

EX-SEGRETTI AIDES CITE 'DIRTY TRICKS'

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2 Witnesses Tell Watergate
Panel of Acts to Upset
Democrats in Campaign

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WASHINGTON, Oct. 4—Two young men—one apparently contrite, the other unapologetic—told the Senate Watergate committee today of their efforts to disrupt the election campaign of Democratic presidential candidates last year.

Both men, Martin Kelly and Robert Benz, said that they had been hired for \$150 a month, plus expenses, by Donald H. Segretti, and both admitted to having performed a series of "dirty tricks" against the Democrats, mostly in Florida.

They said that they had hired pickets, distributed fake campaign literature, planted stink bombs and written letters. Mr. Kelly testified that he had hired a girl for \$20 to run naked in front of a hotel where Senator Edmund S. Muskie was staying, shouting, "I love Ed Muskie."

Finds Abuse 'Deserved'

The hearings are scheduled to resume Tuesday with more testimony on political tricks by both Republicans and Democrats.

The two men testified under a grant of immunity that prohibits prosecution against them based on their Senate testimony. But there the similarity between the two ended.

Mr. Kelly, 24 years old, said that he "felt guilty" for what he had done and told the committee, "Any shame or abuse that is heaped on me is certainly well deserved."

He gave expansive answers to the Senators' questions, describing articulately and in a measured voice how he had worked "to get the candidates to start back-biting each other."

He started with small pranks,

Ex-Segretti Aides Testify On 'Dirty Tricks' in 1972

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he testified, releasing white mice and a bird at a Muskie news conference, placing advertisements on radio stations that might alienate Cubans in Florida against Senator Muskie and hiring persons to picket the candidates' rallies.

Mr. Kelly said that he had hired the girl for \$20 because she was "hungry for money," but he said that he had not expected her to strip and parade naked in front of Senator Muskie's hotel in Gainesville, Fla.

But the girl performed her task. A former staff member of the Maine Senator recalled later today that he and the senator had looked out of their hotel room in Gainesville and "saw a girl running naked as a jaybird."

A Top News Item

The Senator paid little attention to the incident, the staff member recollected, but "the reporters stumbled all over themselves to cover the story."

Mr. Kelly said that gradually his activities became "more intense." He explained: "I was weaving my own spider web, and I could not get out of it. I kept getting in deeper and deeper."

Once, he testified, he posed as a Muskie worker and invited African diplomats to dress in their native garb and go to a dinner for the Senator here. He also ordered limousines to pick up the diplomats and charged all bills to the Muskie headquarters.

"Almost the complete purpose" of his efforts, he said, was not to influence voters directly but to "have the candidates get upset and maybe do something back to the other candidates."

Senator Edward J. Gurney, the Florida Republican, called most of the pranks "rinky-dink" and said that all politicians expect to have tricks played on them. "I loathe it, but it is part of politics," he added.

But Mr. Kelly, dressed neatly in a brown double-knit suit, said, "I'm not here to defend my position, I don't have a position to defend."

Mr. Benz, who will be 25 tomorrow, volunteered no information and answered most

A sample of his exchange with Terry F. Lenzner, an assistant chief counsel on the committee, went as follows:

LENZNER: Did you also learn that Senator Jackson was to appear for the opening of his headquarters in Tampa in January of 1972?

BENZ: Correct.

Q. Did you take any action with regard to that?

A. Yes, I did.

Q. Can you describe those?

A. Those were the activities where I hired a Mr. Yancey and a Mr. Edwards to sit across the street with some signs, something stating to the fact that "Believe in Muskie" or "Muskie Country."

Q. Were you on the scene that day?

A. Yes, I was.

Q. Did you observe Senator Jackson with Mr. Yancey and Mr. Edwards?

A. Yes, I did.

Q. Was a photograph taken of that?

A. Yes, there was.

Q. Did you see it reprinted in newspapers?

A. Yes, I did.

Q. Was that widely circulated, to your knowledge, throughout the country?

A. I don't know.

Q. It was in the local area?

A. Correct.

Giving Medicine Back

He explained, though, how he had worked in the unsuccessful 1970 Senate campaign of former Representative William C. Cramer, a Republican, and how a number of unspecified tricks had been played on him. Some of the same Democrats who had worked against Mr. Cramer, he said, were working for Democratic candidates in the 1972 Presidential primary in Florida.

He agreed to work for Mr. Segretti, Mr. Benz explained, because "it was an opportunity to give these people a little bit of the medicine they had given me."

He said that he knew it was illegal for him to instruct an accomplice to send a letter accusing Democrat Senators Hubert H. Humphrey and Henry M. Jackson of sexual misconduct, and he declared that he felt badly because the accomplice, George Hearing, was now in jail, having pleaded guilty to distributing false campaign material.

But he said that he "felt like I did what I should do," and



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Robert M. Benz testifying before the Watergate committee yesterday.

he added that he thought his tricks might prevent Democrats from acting in like fashion in future campaigns.

"If my actions in any way would have cleaned up politics, they would have contributed something," he declared.

Everyone but politicians knew that dirty tricks and political sabotage were commonplace in election campaigns, Mr. Benz testified, rubbing his palm across his thinning blond hair.