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'Young Winston,' Old Politics

By Henry Mitchell

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The Washington premiere (invitation only) of "Young Winston," a movie about Winston Churchill's early years, was handled with such refinement Monday night that hardly anybody turned out to watch celebrities—a pity since there were a number of wheels present.

"Only four people came to see what the kleig lights were all about," said a Columbia Pictures photographer who found slim pickings, crowdwise, at the MacArthur Theatre.

And later, at the 18th-century reception rooms in the deepcarpeted offices of the Motion Picture Association on I Street, nobody, nobody stood on the sidewalk to see specimens of capital officialdom.

Lord Cromer, the British ambassador, and Lady Cromer were patrons for the event, which drew representatives of the White House (listed under "Miscellaneous" on a guest list), a wide assortment of ambassadors and, of course, stars of the picture.

At the screening CIA

chief Richard M. Helms ran into White House appointments secretary Dwight Chapin, whom newspaper stories linked to the alleged Republican spying on the Democrats. Some published pictures showed Chapin with a crew cut—a picture 10 years old.

"Hello, Dwight," Helms called, "I'd recognize you anywhere."

Chapin later laughed at the remark and told friends, "He said he'd recognize me anywhere—I should ask him for a job."

John Ehrlichman, assistant to the President for domestic affairs, also joked about Chapin's longer hair nowadays—"I like him better in a crew cut, myself," he said.

Ehrlichman had previously said that all the commotion about Republican spying and supersleuthing "did not persuade me" there was any truth in the charges, and he doubted voters would be persuaded, either.

William L. Safire, special assistant to the President, asked a reporter, "What do they say he (Chapin) is guilty of? Sabotage? Sabo-

tage of whom? It's meaningless."

The Oscar-winning producer of the film, Carl Foreman, was one of the first at the reception and was introduced to Jean Westwood, chairman of the Democratic National Committee—also listed under "Miscellaneous."

Knowing the interest in politics in Washington, Foreman asked her if she was Democratic or Republican.

"Democrat," she said, inspiring a bystander's quip that you never know nowadays, with people running around in disguise and infiltrating everything.

"You think maybe I'm a Republican trying to sabotage the program," Mrs. Westwood said, smiling none too lightheartedly.

The allegations of bugging Democratic headquarters and generally sabotaging efforts drew a comment from Mrs. Westwood.

"Until a week ago it was only in Washington and New York that you heard about the Watergate, but in the last week it's become the first thing people comment on no matter where I go in America."

"The other day a Republican—some of my best friends are Republicans, best friends between elections—told me in San Francisco he thought the election should be postponed 'till the Watergate business was fully investigated.

"And if the Republicans think it's really just nothing, why don't they go right into court?"

"Obviously this Watergate thing is going to be held over 'till after the election, right?" asked Foreman, who is not entirely familiar with American politics but who seemed interested.

"I don't know if it can all be held," said Mrs. Westwood.

The star of the Churchill film, Simon Ward, celebrated his 31st birthday at the party—a cake with one candle had been prepared.

Father Gilbert Hartke of Catholic University, a sort of dean in the field of university theater, told the young man, "the thing that impressed me was not that you learned all the things about Churchill, but that you developed the character from the inside out. I could see the maturation as your performance went on."

Jack Valenti called for silence and said he had a stupendous announcement—"I thought of bugging this place, since only leaked stories get in Washington papers"—but decided his announcement would make news anywhere. He then announced it was Ward's birthday, which guests who had observed the large cake saying "Happy Birthday, Simon" had suspected for some time.

Among the ambassadors and ministers spotted during the evening were those of Bangladesh, Belgium, Botswana, Chile, El Salvador, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Indonesia, Italy, Ivory Coast, Malaysia, Nepal, Nigeria, Turkey, and Yugoslavia.

Secretary of Transportation John Volpe attended with his wife, along with Marion Smoak, acting chief of protocol, and Mrs. Smoak; Sens. Harry Flood Byrd Jr. (Ind-Va.), Roman Hruska (R-Neb.), Mike Gravel (D-Alaska) and Jennings Randolph (D-W. Va.).



Dwight Chapin, White House appointments secretary, and Mrs. Chapin at the opening of "Young Winston."