



On a wooded knoll near their home, author Jack Anderson and seven of his children inspect the spot from which Justice Department agents kept

him under surveillance, hoping to discover his sources. The Anderson youths retaliated by keeping a careful watch on the government agents.

My Journal on Watergate

by Jack Anderson

WASHINGTON, D.C. If I had been a better reporter, I might have prevented the break-in at Washington's Watergate on June 17, 1972, and changed the course of history. Two months before the Water-buggers were captured, I was told about their plan to eavesdrop on the Democrats. With a little more diligent digging, I might have uncovered enough details to print the story. This would have broken up the plot and spared President Nixon his current humiliation.

Or I might have altered history more to George McGovern's liking. I learned last August that E. Howard Hunt, the

romantic spy, had packed his Watergate papers in eight cardboard boxes, smuggled them out of the White House and hidden them away in an associate's basement in Alexandria, Va. I almost gained access to Hunt's hidden papers, but he reclaimed them just ahead of me. These contained dramatic documentation that would have bared the whole Watergate skulduggery in time for the voters to act.

Investigating each other

My own Watergate story began long before the name became a household word. Shortly after President Nixon moved into the White House, he and I

began to investigate one another. I became aware in 1970 that he was using lie detectors and grand jury subpoenas in an effort to find out who my sources were.

Inside the Pentagon, suspected sources were grilled behind the forbidding doors of Room 3E993. Some were followed and their neighbors were questioned. Once, the gumshoes zeroed in on the wrong man, a mild, bespectacled Pentagon aide named Gene Smith, who was badgered, threatened and finally subpoenaed to appear before a grand jury in Norfolk, Va. Smith denied under oath that he had ever talked to me. U.S. Attorney Brian

Gettings admitted afterward that it had been "suggested" he go after Smith. "We probably did have the wrong man," acknowledged the prosecutor.

In 1971, the President formed his private Plumbers Squad, including G. Gordon Liddy and E. Howard Hunt, to plug news leaks, among them my India-Pakistan columns. They concluded mistakenly that the source was located on Henry Kissinger's staff. Innocent staffers were yanked from behind their desks and dragged to polygraph machines, although it was the White House, not my sources, doing the lying about Pakistan. Eventually an entire section of Kissinger's staff was scattered around the world, and Adm. Robert Welander who headed it was exiled to the Atlantic fleet.

The Plumbers start working

The Plumbers really went to work on me in March, 1972; after I published a memo from Dita Beard to her ITT superiors linking an antitrust settlement with a \$400,000 pledge to help finance the Republican Convention. *The Washington Post* reported that the White House was "directing a major effort to discredit columnist Jack Anderson and the ITT memorandum he published . . . the effort includes feeding negative

material about Anderson . . . to Republican members of the Senate and to the press."

At one point, Hunt tried to persuade Dita Beard to repudiate her memo. He turned up in Denver at Dita's hospital bedside under the name of Edward Hamilton, an alias he would also use at various stages of the Watergate incident. He had donned makeup and a cheap red wig for the occasion, a wig which was askew, giving him the appearance of a French mime. Dita's son, Bull, later described Hunt's appearance as "very eerie; he had a red wig on cockeyed, like he put it on in a dark car."

As *The Washington Post* reported it, the White House was "coordinating a continuous effort to discredit Anderson." The Plumbers were assisted in this effort by another Watergate figure, Robert Mardian, who then headed the Justice Department's Internal Security Division. He ordered my house staked out, but I learned the makes and license numbers of three autos used by Mardian's men. With nine children, I was able to command a far more reliable counter-espionage squad than Mardian's. My kids had a lot of fun spotting the cars. They reported back that they could see men with binoculars, bringing to our neighborhood an exhilarating air of intrigue. They located the main lookout atop a knoll near a church about a mile from my door.

'They're after me now'

I retaliated by also sending members of my staff to watch Mardian's house and to tail him wherever he went. When the investigator thus became the investigated, he had conniptions. A source in his office told us he kept wailing: "They're after me now!"

