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THE PRESIDENT'S PRIVATE EYE

AS Richard Nixon's predilection for secrecy and intrigue were the hallmarks of his operation of foreign policy, so they also became the distinguishing characteristics of certain actions he pursued in the domestic arena. He entered the White House with deep suspicion of his "enemies" on the left, the opponents he had fought throughout his political career, from the supporters of Jerry Voorhis in 1946 to the partisans of Hubert Humphrey in the 1968 presidential campaign, and who he believed made up the bulk of the bureaucrats in the government. Henry Kissinger, the former Harvard professor who moved easily within the Eastern Establishment, recognized that Nixon felt "shunned" by that same group, and, he wrote, "this rankled and compounded his already strong tendency to see himself beset by enemies." Chief of Staff H. R. "Bob" Haldeman similarly wrote that Nixon "would despair at his lack of natural charisma, and realize that if he was to win he would have to attack and destroy the enemy." Whoever seemed to be on the opposite side, Nixon pursued, often with what Haldeman observed were "petty, vindictive orders." If Nixon had endured a time of negative press coverage, he would seek to bar all

reporters from *Air Force One.* If a senator made a speech against the president's policies in regard to Vietnam, Nixon would issue an order to Haldeman: "Put a twenty-four-hour surveillance on that bastard."

Why a surveillance? To obtain deleterious information that could be used against the senator. Nixon liked that sort of secret, intrigue-related intelligence, and fostered an environment within the White House that put a premium on it. The president believed that the domestic information-gathering arms of the government—the FBI and other federal policing agencies—could not be counted on to undertake confidential assignments of the sort he had in mind. J. Edgar Hoover, Nixon believed, had files on everybody, but even though Hoover often cooperated with Nixon, the FBI director was reluctant to release any of those files to Nixon even after he became president, just as reluctant as Director Richard Helms would be in 1971 to release the CIA's Bay of Pigs files when Nixon instructed him to do so.

And so, just weeks after Nixon's inauguration, the president directed White House counsel John Ehrlichman to hire a private eye. "He wanted somebody who could do chores for him that a federal employee could not do," Ehrlichman says. "Nixon was demanding information on certain things that I couldn't get through government channels because it would have been questionable." What sort of investigations? "Of the Kennedys, for example," Ehrlichman wrote in *Witness to Power.*

Ehrlichman quickly found a candidate, a well-decorated, forty-year-old Irish New York City cop, John J. Caulfield. Caulfield had been a member of the NYPD and its undercover unit, the Bureau of Special Services and Investigations (BOSSI). He had made cases against dissident and terrorist organizations, and BOSSI as a whole was known for its ability to penetrate and keep track of left-wing and black groups. One of the unit's jobs was to work closely with the Secret Service and guard political dignitaries and world leaders who frequently moved through the city. During the 1960 election, Caulfield had been assigned to the security detail of candidate Richard Nixon. He had befriended Nixon's personal secretary, Rose Mary Woods, and her brother Joe, the sheriff of Cook County, Illinois. In 1968, after leaving the New York City Police Department, Caulfield had served as a security man for the Nixon campaign.

But when Ehrlichman approached him in early 1969 and asked Caulfield to set up a private security firm to provide services for the Nixon White House, Caulfield declined, and instead suggested that he join Ehrlichman's staff and then, as a White House employee, supervise another man who would be hired solely as a private eye. Ehrlichman

agreed, and when Caulfield arrived at the White House to start work in April 1969, he said he had the ideal candidate for presidential gumshoe, a BOSSI colleague, Anthony T. Ulasewicz.

