

Politics

GOP Security Aide Among Five Arrested in Bugging Affair

By [Bob Woodward](#) and

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June 19, 1972

One of the five men arrested early Saturday in the attempt to bug the Democratic National Committee headquarters is the salaried security coordinator for President Nixon's reelection committee.

The suspect, former CIA employee James W. McCord Jr., 53, also holds a separate contract to provide security services to the Republican National Committee, GOP national chairman Bob Dole said yesterday.

Former Attorney General John N. Mitchell, head of the Committee for the Re-Election of the President, said yesterday McCord was employed to help install that committee's own security system.

In a statement issued in Los Angeles, Mitchell said McCord and the other four men arrested at Democratic headquarters Saturday "were not operating either in our behalf or with our consent" in the alleged bugging attempt.

Dole issued a similar statement, adding that "we deplore action of this kind in or out of politics." An aide to Dole said he was unsure at this time exactly what security services McCord was hired to perform by the National Committee.

Police sources said last night that they were seeking a sixth man in connection with the attempted bugging. The sources would give no other details.

Other sources close to the investigation said yesterday that there still was no explanation as to why the five suspects might have attempted to bug Democratic headquarters in the Watergate at 2600 Virginia Ave., NW, or if they were working for other individuals or organizations..

"We're baffled at this point . . . the mystery deepens," a high Democratic party source said.

Democratic National Committee Chairman Lawrence F. O'Brien said the "bugging incident . . . raised the ugliest questions about the integrity of the political process that I have encountered in a quarter century.

"No mere statement of innocence by Mr. Nixon's campaign manager will dispel these questions."

The Democratic presidential candidates were not available for comment yesterday.

O'Brien, in his statement, called on Attorney General Richard G. Kleindienst to order an immediate, "searching professional investigation" of the entire matter by the FBI.

A spokesman for Kleindienst said yesterday. "The FBI is already investigating. . . . Their investigative report will be turned over to the criminal division for appropriate action."

The White House did not comment.

McCord, 53, retired from the Central Intelligence Agency in 1970 after 19 years of service and established his own "security consulting firm," McCord Associates, at 414 Hungerford Drive, Rockville. He lives at 7 Winder Ct., Rockville.

McCord is an active Baptist and colonel in the Air Force Reserve, according to neighbors and friends.

In addition to McCord, the other four suspects, all Miami residents, have been identified as: Frank Sturgis (also known as Frank Florini), an American who served in Fidel Castro's revolutionary army and later trained a guerrilla force of anti-Castro exiles; Eugenio R. Martinez, a real estate agent and notary public who is active in anti-Castro activities in Miami; Virgilio R. Gonzales, a locksmith; and Bernard L. Barker, a native of Havana said by exiles to have worked on and off for the CIA since the Bay of Pigs invasion in 1961.

All five suspects gave the police false names after being arrested Saturday. McCord also told his attorney that his name is Edward Martin, the attorney said.

Sources in Miami said yesterday that at least one of the suspects -- Sturgis -- was attempting to organize Cubans in Miami to demonstrate at the Democratic National Convention there next month.

The five suspects, well-dressed, wearing rubber surgical gloves and unarmed, were arrested about 2:30 a.m. Saturday when they were surprised by Metropolitan police inside the 29-office suite of the Democratic headquarters on the sixth floor of the Watergate.

The suspects had extensive photographic equipment and some electronic surveillance instruments capable of intercepting both regular conversation and telephone communication.

Police also said that two ceiling panels near party chairman O'Brien's office had been removed in such a way as to make it possible to slip in a bugging device.

McCord was being held in D.C. jail on \$30,000 bond yesterday. The other four were being held there on \$50,000 bond. All are charged with attempted burglary and attempted interception of telephone and other conversations.

McCord was hired as “security coordinator” of the Committee for the Re-election of the President on Jan. 1, according to Powell Moore, the Nixon committee’s director of press and information.

Moore said McCord’s contract called for a “take-home salary of \$1,200 per month and that the ex-CIA employee was assigned an office in the committee’s headquarters at 1701 Pennsylvania Ave., N.W.

