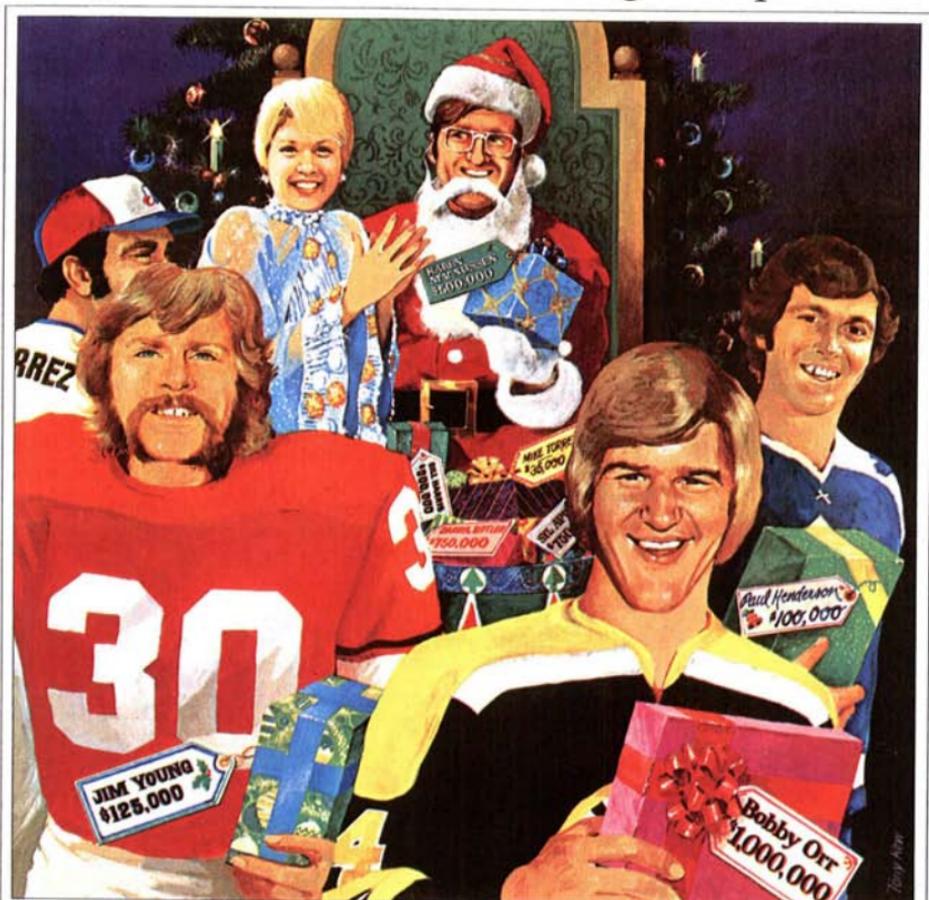




Macleans

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John Allan Cameron & the Cape Breton Sound
Is your local WASP an endangered species?



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Cover illustration by Tony Kew

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INSIDE MACLEAN'S

If you tell people the closest Canadian to the Watergate crisis was a 21-year-old student with one year of law school to his credit whose only other claim to fame was that he was the youngest delegate to the 1967 Conservative leadership convention, there are bound to be questions raised as to his credibility. We had them, too, but they began to evaporate from the moment the operator at Select Committee headquarters in Washington picked up the phone: "You're calling from Canada, huh? Then you must know Stephen Leopold. A real sweetheart, loud and lots of fun. Just a moment and I'll switch you . . ."

Once you talk to Barry Schochet, assistant counsel to the hearings, you have to accept that Stephen Leopold did indeed play a significant role in unveiling America's great tragedy. "Much of the evidence so far introduced was due to Stephen's perceptive mind," says Schochet, "and even after two months his research is still being used. Stephen had an innate facility for finding the really interesting documents. He was also the only staff member who was given an official going-away party."

The people around the committee room referred to Stephen always as "the Mad Canuck." A red maple leaf flag was hoisted at the entrance to his office; a poster of a bald eagle was taped above his desk proclaiming "It's un-American to be a Canadian"; and he kept showing up for afternoon baseball games sporting a Montreal Canadian's jersey. When he worked, though, he was serious, as Schochet verifies, and by September Leopold had digested evidence from close to 100,000 documents. "What will be released eventually I can't tell," he says. "But I'm convinced I will always know certain things about Watergate the public will never be told."