In May 1969, Ehrlichman and Caulfield flew to New York and met Ulasewicz in the American Airlines VIP lounge at LaGuardia Airport. Ulasewicz was ten years older than Caulfield, just as streetwise, and even saltier, with a thick accent picked up from his youth on the Lower East Side and twenty-six years of pounding the pavement on his beats. He was told in the VIP lounge that he would operate under a veil of tight secrecy. He would receive orders only from Caulfield though he could assume that those came from Ehrlichman, who would, in turn, be acting on instructions from the president. Ulasewicz would keep no files and submit no written reports; he later wrote in his memoirs that Ehrlichman said to him, "You'll be allowed no mistakes. There will be no support for you whatsoever from the White House if you're exposed." Ulasewicz refused an offer of six months' work, and insisted on a full year, with the understanding that there would be no written contract, just a verbal guarantee. It was also agreed that to keep everything away from the White House, Ulasewicz would work through an outside attorney. In late June 1969, Caulfield directed Ulasewicz to come to Washington and meet a man named Herbert W. Kalmbach at the Madison Hotel. Kalmbach was Nixon's personal attorney in California, and he told Tony that he would be paid $22,000 a year, plus expenses, and that the checks would come from Kalmbach to Tony's home in New York. To avoid putting the private eye on the government payroll, Kalmbach was to pay him out of a war chest of unspent Nixon campaign funds. Ulasewicz requested and was promised credit cards in his own name and in that of a *nom de guerre*, Edward T. Stanley. Shortly, he started on his first job for the Nixon White House. One day after Senator Edward M. Kennedy's car plunged off a bridge, killing a young woman, Tony Ulasewicz was at Chappaquiddick, Massachusetts, posing as a reporter, asking a lot of questions and taking photographs. He stayed a week, and phoned reports to Caulfield thrice daily.

Thereafter, he crisscrossed the country, investigating whatever the president or his subordinates thought proper targets for information—such Democrats as George Wallace, Hubert Humphrey, Edmund Muskie, Vance Hartke, William Proxmire, and Carl Albert, Republican representatives John Ashbrook and Paul McCloskey, antiwar groups, entertainers, think tanks, reporters, even members of Nixon's own family. For instance, when it was feared that the president's nephew, Donald Nixon, Jr., might fall prey to an embarrassing business deal,

Ulasewicz went to California to look into the matter. When a Florida teachers' union complained of the ease with which Julie Nixon Eisenhower landed a job, Ulasewicz was there to investigate the accusation and the resulting news coverage. When the satirical film *Millhouse: A White Comedy* was released, Tony had to go and see it. When the comic and presidential imitator known as Richard M. Dixon became popular, Tony was charged with looking into his background.

He was asked to dig up information on one of Nixon's favorite targets, columnist Jack Anderson, and then to search the backgrounds of Anderson's brothers. Ulasewicz also pried into a group that sold presidential emblems on walnut plaques, tried to discover how the My Lai massacre story had leaked out, and hung around with demonstrators from the Vietnam Veterans Against the War and the National Peace Action Coalition. Ulasewicz was dispatched to investigate a former lobbyist who had written a book in which he alleged that he had conveyed gifts to many Capitol Hill politicians. Even a band of Quakers—members of Nixon's own religion—were targeted when they held a prayer vigil in front of the White House. In most of these instances, Ulasewicz was told to find out what he could about these groups or individuals, to dig for information that could be used against them, and report his findings to Caulfield.

After a year and a half as presidential counsel and then assistant to the president for domestic affairs, John Ehrlichman was appointed head of the new White House Domestic Council, in effect, the number-three man in the White House managerial hierarchy, just behind Bob Haldeman. It was July 1970, and the White House looked to replace Ehrlichman with a man who—in the mold of all the newer Nixon appointees—would be competent but not a threat to the president. Ehrlichman, who had known Nixon since the 1960 campaign, had had the president's ear, but the new counsel would not. He would be among the loyal staff, a detail man who would report to Ehrlichman and Haldeman. A prime candidate was one among the dozens of bright-eyed young Republicans of good background who had been attracted to the political arena, John Wesley Dean III.

Dean came from a family of some means and had attended a military prep school in Virginia, where he had roomed with Barry M. Goldwater, Jr., son of the Arizona senator. He remained close to the Goldwater family for many years. He graduated from Georgetown Law School and married the daughter of a Democratic senator from Missouri. There was one child, and a divorce. He landed a position at a Washington, D.C., law firm specializing in communications law, but

lasted only six months before he was fired when it was discovered that Dean was secretly working on a television station license application for a competitor of one of his firm's clients.