I also suspected, but could never prove, that the Nixon crowd tapped my telephones. I was only slightly surprised, therefore, by a letter mailed to me on April 15, 1972. It was written by William Haddad, a New York entrepreneur who, until a dozen years ago, had been a prize-winning investigative reporter. Haddad told me he had learned from a private investigator of plans to tap the telephones of the Democratic National Committee. Haddad understood the plot had been hatched by a group of advertising men, known as the November Group, who had been recruited for the Nixon campaign.

As it turned out, I was personally acquainted with some of the Waterbuggers. Frank Sturgis, an incurable soldier of fortune who had roamed the world in search of danger, excitement and fighting, had been a friend of mine for many years. I had written in *PARADE* about his exploits fighting for and then

against Fidel Castro.

He introduced me in Miami to Bernard Barker, short and swarthy, who was known to his associates as "Macho" (he-man). They spoke of Eduardo, their CIA superior during the Bay of Pigs, who I only recently realized was E. Howard Hunt. They were a collection of romantics, forever seeking adventure, forever finding misadventure.

On April 17, 1971, exactly 10 years after the Bay of Pigs, Barker found a note pinned to his door: "If you are the same Barker I once knew, contact me [at a Miami hotel]." The note was signed by Eduardo. Thus the Waterbuggers, recruited from the Bay of Pigs bunglers, were assembled for their biggest caper.

A familiar face

I had everything but a road sign pointing to the story. My press notices claimed I was an investigative reporter; I had been alerted to the Watergate plot two months in advance; and I had personal ties with the Waterbuggers. Yet I was quite oblivious of the conspiracy when on June 16, 1972, I was making my way through Washington's National Airport to catch a plane to Cleveland. I recognized a familiar face and stopped to chat. It was Frank Sturgis.

I asked what he was doing in Washington. "Private business," he said, with a conspiratorial smile. He introduced me to Eugenio Martinez, the CIA-affiliated locksmith who was to pick the Watergate locks that night.

I made a mental note to find out what Sturgis was up to, then I hurried on to Cleveland. Next day, I read on Page 1 what Sturgis had been up to. He had been captured, with the rest of the Cuban "Mission Impossible" team, inside the Watergate.

'Fighting Castro'

I looked him up immediately in the old red brick building that houses the District of Columbia jail. He would say only that the Watergate project was part of their fight against Castro. In return for their services, they had also been promised, said Sturgis, that some Cuban refugees suffering from the fog and distance of London would be allowed to come to Miami.

Sturgis told me he'd been paid only expense money and didn't know what legal assistance he would get. With his assent, I went to court and asked that he be paroled in my custody. The Justice Department, distrusting my charitable intentions, suspected I might pump him for more answers and vigorously objected to releasing Sturgis in my care. He was remanded, therefore, to his cell block.

(My court appearance in Sturgis' behalf also disturbed the Democrats. After I printed details of Larry O'Brien's expense accounts, the Democrats issued a statement suggesting I had received information stolen from their offices by the Waterbuggers. I had managed, as usual, to gain the enmity of both political parties.)

Continuing my pursuit of the Watergate story, I learned from FBI sources the gist of the preliminary findings. It was necessary, however, to document the details. I asked my sources to bring me the FBI investigative reports. It is much easier to quote a confidential FBI report than it is to pry the details from a long list of people associated with the story.

But while I was trying to pry the documentation loose from FBI files, two young reporters from *The Washington*

Post, Bob Woodward and Carl Bernstein, got the story by hard leg work. They printed the startling details of the spying-sabotage operation behind the Watergate break-in.

My search for documentation, meanwhile, led me to the Hunt papers. While the melodramatic G. Gordon Liddy had shredded his Watergate documents, Hunt, the author of 46 obscure novels, apparently recognized the literary value of this hush-hush material. He packed his documents into eight cardboard boxes, obtained clearances to move the sealed boxes out of the White House, then arranged for a trusted associate, Roy Sheppard, a federal employee, to pick them up and stash them in his basement.