When he left to resume second-year law studies back home in Montreal, Stephen Leopold brought many stories back with him, some of which are shared on page 19, and some of which have a more personal meaning, like the party on the final night. The staff had made a banner for him, CANUCK GO HOME it read, and in small print at the bottom, in the language Sam Ervin's mother had painstakingly taught him, they had added Y'ALL COME BACK HEAH.





Stephen S. Leopold (second from right), the only Canadian staff member of the U.S. Senate Committee, analyzes the Watergate hearings and reports why we in Canada have nothing to be complacent about.

Inside the Watergate hearings

By Stephen S. Leopold

While there is no evidence, at this writing, that President Richard Nixon had prior knowledge of the Watergate break-in, there is a good lot of evidence that he was aware of the cover-up. During three and a half months as an investigator for the Senate Select Committee on Presidential Campaign Activities (the Ervin Watergate committee), I examined reams of evidence indicating that the President knew, or should have known, what was going on. I never saw anything, either on the public record or in the private files to which I had access, that would contradict such conclusions. And, from my knowledge of the Ervin committee, its ability and its integrity, I can say that, had there been material available to clear the President, the committee would have made it public.

Therefore, the first conclusion I formed, as a Watergate investigator, was that there is a dark cloud of suspicion, to say the least, hovering over the White House. The second conclusion I formed, as a Canadian, is that a Watergate could very well happen here. Although it would not take place in quite the same way, it would be just as hard to detect, but easier to recover from, for reasons that I shall come to later.

From the first day of the Senate hearings, it was as an investigator and as a Canadian that I watched Watergate unfold, and the watching was an adventure so fascinating, exhilarating and, in some ways, disturbing that I can still scarcely believe it

happened to me. I had followed the first stories about the spreading scandal in the press. Then I saw, after the November, 1972, election, when I was back at McGill Law School — where I am now in my second year — that the story seemed to be growing. This was clearly the most crucial political event of the decade and, in some ways, of the century, vital to the U.S. certainly, but important to Canada too, because our fate is so closely linked, like it or not, with the Americans. I resolved that, if possible, I would play some role in it. I wrote to Senators Ted Kennedy and Warren Magnuson, key figures in the early airing of the case, and received back those polite form letters saying "Thanks but no thanks." I wrote back in February, 1973, after the committee was formed, to the chairman, Senator Sam Ervin, and got the same kind of answer.

I decided to give it one final try. Last summer, I intended to travel across the U.S., and I wrote two letters just before leaving: one was to Ervin, the other to Rufus Edmisten, chief counsel to Senator Ervin's Committee on the Separation of Powers — I had heard that he was the best way to approach the Senator, and that turned out to be the case. My letters were the same to both: I said that I was a 21-year-old law student with some background in investigating in Montreal (I'd done some work on shady car dealerships and on the oil industry) and that I wanted to work as an unpaid volunteer for the com-



Gordon Liddy

Former counsel to the President's major re-election campaign committee and its finance arm, and a prominent member of the White House Plumbers, he was convicted in the Watergate break-in.

mittee. I had already started on my trip, and I was on holiday at Virginia Beach when a letter from Edmisten arrived at my home in Montreal; I was informed by telephone from Montreal that Edmisten had expressed interest and had asked me to call on him.

I went to see him and said, in effect, that he had nothing to lose by taking me on; after all, I wouldn't cost anything. He told me to come around the next day. I still was not sure that I had been taken on. Nevertheless, I moved into a dingy old apartment on Constitution Avenue, one block from the New Senate Office Building, where the committee staff was housed. I reported to work at 7.30 a.m. on May 17, the day the hearings opened.