But Dean landed on his feet and through his connections soon became minority counsel to the House Judiciary Committee, and, after Nixon's election, moved rather easily into the Department of Justice, then under the direction of Attorney General John Mitchell. Obviously bright and ambitious, Dean picked up the sense of ruthlessness that seemed to be in favor in the Nixon administration. After little more than a year as a deputy assistant attorney general, Dean made a list of candidates for a job at the White House being compiled by Bud Krogh, another White House aide of about Dean's age, who had bumped into him on Justice Department matters. Because he was on this list, Dean became the leading candidate for the job of counsel to the president.

Ehrlichman and Haldeman, to whom Krogh reported, both assumed that Dean was a Mitchell man because he worked at Justice, but this wasn't precisely the case, for Dean was only at Justice thanks to Republican connections. Nor did Mitchell recommend him to the White House. In fact, both Dean and Mitchell later reported that Mitchell had tried to discourage him from taking the job. Dean told that to the Senate Select Committee on Presidential Campaign Activities, known as the Watergate committee, and recalled in an interview with us that Mitchell had advised him to stay where he was, saying, "I hate to see you go to the White House, because that's an awful place. . . . You're going to go on up in the Department of Justice—you'll have a better job here."

But for a young man who wanted power, the White House seemed the place to be, and when Bud Krogh offered to have him flown to San Clemente to meet with Haldeman, Dean jumped. Haldeman, who wore his own hair in a close-cropped military cut, didn't like Dean's long blond hair, and joked that Dean would be the resident "hippie." At San Clemente, Dean had a perfunctory interview with Nixon, and was then officially hired.

Dean's first day at the White House was July 27, 1970, and from the outset, he determined to make the most of his position. A flashy figure in an environment filled with drab ones, he eventually became known around the White House as the "golden boy," and not only for his long, thin blond hair. Youthful and dashing in appearance, Dean developed a reputation as a playboy, a notion he did not try to discourage. "He lived a little fancier than the rest of us," recalls Gordon C. Strachan, who was about Dean's age and worked as an assistant to Bob Haldeman. Ehrlichman wrote that Dean "lived beyond his salary.

He owned an expensive town house in Alexandria [Virginia]. Dean's Porsche, Gucci loafers, and tailored sports clothes should have raised more eyebrows than they did." In those days Dean wore contact lenses and his suits were crisp and a bit flashy; only later, when he was to appear before the Watergate committee, did he don owlish glasses, conservative suits, and cut his hair so that it didn't fall below his collar.

Shortly after assuming his position, Dean began thinking about expanding his domain, and hired former Army officer Fred F. Fielding as an assistant lawyer in the counsel's office. They became close friends. In Dean's 1976 memoir, *Blind Ambition*, he recounted how he explained to his new associate the way in which their careers could quickly rise: "Fred, I think we have to look at our office as a small law firm. . . . We have to build our practice like any other law firm. Our principal client, of course, is the president. But to convince the president we're not just the only law office in town, but the best, we've got to convince a lot of other people first." Especially Haldeman and Ehrlichman.

But how to convince them? As Dean tried to assess the situation at the White House, events soon showed him that intelligence gathering was the key to power in the Nixon White House. One of Dean's first assignments from Haldeman was to look over a startling proposal to revamp the government's domestic intelligence operations in order to neutralize radical groups such as the Black Panthers and the Weathermen.

The scheme had been the work of another of the White House's bright young stalwarts, Nixon aide Tom Charles Huston. The impetus was a meeting chaired by Nixon in the Oval Office on June 5, 1970, attended by J. Edgar Hoover, Richard Helms, and the chiefs of the NSA and the Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA). The various agencies were almost at war with one another; just a few months earlier, for instance, Hoover had cut all FBI communication with the CIA. Nixon wanted the agencies to work together against the threat from the "New Left." In the aftermath of Nixon's decision in May 1970 to invade Cambodia, and the killings of several students at Kent State University, colleges all over the country were again being rocked by riots and demonstrations as they had been in the last year of Lyndon Johnson's presidency, and for the same reason—young people were objecting to the president's war policies. In Nixon's view, the threat was grave and must be attacked; therefore the agencies must find some way to bury their differences and concentrate on the true enemy. Huston was assigned to help Hoover and the intelligence chiefs clear obstacles to their working jointly on these matters.

