

[In the week of June 7, 2005, I wrote two articles for my twice-a-week eletter, *Reality Check*. I posted them on my website, www.GaryNorth.com, 13 months later. I have extracted them here.]

INSIDE JOB: HOW NIXON WAS TAKEN DOWN

Part 1

DEEP THROAT: THE SIDESHOW SOLVED!

The identity of Deep Throat is modern journalism's greatest unsolved mystery. It has been said that he may be the most famous anonymous person in U.S. history.

This is the assessment of John O'Connor, author of the July, 2005 "Vanity Fair" article, "I'm the Guy they Called Deep Throat." If this really was modern journalism's greatest unsolved mystery, then modern journalists have got way too much time on their hands.

Deep Throat. For days after "Vanity Fair"'s story appeared (May 31), the media were filled with Deep Throat stories. "Washington's oldest mystery is solved!"

This shows that Washington is still as dumb as a post, and has a newspaper to prove it: "The Washington Post."

Deep Throat was a side show in 1973, and still is. Deep Throat never had what it took to unseat Richard Nixon. Neither did Woodward and Bernstein. One man did. He remains anonymous.

In the initial contacts with Woodward, Deep Throat merely confirmed what W&B had dug up on their own. He was not a supplier of new information until much later.

The real supplier of new information never talked with Woodward or Bernstein. They never knew he was the reason why all the President's men sank with the Good Ship R. M. Nixon. He was buried so deeply in the bowels of the government that I call him Deep Sphincter.

"FOLLOW THE MONEY"

W. Mark Felt was on target when he told Woodward to follow the money. He did historians a great favor by getting this phrase into the English language -- not that most salaried historians are willing to do this. But anyone who is trying to uncover the source of crucial decisions ought to begin with the trail of digits in our era that we call money.

Nevertheless, this is only one avenue from the here and now back to square one. The other major trail is the loyalty trail. This procedure is what I have called "follow the oath." When we discover to whom or to what a man has sworn allegiance, we learn a great deal about him. We must also look carefully at the sanctions, both positive and negative, that are imposed to maintain his allegiance.

When men keep their mouths shut about a really big secret, there has to be fear in the picture. Men love to brag about the big deals they have been a part of. Eventually, they feel compelled to take credit. W. Mark Felt held back for over three decades, but finally he went public. "Yes, I did it. I'm the one!" It is the cry of the four-year-old on the day care playground: "Look at me!" Call it a Felt need.

The man who takes his biggest secret to the grave was a serious player, or at least a serious observer.

He who exposes a damaging secret is hailed by the enemies of his victim and is vilified by the victim's supporters. Mr. Felt is now experiencing both traditional responses, which come with the territory. His critics cry: "Disloyalty!" Nixon's enemies cry: "Higher duty!" Different strokes from different folks.

But the person who actually made the difference -- the one who brought Nixon down -- says nothing. The press says nothing. The greatest Watergate secret of all remains a secret.

TRUNCATED CHAINS OF COMMAND

Woodward and Bernstein kept writing stories about the Committee to Re-Elect the President. Nixon's team was not very forward-looking when they chose this name for their organization. Its acronym later became CREEP. (The other possible acronym, CRP, also created PR problems.) I challenge readers to come up with a real-world organization with a negative acronym to match CREEP. CREEP crept on behalf of a man universally regarded by his enemies as a creep. CREEP was perfect for the newspapers.

Nevertheless, tracing money into CREEP and back out to one of the burglars was not the same as tracing anything illegal to Nixon. Nixon could always say that he had nothing to do with the minions at CREEP. This is what every senior decision-maker says whenever some unsavory machination hits the headlines. It works most of the time.

The minions are either loyal or afraid. When threatened with serious negative sanctions, they may reply: "I was just following orders!" But these unwritten orders always seem to have originated no higher than the rank of staff sergeant or its organizational equivalent. Somehow, with the exception of My Lai, such orders do not originate at the commissioned officer level, and never at the field- grade officer level. There is always a break in the chain of command, usually quite low on the chain. The only exception is when a nation loses a war. The Nuremberg trials followed the orders all the way up. But these post- World War II trials were unique in the history of peacetime.

Nixon lost the Watergate war. Yet in the midst of that war, he was in a safe position with respect to CREEP's flow of funds. Here, he knew what he was doing. He was out of the loop. The Democrats had almost succeeded in scuttling him on the payola issue in the 1952 Presidential campaign, and only his deservedly famous "Checkers" speech saved him. Overnight, Checkers became the most famous dog in American political history, the dog that saved Nixon's career. Eisenhower had been prepared to drop Nixon from the ticket, but that speech went to the hearts of Republicans in the heartland. Nixon survived. Never again would he let himself be implicated in wrongdoing by this sign on his desk: "The bucks stop here."

Yet in August, 1974, Nixon resigned. How did this happen?

THE SMOKING TAPES

Two events led to Nixon's removal: one public, one private.

