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WATERGATE CHRONOLOGY: A COMPENDIUM OF SCANDAL AND REVELATIONS

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OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, May 6, 1974

Mr. FRASER. Mr. Speaker, when five agents of President Nixon's campaign were arrested at the Democratic National Committee's Watergate headquarters on June 17, 1972, White House Press Secretary Ronald Ziegler labeled the incident "a third-rate burglary." The Watergate break-in has since called "the opening act of one of America's greatest tragedies."

Watergate has mushroomed into a political scandal of unprecedented dimensions, with allegations, indictments, and events coming in rapid, bewildering succession. As Congress and the country debate impeachment of President Nixon, it is important to clarify our perception of the Watergate kaleidoscope.

From this chronology there emerges a clear picture of the Nixon administration showing flagrant and systematic violation of constitutional rights, subversion of the electoral process through illegal fund raising and campaign sabotage activities, abuse of the Federal bureaucratic machinery and willful obstruction of justice.

The chronology shows that Nixon illegalities began in 1969, for almost as soon as he became President, Richard Nixon began secret bombing of Cambodia and authorized illegal wiretaps on 17 reporters and Government officials. It also shows consistent White House efforts to block or impede the course of the Watergate investigation.

Yet despite Nixon's efforts to prevent full disclosure of the facts, the Watergate "bombshells" have continued. Now almost 2 years after the discovery of the Watergate break-in, we know that in undermining public faith in the integrity of our leaders and governmental institutions, President Nixon and his administration have delivered the most sinister attack on American democracy in our Nation's history.

The chronology follows:

WATERGATE CHRONOLOGY

(Compiled by

Americans for Democratic Action)

1969

January 20: Richard Nixon becomes President. John N. Mitchell is named attorney general, H. R. Haldeman becomes White House chief of staff, and Ronald Ziegler is appointed Nixon's press secretary.

March: Nixon begins secret bombing of Cambodia.

May: Nixon authorizes illegal "national security" wiretaps on 17 reporters and high government officials after leaks of information on SALT and the bombing of Cambodia.

August: At the request of the White House, the I.R.S. sets up an "Activist Organizations Group," later renamed the "Special Service Group," to crack down on "extremist organizations."

August 1: Justice Department initiates anti-trust proceedings against ITT in connection with an ITT-Hartford merger.

November: John D. Ehrlichman becomes Nixon's chief domestic advisor.

1970

April 30: Nixon announces invasion of Cambodia. Though U.S. air strikes begun in March 1969 total 3,875 by May 1970, Nixon tells the American people the U.S. has not moved against enemy sanctuaries in Cambodia for five years.

July: John Dean III becomes counsel to the President.

July 23: Nixon approves the "Huston Plan" calling for use of illegal methods to gather intelligence on demonstrators and domestic radicals. Five days later, Nixon allegedly rescinds his approval.

September: Pentagon allegedly begins pilfering of secret National Security Council documents, a project which continues through December 1971.

December: White House forms "Inter-agency Evaluation Committee" to serve essentially the same purpose as the Huston Plan, which apparently never went into effect.

December 16: Dairy industry group writes letter promising a \$2 million contribution to the 1972 Republican campaign in return for curbs on dairy imports.

December 31: Nixon places import quotas on certain dairy products.

1971

January 19: Herbert Kalmbach, Nixon's personal attorney, becomes unofficial fund raiser for Nixon's re-election campaign and begins soliciting illegal corporate contributions.

February: "National security" wiretaps authorized by Nixon in May 1969, and later declared unconstitutional by the Supreme Court, are terminated.

Spring: Nixon begins secret taping of all

Oval Office conversations, ostensibly for historic purposes.

March 12: Agriculture Department announces decision not to raise milk price supports.

March 25: Shortly after a meeting between Nixon and milk producers, Agriculture Department announces milk price support increase. Nixon campaign contributions from the dairy industry—eventually totaling at least \$427,500—are forthcoming.

May 3-5: May Day—Over 13,000 anti-war demonstrators are illegally arrested in Washington, D.C.

June: Pentagon Papers are published in the *New York Times* after being leaked by Daniel Ellsberg. Nixon directs creation of the White House "Plumbers" group, headed by Egil Krogh, Jr., and David Young, to investigate the matter. Ehrlichman hires E. Howard Hunt and G. Gordon Liddy to investigate Daniel Ellsberg.

