

Excerpts From Notes on Interview of

Haldeman by Senate Committee Lawyers

TIMES, FRIDAY, JULY 13, 1973

Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, July 12—

Following are excerpts from notes on an interview of H. R. Haldeman on May 4, 1973, conducted by Samuel Dash, Fred P. Thompson and James Hamilton, staff counsel in the Senate Watergate committee. John J. Wilson and Frank Strickler represented Mr. Haldeman, and Douglas Parker was present on behalf of the White House. Mr. Haldeman's statements have been paraphrased by the committee staff:

I did not know of [E. Howard] Hunt and [G. Gordon] Liddy as "plumbers." I was generally aware that there was a plumbers' project concerning the Pentagon papers leak but I didn't know who was doing it or under what authority. I did know that Bud [Egil] Krogh and David Young were the principal White House people involved.

I had no official responsibilities during the campaign except as related to White House campaign activities, such as campaign travel and any direct involvement of the President's office in terms of his activity.

I was indirectly involved in the sense that I maintained a general background of information flowing into my office on what was going on in the campaign, how the organization was being set up and what its activities were, in terms of keeping the President informed. The President looked to me as the person in the White House who would maintain a general knowledge of the campaign structure. For that purpose Gordon Strachan was the principal point of contact with C.R.P. and maintained a line of communication with them so that he could fill me in and keep the flow of information coming through.

The only person at C.R.P. who served as a contact man was John Mitchell when he was a director and Clark Macgregor afterwards. I maintained infrequent but direct contact with them and [Jeb Stuart] Magruder worked under Mitchell's direction to see that nothing inconsistent with White House policy was done.

The Focal Point

The focal point of legitimate intelligence gathering in the campaign was at C.P.R. There was an effort made to keep a separation between C.R.P. and the White House.

Campaign policy was directed and implemented by C.R.P. John Mitchell sat in on meetings both at C.R.P. and the White House, and Clark Macgregor after him, so that he could report anything of major significance and get a feeling for matters of concern to the White House for that day.

I knew in the broad sense that Strachan received material from C.R.P. regarding intelligence gathering. I saw

some. He received information copies of most of the material produced by C.R.P., public material and internal communications. He sorted through that material to determine what would be of potential interest to me and assembled that periodically and [gave] it to me and I would look at it. The intelligence material was passed on to me that way generally.

One intelligence activity was a project referred to as Chapman's friend's reporter. Chapman's friend was a designation for a newspaper reporter who traveled at different times with different opposition candidates during the primaries and then with McGovern or Shriver during the general election and would phone in when there was any reason to, with a summary report on how the opposition campaign was going. He would get interviews with members of staff

or even the candidates sometimes and then he would phone in reports as to what they were saying. He would describe mood of the campaign, etc.

I don't think I ever saw anything that looked like copies of materials from Democratic headquarters. It's possible that there may have been in the stack of communications of public material. I don't recall seeing any internal documents. I have no recollection of seeing any material attributed to an unidentified source. After the Watergate break-in on Monday [June 19] I asked Strachan if he had any knowledge in the White House of this activity specifically and whether there had been any information that we had received at any point that came from that kind of activity.

He said he had checked and he had no knowledge of such activity nor did he believe that anyone else here did so far as he knew but that in looking at the thing after the fact, he had to raise the possibility that there had been three reports that [had] come in that were identified as "confidential sources" reports, that or something similar, and that in hindsight he thought could have come from the Watergate kind of source.

One of them had been sent to me in one of the compilations of a series of documents. The others had not. I have no recollection of seeing that kind of thing but it is possible that it was sent to me. Strachan did not state from whom he received it. I don't know how he got his information. Some came from the committee. I assume it was from a number of sources. It was all delivered over periodically. He did indicate to me later on the same subject that none of this material to the best of his recollection was identified by code name.