My first job, though mundane in retrospect, was the most exciting thing I could do at that moment by doing with my time. It was correcting a typographical error in 300 copies of Senator Ervin's opening statement, a job that gave me a sneak preview into an historical moment. Soon, I was involved in much more crucial work — serving subpoenas, searching documents, interviewing witnesses and receiving and following up some of the hundreds of tips that came into the office. The committee staff worked out of a huge workroom hastily thrown together in the auditorium of the New Senate Office Building, just across the street from the hearings, which took place in the caucus room of the old Senate Office Building. The place was jammed with makeshift cubicles, stenographers' desks and photocopying machines; I had one of the few offices where the walls actually went up to the ceiling, because it was the auditorium's projection room. I was working with such people as Chief Investigator Carmine Bellino, the man whose investigative work under Attorney General Robert Kennedy opened a jail door for Jimmy Hoffa, and Wayne Bishop, who was one of those responsible for breaking the Valachi Papers. Although I was clearly not of their calibre, we were nevertheless investigators together, and I am proud of the fact that I was the only Canadian, and the only volunteer on the staff of the committee.

My specialty was documents. There were 1,300 file drawers full of documents taken from the Committee to Reelect the President, and held in the custody of the United States' National Archives. They were stored on shelves, row by row, like the stacks of any large library, in the basement of the archives building on Pennsylvania Avenue. We mined those documents as eagerly, as frantically, as any miners who ever panned for gold. Most Canadians, and most Americans for that matter, saw Watergate as a series of television images of the dominant players — shaggy-haired and beetle-browed



John Dean

White House counsel, and the man whom Nixon says he ordered to check into Watergate, he is sure that money controlled by Haldeman was used to buy the silence of some Watergate defendants.



President Nixon

He instituted the Plumbers' squad and at least tacitly approved their tactics. He may not have known about the Watergate break-in, but if he didn't know about the cover-up he should have.

Sam Ervin, with the soft voice and the ready quip (though some of his stories were so well known to his wife that, at one committee party, she delivered his punch lines, one beat ahead of him), the quicksilver Howard Baker, the earnest Lowell Weicker, the boyish John Dean, the smoother, older and infinitely chillier Teuton twins, John Ehrlichman and H. R. Haldeman. I saw it as a series of documents, which slowly, letter by letter, paragraph by paragraph, memo by memo, formed a pattern of their own.

We did not always see the same Watergate, the television screen and I. I would walk across the street from our working room to the hearings and see, with the watching world, that, on the witness stand, Haldeman appeared less aloof, less cold, a little less blindly arrogant than Ehrlichman, and that Ehrlichman was much tougher than Haldeman. In their working diaries, which I examined, the opposite was true. Ehrlichman came across in his diaries as a little more human. Admittedly, that wasn't what I was looking for; I was looking for the times of appointments, so that we could cross-check stories against each other, but I couldn't help noticing, for instance, that Ehrlichman would occasionally have members of his family over to the White House, and you'd see a note "Lunch with daughter and friend." Haldeman never did anything like that. Day



H. R. Haldeman

Nixon's other top aide, his diary shows him to be coldly efficient, and all business. He played a key role in Nixon's 1962 California race, later called "the dirtiest campaign in the State's history."

in, day out, he was strictly business; you'd never know he had a family except for the occasional reference to "Meet Mrs. H. at Kennedy Centre, 7.30 p.m."

And what was it that all of these documents showed? In essence, they were the framework of the case against President Nixon and his aides as it appeared in the committee hearings. Yes, of course, there were other lines of evidence but these have yet to be revealed at this writing, and I cannot, and will not, betray the confidence that was placed in me because of my privileged position.

There are three essential elements to the picture that emerges; call them, for convenience, The Plumbers, Watergate and the Cover-up, and the whole array of political espionage that went under the heading of Dirty Tricks.

The Plumbers

We know that on July 23, 1970, President Nixon approved the use of some previously banned tactics for gathering information by the chief federal security agencies, including the FBI and the CIA, on the people he considered to be his enemies — campus rioters, war demonstrators, militant blacks, and so on. It was now permissible to open personal mail, intercept private communications between the U.S. and foreign correspondents, and even to break into and enter premises in search of information. There is a memo on the file indicating that a Nixon aide, Tom Huston, advised the President that breaking and entering, at least, was "clearly illegal." Another memo from FBI director J. Edgar Hoover indicated that Hoover opposed the new tactics — although Hoover's reasons are not given. President Nixon says that, five days after he approved of the new methods, he withdrew his support, and that the plan never went into operation, but there is nothing, not one scintilla of evidence, on the record to prove the President's assertion.

