

ate Bugging Trial Opens Monday

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BALTIMORE
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WASHINGTON—In front of the White House, the carpenters have hammered together the reviewing stands for the inauguration of President Nixon's second term.

But only a few blocks away at the corner of Constitution Avenue and John Marshall Place, events are preparing to unfold in the U.S. Courthouse that may cast long shadows over the President's second administration.

The Watergate bugging case, carrying the promise of becoming one of the most celebrated political trials of the century, opens Monday.

And already the presiding judge has made clear to the U.S. attorney prosecuting the

department that he wants more questions answered than they appeared to be eager to raise:

"This jury is going to want to know the purpose (of the break in and bugging of the Democratic national committee headquarters). What did these men go into the headquarters for? Was their sole purpose political espionage? Were they paid? Were there financial gains? Who started this? Who hired them, if anyone hired them? A whole lot is going to come out in this case."

Thus Chief Judge John J. Sirica of the U.S. district court advised Justice Department lawyers that he wants the whole story told in the trial of the seven men indicted in the raid of the Democrats' Watergate headquarters last June.

All the ingredients appear to be at hand to guarantee a high powered trial: The cast of characters, the reports of political intrigue and cloak and dagger operations, the devious routes of funds from political contributors through a bank in Mexico and into the hands of one of the break-in defendants, and the alleged connections to powerful men in the White House.

But political trials, like carnivals, have a way of failing to live up to their publicity.

The reports of advise-and-

consent sex and Capitol Hill payoffs paled when the case of Bobby Baker, Lyndon Johnson's Senate aide, moved from the whispers of the Senate cloakroom into the courtroom.

Reports that the Justice Department has negotiated with the Watergate defendants in an effort to convince them to plead guilty in order to avoid holding the trial—and the questions Judge Sirica raised—have been turned aside by a brief "no comment" from Justice Department spokesmen.

The Justice Department and other principals in the case are under a stern order from the bench not to discuss it out of court.

The seven defendants in this bizarre chapter in American politics are:

- E. Howard Hunt Jr., a

mer CIA agent, novelist and White House consultant.

- G. Gordon Liddy, a former FBI agent, federal prosecutor, and treasury official, who was fired as finance director of President Nixon's campaign committee when he refused to answer government agents' questions about the break-in.

Published reports quoting unnamed federal investigators alleged that Liddy and Hunt, equipped with a walkie-talkie, were inside the Watergate but escaped arrest when they were warned by a lookout that police had arrived.

The other five were seized at gunpoint, along with electronic listening devices and

photographic equipment, inside the Democratic Watergate offices:

- James W. McCord Jr., former CIA employe and FBI agent, who was security chief for President Nixon's campaign committee.

● Bernard L. Barker, a Cuban-born, former CIA employe who is reported to have been involved in the planning for the Bay of Pigs invasion and now runs a real estate office in Miami. It was through his company's account that Barker reportedly passed \$114,000 in checks intended for Nixon's campaign.

- Frank A. Sturgis, a Barker associate active in the anti-Castro movement who

has been described in court as a soldier of fortune.

- Eugenio R. Martinez, a salesman in Barker's firm and longtime friend, and Virgilio R. Gonzalez, a Miami locksmith and Barker associate.

Barker, in an interview published in September before he was indicted, praised the three Miami men arrested with him and said his main regret was that "those people that I have motivated under me" had been caught with him.

Democrats and some other sources said the Watergate breakin was part of a broader political espionage scheme Republican campaign officials directed against Democrats.

The Democrats, including presidential candidate George McGovern, charged that President Nixon, former Attorney General John Mitchell, who was chairman of Nixon's reelection campaign at the time of the break-in, and other White House political aides knew about or condoned the political espionage network.

White House press secretary Ronald Ziegler scoffed at allegations that the break-in was a political espionage raid, terming it at the time only "a third-rate burglary attempt."

Despite the furor in the press, and in Democratic campaign oratory, the Watergate affair disappointed and frustrated McGovern by fail-

ing to develop into the political issue he thought it would.

But many politicians think it would have cut with a sharper edge if the Democratic candidate had been someone other than McGovern and involved in a tighter campaign.

But the edge may become sharper and slice more deeply later.

There is obviously wide interest in the trial. It was discovered that the regular courtroom didn't have enough room for all the reporters applying for credentials to cover it.

So it was ordered moved into the more spacious ceremonial courtroom—a fitting setting for high drama.