Did Not Know Segretti

I never became acquainted with [Donald] Segretti except in the press. I never met him or had any communication with him. I became aware of his name during the summer of 1971 when the suggestion was made by either Strachan or Dwight Chapin or both that a friend of theirs from college who would be getting out of the Army was potentially a man who would be interested in and very able to carry out the kind of activity that Dick Tuck had so ably done for the opposition. [Mr. Tuck is a well-publicized Democratic political prankster.] They thought he would be a good man to get doing this kind of work. I don't know whether they gave me his name at the time but we talked about a specific captain in the Army, a lawyer, who was an old schoolmate of theirs.

I agreed that they could talk with him, see if he was interested, etc., etc., and I agreed that financing for his proposed activities should be worked out with Herb Kalmbach, [fund-raiser and the President's personal lawyer] and only raised the question with them that he should operate as totally independent of C.R.P. or the national committee or the White House. As an independent man working on his own initiative within broad guides of the kind of activity we talked about, Dick Tuck sort of things, but with a specific stipulation that he was not to engage in illegal or improper activities. I was assured that this has been spelled out to him.

Kalmbach had been a fundraiser for the President [in 1968] and then on the President's behalf and on behalf of financial supporters of the President undertook to raise funds in 1970 for support of Congressional and senatorial candidates who were believed to be potential backers of Administration positions. His efforts in that regard were

very successful and after the 1970 campaign he had some quite substantial funds remaining that were not expended, some of which remained from efforts he had made earlier in the 1968 campaign.

Following the '70 Congressional campaign he undertook to raise additional funds that would be ongoing or incoming money for the 1972 campaign, to provide for political financial needs between then and when the actual 1972 campaign started — polling, travel, etc. I knew he had substantial funds, a large part in cash. It was a better basis for him [Segretti] to be operating independently rather than tied to the campaign. [All of this was in explanation of why Segretti was paid by Kalmbach.]

Amounts Not Discussed

I did not discuss the amounts to be paid to him [Segretti] or any other individuals doing this work. I don't believe I got any oral or written reports from Chapin or Strachan.

I don't believe that Strachan ever talked to me about Howard Hunt's activities in the area of recruiting people to do Tuck-type activities or any kind of surveillance work. I don't think Strachan was aware of Hunt's activities. I am also not aware from any other source of Hunt's activities.

Prior to April 7 [1972] I had understood that the Kalmbach money was being held separately by Kalmbach. I have since learned that it apparently had been commingled with money raised by [Maurice H.] Stans [Chief fund-raiser] prior to April 7, but I don't know that for a fact. I had some discussions with Stans, Mitchell and Kalmbach, not necessarily in one session — regarding the use of some of the cash that Kalmbach still maintained.

It was agreed in those discussions that \$350,000 in cash would be set aside under my custody for the possible use by the White House for polling activity done for our information rather than for C.R.P. that arrangement was made. It was my understanding that the balance of the funds would be put in the C.R.P. fund and considered part of the cash on hand.

The \$350,000 was picked up in cash by Strachan in the committee office. He received the cash from Hugh Sloan, the treasurer, on April 6. We, in turn, gave the cash to a man whose name I don't know to whom he was referred by Alex Butterfield in my office for safekeeping and held pending the potential need for use of the fund. The anticipated polling needs never developed and the funds were never used for that purpose.

One Withdrawal Made

There was, I am told, one withdrawal sometime in April of 1972 of \$22,000 which was delivered at the direction of Dick Howard in the White House to an advertising firm for the placement of an ad.

The ad, the work of Charles Colson, was placed in The New York Times. It supported the President on the mining of Haiphong Harbor and was signed with names recruited by the "November Group," an organization that handled Nixon's campaign advertising.

Strachan tells me that I O.K.'d the use of that \$22,000 for that purpose at that time. Other than that there were no withdrawals from the fund prior to the election.

