

McCord Typewriter Ribbons Burned



Jack Anderson

NEW ACCOUNTS reported that a CIA operative stood by while Mrs. James McCord, wife of the Waterbugger, burned papers following the arrest of her husband inside the Watergate.

We have now learned that there were two incinerations in the McCord fireplace. The first fire, indeed, caused smoke damage after the damper closed and the smoke billowed through the house.

CIA consultant Lee Pennington attended the second burning. He swears that Ruth McCord burned only old magazine articles, letters and clippings but not any Watergate-related documents.

★ ★ ★

BUT TWO DAYS earlier, we have now learned, she destroyed a tangle of old typewriter ribbons in the fireplace. These had been removed by McCord, an ex-CIA agent, from President Nixon's campaign headquarters.

An expert could determine from the ribbons what had been written on the typewriters. Because the ribbons fouled the campaign committee's famous shredders, McCord had taken them home in paper bags to destroy.

When he was arrested during the Watergate break-in, his wife was worried over what to do with the bag stuffed with typewriter ribbons. She decided to incinerate them in the fireplace, rather than leave them in the trash for the FBI to find.

Pennington told us he didn't learn until later about the burning of the typewriter tapes. He saw the smoke damage but as-

sumed it had been caused by the second fire, he said.

Like a good agent, he reported the burning to the CIA. His secret report was subsequently turned over to Watergate investigators.

They seem satisfied no papers were burned in the second fire that tied the CIA to the Watergate break-in, as they had originally suspected. But they wonder what evidence, if any, was destroyed on the typewriter ribbons.

★ ★ ★

BACKROOM Washington politicians encouraged the wholesale slaughter of thousands of kangaroos.

For more than a year, authorities have pleaded with the Department of the Interior to stop slaughtering kangaroos. They threatened to threaten American consumers with the loss of their kangaroos.