To begin with, then, we know that whether or not federal agencies did in fact carry out such tactics, they had the President's advice and orders to carry them out, even though he had been advised that illegality was involved.

We also know that, in June of 1971, President Nixon created the Plumbers, the White House Special Investigations Unit, the natural outgrowth of these tactics. The Plumbers' job was to block the leaks of government information to the media; they came under the supervision of John Ehrlichman and included David Young, E. Howard Hunt and Gordon Liddy. President Nixon says that they were hired for "highly sensitive" work connected with national security, but in fact their activities included fabricating a State Department memo



John Ehrlichman

One of Nixon's two top aides, he supervised the Plumbers, and gave approval for a "covert operation" to examine the Ellsberg psychiatric file. The operation resulted in a burglary.



John Mitchell

Nixon's law partner, campaign manager and political ally, he knew a lot about Watergate soon after the arrests. The question is, what did he tell the President?

linking the Kennedy Administration with the assassination of the president of South Vietnam, conducting an investigation into the accident in which Mary Jo Kopechne was killed at Chappaquiddick, and burglarizing the office of Dr. Lewis Fielding, psychiatrist to Daniel Ellsberg, the man who was responsible for making the Pentagon Papers public. The connection of any of these matters to national security was tenuous at best. When John Ehrlichman was testifying, and Senator Ervin said that the Fielding burglary had nothing to do with national security, Ehrlichman's lawyer, John Wilson, asked him how he knew and, Ervin replied, "Because I understand the English language; it's my mother tongue."

Perhaps the President didn't know what the Plumbers were up to; Ehrlichman portrayed them as working chiefly to "stimulate various agencies and departments" to clamp down on leaks. Common sense suggests, however, either that the President knew of at least some of the details of their work or that, if he did not, he should have.

Does this appear too harsh a judgment? Consider that, during the 1972 election, Senator George McGovern was crippled as a candidate by revelations about the past history of mental problems of his running mate, Tom Eagleton. It was said of McGovern by the gleeful

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Republicans that any potential President should be judged by the people around him, and that McGovern should have known about Eagleton. McGovern was portrayed as a bumbling fool for not having investigated the Missouri Senator's background thoroughly. Remember that Eagleton was picked in a matter of hours, forced out of the pack of possible candidates in the heat of a convention. President Nixon had months to examine the character and actions of his aides, to determine what they were doing on his behalf and, in my view, if he did not know what was going on, his fault was far more grievous than any failing of McGovern's.

The weight of what we have learned so far, then, indicates that the President approved extraordinary and illegal measures in the area of political activity; at the very least, he set the tone that made possible such actions as the burglary of Dr. Fielding's Los Angeles office. That burglary is traced in a memo from Egil Krogh and David Young, which Ehrlichman approved, suggesting that "a covert operation be undertaken to examine all the medical files still held by Ellsberg's psychoanalyst" (this contains a handwritten caution from Ehrlichman, "If done under your assurance that it is not traceable") and another memo from Krogh to Ehrlichman, just before the burglary, referring to the "present Hunt/Liddy project Number One." But the most intriguing evidence, for me, came out when Ehrlichman was on the witness stand before the committee, and seemed to be laying the groundwork for an argument that the burglary was perfectly legal. It was within the President's powers to order such an action, he said. While far from an admission that the White House laid out the plans and approved them, Ehrlichman's line of reasoning certainly seemed to point that way.

There is also evidence of the extraordinary intervention of the White House in the Ellsberg case while it was still before the courts. Ehrlichman twice met briefly with Judge Byrne, the presiding judge, to find out whether he would be interested in the job of director of the FBI. Later, Nixon himself discussed the matter briefly with Judge William Byrne at the White House. Had any private citizen attempted to meddle with a case in that way, he could have gone to jail for his pains. The White House explanation is that these meetings had nothing to do with the Ellsberg case, and some people believe that; but then, some people believe the earth is flat, too.

Watergate and its Cover-Up

There is nothing to suggest that the President engineered or even had prior knowledge of the break-in at Democratic National Headquarters in the Wa-

tergate complex on June 17, 1972. There is, however, substantial evidence that he played a key role in the cover-up.