After the election there remained \$328,000 in cash in his safe box. Strachan, who was clearing up his affairs at the White House and preparing to move, asked what should be done with the \$328,000 and I instructed him to make arrangements through John Dean to turn over that cash to C.R.P. My reasoning for that was that this had been



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withheld from a larger fund, all of which had been turned over to the committee prior to the [April 7] reporting period and that this was the proper place for these funds. It wasn't desirable or proper to hold them any longer and, not knowing what complications there would be in the campaign reporting requirements, [I] told him to talk with Dean and make arrangements to transfer the funds.

That would have been in the mid-to-late-November period.

Sometime after that I was told by Dean (I had no further conversations with Strachan about those funds until considerably later) that there was some difficulty, that he had not made the arrangements yet to move the fund to the committee, complications regarding reporting, etc. I urged him to get that worked out and get the money transferred over there. I was told by Dean at a later time that he had made arrangements that the funds would be and subsequently had been delivered by Strachan to Fred Larue at the committee and that Strachan had reported back to him that the funds had been turned over.

Two Separate Deliveries

I was informed that this had been done in two separate deliveries several days apart. The first delivery was \$40,000 and the second was the balance.

Another factor is that in the interim period as he [Dean] had several times during the period of the campaign, [he] mentioned to me that the committee was concerned with and interested in raising funds for the defense of the defendants in the Watergate case and he indicated to me that they were seeking funds for this purpose and this seemed to me further incentive to remove the funds that we had agreed to transfer over. There was no direct connection between the two [the transfer of the money and the defense funds], but I don't mean to imply there was no connection. This conversation took place before actual delivery was made. I understand the actual delivery was made in mid-January 1973.

I don't recall that there was a rationale given or asked for regarding taking care of the legal fees or the defendants or why it was necessary at that time or the fact of paying for all of them. There was a passing reference to this at several points in time to this as one factor that Dean did mention as he reported in other aspects of the ongoing activity in the Watergate matter.

Dean has told me that sometime prior to the election he raised the question with me about the interest in raising defense fund money, the question of whether Kalmbach could be asked to undertake to raise funds. He raised this with me because Kalmbach had

arranged that he would not be asked to do more fund raising. He checked with me to check that concurrence and he said I had no objection. I don't remember it but I have no reason to doubt it.

Kalmbach did not contact me about this matter. I didn't know at the time that he had contacted Ehrlichman about it but I have since understood that he did. I do not have actual knowledge that any money Kalmbach raised actually went to the defendants.

A Reason to Act

If they needed money for the defense fund, that was all the more reason to send it back to the committee.

[Wilson said that the determination to return the money to the committee had been made independently termination of any other consideration. That was the moving objective in Haldeman's mind].

I gave instructions to transfer the money before the matter of payment of fees came up.

Insofar as it being politically embarrassing if it came out that these payments were being made, I thought it was generally known. I didn't give it a lot of thought.

I did not give any significance to the fact that Kalmbach was to raise the money, that it would be done outside of channels.

I didn't think about it. I didn't know that he was aware there was a surplus of funds at the committee.

I did not know of payments being made to Liddy before June 17, [1972]. I'm sure I knew he was on the payroll.

I got no indication from Dean that there was an effort being made to cover up involvement of individuals in the White House and C.R.P. re Watergate until March or April [1973].

I became suspicious about a cover-up indirectly when we got into [a] period in March, 1973, when, because of the President's intensified push into matters relating to the Watergate and thus, Dean's intensified activity, thus some information that I acquired during that process. In the early stages after Watergate, Dean was the point of contact as to what was going on in the Watergate as various events developed.

I do not recall discussing with [Charles] Colson [White House special counsel] in January, 1973, information from Dean that there had been a meeting planning bugging operation where Dean and A.G. [Attorney General John N. Mitchell] attended. What specific information has come to my attention in that period would be only in [the] role that I have as a recipient of information for the President or disposer of information on instructions of the President.

Role Defined

Virtually all of my input in this whole area arises directly either as a result of a question I would raise with John Dean at the direction of the President in terms of some new development, that I would then check out and report back. I did not operate independently in terms of working on my own initiative or to function as a factor in investigating, analyzing or handling any of these areas. Any communications were in the role of requesting information for the President or receiving information from someone else for him.