June 25: Dita Beard, an ITT lobbyist, writes memo linking ITT pledge of \$400,000 for the Republican convention in San Diego to favorable settlement of the anti-trust case against ITT.

July 23: At Ehrlichman's request, C.I.A. Deputy Director Robert Cushman meets with Hunt to provide logistical aid and equipment for Hunt's "highly sensitive mission."

July 31: ITT anti-trust case is settled favorably for ITT.

August: Nixon approves Hunt-Liddy trip to California to develop information on Daniel Ellsberg.

August 5: ITT deposits \$100,000 in the bank account of the G.O.P. Convention Bureau in San Diego.

September: Hired by presidential aides, campaign saboteur Donald Segretti begins recruiting Nixon supporters to act as spies in Democratic campaigns and to perform "dirty tricks."

September 3: Ellsberg's psychiatric records are burglarized from Dr. Louis Fielding's office in Los Angeles. The burglary is financed with Nixon campaign money.

October 15: Bill Graham Day, Charlotte, N.C.—The Secret Service is involved in widespread violations of civil liberties at observances honoring Billy Graham.

December: Liddy becomes general counsel to the Committee to Re-elect the President (CREEP) and begins developing an intelligence plan for use in the campaign.

1972

January 27: Mitchell, Dean, Deputy Director of CREEP Jeb Magruder, and Liddy meet to discuss Liddy's proposed \$1 million intelligence plan. Liddy is told to develop a "more reasonable plan."

February 4: Mitchell, Dean and Magruder consider and reject a second Liddy intelligence plan, but instruct Liddy to continue his planning.

February 15: Maurice Stans becomes fi-

6.7
JULY

financial chairman of CREEP and immediately begins stepped-up fund-raising efforts.

February 29: Columnist Jack Anderson breaks story linking favorable settlement of the ITT anti-trust case to Nixon campaign contribution and implicating Mitchell and Kleindienst in the affair.

March: White House aide Charles Colson writes memo to Haldeman warning of evidence which could "directly involve" the President in the ITT scandal.

March 1: Mitchell resigns as attorney general to become director of CREEP.

March 29, 30: Mitchell, Mitchell's aide Fred LaRue and Magruder meet in Key Biscayne, Florida, and Liddy's third plan calling for illegal entry into and wiretapping of the D.N.C.'s Watergate headquarters is approved.

April 3: Gulf Resources President Robert Allen contributes \$100,000 to Nixon's campaign, and the E.P.A. subsequently abandons a pollution case against Gulf's principal mining and smelting company.

April 5: Hugh Sloan, CREEP finance committee treasurer, receives the Allen contribution after it has been "laundered" in Mexico and gives some of this money to Watergate conspirator G. Gordon Liddy.

April 7: New disclosure law requiring strict financial reporting of campaign contributions takes effect. CREEP has collected \$19.9 million in legal and illegal campaign contributions prior to this date.

April 10: Financier Robert Vesco, under investigation by the S.E.C. for stock fraud, makes a secret \$200,000 contribution to the Nixon campaign.

May 27: First Watergate break-in and wire-tapping of the D.N.C.'s headquarters takes place undetected. Magruder, according to his own testimony, begins supplying Mitchell with copies of information obtained from the wiretaps.

June 9: Congress confirms Richard G. Kleindienst as attorney general.

June 17: Second Watergate break-in occurs, and five agents of the Nixon campaign are arrested by the Washington, D.C. police.

June 19: Press Secretary Ronald Ziegler labels Watergate break-in "a third-rate burglary."

June 20: Nixon, Haldeman and Ehrlichman, according to the Haldeman memo, meet to plan a "PR offensive" to divert attention from Watergate. During a telephone conversation with Nixon, Mitchell, according to his own testimony, tells the President that only the five men arrested at Watergate were involved.

June 22: Referring to the Watergate break-in, Nixon says the White House has had "no involvement whatever" in the matter.

June 23: At Nixon's request, White House aides Haldeman and Ehrlichman meet with C.I.A. officials Helms and Walters to discuss limiting the F.B.I.'s Watergate investigation.