First, there is the undisputed fact that \$420,000, taken mainly from donations made to the Nixon election campaign fund, were distributed secretly to the seven Watergate defendants, their families and their legal counsel. Telephone booths, storage lockers and other public sites were used as money-drops for this legal aid, one source of which was a \$350,000 White House cash fund that was controlled by Haldeman. Haldeman said he knew about the payments, but denied that he had approved of them. John Dean, however, was sure that the money was to be used to buy the silence of the defendants. Herbert Kalmbach, formerly the President's personal lawyer, testified that Ehrlichman had assured him, when he raised the issue, that these questionable payoffs were quite proper. Ehrlichman's version is that he does not remember any such conversation, and that he thought the money was for lawyers' fees or as a "humanitarian" gesture.

There is nothing in the documents that settles the payoff question one way or the other, for the very good reason that, soon after the arrests of June 17, 1972, principal figures in the affair went on a paper-shredding orgy. Little of an incriminating nature was going to be left in writing from that day on.

But the paper-shredding itself was the crudest part of the cover-up. Gordon Liddy — legal counsel for the Committee to Reelect the President, a convicted Watergate conspirator and a Plumber — destroyed a sheaf of documents, presumably those in which the techniques of political information-gathering were outlined (certainly they did not pertain to a future Walt Disney production). Jeb Stuart Magruder, deputy campaign director of the CRP, also had documents destroyed, including reports of the Watergate wiretaps. John Mitchell's assistant, Fred LaRue, and Nixon's counsel, Herbert Kalmbach, both admitted to shredding records of the money distributed to the Watergate defendants. FBI Acting Director Patrick Gray burned documents taken from the safe of Howard Hunt, another of the Plumbers. Finally, Maurice Stans, Nixon's finance chairman, destroyed reports of campaign contributions received before a new law forcing disclosure of campaign fund sources came into effect on April 7, 1972.

None of these destructive forays proves that there was a direct link from the President's Oval Office to the cover-up; most of those who did the shredding had good reason to want to protect their own skins. Rather, what the shreddings show is how complete, how instantaneous and how widespread was the

continued on page 66

"I want
a real
sherry"



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automatic reflex to burn and bury the evidence.

There are two other items in connection with the cover-up that appear on the record. On June 20, 1972 — that is, three days after the Watergate arrests — Ehrlichman, Haldeman and the President met for two hours and 15 minutes in the Oval Office. Just before that meeting, Ehrlichman and Haldeman met for 90 minutes with the President's campaign manager, John Mitchell, Attorney General Richard Kleindienst and White House Counsel John Dean. The subject of both meetings was the same — Wa-

tergate — and it is clear from the record that those present knew quite a bit about the affair by that time. Mitchell, for example, knew of the participation of Liddy and Hunt, and about the activities of his own deputy, Jeb Stuart Magruder; Dean had already talked to Liddy and Magruder and had apparently briefed Ehrlichman; Haldeman had talked to his own aide, Gordon Strachan, and Kleindienst had also talked to Liddy.

How much of this collective information was passed on to Richard Nixon? Nobody knows; the crucial evidence is presumably on one of the White House

tapes which the President has so far refused to release either to the Ervin committee or Special Prosecutor Archibald Cox.

There was another meeting with President Nixon that day. At 6.08 p.m., John Mitchell talked to the President for a few minutes. He had been briefed, in the meantime, by his two campaign assistants, Fred LaRue and Robert Mardian, about a long interview they had had with Liddy. The brief Mitchell-Nixon meeting was the first direct contact, apparently, between these two old friends, colleagues and former law partners since the Watergate arrests. What was said? Mitchell's story to the committee was that he apologized to the President for what had happened, but knew nothing more than the fact that five men had been charged (Liddy and Hunt had not yet been arrested). In fact, Mitchell knew much more than that; but what did he say? Again, the crucial evidence should be on the still withheld White House tapes.

Finally, on the cover-up, there is the direct testimony of Patrick Gray, the former Acting Director of the FBI, who says he telephoned Nixon on July 6, 1972, to warn him that some of his White House aides were trying to "mortally wound" the President by interfering with the FBI investigation of Watergate. Nixon has never really answered Gray's testimony, except to say that he thought it related to the danger of compromising a CIA operation.