The first event was the televised admission by Alexander Butterfield, under questioning by a Republican Senate staff lawyer, that Nixon had bugged the White House. The Secret Service had tape recorded all of Nixon's conversations, beginning in early 1971. By this public admission, he became the most important of all the public players.

Butterfield had been Deputy Assistant to the President. He had been recommended by Haldeman. He worked with the Secret Service on security matters. He had been in charge of secretly taping the Cabinet meetings.

In late 1972, he had been appointed the head of the Federal Aviation Administration. He

remained the head of the FAA after Nixon resigned.

The recording system went on and off automatically throughout the Executive Office Building (1) whenever it detected a voice, if (2) the system previously detected Nixon's electronic locator, which the Secret Service made him wear. When he was in a room and someone started speaking, a tape recorder came on. Again, this is according to the official site. It is also what Butterfield told a conference in 2003. A transcript is posted on-line, and it is a fascinating document.

http://www.whitehousetapes.org/pages/tapes_rmn.htm

This automated system was not the recording system used in the Cabinet Room. There, the system had to be activated manually. Butterfield had been in charge of the manual taping system until he went to the FAA.

On July 13, 1973, he told Senate staff committee members about the tapes. He testified in public on July 16, 1973. He was of course asked about the tapes. He admitted everything.

Chief of Staff Alexander Haig ordered the Secret Service to remove the system on July 18. Let me check my calendar: testimony on July 16; removal on July 18 . . . lightning-fast thinking by a retired 4-star general!

Think about this chronology:

The first bug was planted in the Democrats' office on May 28, 1972.

The bungled break-in took place on June 17.

On August 1, the "Washington Post" reported a \$25,000 check, earmarked for the Nixon campaign, that had been deposited in the bank account of one of the burglars.

On October 10, the "Post" reported that the FBI had determined that the break-in was part of a campaign of spying conducted by the President's re-election effort.

<http://www.watergate.info/chronology/1972.shtml>

The tape recording system was removed on July 18, 1973, at Haig's request, not Nixon's, according to the government's official site for the tapes.

Somehow, it had not occurred to Nixon that the tapes might be incriminating. "Let the good tapes roll!"

Men later went to jail because of what was on those tapes. Some of them knew that the tape machine was running when they spoke the words that sent them to jail. Haldeman knew. Others may have known. Yet we are supposed to believe that they never told Nixon, "Turn off the tape recorder."

I have my choice of conclusions: (1) Nixon and his assistants simply forgot about the recorders; (2) they thought that no one would gain access to the tapes before the statute of limitations ran out for them, and they cared nothing about future historians' assessments of their personal integrity; (3) Nixon did not have control over the recordings.

Most commentators say #2 was the reason: Nixon's desire for accurate records for writing his memoirs. It turns out that recorders had been installed by Eisenhower, Kennedy, and Johnson. We have learned that Roosevelt had a primitive recording system installed. Johnson had advised Nixon to start recording his conversations. He told him that he was using tapes to write his memoirs, which were published in 1971. Nixon at first resisted the suggestion, but in early 1971, he asked Butterfield install the system.

From the day he had the system installed, he lost control over his Presidency. He was leaving a record of everything he said.

Butterfield and others have pointed out that Nixon was incapable of operating any mechanical device. This was why Butterfield had to turn on the recorder in the Cabinet room. This was also why Rose Mary Woods got blamed for the missing 18« minutes. No one close to the President believed that Nixon could have erased it by himself.

This means that Nixon from the beginning knew that he would have to have the tapes transcribed by a third party. Whatever was on them, a third party would know.

Also, he would have to listen to a staggering number of tapes before getting any section transcribed. In less than three years, there were 3,700 hours of tapes. There would have been over three more years of taping on the day Haig removed the system.

In his post-Presidency writing, how could he identify the tape of a specific meeting? By coordinating his appointments calendar with the dates on the tapes. If he could do this, so could the person in charge of the tapes, if he had access to the appointments calendar. The Secret Service controlled the tapes, which were stored in a room under the Oval

office. Nixon did not personally control the tapes. There was one simple way that he could get away with "I am not a crook": remove all the tape recorders and destroy all the tapes -- assuming there was only one copy. Haig finally pulled the plug. Too late. At that point, destroying the tapes would have been obstruction of justice. On June 18, 1972, it would not have been.

Someone was determined to keep those tapes rolling. Nixon did not remove the system; Haig did, on his own authority, the official version says. But, by then, it was legally too late to destroy the tapes.

INVESTIGATIVE REPORTING

Beginning no later than Nixon's resignation, a competent reporter would have followed more than the money. He would have pursued these questions:

- Who had something to gain from the tapes?
- What did he have to gain?
- Who had the power to leave the tapes running?
- How did he gain this power?
- To whom was he loyal? Why?
- What sanctions were over him?
- Why did the Nixon's senior staff talk on tape?
- Why didn't they say: "The tapes go or I do"?
- What sanctions did they face for quitting?
- To whom were they loyal?

The tapes provided enormous leverage against Nixon. The question is: For whom? And this: Starting when?

