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WHITE HOUSE SUPERSPY

WASHINGTON.
The White House ordered E. Howard Hunt, its resident snoop, to conduct a secret investigation in May 1972, of a prominent Cuban exile physician.

The subject of the scrutiny was Dr. Enrique Huertas, whose reputation is impeccable. Yet confidential White House documents show that the undercover Hunt was turned loose on him.

The price was directed by one of President Nixon's staff assistants, William "Vic" Marumoto, who was paid \$100,000 for the assignment to find jobs and contacts for wealthy Spanish-Americans. A memo furnished to the investigator who reported on a confidential May 12, 1972, mission, came to White House aides Charles Colson and Patrick "Had Howard" Hunt. Hunt checked out Enrique Huertas, president of the Cuban Medical Doctors in Exile, whom he reported cryptically. He added that Hunt had submitted a report to him.

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"Vic" was a fast lane for Hunt, who was running around in a silly CIA wig covering out heavy Watergate duties against newsmen, Democrats and un-sympathetic Republicans. He is now serving time for his role in the Watergate debacle and conspiracy.

Dr. Huertas was turned over to Hunt for investigation at about the time the Cuban physician came to Washington to visit with Organization of American States foreign ministers. He also dropped by the White House to see Marumoto.

As Dr. Huertas recalls the encounter, he mentioned the need for a grant to build a medical facility for Cubans in Miami, Marumoto, in turn, invited Huertas to attend several receptions being held in conjunction with the OAS meetings.

Dr. Huertas impulsively refused to

go, saying he didn't want to attend any OAS functions until he could go as a representative of a free Cuba. In retrospect, he told my associate Les Whitten ruefully: "Marumoto must have thought, 'Who is this guy, anyway?'"

As Marumoto recalls the incident, he received a call from Charles Colson's office asking about an invitation to Dr. Huertas to attend an official dinner. The Colson aide suggested that Hunt check out the physician. Marumoto called Hunt to his office, gave him the doctor's name and later received a written report. Marumoto doesn't remember what Hunt reported, except that it was summed up in one or two pages.

The discovery of the Huertas episode raises the specter of dozens of other unreported probes which may have been carried out by the White House undercover "plumbers" squad at the whim of anonymous Nixon staff assistants.

Clearly, the break-in at Daniel Ellsberg's psychiatrist, the bugging of columnist Joe Kraft, the attempt to discredit the Kennedys, the going-over the plumbers gave my own operation and other publicized "Mission: Impossible" escapades still haven't exhausted the secrets buried in the deepest files at 1600 Pennsylvania Av.

Footnote: Both Colson and Malok told us they cannot remember Huertas' name or Marumoto's memo.

—The President's pal, Bebe Rebozo, sold some land to the federal government in 1969 for the Biscayne National Monument. He received an over-the-appraisal settlement on one 12.4-acre parcel and a huge settlement on another 77-acre tract he owned jointly with three others. In contrast, neighboring property owners have complained to

us they received single, take-it-or-leave-it offers that were far below the appraisal values.

—We have been inundated with citizen complaints that the military brass use government cars and drivers to haul around their wives and children. Spot checks have confirmed some of the charges. For example, Gen. Creighton Abrams, the Army chief, sends his daughter to an exclusive girls' school in Alexandria, Va. Along with some schoolmates, she is chauffeured to and from school every day in a military station wagon. At the same time, the Pentagon is cutting back fuel for essential military operations.

—Last June, we reported that the National Aquarium was compelled to spend a tenth of its meager budget to provide exotic fish for the pampered poobahs of government. The taxpayers, for example, supplied former Vice President Spiro Agnew with Kissing Couranins and White House press secretary Ronald Ziegler with Bleeding Heart Tetras.

As a result of our column, the National Aquarium has now been authorized to phase out its door-to-door fish service. All fish-tank holders have been notified by letter that "the maintenance of existing aquariums will be discontinued."

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—The 555th Air Force Band, a reserve unit of the Ohio Air National Guard, recently returned from a two-week tour of Spain. Although it may sound like a Spanish joy ride, it was anything but. The band members sat on wooden benches on aerial refueling planes for the trans-Atlantic trip.

They rushed around in an old bus to perform goodwill concerts. On the way to Toledo, Spain, the band's bus caught fire and their instruments went up in flames. Down but not out, the merry military musicians borrowed instruments, some from local high schools students, to meet their remaining commitments. Then they returned on another aerial refueler, sitting for 15 hours on wooden benches.

plain that these heralded enterprisers did not a liberate mankind in the Middle East and the ancient tensions and fears.

In this setting, Haig's appraisal of where it would have stood in the country's esteem "Watergate" is excessively cheerful. But it must also be conceded that the Dr. Mr. Nixon's present and seemingly climactic role identified as Watergate—events so numerous that the country seems under bombardment.

No simple episode has shaped the mood and disaffection; it is rather the cumulative lawlessness, dissembling and arrogance that has since the bid was initially lifted. Almost each "tentative verdict" the country has rendered—by a decisive majority—is that it simply does not believe the things Mr. Nixon says. That skepticism irretrievably increased by the riddling of a whole of exercises in simulated candor.

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As one fascinated by the element of accident I was once sympathetic to the view that Watergate was a kind of monumental piece of bad luck for a last seemed to have everything going for him. know of others who have been victimized and scarred by a single episode.

Many years ago in Washington one of the most and promising young lawyers of the New Deal caught stuffing ballot boxes in a local election. It was an apparently senseless aberration heaved he was trying, as a suspect ex-convict, to really a political "pro." After serving a prison term gallantly spent more than two decades neglecting himself, but always aware that he would not the eminence universally forecast for him.

Others have similarly learned that there are statutes of limitations on what may have been a meritorious life. But Watergate, it is now evident, was far an isolated misadventure in which Mr. Nixon was fairly entrapped. It reflected the amorality, co standards and disdain for the rule of law that named his inner circle; there the perpetration of his own sake—justified all abuses of power. They set the tone for those operations was Richard Nixon were consistent with his historic political life-style.

This is why Haig's wistful phrase "without hope, Watergate," or a comparable moral collapse other name, was as inherent in the Nixon era as pot Dome in the age of Harding. The question and how it would happen, and how long the I could beat the rap.