

Watergate: A Woman's Story

By JOYCE ILLIG

THE DEAN FILE at Bantam Books has been reactivated, only this time it's for John Dean's wife, Maureen, who has just signed a six-figure contract with the paperback powerhouse. Her tale, the first to be published by a Watergate wife, is described as primarily a love story.

According to one source, she'll report on what it was like "being with a guy who was at the top of his career prior to Watergate. She will also give the first woman's inside report of Camp David days."

Hays Gorey, a Washington correspondent for Time magazine who wrote a lot about Dean and got to know them both well, will be writing the book with Maureen Dean.

Bantam had been the prime contractor for John Dean's proposed book deal, which reportedly fell through because anything he writes could be subpoenaed at upcoming trials. A few months after Bantam had made an agreement with Farrar, Straus & Giroux to publish the

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hardcover edition, the project was withdrawn. Dean was testifying at the Mitchell-Stans trial at the time.

Dean has yet to appear as a prosecution witness at the September 30 Watergate cover-up trial of John Mitchell, H.R. Haldeman, John Ehrlichman, Robert Mardian, Gordon Strachan and Kenneth Parkinson. When the Watergate prosecutors have finished with Dean, he'll be sent to a California federal prison to serve the balance of his one-to-four-year prison term. Perhaps then Dean will write his memoirs and Bantam will start negotiations all over again.

PRAEGER PUBLISHERS will close its Washington office next month, reflecting the company's decision to concentrate on trade publishing at the expense of the governmental and scholarly books for which the four-person local office is best known. Lois O'Neill, who has run the Washington office since 1966, has been named editor-at-large and will work out of her house here with an additional office at Praeger's New York headquarters. She will concentrate on acquiring trade books in politics, public affairs and biography.

In the past year Praeger has made a concerted effort to change its list. This fall for the first time the firm is bringing out two novels. Mrs. O'Neill acquired the autobiography of Blaze Starr, the Baltimore stripper, which was published in June with great success. She was also responsible for the biography of Indira Gandhi, among other books, and is currently editing a book by Newsweek's Watergate team, Nicholas Horrock and Evert Clark, for the spring list.