In early July, Huston sent a long analysis to the president, endorsed by Hoover and the other intelligence agency directors, on how to enhance cooperation. To this memo Huston added his own secret one that became known as the "Huston Plan." It called for six activities, some of which were clearly illegal. They included electronic surveillance of persons and groups "who pose a major threat to internal security"; monitoring of American citizens by international communications facilities; the relaxation of restrictions on the covert opening of mail by federal agents; surreptitious entries and burglaries to gain information on the groups; the recruitment of more campus informants; and, to ensure that the objectives were carried out and that intelligence continued to be gathered, the formation of a new interagency group consisting of the agencies at the June 5 meeting and military counterintelligence agencies. Nixon endorsed these measures in the Huston Plan on July 14, 1970, because, as he put it in his memoir, "I felt they were necessary and justified by the violence we faced."

The secret plan angered J. Edgar Hoover, not because he objected to coming down hard on dissidents, but, rather, because he felt that any new interagency group would encroach on the turf of the FBI and because he was concerned about the negative public reaction should any of the activities be exposed. On July 27, the day Dean began work at the White House, Hoover took the unusual step of venturing out of his own domain to visit his nominal superior, Attorney General John Mitchell. As Hoover learned, Mitchell did not know anything about the Huston Plan at the time. "I was kept in the dark until I found out about it from Hoover," Mitchell later told us. But as soon as he was apprised of the plan, Mitchell agreed with Hoover that it must be stopped—not for Hoover's reasons, but because it contained clearly unconstitutional elements—and immediately visited Nixon and told him it could not go forward. In testament to Mitchell's arguments and good sense, Nixon canceled the plan shortly thereafter and Huston was relieved of his responsibilities in the area of domestic intelligence.

Coordination of official domestic intelligence from various federal agencies concerning antiwar activists and other "radicals" was then handed to the new White House counsel, John Dean, along with a copy of the rejected Huston Plan. But it seemed that the president was still not satisfied with the quality of domestic intelligence, because in August and September Haldeman pushed Dean to try and find a way around the Hoover roadblock. In pursuit of a solution, on September 17, 1970, Dean went to see his old boss, John Mitchell. Hours earlier, Mitchell had lunched with Director Helms and other senior CIA

officials who had all agreed that the FBI wasn't doing a very good job of collecting domestic intelligence.

Dean and Mitchell spoke, and the next day Dean prepared a memo to Mitchell with several suggestions: There should be a new committee set up, an interagency group to evaluate the government's domestic intelligence product, and it should have "operational" responsibilities as well. Both men, Dean's memo said, had agreed that "it would be inappropriate to have any blanket removal of restrictions" such as had been proposed in the Huston Plan; instead, Dean suggested that "The most appropriate procedure would be to decide on the type of intelligence we need, based on an assessment of the recommendations of this unit, and then to proceed to remove the restraints as necessary to obtain such intelligence."

Dean's plan languished and was never put into operation. Years later, in the spring of 1973, when Dean was talking to federal prosecutors and preparing to appear before the Senate committee investigating Watergate, he gave a copy of the Huston Plan to Federal Judge John J. Sirica, who turned it over to the Senate committee. Dean's action helped to establish his bona fides as the accuser of the president and was the cause of much alarm. In his testimony and writings thereafter, Dean suggested that he had always been nervous about the Huston Plan and that he had tried to get around it, and as a last resort had gotten John Mitchell to kill the revised version. In an interview, Dean told us, "I looked at that goddamn Tom Huston report," went to Mitchell and said, "General, I find it pretty spooky." But as the September 18, 1970, memo to Mitchell shows, Dean actually embraced rather than rejected the removal of "restraints as necessary to obtain" intelligence.