After Butterfield's testimony, Nixon's opponents had far more leverage than before, but it was still insufficient leverage. They had to get access to all of the tapes, but the courts refused to grant this. Congress was not allowed to go on a fishing expedition. In effect, the prosecutors had to have a warrant issued by the court, meaning Judge Sirica. They had to be able to identify specific discussions related to suspected crimes, not discussions in general.

Nixon soon invoked "executive privilege." The courts were unwilling to give carte blanche to the two Watergate committees to turn their staffs loose on those tapes -- not unless the Supreme Court authorized this. The Supreme Court did not do this until after the lower courts and Congress had access to the crucial segments of the tapes.

FOLLOW THE NUMBERS

We come now to the second event, which was a connected series of events: the heart of the Watergate investigation.

This is not the heart of Watergate as such. We still do not know for sure why the Plumbers installed bugs in the office of the Democratic National Committee. We do not know why they came back weeks later.

But the most important thing we do not know is the name of the inside man at the White House.

There was an inside man. On him, the outcome of the investigation pivoted. Yet I know of only three people who have ever raised this issue in print. I am one of them: third in a row.

I first wrote about this in 1987. That was 14 years after the event, or, more accurately, a related series of events. A copy of my brief discussion is on-line. It is a section from the bibliography of my book, "Conspiracy: A Biblical View."

<http://bit.ly/gnconspirebib>

I have never been contacted by any historian or any journalist regarding what you are about to read. I sent it to the professor whose journalism students did the famous investigation of Deep Throat a few years ago. They jointly concluded that he was Fred Fielding. The professor never replied.

Here is the story that Woodward and Bernstein somehow missed, though it was the central fact -- not Deep Throat's revelations -- in Nixon's defeat and their subsequent fame. Here is what I wrote in the 1996 revised edition of my 1987 book.

* * * * *

The Watergate investigation became a media extravaganza that seemed to elevate the reporter's calling to national status. Yet some of the details of the Watergate investigation raise questions that only hard-core conspiracy buffs ever ask. For instance, we all know that Nixon was brought down because of the White House audiotapes. But he refused to give up these tapes in one fell swoop. In fact, not until 1996 were scholars given access to these tapes. Only under specific demands by government prosecutors did Nixon turn over limited sections of those tapes. Gary Allen in 1976 summarized the findings of Susan Huck's February, 1975, article in "American Opinion," the publication of the John Birch

Society. Allen wrote in "The Kissinger File" (p. 179):

Consider the fantastic detail involved in the requests. On August 14th, [1973] for example, Judge Sirica demanded the "entire segment of tape on the reel identified as 'White House telephone start 5/25/72 (2:00 P.M.) (skipping 8 lines) 6/2:3/72 (2:50 P.M.) (832) complete.'" I don't know what all the identifying numbers mean -- but you have to agree that only somebody very familiar with the tapes would know. These boys knew precisely what to look for! Here is another sample request:

January 8, 1973 from 4:05 to 5:34 P.M. (E.O.B.)

a) at approximately 10 minutes and 15 seconds into the conversation, a segment lasting 6 minutes and 31 seconds:

b) at approximately 67 minutes into the conversation, a segment lasting 11 minutes;

c) at approximately 82 minutes and 15 seconds into the conversation, a segment lasting 5 minutes and 31 seconds.

Only Susan Huck asked the obvious question: How did the prosecutors know precisely when these incriminating discussions took place? There are only two possible answers: (1) someone with access to the tapes inside the White House was leaking the information; (2) there was a secret back-up set of the tapes in the hands of someone who was leaking the information. Leaked information would have been illegal for prosecutors to use in court, yet this was how they brought Nixon down.

To my knowledge, no reporter or professional historian has ever bothered to follow up on this remarkable oddity, or even mention it. Nobody ever asked: "What person was in charge of storing those tapes?" It took one of the least known and most diligent conspiracy historians (Ph.D. in geography) even to mention the problem. Strange? Not at all. Normal, in fact. Such is the nature of history and the writing of history whenever the events in question point to the operation of powerful people whose private interests are advanced by what appear to be honorable public activities that cost a lot of money.

<http://bit.ly/gnconspirebib>

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<http://www.garynorth.com/public/1399.cfm>

INSIDE JOB: HOW NIXON WAS TAKEN DOWN

Part 2

IDENTIFYING THE MOLE

There was a mole in the White House. This is the central fact of the Watergate investigation. Without him, Nixon would not have been threatened with impeachment, let alone conviction. This is the issue that no one mentions and no one pursues. It is the elephant in the living room. It has been there for over 30 years. The media's response by now is universal: "What elephant? We don't see any elephant."

The Plumbers had broken into the Watergate complex to bug one office. They were called Plumbers because their original job was to plug leaks. Perhaps the greatest irony in American political history is this: the most damaging of all leakers in American history was inside the Nixon White House, and the most significant bugs in history were installed on Nixon's orders.

TIMING

Notice that Judge Sirica's request came in on August 14, less than a month after the recording system was shut down by Haig. Whoever was leaking the information identified the incriminating passages very fast.