In essence, his reply to all the cover-up charges is that he left everything in the hands of one man — John Dean — and that Dean failed him, and failed to follow his orders to root out the truth about White House participation in the affair. Would the President really have left so key a matter to one aide, knowing the potential for conflict of interest? Would he really have cut himself off from all the other potential sources of information — the FBI, his top aides, Ehrlichman and Haldeman, his close friend and political ally, John Mitchell — and relied solely on the fresh-faced newcomer, John Dean? Perhaps; but if that is what he did, the incredible stupidity of his action makes anything George McGovern did or said shine by comparison.

The Dirty Tricks

To my mind, the dirty tricks campaign run by the Committee to Reelect the President was far more sinister than the Watergate break-in and wiretapping. After all, those were illegal acts which, once discovered, could be dealt with; the dirty tricks campaign represented something more; it reflected an attitude, an unethical and odious attitude, toward the whole of political life. You could not bring the dirty tricks to a halt by arrest-

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ing someone; you had to change the state of mind of almost everyone in the top echelons of the campaign; you had to break through the pervasive attitude so clearly reflected on the witness stand by Mitchell, Ehrlichman and Haldeman that, in the struggle for power, almost anything goes.

One day when I was going through memos in John Mitchell's file, I came across a number dealing directly and exclusively with Presidential campaign activities and tactics. These were dated as far back as November, 1971. I remembered that, during Senate hearings in

March, 1972, Mitchell had sworn under oath that he played no direct role in politics while acting as Attorney General (while it is normal and proper in Canadian politics for cabinet ministers to play such a role, American practice frowns on it) and here, before my eyes, was evidence directly to the contrary. I put the memos down for a minute, and I said, out loud, "Jesus, that's really the way these people behave."

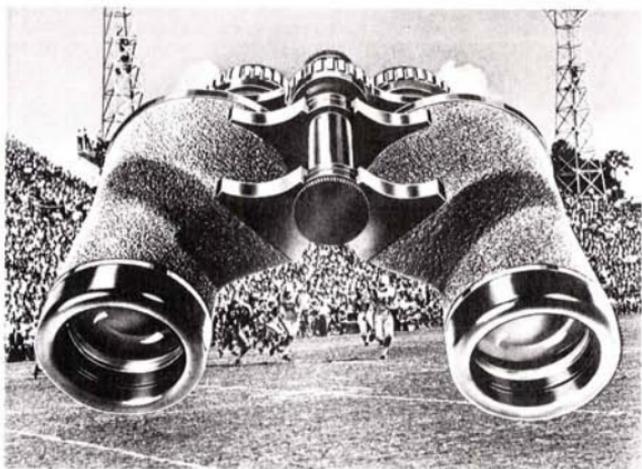
The way people behaved in the Presidential campaign was to play dirty tricks. There were the letters, on dummy stationery, during the Florida primary,

designed to smear Senators Muskie and Jackson before the Democratic nominating convention. Jackson might have made a stronger candidate than McGovern against Nixon; so might have Muskie. However, part of the reason that neither had the chance was due to the tricksters. Then there were the plans, laid out in two long meetings between Plumber Liddy, Dean, Mitchell and Magruder, when Mitchell was still Attorney General, which included wiretapping the Democrats, using call girls to blackmail Democrats at their leadership convention and kidnapping anti-Nixon leaders in radical groups. The budget for all these tricks was one million dollars. The plans were rejected by Mitchell, and then scaled down to concentrate on wiretapping, at a budget of \$250,000. Mitchell denied that he approved even this version, but it is clear that the wiretapping program went forward, and doubtful that anyone other than Mitchell could have given approval for the financing of such an operation.

There were other dirty tricks, too, such as the planting of spies, in the guise of reporters, on the Muskie and McGovern campaign trails. These spies would send daily accounts under one code name of "Chapman's Reports." Their job was not only to gather political information that might damage the potential candidates but also to pick up bits of gossip that might be used against unfriendly reporters. In short, anything, including, as one of the agents put it so graphically and ungrammatically, "who was sleeping with who," that might aid the President and confound his enemies.

There was the list of enemies, too, and the series of documents suggesting how reporters, radicals and others who crossed the President could be harassed by the FBI and the Internal Revenue Service.

