

More Fumes from the Watergate Affair

This kind of activity has no place whatever in our electoral process or in our governmental process. And the White House had no involvement whatever in this particular incident.

SO Richard Nixon told a White House press conference last summer, just after the first revelations of the Watergate affair. But some incriminating connections soon were made. Two of the seven men indicted for breaking into the Democratic National Headquarters last June to plant bugging devices had served for a time as White House consultants. The money that financed the espionage operation was traced to the Committee for the Re-Election of the President. Now TIME has learned that information in the Justice Department's files establishes a direct link between the White House and a Los Angeles attorney named Donald H. Segretti, who was paid more than \$35,000 from the C.R.P.'s funds to subvert and disrupt Democratic candidates' campaigns this election year.

The department's files state that Segretti, a 31-year-old registered Democrat and a former Treasury Department lawyer, was hired in September 1971 by Dwight Chapin, a deputy assistant to the President, and Gordon Strachan, a staff assistant at the White House. Chapin is the President's most trusted aide-de-camp and acts as a liaison between Nixon and his giant staff. For his services, Segretti was paid by Herbert Kalmbach, Nixon's personal attorney who has handled such matters as the acquisition of Nixon's estate at San Clemente, Calif. Segretti's recompense included a \$16,000-a-year salary plus expenses. From Sept. 1, 1971, to March 15, 1972, Kalmbach gave Segretti more than \$35,000, including one payment of \$25,000 in cash. The money came from a C.R.P. fund that was kept in the safe of Maurice Stans, chief political fund raiser for the President. Chapin and Strachan did not respond to efforts to reach them for comment.

It was a record of telephone calls between E. Howard Hunt, apparently one of the chief movers in the Watergate operation, and Segretti that first put investigators on to the scent. Next they discovered that Segretti went to Miami to meet with Hunt, one of the two former White House consultants indicted in the Watergate affair. The meetings occurred at the time the Watergate bugging scheme was being planned. The Justice Department investigators, under the command of Assistant Attorney General Henry E. Petersen, did not pursue the Segretti connection.

Segretti divulged to Justice Department officials only the bare outlines of his mission. He said that he was hired,

among other things, to disrupt the primary campaigns of Democratic candidates. On one occasion, he said, he went to California to harass candidates with telephone calls and feed them false tip-offs. He also arranged to have embarrassing questions put to the Democrats at their public appearances. The Department of Justice learned that in 1971 Segretti asked a former Army officer friend to infiltrate the George Wallace campaign and work as an informant.

An assistant attorney general of Tennessee, Alex B. Shipley, has said that Segretti approached him last year and tried to hire him to disrupt Democratic campaigners. "It wasn't represented as a strong-arm operation," said Shipley. "He stressed what fun we could have." As an example of the trouble he might cause, Shipley was told that he could call the manager of a coliseum where a Democratic rally was to be held. He could represent himself as the candidate's field manager and report some threats from hippies or other troublemakers, asking that the rally be moved up to, say, 9 o'clock, thus ensuring that the coliseum would be padlocked when the candidate arrived at 7.

Know Nothing. As the fumes of Watergate continued contaminating the atmosphere of the election year, there were other hints of "fun." The Washington Post reported last week that a letter to New Hampshire's Manchester *Union Leader* accusing Edmund Muskie of a racial slur against French Canadians may have been written by Ken W. Clawson, deputy director of White House communications. A Post reporter, Marilyn Berger, claimed that Clawson told her that he had written the note, which said Muskie had condoned the epithet "Canuck," an insult to New England's French Canadians. The letter, published over the signature of a "Paul Morrison" in the *Union Leader*, helped to precipitate Muskie's famous "crying speech," when the candidate shed indignant tears and thus damaged his image of stability. Clawson last week declared: "I know nothing about it."

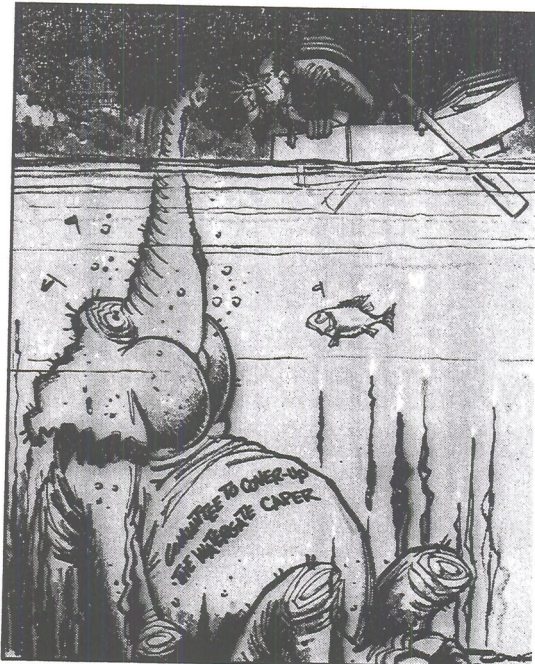
Last week Edmund Muskie charged that his presidential effort was plagued by a "systematic campaign of sabotage," although he did not specifically accuse the Republicans. Sometimes, he said, embarrassing campaign material was sent to constituents in "Muskie" envelopes. Once, before the Florida primary, a flyer was distributed on Muskie's stationery accusing Senators Hubert Humphrey and Henry Jackson of illicit sexual activities.

TIME has also learned that Bernard Barker, the former CIA agent who led the raiding party into the Watergate, recruited nine Cubans from Miami in early May and assigned them to attack

Daniel Ellsberg, the man who released the Pentagon papers to the public. Barker flew the Cubans to Washington first class, showed them a picture of Ellsberg, and told them: "Our mission is to hit him—to call him a traitor and punch him in the nose. Hit him and run." The site chosen was outside the Capitol rotunda, where the body of J. Edgar Hoover was lying in state. The idea was to denounce Ellsberg, who was holding a rally on the steps, and start a riot. As it turned out, the "riot" ended after a brief flurry of punches, most of which landed on Ellsberg's bodyguard.

It is difficult to tell just what effect

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"...Four more weeks!...Four more weeks!..."

the Watergate affair and other episodes of political sabotage will have upon the presidential election. It may be that the entire issue of dirty tricks will only linger vaguely in the air and then be swept aside in a Nixon triumph. Texas Democrat Wright Patman, chairman of the House Banking and Currency Committee, failed last week in his repeated efforts to open a congressional investigation of Watergate.

With that, Edward Kennedy, as chairman of the Senate Subcommittee on Administrative Practice and Procedure, took the first steps to open an investigation of his own. Late last week, the subcommittee's Democratic majority approved Kennedy's plans to subpoena witnesses in an inquiry not only of Watergate but also of other political espionage. Whether the investigation could be mounted soon enough—or would uncover enough beyond what is known—to stir an apparently indifferent public remained a question.