June 28: Acting F.B.I. head L. Patrick Gray III, at a meeting with Dean and Ehrlichman, is given Hunt documents which Dean labels "political dynamite" and says "should never see the light of day."

June 29: Nixon's attorney Herbert Kalmbach begins funneling secret payments to Watergate conspirators.

July 1: John Mitchell resigns as Nixon's campaign manager after Martha Mitchell demands publicly that he leave politics and "all those dirty things that go on."

July 6: Gray calls Nixon to express concern over the interference of White House aides in the F.B.I.'s Watergate investigation, stating, "People on your staff are trying to mortally wound you." Nixon tells Gray to press ahead with the investigation.

August 1: G.A.O. begins investigation of CREEP finances after the *Washington Post* reports that a \$25,000 Nixon campaign contribution was deposited in the bank account of one of the men arrested at Watergate.

August 26: G.A.O. issues first of several reports citing Nixon's re-election finance committee for apparent violations of the Federal Election Campaign Act of 1971.

August 27: CREEP Finance Chairman Maurice Stans denounces the G.A.O.'s report.

August 28: Attorney General Kleindienst announces the F.B.I.'s investigation of Watergate will be the "most extensive, thorough

and comprehensive" investigation since Kennedy's assassination.

August 29: Nixon claims all those currently employed in his administration have been cleared of complicity in Watergate by an investigation by John Dean.

August 30: Nixon says he will not comply with a Democratic suggestion that a special, nonpartisan prosecutor instead of a Justice Department attorney be assigned to the Watergate case.

September 15: Grand jury indicts James W. McCord, Jr., Bernard L. Barker, Frank A. Sturgis, Eugenio Martinez, Virgilio Gonzales, E. Howard Hunt, and Gordon Liddy for their involvement in the Watergate break-in. At a meeting in the Oval Office, Nixon, Haldeman and Dean discuss Watergate and related matters. The President, according to Dean, commends Dean on doing a "good job" and says he is pleased the Watergate case has "stopped with Liddy."

October 10: CREEP dismisses *Washington Post* report of a widespread Republican network of espionage and sabotage directed against Democrats as "a collection of absurdities."

October 23: Citing Justice Department files, *Time* magazine reports that Donald Segretti was hired by White House aides Dwight Chapin and Gordon Strachan and was paid more than \$35,000 by Nixon fund raiser Kalmbach to sabotage the campaigns of Nixon's Democratic rivals.

November 7: Richard Nixon is re-elected President in a landslide victory.

December: Gray destroys Hunt documents received June 28, 1972.

1973

January 8: Trial of Watergate defendants Barker, Sturgis, Martinez, Gonzales, McCord, Hunt and Liddy begins, with Judge John Sirica presiding.

January 11: Defendant E. Howard Hunt pleads guilty.

January 15: Defendants Barker, Sturgis, Martinez and Gonzales also plead guilty.

January 26: CREEP finance committee is fined \$8,000 after pleading no contest to charges of failing to report to the G.A.O. cash sums given to Liddy by treasurer Hugh Sloan.

January 30: Liddy and McCord are convicted for illegal activities in connection with the Watergate break-in.

February 7: Senate Watergate Committee is established by a unanimous vote of the Senate.

February 27, 28: President Nixon evinces complete awareness of the Watergate cover-up and reassures John Dean that he has no legal problems, according to testimony by Dean.

February 28: Senate hearings on L. Patrick Gray for confirmation as permanent F.B.I. director begin, and new disclosures are made about CREEP officials' efforts to impede the F.B.I.'s Watergate investigation.

March 3: Attorney General Kleindienst testifies he was not pressured to drop the ITT antitrust case.

March 13: Nixon, according to testimony by Dean, says he has approved executive clemency for Hunt and there will be "no problem" raising \$1 million to silence Watergate participants.

March 17: Nixon learns of the Ellsberg breakin but does not immediately disclose this to Judge Matt Byrne, who is presiding at the Ellsberg trial.

March 21: According to his own account, President Nixon first learns of the Watergate cover-up, "personally assume(s) responsibility for conducting intensive new inquiries into the matter," and orders those conducting the investigations to report directly to him.

March 23: Judge Sirica makes public a letter received from McCord which charges that perjury was committed at the Watergate trial and that defendants were pressured to plead guilty and keep silent.