There were 3,700 hours of poorly recorded tapes. They were recorded at 15/16 inches per second: the lowest of low fidelity.

Think of the mole's task. Reviewing all of the tapes by himself from scratch in time to tip off one of the two committees or Sirica was impossible. He would have had to spend months listening to tapes unless he knew exactly where the passages were. If he did, then this was a long-term spying operation. It did not begin on July 16, 1973.

If he had a photocopy of the President's appointments calendar, he could have narrowed down the meetings with key advisors. This would have helped speed up the operation, but not enough to make possible the detailed identifications in less than a month.

He would not have turned duplicates over to a Congressional staffer. What could the

staffer have done with them, other than to parcel them out to low-level staffers for review? For them to have reviewed all of the tapes, it would have taken a team effort. This would have been risky: too many people in on the deal. Secrets are hard to keep personally, let alone in a group. Copies of the tapes were stolen goods and therefore inadmissible in a court, at least a court that was operating in full public view. The secret had to be maintained.

How did he do it? I see only four possibilities:

He had been monitoring the conversations and taking notes of what was being said, correlating this information with the tapes. He later reviewed his notes and retrieved the key tapes, identifying the key passages by using a stopwatch.

He had been making duplicate copies of all the tapes for months, and then delivered them all at once to someone who had access to a team of oath-bound intelligence community reviewers.

He made copies on a high-speed duplicator and delivered them to a team of oath-bound intelligence community reviewers.

He knew approximately when the incriminating discussions had taken place, and he went back to the specific tapes to time exactly how far into each tape each discussion began and ended. He then turned these numbers over to a Congressional staffer or other intermediary.

Option #1 makes this conclusion inescapable: the mole was a Secret Service agent whose full-time job was to record the tapes while listening to them.

Options #1 and #2 assume the existence of a long-term strategy: use the tapes against Nixon when the opportunity arose. But what kind of opportunity? How could the mole have predicted Butterfield's testimony to the Senate committee? Was there more to monitoring the tapes than a plan to cooperate with as-yet unassembled authorities?

Options #2 and #3 assume the existence of a team of reviewers.

As for option #4, who would have known which meetings had been crucial? Butterfield left the White House for the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) in late December, 1972. He had been in charge of taping Cabinet meetings, but Cabinet meetings were not where the Watergate cover-up was discussed. How could he have been the mole? Yet there is no doubt that he knew the mole. He may not have known that the mole had

become a mole, but if he didn't suspect what was happening after Sirica's request, 1973, he was either remarkably unobservant or else completely out of the loop.

No reporter today asks Butterfield about any of this. The elephant really is invisible to this generation of reporters.

For anyone to have made duplicate copies of all the tapes prior to Butterfield's testimony (option #2) would have been an immense undertaking for one man working part-time, i.e., not monitoring the discussions as they took place (option #1). It would have taken months. After Butterfield's testimony, it would have been impossible for a mole to do this by himself.

THE GATEKEEPER ISSUE

It is possible that a second set of tapes had been made from the very beginning, or at least after the break-in. Whoever had such a set of tapes would have had leverage over the President. But the Secret Service controlled the machines. How did anyone gain access to the tapes without Nixon's authorization? Why would Nixon have given it?

Without a team to review the tapes, how could one man have done this on short notice, i.e., after July 16? He would have had to be one of the Secret Service agents who sat in the room to monitor the tapes, assuming that someone did this, even though the tape machines came on automatically. He took notes. But this would mean that he was self-consciously looking for ammunition to be used against Nixon. Why?

The main problem with this theory is that other Secret Service agents did not know what was going on in the room where the machines were kept. If there was a full-time agent in that room all day long, there would have been suspicions.

In 2003, Butterfield attended a conference on the tapes. He described where the tape machines were located.

There was a little thing -- they blasted a hole in the brick wall down underneath the White House and put all this machinery inside a brick wall and then put a cabinet door over it. And I said to [Secret Service security agent Alfred] Wong, I -- this was in the locker room of the protective security [unclear -- microphone problem] Secret Service agents, so when they'd come to work, they had little lockers in there, and they'd change clothes and go home. They didn't stay long in this little room, and I said, "Aren't they going to think this great big panel -- what you call it used to be

a brick wall, they're going to question that?" And he said, "No, they probably won't, and if they do, I'll just say, 'We've got something in there,' and they won't ask any questions." And that's true. The Secret Service wouldn't pry or probe at something like that. But there was a hell of a big door in there, and we -- [laughter] and it was a tiny little room anyway, pretty little.

<http://www.whitehousetapes.net/info/nixon-tapes-overview>

Here the equipment resided, and here boxes of tapes were stored. Nobody noticed. "Don't ask. Don't tell."

So, there were only a few Secret Service technicians who knew what was inside that little room. These men served as the gatekeepers. Anyone wanting access to the tapes had to get through at least one of these gatekeepers . . . unless one of them was the mole.