Did the President know of and approve these tactics? Well, let us look back to 1962, and the California race for governor between Richard Milhous Nixon and Edmund G. "Pat" Brown. It was later described as "the dirtiest campaign in California history" (which covers a lot of territory), and the dirtiest part of it was the attempt to make the moderate Brown appear dangerously radical and "soft on Communism." There were bumper stickers that said IS BROWN PINK? There was a campaign pamphlet called *The Little Red Book* which accused Brown of "collaborating with and appeasing Communists." There were doctored photos, one of which purported to show Brown bowing to Khrushchev (the pose was actually cropped from a picture of Brown and a Laotian girl). Finally, there was the Committee for the Preservation of the California Democratic Party, a mysterious body that circulated a question-



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HOW TO BOOKS

from MACLEAN'S

naire, purportedly to ask Democrats for their opinions but in reality to attack Brown and persuade them not to vote, or to vote for Nixon. The questionnaire asked for donations to be sent to its headquarters which, by a touching coincidence, turned out to be in Nixon's campaign building. The Democrats got a court order banning circulation of the questionnaire, but they weren't the only ones who sued Nixon. Los Angeles county Republicans launched a lawsuit to make him disgorge some of the hundreds of thousands of dollars in party revenues which were to have been shared with other candidates but which the gubernatorial candidate snared for himself.

Nixon's response when he was charged with dirty tactics was the now familiar ploy that he knew nothing of what was going on and that somebody else must have done it. The somebody else who ran that campaign were H. R. Haldean, his campaign manager, John Ehrlichman, his advance and logistics man, and Herbert Klein, press aide; all of them went on to White House glory and played key roles in the 1972 campaign.

There is no question that the leader sets the tone of a political campaign by his own conduct, by the matters he approves and disapproves and by the people he hires and fires. In this way, the leader signals to his subordinates what he will and will not tolerate. The President now says that some of his "overzealous" supporters went too far in 1972, much further than anything he would approve, when they launched the dirty tricks campaign. What was a so-called "overzealous" supporter supposed to make of the 1962 campaign, and of the subsequent hiring of its architects to work in the White House?

All this smugness about American misdeeds may tend to make Canadians complacent, but in my view such complacency would be wrong. I have already said that Canada could have a Watergate. Indeed, in the area that concerns me most — political dirty tricks — we have already had it, not once but hundreds of times over. One has only to look at the complaints made by dozens of candidates in any provincial or federal election.

What follows is but one small example taken from my own observations. In 1967, when I was only 15, I was a delegate to the Progressive Conservative leadership convention in Toronto, the one that chose Robert Stanfield as leader (I was a PC then, but not necessarily now; like many Canadians, I'm presently undecided). I am proud to say that I had pledged myself to support Davie Fulton. After the fourth ballot, Fulton dropped out, leaving only

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Stanfield and Manitoba Premier Duff Roblin in contention. It became crucial for Fulton loyalists like me to know which way Fulton was going himself and how he wanted us to cast our ballots. What finally emerged was that Fulton intended to vote for Stanfield. However, he did not want to influence his followers in any way; he felt that they had earned the right to vote as they saw fit. (As a matter of fact, I was standing near Fulton at the time and he clearly indicated that he personally would vote for Stanfield but that his followers were in no way committed.) In my opinion, a dirty trick stalemated Fulton's intention. As the Fulton signs came down, Stanfield supporters stationed around the arena at strategic spots replaced them with Stanfield signs. One minute, we, the delegates, were watching Fulton banners; the next, in the same spots, we saw Stanfield signs. In the maelstrom that was Maple Leaf Gardens, where communication among the delegates and between delegates and their candidates was almost impossible, that was a clear signal — Fulton was going to Stanfield and his supporters should do the same.

Did that trick cost Roblin the nomination? I don't know, any more than I know whether the phony Muskie letter referring to "Canucks" doomed the Maine Senator's chances. However, I do remember delegates who had pledged themselves to Fulton subsequently telling me that they had voted for Stanfield solely because of the impression the changed signs had created. This could only be termed "dirty politics"; though not illegal, it was highly immoral. And I can't help wondering about the long-term effects for Canada. Would Roblin have lost as badly to Pierre Elliott Trudeau as Stanfield did in 1968? And, in 1972, when Stanfield seemed to snatch defeat from the jaws of victory, would Roblin have done better? Would we have a different government today if it were not for a political dirty trick?