March 24: McCord tells Senate investigators that John Dean and Jeb Magruder had advance knowledge of the Watergate break in.

April 5: Gray's nomination as F.B.I. director is withdrawn, and Nixon and Ehrlichman meet with Judge Byrne to sound him out for the vacant F.B.I. post.

April 14: Ehrlichman, according to his own account, gives Nixon a complete report on the Watergate cover-up.

April 15: Dean, according to his own testimony, tells Nixon he has gone to the U.S. attorney's office to report the Watergate cover-up. Nixon, according to Dean, says he had been "joking" when he approved raising \$1 million for the Watergate defendants and was "foolish" to have discussed executive clemency with White House counsel Charles Colson.

April 17: Nixon announces there have been "major new developments in the case." After ten months of assailing Watergate news stories as "fiction," Press Secretary Zeigler declares past White House statements on Watergate "inoperative."

April 24: White House denies that Watergate defendants were offered executive clemency to plead guilty and remain silent.

April 26: Jeb Magruder, deputy director of CREEP, leaves the Department of Commerce, thereby becoming the first Nixon Administration official to resign over the Watergate affairs.

April 27: Gray resigns as acting director of the F.B.I. after being implicated in the attempted Watergate cover-up. G.A.O. issues report charging Hugh Sloan, former Nixon campaign finance committee treasurer, with knowingly submitting false financial reports to the G.A.O. Office of Federal Elections in violation of the Federal Election Campaign Act.

April 30: Nixon announces the resignations of four of his closest aides: H. R. Haldeman, White House chief of staff, John Ehrlichman, chief domestic advisor, presidential counsel John Dean, and Attorney General Richard Kleindienst. The President nominates Elliot Richardson as attorney general, giving him full charge of the Administration's Watergate investigation and authority to appoint a Watergate special prosecutor. Accepting full responsibility for Watergate, Nixon pledges that justice will be pursued "fairly, fully and impartially, no matter who is involved."

May 4: Former campaign treasurer Hugh Sloan admits that a secret cash funds of \$1-2 million was never reported publicly.

May 9: Plumbers' head Egil Krogh resigns as under secretary of transportation. Nixon pledges Attorney General designate Richardson and the special prosecutor "will have the total cooperation of the executive branch in investigating the Watergate case."

May 10: Former Nixon cabinet officers Mitchell and Stans are indicated in connection with the Vesco contribution for which they allegedly promised to intercede on behalf of Vesco in a stock fraud case. Dean issues statement reporting efforts underway to prevent his testifying fully and freely.

May 11: Judge Byrne declares a "mistrial due to government misconduct" in the Pentagon Papers case and dismisses all charges against Daniel Ellsberg and Anthony Russo.

May 14: Deputy C.I.A. Director Lt. Vernon Walters says White House pressure was put on the C.I.A. to assist in the Watergate cover-up. John Dean denies ever having written, or been asked to write the so-called "Dean Report" referred to by Nixon on August 29, 1972.

May 16: Press Secretary Ziegler confirms a *New York Times* report that information for Nixon's August 29, 1972, statement did not come from a briefing by Dean as originally maintained. Former C.I.A. Director Helms testifies White House aides used Nixon's name in requesting C.I.A. aid in the Watergate cover-up.

May 17: Senate Select Committee on Watergate, chaired by Sam Ervin (D-N.C.), begins televised public hearings.

May 18: Attorney General designate Richardson names Archibald Cox as special Watergate prosecutor.

May 22: Nixon for the first time publicly admits Watergate cover-up efforts at the White House, but denies personal complicity.

The cover-up, he claims, was necessary to protect "national security."

May 23: Elliot Richardson is confirmed as attorney general after a long Senate deadlock over the powers of the special prosecutor.

June 14: Former CREEP Deputy Director Magruder testifies that Mitchell approved the Watergate break-in and later participated in the cover-up.

June 20: CREEP finance committee is fined \$3,000 for failing to report the Vesco contribution.

June 25-29: Challenging Nixon's May 22, 1973 statement, John Dean testifies the President was aware of the Watergate cover-up as early as September 1972.

June 28: Senate Watergate Committee publishes list of 216 Americans on the White House "enemies" list.

July 6: American Airlines official admits to having donated \$55,000 in corporate funds to the Nixon campaign after solicitation by Herbert Kalmbach. Subsequently, other corporations admit illegal contributions.