If the tape operator was the mole, he could not have been in that room full-time without creating scuttlebutt and suspicion. This does not rule out the possibility, but it does impose a special burden of proof on the person who chooses this option. This evidence would be difficult to obtain: pay receipts that say "for taping and personally monitoring Nixon's conversations." Alternatively, Butterfield could affirm in writing that one agent was always present in the taping room when Nixon was in the White House.

That person was almost certainly the mole.

Is there any other possibility of a one-man operation? It is conceivable that someone very high in Nixon's inner circle had access to the tapes after Butterfield's testimony. Haig is one candidate. This is the man Gary Allen thought was the source of the leak. The hard evidence is not there, as far as I can see. But it is not beyond possibility.

A mole operating alone had to know approximately when the incriminating discussions had taken place. Only a highly placed person on Nixon's staff could have known this, presumably a participant. He somehow gained private access to these tapes, got out his stop watch, and listened to each tape until he found various smoking guns. Then he told a Congressional staffer what sections to ask for.

If this was done by someone on Nixon's staff, it would have been someone who did not incriminate himself on a tape. Some of the highest-placed staff members went to jail or were exposed to the threat of jail. Haldeman knew, yet he kept talking. He was the one senior staff member identified by Butterfield as having known about the tapes. He went to jail. It is unlikely that he was the mole.

Let us assume for the sake of argument that no duplicate set of tapes existed prior to July 16. Someone who had detailed knowledge of the tapes was able to review the originals and then pass on this information within weeks. How did he get by the Secret Service?

This is the central organizational issue of the Watergate story. I doubt that anyone will pursue this at this late date. But it needs to be pursued if we are ever to get the story even remotely straight.

WHO GUARDS THE GUARDIANS?

This is one of the oldest questions in political history.

I see no alternative to this conclusion: someone who had the cooperation of the Secret Service had access to the tapes. The tapes were stored in a secret room under the Oval Office. Here is Butterfield's account in 2003.

Carlin: Outside of you, who knew the system was being used?

Butterfield: Well, yeah, it was a deep dark secret, and I want to say no one knew, but the people who actually knew are the president, myself, Bob Haldeman and Larry Higby, Bob's staff assistant -- one of three staff assistants to Bob, Al Wong, who was the Technical Security Division Chief, Al Wong, W-O-N-G, and three technicians who, who put these tapes in: a fellow named Ray Zumwalt, Roy Schwalm, S-C-H-W-A-L-M, and Charles Bretts. They were the technicians, and one of those three changed the tapes when they had to be changed and that sort of thing.

He did not indicate that someone was in the taping room full-time. If someone was, and if he was there every day, then he becomes the most likely candidate for the title of lone mole. Otherwise, this had to be a team effort: the mole, plus a team of reviewers.

The shorter the time period between Butterfield's testimony and Sirica's first request, the larger the team had to be, or else the more sophisticated the tape-reviewing technology had to be. The team had to find where the key discussions were on the tapes. There were a lot of discussions.

MOTIVE

Follow the money. Also, follow the oath. Look for a motive. If it's not money, sex, or

power, then start looking for revenge.

Had I been a reporter, after Nixon's resignation I would have gone looking for a motive -- a motive acknowledged as legitimate by one or more of the tapes' gatekeepers. I would have gone looking for someone with (1) personal connections to the White House Secret Service unit that oversaw the taping and (2) a motive for revenge against Nixon and all the President's men.

No reporter did this. Now it is up to historians, who tend to be even more risk-averse and peer-sensitive than reporters. Don't hold your breath.

Somebody got through the gates. He was working with a team. There was insufficient time for one man to review all of the tapes.

The question has to be raised: Why would any of the technicians have cooperated with such a team? Why would he have handed over duplicate tapes, plus handed over a photocopy of the President's schedule, to enable the third parties go snooping?

There had to be a jointly shared motive. The motive presumably had to do with the oath: loyalty. There was a higher shared loyalty involved, a loyalty to something above Nixon. This could have been the Constitution. In intelligence circles, I don't think this one is high on the list. Loyalties are more personal than Constitutional law. So are sanctions for violating the oath. The secret would remain a secret.

There is loyalty owed to oath-bound brothers. There is also loyalty to "cousins" operating under a different but similar oath-bound structure. There is loyalty of professionals against amateurs, of lifetime bureaucrats against temporary politicians. "Loyalty to" always implies "potential disloyalty to."

Where there is loyalty, there is always the opportunity for disloyalty. This is why secrecy is so powerful: it offers an opportunity to destroy. Where there is oath-bound loyalty, the temptation for disloyalty increases, especially against those bound by a rival oath. There must be serious sanctions against betrayal. (You do not have to read the century-old works of Georg Simmel to understand these issues, but it helps.)

So, the question arises: What team supplied the reviewers? Answer: a group that perceived its corporate connection with the victims. The victims are easy to identify: the Plumbers. Their connection is easy to identify: the CIA.

THE PLUMBERS

Who were they? G. Gordon Liddy (ex-FBI) ran the show. Then there were the five burglars: Bernard Baker, Virgilio Gonzalez, Eugenio Martinez, James McCord, and Frank Sturgis. The name of E. Howard Hunt (ex-CIA) appeared in address books carried by two Plumbers. By the time Butterfield testified, all seven were in jail.