I dealt with Sheppard through his lawyer, Peter Wolfe, who was deeply

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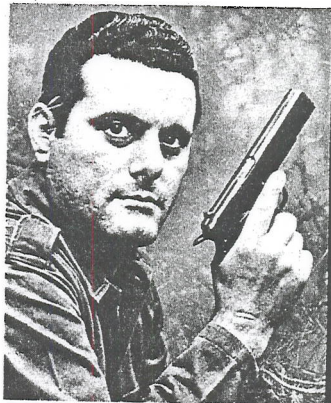
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Robert Mardian, then the head of the Justice Department's Internal Security unit, ordered Anderson tailed, only to find himself being followed.



E. Howard Hunt stashed eight boxes of Watergate evidence in a friend's home. Anderson nearly intercepted it, but Hunt reclaimed it just in time.



In 1961 Frank Sturgis, using the name Fiorini, co-authored a *PARADE* article with Anderson on Cuban freedom fighters, posing for this stony-faced cover photograph (left). After Watergate capture, Sturgis looked even grimmer (right).



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WATERGATE CONTINUED

troubled about the secrets hidden in his client's basement. I pursued Wolfe, pleaded with him and, I felt sure, persuaded him to acquire the documents from his client. I was so sure of gaining access to the documents that I alerted my associate Les Whitten to be ready to help read the contents of the boxes. But suddenly, in August, Hunt contacted Sheppard who returned the incriminating boxes. That chance to blow the Watergate scandal wide open was lost.

By this time, I was convinced that the President's chief of staff, H. R. Haldeman, had directed the dirty tricks operation. My White House sources told me he controlled the political campaign so tightly that no important decision could be made without his approval. I couldn't get positive proof, however, that he had okayed the spying and sabotage.

Powerful but invisible

The most I could say, as I reported on Aug. 22, was that Haldeman was "the most powerful man in the 1972 campaign" except for the President himself. "Operating out of the White House on government salary," I wrote, "Haldeman has tried to remain the invisible man of the campaign . . . Haldeman issues political directives, approves campaign contracts, receives political reports and coordinates campaign activities."

By Feb. 25, 1973, I was able to implicate Haldeman a bit more. "Senate investigators and FBI agents," I reported, "have followed the Watergate tracks right up to Haldeman's door but can't get past his bright young assistants. The FBI men, for example, were forbidden from questioning him. Yet they were able to trace Watergate clues to Haldeman aides who never make a move without asking Haldeman."

I was also the first to link former Attorney General John Mitchell to the Watergate plot in a column published last Sept. 23. But the most important story, I felt, was the cover-up. The day after Christmas, I reported that the Justice Department had sounded out Watergate defendants "about entering guilty pleas" and thus keep the details of their operation off the court records.

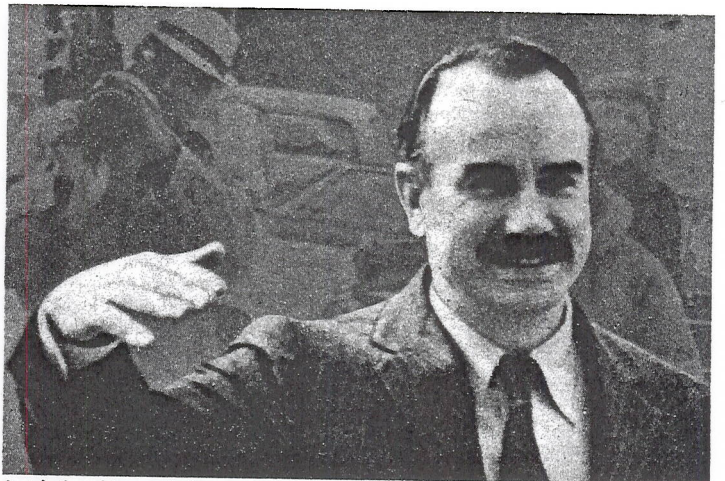
Late night meeting

All the defendants, nevertheless, went ahead with their court preparations. On the eve of the trial last January, Hunt pressured the four Miami members of the bugging crew to plead guilty. He brought up former CIA comrades from Miami to join in the appeal. On Jan. 11, he met late into the night with them at the Arlington Towers, just across the Potomac River from the Watergate. I waited in a nearby room for a report from one of the participants.

