

Demos Sue Nixon Unit On Break-In

\$ Million Damages Sought

Examiner News Services

WASHINGTON—Democratic National Committee Chairman Lawrence O'Brien, charging that the attempted break-in at his party headquarters brought the level of politics down to "gutter level," announced today the filing of a million-dollar suit against the Committee for the Reelection of the President.

O'Brien told a news conference the suit is for compensatory and punitive damages totalling \$1 million.

Also named in the suit were McCord Associates, a security firm headed by James W. McCord, and the five men arrested Saturday night in the break-in at the Watergate Apartment complex where the Democratic national headquarters is located. McCord was one of the five arrested.

"Blatant Act"

"As far as I am personally concerned," said O'Brien, "there is a clear line of direction to the Committee for the Reelection of the President and a developing clear line to the White House."

"I am pleased to note that the FBI is investigating this case," said O'Brien, "but I am shocked to learn that the White House, through its official spokesman, deems unworthy of notice this blatant act of political espionage."

"And now we learn of the potential involvement of a White House special consultant who is said to specialize in delicate assignments for the President," O'Brien said.

The Washington Post re-

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ported today that a consultant to White House special counsel Charles Colson is listed in the address books of two of the five men arrested.

Name and Number

The Post said federal sources close to the investigation said the address books contain the name and home number of Howard E. Hunt, the consultant, with the notations, "W. House" and "W. H."

White House press secretary Ronald Ziegler said at a noon briefing that "I talked with Colson after reading the Washington Post story. He made it quite clear to me that he is in no way involved."

Ziegler, who yesterday characterized the incident as "a third rate burglary attempt," said he would not get into a discussion of the matter and referred reporters to political spokesmen.

Nixon Not Involved

He said President Nixon has not become personally involved in the case and has not talked with former Attorney General John Mitchell about it.

But Mitchell, heading the President's re-election campaign, was in the White House today.

Mitchell called the suit a "political stunt."

The re-election committee "did not authorize and does not condone" the alleged burglary and bugging attempt, said Mitchell, and "is not legally, morally or ethically accountable for actions taken by individuals without its knowledge and beyond the scope of its control."

Ziegler was asked about reports that Hunt made a trip to Miami at Colson's request two weeks ago.

"I don't know where Mr. Hunt has been," Ziegler said. "He has not been in a consulting role with the White House for months."

Worked for CIA

Hunt worked for the Central Intelligence Agency from 1949 to 1970, the Post

said. All five suspects have had links to the CIA.

A White House official said Hunt last worked for the White House on March 29, for a regular daily consultant fee.

The suit announced by O'Brien, filed in U.S. District Court, asks for \$100,000 compensatory damages to Democratic headquarters offices and for expenses the party has incurred because of the burglary. It also asks for \$900,000 in punitive damages.

Bugging Charges

The five suspects are being held on charges of attempted burglary, attempted interception of telephone and other communication and violation of voting rights laws.

O'Brien said the Democratic party is the victim of a "police state tactics."

"At a time when polls and primaries have demonstrated beyond a doubt a national cynicism toward politics and the political process," O'Brien added, "Americans now read and hear of cheap cloak and dagger intrigues at the national political level. We learned of this bugging attempt only because it was bungled. How many other attempts have there been? And just who was involved?"

A federal grand jury will be empaneled to investigate the presence of McCord and four Miami men in Democratic Party offices at 2 a.m. Saturday, wearing surgeons' rubber gloves and armed with 35 mm cameras and eavesdropping gear.

A total of \$5300, mostly in \$100 bills with the serial numbers running in sequence, was discovered on the suspects and in the adjacent hotel where the four men were registered under false names.

Sen. William O. Proxmire (D-Wis.) demanded an instant Federal Reserve Board check on the bank that issued the \$100 bills and the method of payment for them.

Police refused to make public the serial numbers, however, and board chairman Arthur S. Burns informed Proxmire that no check on Federal Reserve records could be started without the numbers.

Fired

McCord, who was hired last Jan. 1 by the re-election committee to supervise security at its offices near the White House, was paid \$1209 a month, after taxes.

He earned an additional \$625 a month as a consultant for the GOP National Committee from October through February, when he was raised to \$666 a month.

Arrested with McCord were:

- Bernard L. Barker, a Miami real estate man who reportedly played a role in planning the abortive 1961 Bay of Pigs invasion of Cuba. He is a native of Havana.

- Frank Sturgis (alias Frank Fiorini), a former member of Fidel Castro's guerrilla forces who defected in 1959. He lost his citizenship for serving in a foreign armed force but had it restored with the aid of former Sen. George Smathers (D-Fla.).

- Virgilio R. Gonzales, a locksmith, from Miami.

- Eugenio R. Martinez, a real estate agent, also from Miami.

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