I don't know whether Dean was in Manila at the time of the Watergate break-in. I was in Florida. I don't believe I had a conversation with Dean shortly after this [June 17] requesting him to see what he could find out about what had happened, but I had some general understanding that he was pro-

ceeding to determine what, if any, involvement there was on the part of anyone in the White House and to maintain a continuing line of contact with the ongoing developments in the case.

From time to time he reported specific developments for me to report to the President. I could characterize the kinds of reports as being factual information as to who was being interviewed, that there was no question of so-and-so's involvement, where the case was moving in the judicial process, etc.

There was no period of time in which I sought information from a number of people to satisfy myself as to what had happened involving Watergate.

I have no personal direct recollection of Dean telling me before June 17 that he had participated in meetings with the A.G. and others where bugging was discussed, but Dean has told me that at some point early in 1972 he reported to me briefly that he had just come from a meeting with Mitchell, Magruder and Liddy at which there was a discussion again [he said there was a previous meeting] of general plans for campaign intelligence operations.

No Specific Details

He did not characterize them in any specific detail but said that the proposal made at the second meeting was only somewhat less preposterous and impossible to consider than the proposal at the first meeting which had been rejected. He said there Mitchell concurred that this was an unacceptable idea and the budget level was be-

yond reason and Dean recommended that this be totally [word omitted] that Mitchell had concurred and that it had been.

Dean further says he told me that he felt that this effort to put together an intelligence operation at C.R.P. was not proving to be successful and that we should drop it and he proposed not to attend any further meetings. He says that I concurred in that decision. He then operated on that basis and did not participate any further.

[There was] only one such conversation. I don't believe he mentioned electronic eavesdropping. I have no independent recollection of that conversation. I had no other information prior to June 16 that electronic surveillance was being discussed or used in the campaign.

I do not know whether or not Strachan subsequent to June 16 destroyed any materials pertaining to the investigation of the case.

I was not aware at the time of the Pat Gray, [acting F.B.I. Director], Ehrlichman, Dean meeting reported in the press, but I have heard about it since.

I did not issue any instructions [in] Hunt's safe after the break-in.

I don't know whether [Bruce] Kehrli [White House staff secretary] was one of the individuals who went to the safe but I'm told by Dean that he was present. I don't believe I had any conversations with Kehrli about this or about whether he knew what was in the safe. At some point I was told by Dean that some materials were turned over to the F.B.I. Director rather than the investigative agency. To the best of my knowledge, this was in an early time frame, I think he told me that at that time, shortly following the time of the act.

Did Not Congratulate

I did not have occasion in September-October 1972 after the return of the indictments to congratulate Dean for the job he had done.

I was aware that Dean was

sitting in on the F.B.I. interviews with the White House staff members. I did not instruct him to do this. It was my understanding that he was doing this in his position as White House counsel.

I was not aware of any illegal, improper or unethical activities conducted by Democrats against each other in the primaries except at some point it was reported that Tuck himself had been hired by McGovern and that he was on the McGovern payroll.

As far as what I would consider incidents conducted against us, I can't specify anything that I know was done by the McGovern organization or the D.N.C. but I can certainly get for you a substantial enumeration of incredibly illegal, improper and unethical actions that were in fact committed.

I was generally aware and on top of what was going on in the White House. Virtually all written information to and from the President went through me.

[He agrees that he had reputation as whip-cracker in White House.] If there were a group looking into the Pentagon papers leak, I would be aware that there was such a project but not in detail until it was reported to the President. Ehrlichman, Dr. [Henry] Kissinger, [George] Shultz, [Secretary of the Treasury and former head of Office of Management and Budget reported directly to the President.

Mitchell Set Up C.R.P.