McCord had been a CIA agent until 1970. Hunt had been a CIA agent until 1970. In March, 1973, McCord wrote to judge Sirica from his jail cell to say that he and the others had been pressured to plead guilty. He singled out John Dean and the former Attorney General, John Mitchell. This set the framework: Nixon vs. the brothers.

Nixon left them all to cool their heels in jail. Here is how Hunt described it in a 2004 interview in "Slate".

Slate: I still don't understand how you get involved in Watergate later. Through the CIA?

Hunt: I had been a consultant to the White House. I greatly respected Nixon. When Chuck Colson [special counsel to Nixon] asked me to work for the administration, I said yes. Colson phoned one day and said, "I have a job you might be interested in." This was before Colson got religion.

Slate: How long were you in prison for the Watergate break-in?

Hunt: All told, 33 months.

Slate: That's a lot of time.

Hunt: It's a lot of time. And I've often said, what did I do?

Slate: Did you get a pardon?

Hunt: No. Never did. I'd applied for one, and there was no action taken, and I thought I'd just humiliate myself if I asked for a pardon.

Laura Hunt: He was sort of numb because all of this happened to his wife and his family, his children went into drugs while he was still in prison.

Slate: Wasn't your first wife killed in a plane crash?

Laura Hunt: She was killed when her plane crash-landed at Chicago's Midway Airport. And there was all this speculation from conspiracy buffs that the FBI blew the plane up or something -- so that she would never talk, all this ridiculous stuff.

<http://bit.ly/HuntTalks>

Ridiculous stuff? Strange stuff, yes, but in no way was it ridiculous.

Dorothy Hunt had been an ex-CIA operative. She had met her husband in the CIA. Her plane went down on December 8, 1972: a United Airlines flight from Washington to Chicago. It crashed at Chicago's Midway Airport. Most of the passengers and all of the crew members died.

Within a few hours, a team of 50 FBI agents was at the scene, investigating everything. This is no rumor. It was confirmed in a June 11, 1973 letter from acting FBI Director William Ruckelshaus to the Director of the National Transportation Safety Board, who had sent a letter of complaint (six months after the event) to Ruckelshaus regarding the interference of the FBI.

Getting a team of 50 FBI agents to a supposed crime scene within hours is so unheard of as to mark any such event as historically unique. Legendary. This was not done by the book.

Mrs. Hunt had been carrying a little over \$10,000 in cash -- the equivalent of \$50,000 today.

In his book, "A Piece of Tape," McCord writes that he heard Dorothy Hunt say that her husband had information that would impeach the President.

(Note: I refer to this Web page to provide transcripts of the letters sent by the two Directors, plus the basic chronology of the crash. I do not trust several of the sources cited.)

The Hunts had been "present at the creation," when the CIA was known as the OSS. The condition of Hunt would not have not escaped the notice of former colleagues. Nixon had let a team of former national security operatives go to jail for a burglary related to his re-election. It was clear by late 1972 that they were not going to be pardoned.

The crash was followed by these peculiar events, which were long forgotten until the

Web revived them.

<http://spartacus-educational.com/JFKhuntH.htm>

The day after the crash, Nixon nominated Egil Krogh, the head of CREEP, as Undersecretary of Transportation. The Department of Transportation is the agency that supervises the National Transportation Safety Board.

(He was confirmed in February, resigned in May, and pleaded guilty to supervising Hunt and Liddy in the break-in of Daniel Ellsberg's psychiatrist's office. He went to jail.)

Two weeks after Krogh's nomination, Nixon nominated Butterfield as head of the FAA.

In January, 1973, Dwight Chapin, Nixon's appointments secretary, resigned. He immediately took a senior-level position with United Airlines in Chicago.

(Chapin was convicted in 1974 for lying to the grand jury in 1973 and for offering me a job at the White House in 1971 -- no, scratch that: he only said he MIGHT offer me a job. He never did. He did hire Bob Segretti, who later ran the dirty tricks operation. As a result, they both went to jail.)

To imagine that the intelligence community was unaware of the rapid sequence of these aeronautical-related events is to have a vivid imagination.

Members of an oath-bound fraternity who believe that several of its members have been taken down by outsiders is a force to be reckoned with. There is loyalty at stake. There is also the matter of self-preservation. There is a well-known strategy for dealing with such threats: tit for tat.

Within the intelligence community, there is a degree of cooperation by professionals: those inside vs. those outsiders known as politicians.

LONE MOLE OR TEAM EFFORT?

The tapes were the Achilles heel of Nixon's attempt to avoid public exposure. John Dean could talk, others could talk, but it was their word against Nixon's . . . unless the prosecutors could use Nixon's words against Nixon.

The prosecutors received information regarding the precise location of these words. They received this information because someone inside the White House leaked to

investigators working with or for Judge Sirica the IDs of tapes that would condemn Nixon. But the mole could not have obtained this information by himself, unless he had been working on this project almost from the beginning: taking notes and identifying tapes.

