

# Mankiewicz: Tricks Sowed

By Lawrence Meyer

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The national political director of the 1972 McGovern campaign testified yesterday that the sabotage program conducted by White House and Nixon re-election committee agents against Democratic presidential candidates "seems to have been most successful" in causing deep resentment and division among the candidates.

Frank Mankiewicz told the Senate select Watergate committee that the White House and Nixon re-election committee program of espionage and sabotage in the 1972 campaign was a new departure rather than an extension of well-established tradition on American politics.

Mankiewicz's testimony was heard by only two members of the committee, Sens. Joseph M. Montoya (D-N.M.) and Lowell P. Weicker Jr. (R-Conn.). Since the last live televised session of the hearings last week, attendance by committee members has slackened.

Following yesterday's session, the committee recessed its hearings until about Oct. 30, at which time the Republican minority is expected to announce what witnesses it intends to call to testify.

"I think it is important for someone to state, clearly and firmly, that these 'dirty tricks' are not politics as usual, that American politics does not include any history of or tolerance for sabotage, espionage, perjury, forgery or burglary," Mankiewicz told the committee.

Although Mankiewicz discounted the theory that dirty tricks on behalf of the Nixon campaign actually influenced votes for Sen. George S. McGovern (D-S.D.) during the 1972 primaries, Mankiewicz suggested that the sabotage sowed the seeds of distrust between McGovern and other Democratic candidates, making them enemies rather than opponents.



Associated Press

Frank Mankiewicz: "Dirty tricks created discord . . ."

Mankiewicz said it was possible that Sen. Edmund S. Muskie's (D-Maine) decision not to endorse McGovern when Muskie withdrew from the presidential race was the result of campaign literature and acts of sabotage that Muskie mistakenly attributed to McGovern or his supporters.

"I've been told by people in the Muskie campaign that they believed that Sen. McGovern was the source of dirty tricks not only in New Hampshire, but in other states as well," Mankiewicz testified. He denied that the McGovern campaign had played any dirty tricks against Muskie or any other candidate.

Convicted political saboteur Donald H. Segretti, hired by presidential appointments secretary Dwight Chapin, told the committee last week that the purpose of his campaign

of sabotage and espionage was not so much to influence votes but to create divisions among the Democratic presidential contenders that would prevent the party from uniting behind its nominee after the convention.

According to Segretti and agents working for him, literature was distributed in the name of one Democratic candidate attacking another, letters were mailed on Muskie stationery falsely charging sexual misconduct by Sens. Hubert H. Humphrey (D-Minn.) and Henry M. Jackson (D-Wash.) and fake press releases were issued.

"The purpose of it all," Mankiewicz said, "the slimy letters, the forged press releases, the fake leaflets, seems to have been not to influence the result of any single primary election, but to create within the Demo-

cratic party such a strong sense of resentment among the candidates and their followers as to make unity of the party impossible once a nominee was selected. At that the effort seems to have been most successful."

Mankiewicz said he had no way to gauge how the dirty tricks affected Muskie's decision not to endorse McGovern before the convention, but, Mankiewicz added "I think the course of the 1972 campaign would have been vastly different if he (Muskie) had.

"I don't know how much it contributed but I certainly think that a man who had spent the last four months believing that Sen. McGovern was out to insult him, to make this kind of dirty trick, to make him seem the kind of person that he was not, would certainly be less willing to make that endorsement and I think it entered into that decision just like it entered into Sen. Humphrey's decision to join in the California challenge," Mankiewicz said.

Following the hotly-contested California primary between McGovern and Humphrey, which McGovern won, Humphrey agreed to a challenge of a portion of the delegates from California pledged to McGovern. The issue finally was resolved on the Democratic convention floor after a bitter battle that consumed several weeks prior to the convention and left a residue of ill feeling in the party.

Mankiewicz also attacked charges by former White House chief of staff H. R. (Bob) Haldeman that "agents" of McGovern consented to violent demonstrations, disruptions, heckling, burning or bombing of campaign headquarters and other incidents against President Nixon's re-election campaign.

Referring to the portion of Haldeman's testimony before the committee stating the charge, Mankiewicz said, "Now that statement is false in whole and in each part.



# Distrust

There is no activity listed there which had the knowledge and consent of any of the McGovern campaign, and no evidence of any kind has been presented—or ever will be presented, for none exists—to the contrary.”

The main point he wanted to make, Mankiewicz said, is that sabotage and espionage are not part of “politics as usual. This kind of activity may well be politics as usual for Nixon campaigns, but not for any other Democratic or Republican presidential campaign of which I have any knowledge. And I believe it to be the gravest disservice to the Republic to suggest that it is,” Mankiewicz said.

Mankiewicz was preceded at the witness table by Rick Stearns, 29, a Harvard Law School student who served as McGovern coordinator for the Western states in the 1972 campaign.

Stearns opened his testimony by charging that he had been called to testify “for a partisan purpose.” After Stearns finished his vigorous defense of the McGovern campaign, he quickly was engaged in disputes first with assistant chief counsel Terry F. Lenzner and then with minority counsel Fred Thompson.

Stearns apparently was called to resolve a conflict between his testimony to the committee staff and the testimony Wednesday of Frederick Taugher, southern California McGovern campaign coordinator, concerning a decision to allow McGovern headquarters phones in Los Angeles to be used to organize support for a demonstration against President Nixon in September, 1972.

Taugher said Stearns participated in the decision, and Stearns said he had no recollection of having discussed the matter.

The issue was first raised by Haldeman during his testimony when he charged that the demonstration, at the Century Plaza Hotel in



United Press International

**Rick Stearns, western states coordinator for McGovern campaign, testifies here.**

Los Angeles, was violent. The committee since has determined, from several witnesses that the demonstration was nonviolent, and that it prompted an editorial by The Los Angeles Times,

which endorsed Mr. Nixon's candidacy, praising the demonstrators and the police for the way in which they conducted themselves.

Challenged by Thompson to state how his being called

to testify was a partisan effort, Stearns replied that he had not come to make a “specific” charge. Pressed by Thompson for specifics, Stearns said, “I am not here to name call.”