Within the last one or two weeks, Moore said, McCord made a trip to Miami beach -- where both the Republican and Democratic National Conventions will be held. The purpose of the trip, Moore said, was “to establish security at the hotel where the Nixon Committee will be staying.”

In addition to McCord’s monthly salary, he and his firm were paid a total of \$2,836 by the Nixon Committee for the purchase and rental of television and other security equipment, according to Moore.

Moore said that he did not know exactly who on the committee staff hired McCord, adding that it “definitely wasn’t John Mitchell.” According to Moore, McCord has never worked in any previous Nixon election campaigns “because he didn’t leave the CIA until two years ago, so it would have been impossible.” As of late yesterday, Moore said. McCord was still on the Re-Election Committee payroll.

In his statement from Los Angeles, former Attorney General Mitchell said he was “surprised and dismayed” at reports of McCord’s arrest.

“The person involved is the proprietor of a private security agency who was employed by our committee months ago to assist with the installation of our security system,” said Mitchell. “He has, as we understand it, a number of business clients and interests and we have no knowledge of these relationships.”

Referring to the alleged attempt to bug the opposition’s headquarters, Mitchell said: “There is no place in our campaign, or in the electoral process, for this type of activity and we will not permit it nor condone it.”

About two hours after Mitchell issued his statement, GOP National Chairman Dole said, “I understand that Jim McCord . . . is the owner of the firm with which the Republican National Committee contracts for security services . . . if our understanding of the facts is accurate, added Dole, “we will of course discontinue our relationship with the firm.”

Tom Wilck, deputy chairman of communications for the GOP National Committee, said late yesterday that Republican officials still were checking to find out when McCord was hired, how much he was paid and exactly what his responsibilities were.

McCord lives with his wife in a two-story \$45,000 house in Rockville.

After being contacted by The Washington Post yesterday, Harlan A. Westrell, who said he was a friend of McCord’s, gave the following background on McCord:

He is from Texas, where he and his wife graduated from Baylor University. They have three children, a son who is in his third year at the Air Force Academy, and two daughters.

The McCords have been active in the First Baptist Church of Washington.

Other neighbors said that McCord is a colonel in the Air Force Reserve, and also has taught courses in security at Montgomery Community College. This could not be confirmed yesterday.

McCord's previous employment by the CIA was confirmed by the intelligence agency, but a spokesman there said further data about McCord was not available yesterday.

In Miami, Washington Post Staff Writer Kirk Scharfenberg reported that two of the other suspects -- Sturgis and Barker -- are well known among Cuban exiles there. Both are known to have had extensive contracts with the Central Intelligence Agency, exile sources reported, and Barker was closely associated with Frank Bender, the CIA operative who recruited many members of Brigade 2506, the Bay of Pigs invasion force.

Barker, 55, and Sturgis, 37, reportedly showed up uninvited at a Cuban exile meeting in May and claimed to represent an anticommunist organization of refugees from "captive nations." The purpose of the meeting, at which both men reportedly spoke, was to plan a Miami demonstration in support of President Nixon's decision to mine the harbor of Haiphong.

Barker, a native of Havana who lived both in the U.S. and Cuba during his youth, is a U.S. Army veteran who was imprisoned in a German POW camp during the World War II. He later served in the Cuban Buro de Investigaciones -- secret police -- under Fidel Castro and fled to Miami in 1959. He reportedly was one of the principal leaders of the Cuban Revolutionary Council, the exile organization established with CIA help to organize the Bay of Pigs Invasion.

Sturgis, an American soldier of fortune who joined Castro in the hills of Oriente Province in 1958, left Cuba in 1959 with his close friend, Pedro Diaz Lanz, then chief of the Cuban air force. Diaz Lanz, once active in Cuban exile activities in Miami, more recently has been reported involved in such right-wing movements as the John Birch Society and the Rev. Billy James Hargis' Christian Crusade.

Sturgis, more commonly known as Frank Florini, lost his American citizenship in 1960 for serving in a foreign military force -- Castro's army -- but, with the aid of then-Florida Sen. George Smathers, regained it.

Contributing to this story were Washington Post Staff Writers E.J. Bachinski, Bill Gold, Claudia Levy, Kirk Scharfenberg, J.Y. Smith and Martin Weil.

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