This raises a key question. If the project began before July 16, how would he have known that Butterfield would tell the Committee about the tapes? Monitoring the information on the tapes made strategic sense if the courts or the committees knew about the existence of the tapes. Otherwise, there was nothing to subpoena.

If he did assemble this information over many months while sitting in the taping room, pen in hand, taking notes, then he had another agenda. He was monitoring what was being said for purposes other than cooperating with Sirica, who was not yet in the picture. This raises two questions: (1) Who guards the guardians? (2) To whom do they report?

Here is what we know for certain: the information was made available to Sirica within weeks of Butterfield's testimony.

To get access to the tapes, someone had to get by the Secret Service and into that room beneath the Oval office. Someone did.

The Secret Service is pledged to save the President's life. It is not pledged to save his career. Its agents live in every President's household until he dies, and then they remain with his widow until she dies. We do not call this arrangement what it obviously is: a lifetime monitoring operation.

Had I been a Washington reporter in 1974, and had I known of Sirica's specific tape requests, which were a matter of public record, I would have gone looking for a connection between one of the Plumbers and one of the tapes' gatekeepers.

One analyst did: Mae Brussell. She was a legendary left-wing conspiracy theorist who saw mysterious connections everywhere. If ever there was a believer in a vast right-wing conspiracy, it was Mae Brussell. She immediately spotted a connection. She wrote in "The Realist" (July, 1973) that the Ervin committee had called the wrong witnesses. Her first example was Al Wong.

Wrong witnesses called. Last July, 1972, it was obvious that Al Wong, the Secret Service man who hired James McCord, should be a major witness. When it was disclosed by Alexander Butterfield that the White House was bugged, Al Wong appeared to be holding the tapes. Wong and McCord were close associates.

<http://bit.ly/BrussellWatergate1>

What was she referring to? What had Wong hired McCord to do? The previous August, also in "The Realist," she had reported on the assignment.

James McCord, Jr. held two important jobs at the time of his arrest. He was Chief of Security for the Committee to Re-elect Richard Nixon. With that appointment, McCord was issued his own radio frequency. And that employment was the smaller assignment of the two.

The biggest contract a security agent could receive went to McCord Associates, selected by Secret Service agent Al Wong, to provide all security for the republican Convention in Miami.

She offered no footnote to support this claim, but she surely was on top of this issue from the beginning. Indeed, she was the first journalist to suspect this connection: Wong, McCord, and the tapes.

<http://bit.ly/BrussellMartha1>

If I were going to write a book on Watergate, I would begin looking for evidence to support her second paragraph. Given McCord's CIA background and his CREEP position, the connection sounds plausible.

This does not mean that CIA agents necessarily constituted the reviewing team. It could have been a select group of Secret Service agents, acting on behalf of similarly oath-bound "cousins" or some other group.

There is a unique piece of information, reported by Gary Allen in his book on Kissinger and also his book on Nelson Rockefeller. He quotes from Newsweek (September 23, 1974).

While former white House chief of staff H.R. Haldeman awaits trial for his part in Watergate, the Secret Service chief he ousted from the White House last year has landed a plum job. Robert H. Taylor, 49, who tangled with Haldeman over Nixon security procedures, is now head of the private security forces for all the far-flung Rockefeller family enterprises.

If the mole acted alone in note taking, then he began early. He was alone in that room, but he was not alone with respect to a hierarchy. Government bureaucrats on salaries do not do "extra credit." They get paid to follow orders.

Who gave the order? When? Why?

These are the kinds of questions that the mainstream media steadfastly refuse to ask. They find it easier to believe in the tape fairy.

INADMISSIBLE EVIDENCE

Deep Throat confirmed to Woodward that CREEP was where the money flowed into and out of. This was a smoking gun, if modern gunpowder smoked. It was a .22 pistol: CREEP. The story would have come out anyway because of the \$25,000 check. Following that money was easy. It was not worth a Pulitzer Prize and a movie.

To take Nixon down, there had to be evidence that would stand up in court. This evidence had to have the appearance of being admissible, i.e., not illegally obtained. Yet it was unquestionably illegally obtained. The specificity of the location of the smoking guns on the tapes should have made it clear that the evidence was inadmissible. Yet Judge Sirica -- "Maximum John" -- pretended that it was admissible. He pretended that the tape fairy had delivered the IDs. Every reporter, then and now, has gone along with him.

Once the statute of limitations ran out (1980), nobody could prosecute the accused, had there been an accused. There never was. I do not think there ever will be.

It was not until July 27, 1974 that the Supreme Court ordered Nixon to turn over all of the tapes. He refused and resigned on August 9. Until the Supreme Court ordered him to deliver all of the tapes, he may have thought he could successfully stonewall his prosecutors. He was wrong. From the day he refused to hand over the specific tapes demanded by Sirica, he was on the defensive. From the day that Sirica started using stolen evidence to hound Nixon, it was only a matter of time. Maximum John was willing to break the law to get him. Congress was willing to break the law to get him. Nixon was doomed. The federal system's checks and balances by 1973 were managed by tax-funded "crooks": law-breakers all.

