

The Party Patter on Watergate



NIXON re-election campaign chief Clark MacGregor gets plied with questions about Watergate.

WASHINGTON — When you cover the party circuit in Washington you begin to wonder about some of the things you've read. Take the Watergate bugging, for instance.

Clark MacGregor, chairman of the Committee for the Re-election of the President, can't go to a party without worried Republicans or inquiring press plying him with questions. People listen to what Clark says because he comes across as decent and forthright and not even the more liberal press could dig up something derogatory about him when he was appointed chairman.

Here's what Clark said when a friend asked him why it was that all roads in the Watergate bugging story seemed to lead to the White House.

"The roads are paved with hearsay and unsubstantiated charges," said Clark firmly. Then why doesn't the White House prove it?

"It's like proving you are faithful to your wife," was MacGregor's reply. "There is no proof that these men were connected with the White House. (Howard Hunt and Gordon Liddy had not been connected with the White House for two months before the bugging came to life.) And I am satisfied that none of the people who have been working for me since July (when MacGregor took over the committee) have any connection with it.

"This is the most outlandish exercise I have ever seen. There isn't one shred of evidence! We have come to a pretty pass when people are convinced by charges. You can charge a person with anything but that doesn't make it true. It's the oldest gambit in the book."

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All because of a mistake in a Washington newspaper the Countess of Cromer is emerging as a "picture for an exhibit in " heard of," said the Ambassador