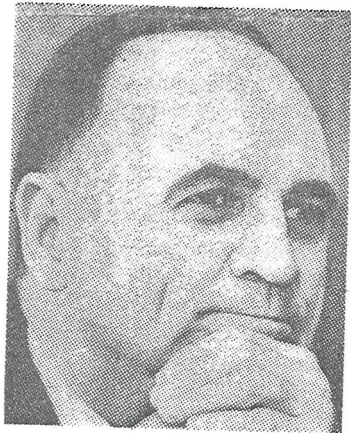


The Watergate Inquiry on TV

AT precisely 10 a.m. Senator Sam J. Ervin Jr. raised the gavel with its striped handle, commented in his soft North Carolina drawl that it had been specially carved for him by a Cherokee Indian, and gently rapped the green-felt-covered table.

Thus began quietly the public deliberations of the Senate Select Committee set up to investigate the bugging and break-in at Democratic party headquarters in the Watergate complex June 17, 1972, allegations of espionage and subversion during the 1972 presidential campaign and campaign financing irregularities.

The proceedings took place under the watchful



AP Wirephoto

McCORD

eyes of four television cameras and at least 300 spectators, most of them apparently lawyers and reporters, in the ornate Old Senate Office Building, Room 318, the Senate Caucus room, made famous by previous television spectacles that had given the public a chance to see for themselves who were the men in the white hats and who were the villains.

"We are beginning these hearings today (May 17) in an atmosphere of the utmost gravity," said Ervin. "The questions that have been raised in the wake of the June 17 break-in strike the very undergirding of our democracy. If the many allegations made to this date are true, then the burglars who broke into the headquarters of the Democratic National Headquarters at the Watergate were in effect

breaking into the home of every citizen of the United States."

"And if these allegations prove to be true, what they were seeking to steal was not the jewels, money or other property of American citizens, but something much more valuable — their most precious heritage, the right to vote in a free election."

'Not a Jury'

"This committee is not a court, nor is it a jury," said Senator Howard Baker (R-Tenn.), "It is the American people who must be the final judge of Watergate."

In addition to Ervin and Baker at the committee table were Herman Talmadge (D-Ga.), Daniel Inouye (D-Hawaii), Joseph Montoya (D-N.M.), Edward Gurney (R-Fla.), Lowell Weicker Jr. (R-Conn.), and two committee counsels, Samuel Dash for the majority, Fred D. Thompson for the minority.

The first witnesses were designed to explain the organization of the Committee to Re-elect the President (CRP) and the White House staff. **ROBERT ODLE JR.**, 29, CRP administrator, did add a surprise note when he said that former Attorney General John Mitchell was handling CRP business while still attorney general.

BRUCE KEHRLI explained the White House organization and Washington policemen **SGT. PAUL LEEPER** and **JOHN BARNETT** described how they rounded up the five men at Watergate.

Then came the first key witness, one of the men convicted in the Watergate affair, **JAMES W. McCORD JR.**, the balding, close-cropped, 49-year-old retired CIA man and ex-security chief for the CRP, who had refused to remain silent and thus touched off the myriad investigations of campaign bugging. He gave lengthy and explosive testimony (after taking the oath, as pictured on This World's cover) through Friday and into last Tuesday. His testimony included:

- A declaration that G. Gordon Liddy and E. Howard Hunt, both convicted Watergate conspirators, had

OVER

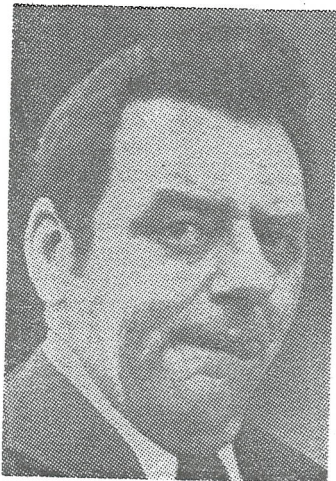
assured him that the Watergate break-in had been approved by Mitchell, presidential counsel John Dean III and Deputy campaign director Jeb Stuart Magruder. He said, "I felt the President of the United States had set into motion this operation."

● Testimony that there had been "pressure" on him to "plead guilty to keep silent." McCord said: "(John J.) Caulfield, a former presidential staff assistant, stated that he was carrying the message of executive clemency to me 'from the very highest levels of the White House.'"

McCord's startling statement, given in a low, husky, clipped monotone, seemed to hang in the Caucus Room's sudden silence. Senator Ervin broke the silence by declaring that McCord's statement "would not be accepted in a court of law to connect the President with what Mr. Caulfield was doing" because it was hearsay.

More Fuel

When the hearings resumed Tuesday, McCord added more fuel to the fire. He said Hunt had confided to him that he had enough information 'to blow the White House out of the wa-



AP Wirephoto

CAULFIELD

ter" and impeach President Nixon.

He said Liddy had told him of a plan to break into the safe of Las Vegas publisher Hank Greenspan to get "blackmail" information about an alleged connection between a Democratic politician with presidential aspirations and a racketeer. A "Howard Hughes plane would be standing by to fly (the men who broke in) to a Central American country," said McCord. But the plan was never put into action.

McCord said his own attorney, Gerald Alch had suggested that he go along with an effort to shift blame for the Watergate affair to the CIA, that CIA records could

'This committee is not a court, nor a jury'

be "doctored" and the new director, James Schlesinger, would "go along."

McCord told the Senators that he decided that "the nation was in serious trouble" when he saw both the CIA and L. Patrick Gray's leadership of the FBI undermined by efforts to cover up the Watergate affair and he wrote a letter in December to his friend John Caulfield warning him that if "the Watergate operation is laid at the CIA's feet where it doesn't belong, every tree in the forest will fall."

One Exception

JOHN J. CAULFIELD promptly confirmed McCord's testimony concerning their relations — with one major exception. He said he did not recall ever mentioning President Nixon by name in connection with offers of executive clemency.

Caulfield testified to the cloak-and-dagger-type rendezvous and the offers of ex-

ecutive clemency but said he was just a messenger for Dean, who had impressed on him that "this was a very grave situation which might some day threaten the President, that it had the potential of becoming a national scandal."

Caulfield said he asked Dean, "Do you want me to tell him (McCord) it comes from the President? He said words to the effect, 'No, don't do that. Say that it comes from way up at the top.' I specifically never spoke to the President of the United States and have no knowledge of my own as to whether he personally had endorsed this offer or indeed whether anyone had ever discussed it with him."

On Wednesday Caulfield admitted, "I know when wrongdoing is occurring" and that what he had done was wrong, but "my loyalties, especially to the President of the United States, overrode those considerations."

Another former New York policeman, who had done work for presidential domestic chief John Ehrlichman, ANTHONY ULASEWICZ, said he, too, knew he was doing something illegal when he acted as go-between for Caulfield in dealings with McCord, but assumed the request came from the White House.

GERALD L. ALCH, the young Boston attorney who had defended McCord at the Watergate trial, read a prepared statement covering his relations with McCord. He was obviously outraged by McCord's charges that the lawyer had tried to pressure McCord into pleading guilty, had said that CIA documents could be "doctored" or executive clemency arranged. McCord's story, he said, was "in some instances completely false, and in others . . . twisted out of context into untruths."



THE SENATE SELECT COMMITTEE FACES THE CAMERA

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