He told me how Hunt, invoking CIA discipline, had asked the four to keep silent and take their medicine. He spoke of "all for one and one for all," and he had a charismatic effect. They also felt sympathy over the loss of his wife in an airliner crash. At first, they asked him to arrange with the White House to soften the charges from burglary to illegal entry. This would have made their offense a simple misdemeanor. Hunt promised to seek eventual executive clemency and to arrange \$1000-a-month payments to their families. After some heated conversation, they agreed to stand together, mute, and accept the sentence of the court.

A rising public clamor

Only G. Gordon Liddy and James McCord went to trial. But the public clamor over Watergate was rising. The White House tried to placate the public by continuing the investigation but confining it behind grand jury doors. President Nixon invoked a most unusual interpretation of executive privilege to



Just before his conviction as a conspirator in the Watergate case, a jaunty G. Gordon Liddy salutes the press. He has since maintained the stoic silence of a spy.

prevent past and present White House aides from appearing before the Senate.

It seemed to me the Nixon Administration intended to use grand jury secrecy to protect the guilty and keep the embarrassing facts from reaching the public. I sought access, therefore, to the grand jury findings, and on April 16, I began printing verbatim excerpts.

This apparently helped to persuade the President to change his strategy. He announced at a secret Cabinet meeting that he would support a full investigation by both the grand jury and the Senate. He mentioned, with obvious irritation, my verbatim reports of the grand jury proceedings. Richard Kleindienst, then the Attorney General, protested that the leak must have come from the court reporting firm or one of the grand jurors. "Cut the crap," said the President. "We both know it came out of the Justice Department."

Trouble with transcripts

The Watergate prosecutors, meanwhile, complained that my publication of the transcripts was hampering their investigation. I immediately called on them to listen to their objections. They demanded to know how I got the transcripts, since the only copies were locked in their safes. I told them I couldn't divulge my source, not even



The first major witness at Senate committee hearings, co-conspirator James McCord, holds device he says was used to bug Democratic phones.

if I had to go to jail. For two hours, however, they pleaded with me to stop the direct quotes. Anonymous tipsters were refusing to appear as witnesses, they said, for fear of being identified in my column.

I told the prosecutors that I felt they had held back during the Watergate trial but that I believed they were now seeking the full truth. Therefore, I announced on April 25: "I have agreed not to print further verbatim excerpts from the Watergate grand jury hearings. I do so because I have become

convinced that further verbatim disclosures would not be in the best interests of the investigation. However, as a journalist, I have an obligation and a right to continue to report any and all pertinent information on this sordid scandal that so many people in high places have worked so hard to keep from the public."

There were a few close calls. My source of the grand jury testimony was almost revealed to the world through an accident of timing. He walked into my office while a TV crew was setting

up to interview me. He discreetly retreated before his face could be captured on film for the evening news.

James McCord's sensational testimony was summarized in advance in a detailed memorandum, which he submitted to the Senate committee. At a closed-door session, copies were distributed to each Senator to read and return. One copy, however, was never returned. Later, we published the newsworthy memo. The committee was never able to discover, however, which Senator had kept his copy.

Another source for memos

My associate Les Whitten arranged a midnight meeting to get more memos from another source. The committee began a quiet investigation of us which, at times, seemed almost as intensive as its investigation of Watergate.

But without the press, the Watergate scandal would have been hushed and hidden. There are always the ostriches, of course, who prefer to keep their heads in the sand. But our Founding Fathers intended that government misconduct should be exposed. The press in this case, particularly *The Washington Post*, served as the watchdog our forefathers would have wished. The Watergate story, for all its ugliness, is proof that the American system works.

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