

# Nixon and the Watergate Case



**Jack Anderson**

WASHINGTON is buzzing about President Nixon's possible role in the Watergate case. Did he authorize the political espionage and sabotage? Was he aware of the break-in and bugging of Democratic Party headquarters? What is he trying to hide by ordering subordinates not to answer Senate questions about Watergate? The President tried to answer the whippers last week by letting Senate Republican leader Hugh Scott pass on to the press a private remark. "Hugh," the GOP leader quoted the President as telling him, "I have nothing to hide. The White House has nothing to hide."

Our own White House sources say the President certainly did not authorize anyone to send a burglary-bugging team into the Democratic lair. But they acknowledged that he approved the overall espionage-sabotage operation.

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MR. NIXON grew up in the Murray Chotiner school of politics. "Find out everything there is to know about the opposition candidate," Chotiner used to tell his political charges. "Some protest we don't want to run that kind of campaign. They say they want to run a constructive campaign and point out the merits of our own candidacy. I say to you in all sincerity that if you do not deflate the opposition candidate before your own campaign gets started, the odds are you are going to be doomed to defeat."

Sources who sat in on the President's

political strategy sessions last year say he still took the Chotiner approach. He spoke vigorously of his early political frays as "rock'em, sock'em campaigns."

But most of all, they recall, he relished political intrigue. The man they knew to be warm and compassionate, even shy and sensitive, would chortle over the prospect of undoing a political rival. He was never happier than when he was scoring against the liberals who have always fought him.

Our sources say the President ordered an espionage-sabotage effort in 1971 after Maine's Senator Ed Muskie, then the Democratic front runner, began to pass him in the presidential polls. The original purpose, they say, was to undercut Muskie.

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THE INSTRUCTIONS setting up the espionage-sabotage mission, say our sources, were issued through the President's chief of staff, H. R. Haldeman. He had direct authority over Dwight Chapin, the President's appointments secretary, who routed money to Mr. Nixon's personal attorney, Herbert Kalmbach, to help finance the sabotage campaign. Kalmbach admitted to FBI agents that he had paid up to \$40,000 to Donald Segretti who allegedly headed up the sabotage effort. We would like to believe the President has "nothing to hide." But we can no longer ignore the President's personal responsibility for the developments that led up to the Watergate law violations.