

'Startling Revelations' Expected

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Washington

A wide-ranging investigation of the reported effort to subvert last year's presidential election campaign begins today on Capitol Hill.

The Senate Watergate committee, a seven-member panel under Sam J. Ervin Jr. (Dem-N.C.) is scheduled to hear its first public testimony at 7 a.m. PDT in the caucus room of the old Senate Office Building.

The sessions could have a broad impact on the way American campaigns are financed and run, on the futures of many prominent political leaders, and on the immediate fortunes of Richard M. Nixon.

They begin exactly 11 months after the Watergate affair first arose with the arrest of five obscure men who had broken into Democratic headquarters in an elaborate eavesdropping operation.

Ervin, the 76-year-old committee chairman, said during a news conference at Brunswick, Me., that he expects "some startling revelations" from the lengthy inquiry.

Most sources expect a relatively slow start. They

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predicted a painstaking effort to piece together the more obscure parts of the complex scandal as well as to question the famous political personalities involved.

The hearings, to be televised nationally in at least the initial stages, will run off and on throughout the summer. Some authorities

think the sessions will run into the fall as well.

After opening statements by some or all of the seven Senators, the committee will turn to witnesses intended to outline some of the back-

ground of the 1972 campaign.

Robert C. Odle Jr., director of administration for the committee for the Re-Election of the President, will be asked about the organization of Mr. Nixon's political apparatus and about the personalities who ran it.

He will be followed by Bruce A. Kehrli, staff secretary of the President, who is scheduled to explain the structure and the political operations of the White House.

The third witness Sargeant Paul W. Leeper, is a Washington policeman who will be asked to describe the arrest of five men inside the Watergate offices of the Democratic National Committee early in the morning of June 17.

The capture by Leeper and two colleagues of James W. McCord Jr. and four other conspirators produced over the last 11 months the increasingly sensational disclosures of illegal and improper Republican campaign activities.

Except for a narrowly based criminal trial in January and some pretrial testimony in civil lawsuits growing out of the Watergate, the disclosures have often come from unidentified sources.

FIGURE

Even a Watergate figure as familiar as McCord, who is cooperating actively with the investigators, has not yet told his story in an open forum where the public can size him up.

McCord, who was security coordinator for the Nixon committee at the time of his arrest, is the fourth witness expected at the hearings. Whether he will testify today or tomorrow is uncertain.

The Watergate panel, known formally as the Select Committee on Presidential Campaign Activities, expects to deal first with the effort by McCord, his convicted co-conspirators, and any others to wiretap and bug the Democratic opposition in May and June last year.

This first phase also includes the far more explosive subject of an alleged effort by ranking White House officials to cover up administration complicity and to hinder investigation of the conspiracy.

COUNSEL

The committee's chief counsel, Samuel Dash, said he expected the panel to "exhaust this phase" of the case before going on to two others, campaign financing irregularities and broader efforts at espionage and sabotage.

Dash said that while the committee might have to return to the Watergate phase later in order to "make some linkages" with the other aspects it is set to concentrate on the first part throughout June and perhaps into July.

Some committee sources do not share Dash's confidence in the panel's ability to stick closely with the wire-tapping, the area on which there is by far the most detailed information.

While key figures on the current witness list, such as H. R. Haldeman, John D. Ehrlichman, and John W. Dean III, can be summoned to testify more than once, there might be a tendency to question them exhaustively when they first appear.

