

# What Price Watergate?

Watergate has been exorbitantly expensive not only in terms of what the scandal has done to the entire process of American Government, but also in a more mundane matter: how much has it cost? As can best be estimated, the price of investigating, prosecuting and defending the extraordinarily large cast of characters involved in the affair already exceeds \$8,000,000, most of it in

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public funds. The biggest spenders:

► Senator Sam Ervin's Watergate committee has so far spent \$1.5 million. The committee's staff now numbers 63, including 17 full-time attorneys and six investigators.

► The office of Special Watergate Prosecutor Leon Jaworski will have spent at least \$2.8 million by July 1. Jaworski (salary: \$38,000) employs a staff of 80, including 38 attorneys. The three Watergate grand juries have cost more than \$225,000 so far.

► The House Judiciary Committee, now considering impeachment has \$1,000,000 to spend on the investigation through June. Chief Counsel John Doar (\$35,900) is assembling a special staff of 45, which will include 30 lawyers.

Watergate has some all but incalculable costs. Ervin and the six other Senators on his committee (each of whom earns \$42,500), plus key members of their staffs, have been devoting much of their time to the affair. Several congressional committees have been investigating the President's taxes, the financing of his houses and other aspects of the scandal. Grand juries in New York, Los Angeles, Houston and Orlando have looked into Watergate matters. Dozens of employees of the FBI, the Justice Department, the Internal Revenue Service and the General Accounting Office have been drawn into the vortex.

For the defense of the President, the White House claims to have spent only \$290,418 between July 1, 1973, and early January—all in public funds. Special Counsel James D. St. Clair (\$42,500) heads a task force of ten attorneys working exclusively on Watergate. Named to the staff last week was John J. Chester (\$40,000), a trial lawyer from Columbus, Ohio.

So far, 26 persons have been charged for crimes under the rubric of Watergate, and many others—such as H.R. Haldeman, the former White House chief of staff—have hired lawyers to protect themselves. Private legal fees can be brutal, as Spiro Agnew learned while running up bills reliably reported to total \$200,000. Former White House Counsel John Dean has probably incurred bills of \$50,000. John Ehrlichman, Nixon's former chief domestic adviser, is fighting court actions on both coasts that may already have cost him \$100,000. New York Attorney Henry Rothblatt charged \$125,000 to defend four Watergate burglars, and Watergate Conspirator E. Howard Hunt has paid out nearly \$220,000, a sum largely raised by Nixon campaign aides.

Nor is there any end in sight for these fees. This month Jaworski's grand juries are expected to hand down more indictments, setting up more trials and the prospect of appeals that could stretch on indefinitely. The last bill of the Watergate account will not be stamped PAID for a long, long time to come.