apparently managed to establish this fact. "But where does that get them?" asks a Majority staffer. "All they proved is that Larry O'Brien got a tip, and on the one hand he kind of discounted it, while on the other hand he said, 'So what, let 'em come.' I mean, what was O'Brien supposed to do, put a sign on the door saying, REPUBLICANS, WE KNOW YOU'RE GOING TO BUG US? You can't crucify a guy on the stand for not sitting there every night with a shotgun, waiting for the phantoms to invade. If the Minority tries to use that stuff, it'll really make for a fine set of hearings—we're really hoping they will."

All these awkward machinations by

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the Minority might have had greater impact, or at least have been thrown in to bolder relief, were it not for the fact that they tend to be eclipsed by the clumsiness of the Majority. Sam Dash and the four Majority senators have rambled in their questions when they should have gone for the jugular; they have tended to dismiss with a pat on the head any witness who appeared the least contrite; they have generally hesitated to follow too far any trail that threatened to lead into the Oval Office. As for keeping up its end of the "high degree of cooperation," the Majority staff has not shared any information with the Minority since August—largely for fear that the Minority would immediately leak the information to the press, thereby taking the wallop out of the Majority's cases. For much the same reason, Majority staffers often refused to share information with their boss—Sam Dash had a weakness for dropping "bombshells" on the press. As one of them put it, "If we tell the Minority, then we've got to tell Sam Dash, too."

All of the Committee's bombshells have come from the Majority staff, and it is tempting to claim that they have accomplished as much as they have through sheer luck—especially through the great good fortune of John Dean's deciding to be a forthcoming witness. The Majority staffers, of course, argue that they have had more than luck on their side.

"Sure," says one investigator, "it's no big deal to get John Dean to come in. If you've got a John Dean and he's going to blow his guts, you're gonna get a lot from that. But in the White House you've got about 400 secretaries, right? If you interview them all methodically, you'll get a little bit, right? But if you interview all of them well, you'll tear down the government. That's where the big breakthroughs came from. That's where Caulfield and Ulasevic came from. Operation Sandwedge came from a secretary. The ITT memo—a secretary. The Diem cables—a secretary."

"The point is, there were some amazingly creative interviews. The interviewers literally got out stenographers' pads and pretended they were secretaries, to think through things. The whole frame of questioning started changing. We started asking questions like, 'Was there any place in your boss' office you didn't have access to?' The secretary would say, 'Well, not really.' Then she'd say, 'Wait a minute, there was one drawer I never really had any reason to go into.' We'd ask her what was in it. 'Well,' she'd say, 'I don't really remember, but there was a folder marked Gemstone.' That kind of stuff is just good, painstaking investigation."

The Majority, like Gaul, is divided into three parts, presided over by three assistant chief counsels—Terry Lenzner, David Dorsen and James Hamilton.

Lenzner's group, which includes three or four investigators and eight young researchers, was responsible for the whole sorry Dirty Tricks phase of the hearings. Lenzner is 34, and with his matted, sloppily parted brown hair, his unstarched white shirts, and his baggy tweed pants which hang a good three inches above the ankles, he has the look of stolid, grinding clerk for a small-time conservative judge. Which is not quite right, for Lenzner is a nut-cracking activist lawyer. As an Assistant US Attorney in New York, he helped indict Mafia godson Bill Bonnano. As a defense lawyer in the Berrigan case, he proved that the government's FBI informer was a pathological liar. As an attorney in OEO's legal services division, he got fired by Richard Nixon.

Partisan purposes! The outrageous accusation shocked the Committee. Senator Gurney came to life like a lizard poked with a sharp stick

Lenzner runs the most dynamic group on the Committee's staff, a group which has conducted well over half of all the Majority's interviews and which has delivered most of the Committee's thunderbolts.

Nevertheless, Lenzner has had his problems. Early on, he offended the public's sensibilities by taking apart Richard Moore, a white-haired White House aide. (Moore was a button-down wolf who donned the clothing of a very senile sheep in order to gain sympathy for himself—a ploy which payed off, at Lenzner's expense.) Later on, Lenzner himself got taken apart by Pat Buchanan, a wily but honest White House aide whom Lenzner had unwisely decided to present as a Dirty Trickster. And more than one staffer felt that Lenzner had got his just comeuppance.

"Everybody hates Lenzner and his crew because they think they're better than everybody else and let them know it," says a Majority staffer. "Terry's a prima donna, and he's caused a lot of clashes. He ran into trouble with Buchanan, but he's still the best cross-examiner on the Committee, and it's a shame that Sam Dash hasn't let him ask more questions in the hearings. Sam's an egomaniac and he won't let anyone else handle a major witness. He doesn't mind Jim Hamilton so much, because Hamilton's so lame. I mean, Mardian [former Assistant Attorney General and consultant to CREEP Robert C. Mardian] got on the stand and just ate Hamilton up. And Dave Dorsen's a passive type, so he doesn't worry Sam. But Lenzner's a fireball. He threatens Sam. And there was so much flak after the Moore session that the senators didn't want to put Lenzner back on, either."

Although Lenzner has gained no glory by bringing forth some of the dullest witnesses of the hearings, he defends his Dirty Tricks phase, saying that he was not out to nail anybody but only to present "the whole spectrum of political activities" so that the senators could decide what was acceptable and what was beyond the pale when they got around to writing their report. And Lenzner's final Dirty Trick—the Hughes/Rebozo caper—may yet prove to be one of the Committee's greatest hits.

In 1969 and 1970, Howard Hughes sent \$100,000 to Bebe Rebozo, the President's bosom buddy. Rebozo says he thought the money was a contribution to Nixon's 1972 presidential committee. But Committee staffers claim that by a strange coincidence, the second cash installment arrived at San Clemente the same day that Rebozo and his co-presidential buddy Robert Abplanalp wrapped up a deal to buy \$100,000 worth of Nixon's San Clemente real estate.