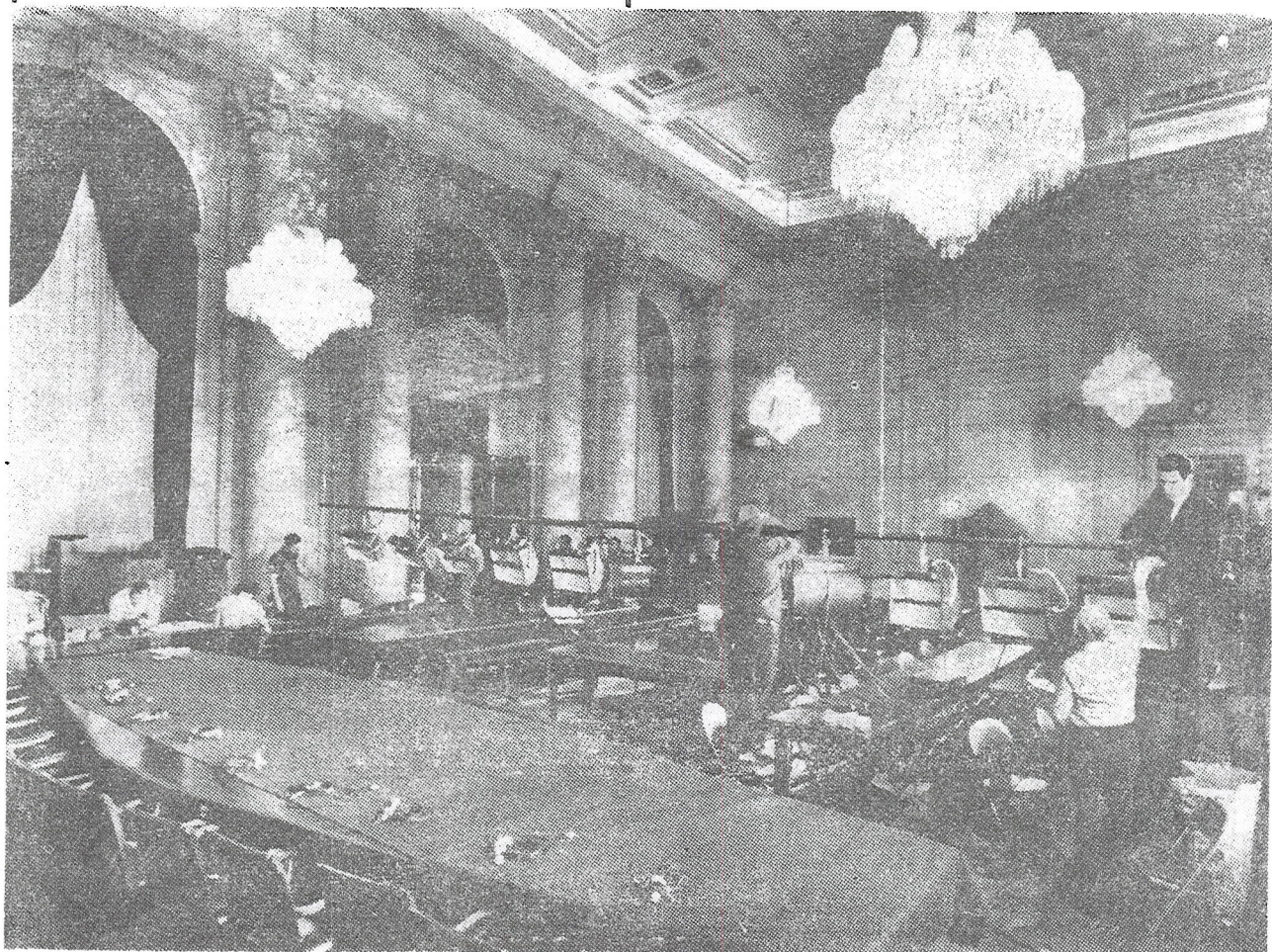
LIST

Dean, the deposed counsel to the president; Ehrlichman, the former domestic adviser to Nixon, and Haldeman, the resigned White House chief of staff, are all well down the list of committee witnesses.

A major issue within the committee is the question of whether to compel testimony from Dean, who has been implicated in the coverup attempt, by granting him immunity from prosecution, which the justice department has so far refused to do.

Chief Judge John J. Sirica granted senate immunity yesterday to G. Gordon Liddy, a convicted conspirator who won a similar grant for his grand jury testimony but who balked at discussing the case anyway. He was found in contempt of court.

The senate panel's session can involve substantial amounts of hearsay testimony, while the courts demand only first-hand evidence except in special circumstances.



UPI Telephoto

Technicians prepared the Senate Caucus room where the Watergate hearings will be held today