

Lawyers for Gainesville Eight Seek Quiz of Gurney's Aide

By ROB ELDER
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Defense lawyers in the Gainesville Eight conspiracy case will attempt to question an aide of U.S. Senator Edward Gurney about alleged "misconduct" in the government's prosecution of anti-Nixon veterans.

Gurney, the Florida Republican, is a member of the Senate Watergate Committee. The aide is Mike Carr, who works in the senator's Washington office. In 1972, Carr worked for the Committee for the Reelection of the President.

Lawyers told The Herald Tuesday they hope to call Carr as a defense witness for seven Vietnam Veterans Against the War and one VVAW sympathizer accused of plotting violence at the 1972 political conventions.

IN ARGUMENTS and motions to be heard next week by U.S. District Judge Winston E. Arnow in Pensacola, the defense will ask the court to schedule a full evidentiary hearing on the veterans' claims that they were framed as part of the Watergate cover-up.

In an affidavit accompanying motions already filed with the court, the defense says it hopes to question Carr, as well as indicted political saboteur Donald Segretti and several former White House and CREP officials already linked with the Watergate scandal.

Carr's job for CREP was to organize veterans for Nixon. The VVAW affidavit says the defense wants to ask Carr:

"Whom did he hire? What activities did agents of CREP engage in with respect to veterans' demonstrations or the VVAW?"

"WHAT CONTACTS did he have with the FBI, CIA, military intelligence, local or state police, or the White House in respect to VVAW activities?"

"Did any of his operatives infiltrate the VVAW?"

No evidence in the case thus far has linked the Gurney aide with any activities against the VVAW.

But Carr himself, and the Nixon committee, have drawn a cloak of secrecy around the subject of just what Carr did do. Both Carr and committee spokesmen have repeatedly refused to discuss it with Herald reporters.

Carr agreed to meet with The Herald's Washington correspondent, Phil Gailey, but then backed out at the last moment. He said he would answer questions only

through Tom Gardner, Gurney's press aide.

GARDNER QUOTES Carr as saying Carr served as liaison between CREP and some veterans' groups, but had nothing to do with one pro-Nixon group known as Vietnam Veterans for a Just Peace.

Other persons have linked Carr's name with that organization, however.

Interviewed by Herald columnist Charles Whited at the Republican Convention last August, Russell Vest of Fort Myers, a disabled veteran who fought in Vietnam, said he was a member of Vietnam Veterans for a Just Peace, that the group supported President Nixon, and that they were organized by Carr.

More recently, Paul Gougelman, a member of the Broward County Young Republican organization and an assistant to State Rep. Dan Babs, has said Carr was involved with Vietnam Veterans for a Just Peace.

GUGELMAN TOLD Herald reporter Doug Clifton that he and his roommate, Douglas Kelly, were asked by Carr to work for Vietnam Veterans for a Just Peace.

According to Gougelman, Carr was organizing that group to demonstrate at the GOP Convention.

When the pro-Nixon veterans appeared in Miami Beach, they sought to counter

anti-war demonstrations by the VVAW. Although the VVAW outnumbered the VVJP group by about 100-to-1 at the convention, many newsmen gave the two groups equal attention in an effort to achieve balance.

In addition, a Herald reporter saw two pro-Nixon youths physically disrupt a women's anti-war demonstration outside convention hall. One of the young men identified himself as Stephen McNellis, Minnesota coordinator for VVJP.

AND WHEN Nixon was renominated at the convention, it was John O'Neil, a charter member of the VVJP, who delivered one of the seconding speeches.

Since then, as part of the Watergate disclosures, the White House has admitted that the pro-Nixon veterans group was in fact financed with GOP campaign funds and directed by Charles Colson, the White House special counsel who has resigned in the Watergate cloud.

In addition to questioning Carr, the VVAW defense will attempt to put Colson on the stand, as well as Mel Stevenson, a Veterans Administration consultant who was loaned to the White House to help organize the pro-Nixon veterans.

ACCORDING TO their affidavit, the VVAW defense lawyers want to question Colson about "his organization, known as Vietnam

Veterans for a Just Peace, and as to whether any of his operatives infiltrated the VVAW and, if so, what each of them did."

In addition, the affidavit argues, Colson "should be interrogated as to his contacts, if any, with the FBI and local law enforcement authorities with respect to the prosecution of the defendants."

The whole point of the VVAW argument hangs on two key contentions:

• The argument that the White House and the Nixon reelection committee improperly participated in the prosecution in order to discredit the anti-Nixon veterans.

• And the argument that the case was put together by illegal "espionage, infiltration, sabotage, provocation and electronic surveillance."

AFTER THE Herald uncovered evidence of previously unreported electronic eavesdropping on the veterans — and the admission of a Miami police informer that he offered to help the VVAW buy machine guns — Judge Arnow scheduled a new hearing, beginning June 20, on the electronic surveillance aspects of the case.

After arguments next week, Arnow will decide whether to permit the hearings also to cover the allegations of governmental misconduct.