Nixon's resignation under fire created an immediate problem for Republican Congressman John Hammerschmidt of Arkansas, who had recommended that Nixon not resign, and said that Nixon's offense might not be impeachable. He had stood almost alone. His opponent had gone for the jugular:

[There is] no question that an admission of making false statements to government officials and interfering with the FBI and the CIA is an impeachable offense.

His opponent was Bill Clinton.

Clinton lost in November. Not many Democrats did, however.

Nixon never did turn over all of the tapes. He died in 1994. Only then did the government get all the tapes. The government is still waiting to release to the public the final batch: November, 1972 through July, 1973.

But don't worry. They are on their way. They are being administered by the same experts who took over the administration of the Ark of the Covenant in the final scene of "Raiders of the Lost Ark."

UNANSWERED QUESTIONS

It is now over three decades after these events. We still do not know why the burglars broke in a second time in June, 1972. We do not know how or why 50 FBI agents showed up at the plane crash site where the ex-CIA wife of the ex-CIA suspected Plumber died in December. We do not know why Nixon left the tape recorders running. We do not know for sure what Nixon did, or was planning to do, to persuade the mole or his oath-bound associates to supply the prosecutors with proof of the smoking guns. We do not know the transmission belt by which the prosecutors were able to identify the precise points on the tapes that sent Nixon's senior staffers to prison and were about to get him impeached.

Richard Nixon, in his complete self-confidence, had ordered the tape recorders installed. To use Haldeman's phrase, he not only repeatedly let the toothpaste out of the tube, he left a record of every squeeze. Why?

He installed the tape recorders when he did not need them. He, like his presidential predecessors, believed he was going to retain the upper hand, the final say, when it came time for him to write his memoirs. He let famous men speak in his presence, unaware of the tapes. They would speak their minds, he thought, but he would remain clever. As the English say, he was too clever by half. The following exchange took place in 2003:

Carlin: Mr. Butterfield, why do you think President Nixon sort of let the machine run? I mean, do you think he sometimes even forgot about the fact that he was taping?

Butterfield: Absolutely. Yes. Yeah. We, we marveled at his ability to, uh, seemingly be oblivious to the tapes. I mean, even I was sitting there uncomfortably sometimes saying, "He's not really going say this, is he?"

[laughter] But . . . but he did. . . .

Nixon was paranoid as no President ever was, either before or after. He was convinced that "they" were out to get him: the liberals, the Jews, the media, the Eastern elite. And he was right. There was a widespread visceral hatred of Nixon that has been matched only by hatred for Hillary Clinton. But in circling the wagons against enemies outside, he forgot Jesus' warning:

And a man's foes shall be they of his own household (Matthew 10:36).

Nixon received a pardon for crimes never presented in a court of law. He received it from the only President ever chosen by his predecessor rather than by a vote, who in turn appointed as his Vice President a man who had publicly insisted, "I never wanted to be vice president of anything" -- Nelson Rockefeller. This was the man who had hired Nixon after his California gubernatorial defeat in 1962, bringing him to New York City to live for free in a condominium owned by Rockefeller, and putting him under the authority of bond lawyer John Mitchell, who later went to jail over Watergate. This was the man who had become Henry Kissinger's patron, who in turn hired Col. Al Haig in 1969, who was a 4-star general just four years later -- skipping the third star altogether. He became Supreme Allied Commander of NATO in 1974, soon after Nixon quit. There were winners and losers in Rockefeller's orbit.

The pardon ended the legal issue for Nixon. But, until the day he died, he refused to turn over all of the tapes.

<http://archives.cnn.com/2002/ALLPOLITICS/02/28/nixon.tapes/index.html>

CONCLUSION

From the day that the first highly detailed request came from Sirica, Nixon must have known the truth: he was going to become the victim of the biggest leak in American history. From that point on, Nixon knew he had been betrayed from the inside. He knew he was trapped. He was a lawyer. He had made his political career in 1948 based on rolls of film that had been buried in a hollowed-out pumpkin: evidence that Whittaker Chambers had actually forgotten he had regarding Alger Hiss's spying.

<http://bit.ly/PumpkinPapers>

What Nixon must have known, no salaried reporter has figured out. Susan Huck did. Gary Allen did. I did. But none of us was ever a full-time reporter.

The man who supplied the prosecutors with the technically inadmissible evidence of Nixon's smoking guns may still be alive. He has not broken silence. He has maintained his loyalty. He has kept the oath. If he was watching the evening news in the first week of June, 2005, he must have had a good chuckle.

For over three decades, the press played hide-and-seek with the shadow known as Deep Throat. Reporters and authors expended time, energy, and money on tracking him down. At long last, they have found him, senile and unable to tell his story. "Mystery solved! Case closed!"

Meanwhile, I hear unerasable voices in my mind.

"Good night, David." "Good night, Chet."

"And that's the way it was."

<http://www.garynorth.com/members/5759.cfm>