

Gray Changes Story on Files

Washington

L. Patrick Gray III changed his story yesterday and said he had examined files removed from the safe of a key member of the Watergate conspiracy before burning them with his Christmas trash.

The former acting director of the FBI, who had earlier said that he destroyed the documents without reading them, contended before the Senate Watergate committee that the papers had not been "evidence in the case."

He said, however, that his acceptance of the papers taken from the White House safe of E. Howard Hunt Jr., one of seven men sentenced in the Watergate break-in, constituted "a grievous misjudgment."

Gray largely confined his testimony to two aspects of the Watergate controversy: his handling of the files and the "confusion" over the covert activities of the Central Intelligence Agency.

Among Gray's points in a 51-page prepared statement were these:

- The FBI waited two weeks, at the suggestion of White House and CIA officials, to interview two key witnesses on the handling of \$114,000 in Nixon campaign funds involved in the Watergate break-in.

- President Nixon was informed by Gray on July 6, 1972, that "people on your staff are trying to mortally wound you by using the CIA and FBI and by confusing the question of CIA interest in, or not in, people the FBI wishes to interview."

- The President's only response to this, after "a slight pause," was to instruct Gray to "continue to conduct your aggressive and thorough investigation."

Previous testimony by Lieutenant General Vernon A. Walters, deputy director of the Central Intelligence Agency, differed in some respects with Gray's recollection of events.

Walters, who preceded Gray at the committee's witness table yesterday, testified that when he first went to Gray on June 23 he had indicated that he had left a meeting at the White House.

Walters and Richard Back Page Col. 5

Back Page 1
...then the CIA director had summoned to the White House earlier that day to a meeting with John Edgar Hoover and H. R.aldeman, M.F. Nixon's ranking advisers.

All four men agree that Waldeman told Walters to meet with Gray at the CIA offices, say, they were ordered to object to parts of the FBI investigation while the White House advisers contend they asked only that the question of CIA involvement be explored.

"I have no recollection of memory whatsoever of General Walters informing me at this meeting that he was coming to me after

More Watergate news on Page 6

backing to the White House Gray said, I understood him to be stating a very plain, not a White House message."

FILES
The Hunt files were passed to Gray on June 15, 1972—11 days after the Watergate protests by John W. Dean III, then counsel to the president. The transaction occurred in Philadelphia's

By destroying them with assistance of disclosure only compounded the error, said one source. Gray was resigned on the day the decision became public.

That the documents were not in fact destroyed by evidence, while legally significant, does not less their present better informed army of itself to

shall carry the burden of that...
DYNAMIS
He told the senate that...
...described...
...should...

There was...
...no doubt in my mind that...
...clear implication of the...
...substance and tone of their...
...remarks was that these two...
...files were to be destroyed...
...and I interpreted this to be...
...an order from the counsel to...
...the President of the United...
...States issued in the presence...
...of one of the two top assistants...
...to the President of the...
...United States."

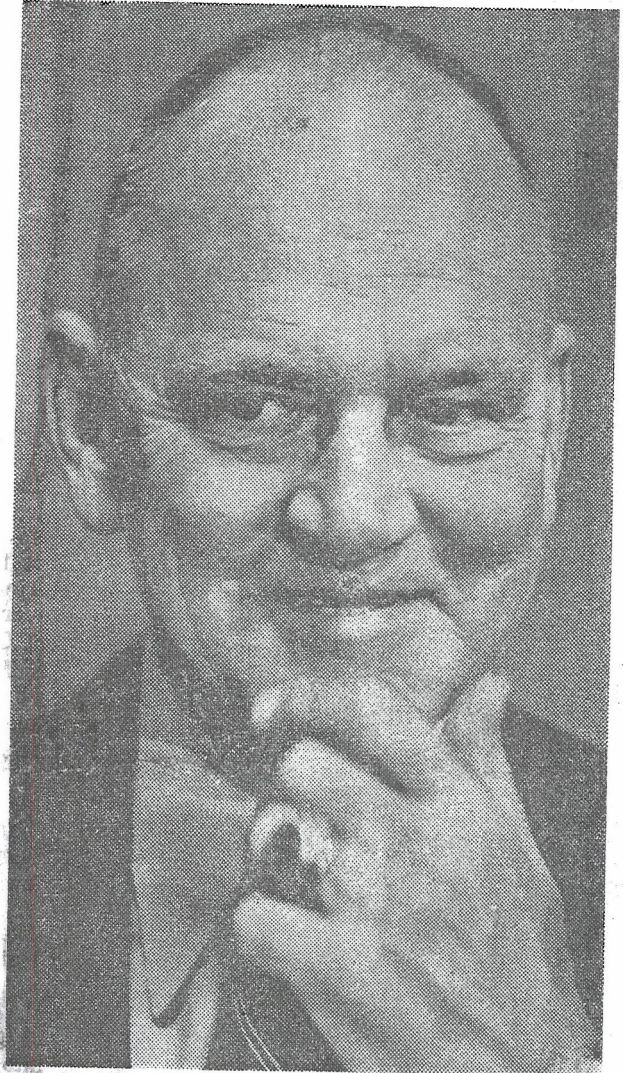
After keeping the files in his Washington apartment and his office safe, Gray said he took them to his home in Stonington, Conn.

"I distinctly recall that I burned them during Christmas week with the Christmas and household paper trash," he said.

"Immediately before put

...[Faded text block]

New Version



AP Wirephoto

L. PATRICK GRAY III TESTIFIED
He said he did look at files before burning them

...directed officials of the Kennedy administration in the assassination of President Diem of South Vietnam, had no reason at all to doubt the authenticity of the files, and was shaken at what I said.

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...wanker admitted recently that it was he who had leaked Gray's story to the press. Gray resigned the day the story appeared.

Among the delayed FBI interviews was one with Manuel L. Quiroga, Mexican attorney involved in the Mexican "laundering" of Nixon campaign funds ultimately funneled to the Watergate burglars.

Also, Gray told the committee. He had asked him not to let the FBI interview Kenneth Dahlberg, the Minneapolis financier and long-time supporter of Senator Herbert H. Humphrey (D-Minn.), whose name, one of the Nixon campaign was included in the Mexican transactions.

Dahlberg was interviewed.

New York Times