

5/5/73

LEN:

Here are the outlines of the story that they're working on. I was flatly told that it might never run because it is not well sourced at this point:

According to sources they do have -- and one in particular, who has a "cosmic view" and has been their best source throughout -- a dirty tricks department was set up back in 1969. It was run by Mitchell and Mardian and ~~somebody else~~ was manned mostly by ex-FBI types, most of whom were very ~~clever~~ clever.

Among their alleged activities:

-- Phone taps of the press, WH staff, and others; usually done in the guise of national security when in fact it was often unrelated. \*

-- Possible break-ins (in one conversation, he was specific about this; in a second he backed away, saying he couldn't identify any particular break-ins)

-- Infiltration and spying on a number of radical and fringe groups, ~~etc.~~ (Hasn't the government always done that?)

-- Efforts to discredit liberals (not specific as to acts).

-- They have no information which ~~z~~ indicates that the dirty tricks team was used for political purposes in the 1970 elections. They do have one source who says that the Watergate taps were ~~purixox~~ authorized at Justice for national security purposes.

What evidence exists on paper? They ~~knix~~ say it's all been destroyed-- probably.

According to their sources, many of these who participated in this ring either left in 1970-1971 or decided they ~~didn~~ couldn't take on some of the assignments. ~~z~~ At this point, Hunt and Liddy were ~~hrough~~ recruited. They proved to be rank amateurs, real bunglers -- but they also soon acquired a reputation as the ~~WH~~ "WH burglars" after they came over.

At some point -- time unspecified -- Mitchell met with HRH and proposed that ~~the~~ Hunt and Liddy be moved to 1701~~0~~ for campaign purposes. HRH said no, but Mitchell ~~was~~ did it anyway.

Let me re-emphasize that this is only a sketchy ~~was~~ story in their minds, but I know they've been pursuing it for ~~some~~ several days. There is no allegation so far of involvement by RN.

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Len, I continue to feel that we ought to know more about the plumbers operation because there is probably more there. As you will recall, <sup>our friends</sup> ~~they~~ said that one source had named Walt Minnick as the fellow who helped move the 8 boxes out of Hunt's office ~~they~~ ~~move~~ Sunday after Watergate. As Minnick worked for Krogh, those boxes could conceivably contain a lot of answers.

Dave