

4 Watergate Suspects Said Still Being Paid

Sources close to the Watergate case have said that "at least four of the five men arrested last June in the Watergate raid are still being paid." The New York Times reported yesterday.

The Times, in a front-page article, also quoted sources "familiar" with the case as saying that one of the men caught in the break-in at Democratic headquarters, Eugenio Rolando Martinez, "was an active employee of the Central Intelligence Agency at the time of the break-in" and was stricken from the CIA's payroll within a day of his arrest.

Martinez and five other men enter the second week of their trial here today on charges of conspiracy, burglary and wiretapping before Chief U.S. District Court Judge John J. Sirica. There have been persistent reports since Friday that four of the defendants—the ones the Times reports are still being paid—want to follow the lead of former White House

aide E. Howard Hunt Jr., and switch their pleas to guilty.

The Times said these points were made by more than one person in a series of interviews with "federal investigators, political figures and defense lawyers":

• High officials of the Committee for the Re-Election of the President have acknowledged privately that they are unable to account for \$900,000 in campaign contributions.

• A Nixon supporter, working in Democratic headquarters, taped open doorlocks leading to the basement, allowing the five men eventually caught to enter the Watergate.

The Times' article, written by Seymour M. Hersh, says that one of the defendants, Frank Sturgis, acknowledged in a meeting in Miami two weeks ago that he has continued to receive payments but that "his funds had been sharply reduced in the last

few months. Another closely involved source said that payments to the four men now range from \$400 a month up."

The money is coming from unnamed sources, the Times said, with Sturgis suspecting that part of it originated with the committee for the Re-Election of the President.

The article states that a freelance writer, Andrew St. George, has been circulating a proposed book outline to New York publishers that recounts Sturgis' undercover work. In the outline is an assertion that former Attorney General John N. Mitchell was kept informed of the activities of the Watergate defendants.

De Van L. Shumway, a spokesman for the re-election committee, was quoted in the article as saying that the Times story was "outrageously false and preposterous," and that Mitchell joined in that criticism.

The article said that St. George signed a contract with

Harpers' Magazine Press for the book and that a publishing firm spokesman had confirmed that such a contract had been signed for "under \$5,000."

In addition, an NBC official was quoted as saying that the television network had paid something under \$8,000 for a contract with Sturgis, with Sturgis to be interviewed on the "First Tuesday" monthly news program.

The Times states that "both Mr. St. George and Mr. Sturgis are controversial figures in their own circles, where they have mixed reputations. While some praise Mr. St. George's intelligence" and devotion, others say he "sometimes confuses fact and fantasy."

The article states that "there are many in the Miami area who have denounced Mr. Sturgis as a fabricator" but "there are obviously those who thought him reliable enough to join the intelligence team."

The Washington Merry-Go-Round

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Hunt Urged Guilty Pleas in Bugging

By Jack Anderson

We can now shed more light on the backstage efforts to persuade the Watergate defendants to plead guilty and save the White House the embarrassment of a public trial.

On Dec. 26, we reported that the Justice Department had discreetly sounded out some of the defendants about entering guilty pleas. The prosecutors were cautious in their conversations with defense lawyers. But more direct messages were relayed through E. Howard Hunt, the former White House aide and CIA veteran.

At first, the defendants held out for a softening of the charges. The five who were caught inside Democratic headquarters, for example, wanted the break-in charge reduced to illegal entry. This would have made their offense a simple misdemeanor.

Any cutting back of the charges, however, would have looked like a fix. So instead, the mystery men behind the scenes used pressure and persuasion. They also alternately stopped and resumed the cash

payments that had been promised to the defendants.

In return, the defendants hinted they might make some embarrassing revelations if they were abandoned. Some indicated they might write books about their experiences, telling all.

Hunt agreed to plead guilty, apparently with a tacit understanding that he wouldn't have to spend too long in jail. He privately urged the other defendants to follow his example.

CIA Visitors

Some of the defendants, who had been involved with Hunt in the Bay of Pigs operation, also received private visits from some of their former CIA comrades. The visitors brought expense money and also offered to make regular payments to the defendants' families. A \$1,000-a-month figure was mentioned.

Our sources could not, or would not, identify the men behind the scenes. We can report only that most of the money for the defendants was funneled through Hunt. He delivered part of the cash to Bernard Barker, who distributed

it to the men he had recruited for the Watergate misadventure. Hunt's wife was carrying \$10,000 in cash when she was killed in a Chicago airliner crash.

Footnote: At the outset of the trial, the prosecutors made a remarkable agreement not to introduce the most damning evidence the FBI had dug up. This was a detailed diary that one of the defendants, Eugenio Martinez, had kept. As a minor functionary for the CIA, he was required by the CIA to keep a record of his activities. Those who have had access to the diary, however, tell us Martinez, in true CIA fashion, used code names to identify all his contacts and associates. Nevertheless, the diary provides an excellent record of the espionage operation at the Watergate.

Pentagon Pipeline

Pentagon Censorship — The Pentagon has acknowledged that orders went out on Dec. 30 to all personnel, civilian and military alike, to keep their mouths shut about military activities and peace prospects in Southeast Asia. Not reported, however, was the

sweeping nature of the order. American pilots flying combat missions over North Vietnam, for example, were specifically prohibited from talking to newsmen. A special directive stipulates: "The no comment guidance specifically precludes interviews at all levels and with air crews in particular." Even the Coast Guard, though it doesn't come under Pentagon jurisdiction, submitted to the censorship order. Adm. Chester Bender, the Coast Guard commandant, ordered all his people to report press queries not to their superiors in the Transportation Department but to the Defense Department.

Zumwalt's Elephants—Adm. Elmo Zumwalt, the Navy chief, recently ordered two ceramic elephants delivered to him from South Vietnam. The tiny pachyderms were shipped free of charge by Pan Am. This happens to be patently illegal. When we asked the admiral's office about this, they told us he would pay the shipping charge. The cost of shipping, we have learned, is more than Zumwalt paid for elephant icons.

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