"Rebozo's story is that he kept \$100,000 in cash in safe-deposit boxes for almost three years," a Committee source told the Post's Woodward and Bernstein. "Now you tell me, is that logical for an investor to keep the money and boot at least \$20,000 in interest? There is something funny about that money." The Committee is so interested in the funny money that it is trying to get ahold of Nixon's personal bank records, and Carmine Bellino is

getting ready to do one of his famous audits. Lenzner's staff is seeking to question Rose Mary Woods, the President's personal secretary. According to Rebozo, she was the only other person who knew about the Hughes contribution. "She knows a lot," says a Majority staffer. "If we can get her to talk, it might just mean the end of the whole ballgame for Nixon."

The expectations of the two other Majority groups do not seem to be nearly so great. Assistant Chief Counsel David Dorsen, a blond, balding, cigar-puffing lawyer who used to investigate corrupt New York City officials, has run the Campaign Financing phase of the hearings. "A lot of people around here distrust Dorsen's group," says a Majority staffer. "He seems to have about 30 people working for him on finances, and they haven't come up with anything yet. Nothing new on the contributions from the dairy people, nothing new on ITT, nothing on the Teamsters. They did uncover one big financial scandal, but they didn't have enough time to handle it themselves, so they gave it to Cox' office. Which was probably a big mistake. Dave's a competent guy, but he seems to have struck out. It's so bad that Ervin is thinking of just calling Dave to the stand to enter 6000 pages of affidavits into the record—none of the witnesses are worth calling."

If Dorsen has really failed to dig up anything new on the ITT case, the failure ranks as one of the major disappointments of the hearings. (The ITT scandal, as everyone knows, involves a \$400,000 contribution which the conglomerate made to the Republican Convention, allegedly in return for the Justice Department's dropping an antitrust suit.) On the evening of July 31st, Lenzner's staff, desperate for evidence to present against the next day's witness, H.R. Haldeman, subpoenaed a secretary and got her to cough up a batch of explosive documents. The documents included a memo from Charles Colson to H.R. Haldeman on the subject of ITT, a memo which warned Haldeman of the existence of other internal memos that would implicate John Mitchell and the President in the case. On the morning of August 1st, Dash sprung the memo on Haldeman, having waited until the last moment to give copies to the seven senators in order to prevent leaks. No sooner had Dash begun to question Haldeman about the memo than Ed Gurney cut him off with frantic objections. Dash went no further, but the memo had already been placed in the record, where it remains, with its gold mine of leads for Dorsen to pursue.

The third Majority group, under the direction of Assistant Chief Counsel James Hamilton, has been preparing the brief for the Committee's case to get the White House tapes. Hamilton is a slim, dark-haired young man with a blank face and a habit of knitting his brow when asked a question. "You go into Jim's office and ask him a question," says a Majority staffer. "He knits his brow, and he looks puzzled, and all you've asked him so far is 'How are you today, Jim?'" Of the three assistant chief counsels, Hamilton is generally

considered to be the least effective.

"There's this whole hopeless faction of people who work on the lawsuits," says a Committee staffer. "They principally work for Hamilton and Sam Dash. Between them, those two have fucked up the lawsuit so badly that Nixon will probably win the thing. Most of the people who work for Dash and Hamilton just got out of law school. They seem pretty competent, but they don't give a shit what's going on because they figure they just want to take a suit to the Supreme Court. Win or lose they've been to the Supreme Court once."

While several members of the staff feel this way, it should be pointed out that many legal experts, including several Harvard Law School professors, find the brief "excellent" and "outstanding." They say that Judge Sirica threw out the Committee's case, not because of faults in the brief but because he feared opening a constitutional Pandora's box.

So much for the immediate future. But what about the long run? What about the report that the Committee will have to write on the hearings and the legislation they will have to recommend on campaign practices and financing? They will begin shortly after Thanksgiving, and a small group of staffers is already at work summarizing all the testimony and pointing out the inconsistencies. "The report will be the most difficult thing yet," says Rufus Edmisten. "I don't know how you'll get seven men to agree on something that has been this volatile."

It is a job that would tax a Solomon, and some observers in the press corps are afraid that the Committee is not up to it. They fear that the Committee may write an unrealistic law that would encroach on proper campaign activities as well as improper ones. They worry that the Committee may put too many restrictions on campaign contributions, or recommend a system of public financing whereby every citizen would check off a portion of his income tax to go to the party of his choice. Fine for the big politicians, they say, but what of the maverick candidate who runs outside the two-party system?

But from the little evidence in hand, it seems highly unlikely that the Committee will recommend anything too extreme. A taste of things to come was afforded anyone who followed the progress of an obscure White House budget bill through Congress. One of the few journalists who followed the bill was Walter Pincus of the New Republic. This is what he wrote:

"Last July at the height of the Ervin committee drama, the House, led by its Appropriations Committee, eliminated a \$1.5 million White House special projects fund after a committee was refused information on how the money was spent in 1972. It was alleged that Watergate conspirator E. Howard Hunt's salary came from that fund, along with money that paid for the Ellsberg psychiatrist burglary. The House also tacked on a requirement for reporting to Congress of any expenses on a President's private property—a direct response to exposures of San Clemente construction. Last week the Senate reversed both House initiatives by overwhelming votes. Floor manager for the Senate bill that reinstated the fund was Watergate Committee member Joseph Montoya."

Senators Inouye and Talmadge also voted for the White House position. Ervin, Baker and Gurney were absent for the vote. The only Watergate Committee senator who bucked the White House was Lowell Weicker.