July 10: In testimony before the Senate Watergate Committee, John Mitchell denies having approved the Watergate break-in, but acknowledges his role in the cover-up.

July 13: *New York Times* reports that, according to their attorney, Watergate defendants Barker, Sturgis, Martinez, and Gonzalez pleaded guilty to the Watergate break-in because they were promised support payments and executive clemency by Hunt.

July 16: Surprise witness Alexander Butterfield, former deputy White House aide, discloses the existence of Oval Office tapes.

July 17: Senate Watergate Committee requests access to certain White House tapes. Dean's attorney predicts the tapes will corroborate his client's assertions about Nixon's awareness of a cover-up.

July 18: Special Prosecutor Cox asks for the tapes.

July 20: In a speech to the White House staff, Nixon says, "Let others wallow in Watergate, we are going to do our job."

July 23: Claiming "executive privilege," Nixon refuses to release the White House tapes. Senate Watergate Committee decides to subpoena the tapes, and Cox announces he too will seek subpoenas.

July 24: Ehrlichman, in testimony before the Senate Watergate Committee, cites "national security" as justification for White House intelligence operations.

July 27: Ehrlichman defends the Nixon campaign practice of spying on opposition candidates and states that the President was not fully briefed on Watergate until April 14, 1973.

July 30: Haldeman testifies that he and Nixon are innocent of wrongdoing in the Watergate affair, claiming they were "misled" by Dean.

July 31: Rep. Robert Drinan (D-Mass.) introduces first impeachment resolution.

August 2: Vice President Spiro Agnew is informed he is under federal investigation on charges of bribery, extortion and tax fraud.

August 6: Former F.B.I. head Patrick Gray testifies he received no orders after March 21, 1973, to report the progress of the F.B.I.'s Watergate investigation directly to the President.

August 14: In response to a federal prosecutor's request for his personal records, Vice President Agnew declares, "I have nothing to hide."

August 15: In an address to the nation, President Nixon again denies personal complicity in Watergate. Citing the need for confidentiality of presidential conversations and documents, Nixon says he will not turn over White House tapes to either the Senate Watergate Committee or the special prosecutor's office.

August 22: Nixon declares at a press conference, "We must move on from Watergate to the business of the people."

August 29: Judge Sirica issues court order for nine presidential tapes.

September 4: Krogh, Young, Liddy and Ehrlichman are indicted in connection with

the Plumbers' break-in at the office of Ellsberg's psychiatrist.

October 1: Donald Segretti pleads guilty to having engaged in illegal campaign activities.

October 10: Vice President Agnew resigns after pleading no contest to income tax evasion.

October 12: Court of Appeals upholds Judge Sirica's order for White House tapes.

October 14: Rep. Jack Brooks (D-Tex.) says the expenditure of \$10 million in public funds on Nixon's private residences raises "serious questions of propriety."

October 19: Seeking resolution of the tapes controversy, the White House makes the "Stennis Compromise" offer: Sen. Stennis (D-Miss.) will be allowed to listen to the tapes so he can attest to the veracity of White House transcripts. Special Prosecutor Cox rejects the offer. John Dean pleads guilty to obstruction of justice in the Watergate cover-up, saying he hopes that "others involved will also come forward and accept responsibility for their complicity."

October 20: "Saturday Night Massacre": Richard Nixon orders the firing of Special Prosecutor Cox; Attorney General Richardson and Deputy Attorney General Ruckelshaus resign rather than carry out Nixon's order; and Cox is ultimately fired by Solicitor General Robert Bork.

October 23: Yielding to public pressure, Nixon agrees to hand over the tapes.

October 30: House Judiciary Committee begins its impeachment inquiry.

October 31: Nixon's lawyers report to Judge Sirica that White House tapes of two key presidential conversations—Nixon's June 20, 1972 conversation with Mitchell and his April 15, 1973 conversation with Dean—do not exist. Former Attorney General Kleindienst admits for the first time that he was pressured by President Nixon to drop the ITT case.

November 1: Leon Jaworski is named as special prosecutor to replace Cox.

November 13: White House aide Stephen Bull testifies that Nixon knew about the missing tapes on September 29, 1973—a month before the White House announced their disappearance.