C.R.P. was created in the spring of 1971. The committee was set up by Mitchell and Harry Flemming, who had been on the White House staff. Thereafter, Mitchell brought Flemming back in to work at the committee and wanted another man over there. I worked with Mitchell on this. I had an interest on the part of the President to see that the right people went over there. But there has been a misapprehension regarding the process in the sense of saying that I set up the committee or made the decision as to who would be there. Mitchell made the decisions. He ran the project and was initiator but I was in periodic contact with him about it.

Kalmbach raised additional funds for 1970 and raised pre-1972 funds after 1970. Well over a million dollars. I was not aware that he transferred substantial funds to California. Kalmbach did not consider himself responsible to me in terms of expenditure of funds. He could initiate expenditure of those funds. I was directly in touch with him I would guess, less than six times during that whole period.

I was aware of the contact with Segretti. I did not meet Segretti at the Benson Hotel in Portland in December, 1971. I was not aware that he was there. I believe Chapin was in touch with him at that time. I did not know this at the time but he has said so since. I don't know whether this was the occasion when Chapin arranged to have Segretti hired to work for the campaign, I think it was subsequent to that.

Watergate Break-In

I was aware that Kalmbach was asked to raise funds for the committee for the purpose of legal fees for the defendants. I didn't know that he was involved in the payment. I don't know his full responsibilities in that assignment. Ehrlichman would not have had discussions with me regarding that.

I'm not precisely sure when I first learned of the break-in at the Watergate. Probably late June 17 by phone. I did not take any action at that

time. Sometime thereafter I learned that members of C.R.P. were involved. I don't remember how that story came out.

I do not recall being at any meeting with Mitchell or other persons regarding what procedures the White House should take regarding this event. There were obviously discussions about it, however. I was naturally dumbfounded

and struck by the stupidity of it. It would be natural that we did and it is possible that we did. I don't specifically recall having done so. I talked with Mitchell about the subject. There were other conversations. I don't recall any specific meetings. There were conversations at various times. I played no leadership role in this. I was concerned about it but it isn't an area in which I would have an active role.

I have no knowledge whether there were other people of Segretti's type hired. I think the understanding was that Segretti would line up other people, I assume as volunteers. I don't know whether he had authority to pay them. I did not approve any dollar amount. I did not approve payment to anyone else.

I don't know where the \$22,000 ad was placed. The money was delivered to Dick Howard or at Howard's direction to an advertising agency. I do not know whose name appeared on the ad. I do not know why the delivery of the \$328,000 was made in two deliveries. All I know is that those were Dean's instructions to Strachan, neither of them told me the rationale behind this split-up.

I didn't have direct knowledge of where the committee kept its funds, accounts, etc.

'I Have Met Porter'

I have met [Herbert] Porter [in charge of scheduling campaign surrogates] but do not know him. I had no knowledge that he had been induced by Magruder to perjure himself.

The only knowledge I have of Ehrlichman telling Dean to dispose of the contents of Hunt's safe after break-in is Ehrlichman telling me it isn't true. Dean told me at some point that what he had done in dealing with the contents of Hunt's safe was to turn all of the contents over to the F.B.I. agents except this one set of sensitive documents which he had turned over in a sealed envelope to Pat Gray, the purpose being for them to be held secure from the leaks that were coming out at lower levels of the F.B.I.

I do not remember if Dean recounted to me any instructions from Ehrlichman on this matter. I don't believe I am aware of any communication by Gray [to the White House] in October, 1972 that there were leaks regarding Watergate.

I don't know exactly when I became aware that there were funds being raised to pay the defendants' legal fees or to make payments to the defendants. I recall from time to time in the period shortly after Watergate, Dean mentioned the Cuban committee formed to raise funds.

I never had any knowledge of quid pro quo. I have seen recently that implication but I have never had any such knowledge.

I had no information in the early stages that Mitchell, Dean, Magruder and Liddy got together and talked about bugging Watergate.

I had no discussions about matters of substance with the U.S. attorney before the grand jury that we have not covered in this interview. The matter of executive privilege in the grand jury has not been resolved. It was raised 10 or 12 times by Ehrlichman. [It was not raised by me.]