Canadians who think our politics don't contain the same elements as the American campaigns are fooling themselves. In Quebec, my native province, it has become traditional to fiddle with the electoral lists, leaving off houses, and indeed whole areas, where the vote is likely to prove unsatisfactory to the party in power. It is also standard practice to run candidates with the same, or a similar, name as one of the standard candidates; in the last provincial election, two Lévesques appeared on the ballot in the Parti Québécois leader's riding.

Campaign funds could be as badly misused in Canadian elections as in American ones, and we wouldn't even know it. We do not have any adequate disclosure laws — not even anything to match the U.S. — on our books. This,

despite a century of sporadic outbreaks of dishonesty since the Pacific Scandal broke on the Canadian horizon in 1892.

Not only could we have a Watergate (and we have had, remember, a great many instances of the misuse of political power, from minor battles over stuffed ballot boxes to such major upheavals as the Dorion Inquiry, the Hal Banks case and the titillating affair of Gerda Munsinger), but we could have a cover-up, too. According to an official in the Justice Department, it's far from clear whether or not political wiretapping is illegal. The regulations governing disclosure of evidence are much more restrictive here than they are in the U.S. The Americans found out about Watergate largely through a series of flukes — a team of investigative reporters who would not be put off, Judge John Sirica, who remained unshaken in his search for the truth, and James McCord Jr., a witness who broke and talked. A similar



case in Canada would require more, not fewer, lucky breaks to bring it out into the open.

This is not to say, of course, that a Canadian Watergate would be exactly the same. The election process here is much more decentralized. Canadians do not vote for a prime minister, they vote for a local Member of Parliament; if there is to be interference with the normal political process, it will not take place in Ottawa, but rather in dozens or even hundreds of riding association offices across the country. There is no motive to centralize Canadian dirty work, and all that means is that it would be even more difficult to detect.

Nor do I believe that there is anything in the Canadian character morally superior to the U.S. Nothing in our history shows us to be less susceptible to abusing positions of trust (remember Sir John A. Macdonald's telegram, MUST HAVE ANOTHER 10,000? Remember the Beauharnois scandal?) and nothing in our law suggests that we are more vigi-

lant in such matters. In the long run, of course, the quality of politics does not depend so much on law as on the prevailing attitudes toward politics, and nothing I have seen suggests that Canadians are any less concerned with winning at any price than Americans.

Therefore, while I feel that we could have a Watergate — may even have had it and not known it — I also think it would take a more decentralized form than in the U.S. I think, too, that we would recover from it more swiftly. We have on our side that ancient, battered, but still serviceable and invincible institution, the parliamentary system.

In the first place, parliament could keep a Canadian Watergate, once broached, from diving underground to fester, as it did in the U.S. (The essential elements of Watergate were revealed before and during the Presidential campaign, but it was possible for the Republicans to dismiss the evidence as a political stunt, and for the President to ignore it.) A Canadian prime minister is on display every day that parliament sits. He cannot continuously refuse to answer legitimate questions in the House of Commons.

The second major advantage of the parliamentary system is that it has a built-in release from paralysis such as that introduced by Watergate — namely, in the defeat of the government responsible. No Canadian leader could remain in power with the representative assembly against him, as Nixon has done; no Canadian leader could survive for long the overwhelming loss of confidence that has been registered by the American people. When I was in Washington, the most striking thing about that city's atmosphere was the feeling of immobility. Nixon had lost the ability to lead; that was clear. But it was also clear that he could not be replaced. Impeachment seemed unlikely (and has become more so, with the resignation of his once potential successor, Vice-President Spiro Agnew), and resignation has been ruled out by his own statements. Americans are faced with three more years of potentially lame-duck leadership, because of what *The New Republic* calls "the fatal flaw" of the American constitution. It adds: "Canada could have got this thing over in three months."

This does not mean, of course, that we should relax in an attitude of soporific self-contentment; the fact that we could recover from a Watergate is a mechanical advantage, an accident of our history. It is important, but it is not vital. What is vital to the well-being of any nation is the kind of moral judgments we bring to bear in the political arena, and the kind of behavior we demand from our leaders.

In this vital area, we have nothing to feel complacent about. ■