November 14: The firing of Cox is ruled illegal by U.S. District Court Judge Gerhard Gessel.

November 17: In response to newsmen's questions about his personal finances, Nixon declares at Disney World, "I am not a crook."

November 20: Having begun "Operation Candor," Nixon assures Republican governors there will be no more "bombshells."

November 21: White House reveals gap of 18½ minutes in tape of crucial June 20, 1972 conversation between Nixon and Haldeman.

November 26: Nixon's secretary Rose Mary Woods says that she may have caused the tape gap by inadvertently leaving her foot on the control pedal.

November 30: Panel of experts approved by the White House and the court begins examining the tape with the missing segment. Former Plumbers' head Krogh pleads guilty to federal charges in connection with the Ellsberg break-in.

December 6: Congress confirms Gerald Ford as Vice President.

December 8: Nixon releases his tax returns for the year 1969-72. Questions immediately arise concerning, among other things, the validity of a \$576,000 deduction taken for the donation of Nixon's vice-presidential papers to the National Archives.

1974

January 15: Electronics specialists appointed by the court conclude the 18½ minute tape gap could not have been caused accidentally in the manner suggested by Rose Mary Woods.

January 18: Judge Sirica recommends a grand jury investigation to determine whether indictments should be brought for criminal actions in the tape mystery.

January 30: In his state of the Union message, Nixon declares: "One year of Watergate is enough."

February 14: Special Prosecutor Leon Jaworski reports refusal of White House to comply with his request for tapes and documents relating to his investigation.

February 20: House Judiciary Committee staff study concludes that a President can be impeached for serious offenses against the public interest without proof of criminal misconduct.

February 25: Nixon declares at a press conference: "I do not expect to be impeached."

March 1: Watergate grand jury gives Judge Sirica a sealed report believed to deal with Nixon's involvement in the Watergate cover-up.

March 2: Grand jury indicts seven of President Nixon's former White House and campaign aides for participation in the Watergate cover-up: H. R. Haldeman, John Ehrlichman, John Mitchell, former White House special counsel Charles W. Colson, former White House aide Gordon Strachan, former Assistant Attorney General Robert C. Mardian and CREEP Attorney Kenneth W. Parkinson.

March 6: Nixon once again insists that he never approved clemency or hush money for the Watergate defendants, but concludes that the tape of his March 21, 1973 meeting with Dean and Haldeman might lead to different conclusions.

March 12: Press Secretary Ziegler suggests the President will not supply the House Judiciary Committee with additional tapes until it defines an impeachable offense.

March 18: Judge Sirica rules that the Watergate grand jury's secret report should be turned over to the House Judiciary Committee.

March 19: Sen. James L. Buckley (Cons., R-N.Y.) becomes the first conservative Republican in Congress to call on Nixon to resign because of the Watergate scandal.

March 21: A House Government Operations Subcommittee reveals that over the past five years \$17 million in government funds have been spent on Nixon's San Clemente and Key Biscayne homes.

March 26: Federal Judge John Sirica gives the House impeachment inquiry the sealed report and the locked briefcase of evidence entrusted to him by the Watergate grand jury March 1.

April 3: The staff of the Joint Committee on Internal Revenue Taxation finds that Nixon owes \$476,431, including interest, on back taxes for 1969 through 1972 for improper deductions and failure to pay capital gains taxes; Nixon agrees to pay \$432,787 plus interest that the Internal Revenue Service ruled was due. Lt. Gov. Ed Reinecke of California is indicted for allegedly having lied to a Senate Committee about the ITT pledge of money for the 1972 Republican National Convention.

April 5: Dwight Chapin, President Nixon's former appointments secretary, is convicted of two counts of perjury concerning his connection with political saboteur Donald Segretti.

April 11: The Judiciary Committee votes 33-3 to subpoena tapes and records of more than 40 presidential conversations.

April 28: John Mitchell and Maurice Stans are found innocent of all charges relating to the Vesco campaign contribution.

April 29: President Nixon agrees to turn over to the House Judiciary Committee edited transcripts of some of the subpoenaed Watergate tape recordings "blemishes and all."

May 1: The Judiciary Committee votes 20-18 to reject Nixon's delivery of edited transcripts rather than copies of the original tapes.

(Copies available, see page 4)

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