A small matter? A minor divergence between two versions of the same incident? As will become clear as this inquiry continues, Dean's attempt to gloss over the actual disposition of the Huston Plan was a first sign of the construction of a grand edifice of deceit.

When John Dean took over the office of counsel to the president, says his predecessor John Ehrlichman, it was an office that "was really vacant . . . it was essentially unsupervised." Ehrlichman had left to set up the new Domestic Council, taking with him his own small staff, and thus "Dean was pretty much on his own." But Jack Caulfield had stayed behind and Dean soon was supervising his intelligence work. Dean looked in all the nooks and crannies and cabinets and found whatever assets the office possessed. Hanging in a forgotten closet was Tony Ulasewicz.

Later, in 1973, appearing before the Senate, Dean testified to little knowledge about Ulasewicz, saying he didn't know or remember his full name until that year. In *Blind Ambition*, he wrote that in July 1971—one year after he had become counsel—he only knew that one of Caulfield's "operatives" was named Tony, "but I didn't find out his last name, Ulasewicz, until years later." Dean's Senate testimony about Ulasewicz befuddled Haldeman aide Gordon Strachan. "That kind of surprised me," Strachan told us. "I thought [Ulasewicz] was [Dean's] guy." Strachan was right: Ulasewicz *was* Dean's guy.

In fact, Dean knew all about Ulasewicz, as can be seen from Dean's comments to the former detective when Caulfield introduced them at the White House. Ulasewicz later described this meeting to a Senate investigator, who recorded in his notes that "He [Ulasewicz] remembers his conversation with Dean as being short and pleasant, indicating that Dean was aware of what Ulasewicz had been doing, and was appreciative of his work." The investigator's notes, located in the National Archives, also record that Ulasewicz quoted Dean as telling him: "You've been doing good work. May get better." Yet another note reads, "Dean knew of his [Ulasewicz's] travels, assignments."

Dean's claims of noninvolvement with Ulasewicz are further controverted by portions of Dean's own book, in which he wrote of some of the assignments he undertook as White House counsel—assignments that match many of the investigations carried out by Ulasewicz, such as those aimed against the Vietnam Veterans Against the War, impersonator Richard M. Dixon, and so on. Dean even boasts of having had to investigate Representative Richard Poff of Virginia, for whom he'd once worked as a legislative aide, when Poff was under consideration by Nixon for a seat on the Supreme Court. A Senate committee staff memorandum of seventy-three Ulasewicz assignments, compiled by the investigators from long conversations with Tony, lists his Number 37 assignment as "Background investigation into Congressman Richard Poff in his hometown in Virginia." As we will see, despite Dean's denials, Dean knew precisely who Ulasewicz was, often ordered him into action through Caulfield, and later issued orders directly to him without an intermediary.

Dean, Caulfield, and Ulasewicz were also involved in a Nixon attempt to settle an old score. Back in 1956, Nixon's brother Donald had received a secret loan from Howard Hughes; when this loan was revealed during the 1960 campaign, it caused some embarrassment. Eleven years later, Nixon determined to make the Democrats pay for having revealed that loan. His friend Bebe Rebozo had convinced Nixon that Democratic Party chairman Lawrence F. O'Brien had been

secretly retained by Hughes to represent his interests in Washington. "It would seem that the time is approaching when Larry O'Brien is held accountable for his retainer with Hughes," Nixon wrote in a memo to Haldeman in January 1971; the president suggested that Charles W. Colson, Nixon's special counsel, could obtain the proof of the O'Brien-Hughes deal, expose it, and thereby damage the Democrats. "Let's try Dean," Haldeman scribbled on the bottom of the memo, and the next day gave the assignment to the White House counsel.

It has long been believed that this early investigation of Larry O'Brien was the germ of the seed that became the Watergate affair, and that it led to the break-in of Democratic Party headquarters in June of 1972. As we will see in later chapters, and demonstrate conclusively for the first time, the target of the two Watergate burglaries was specifically *not* O'Brien. This 1971 investigation of O'Brien led precisely nowhere.

To be sure, Ulasewicz, who had been put on O'Brien's trail two years earlier, did more fieldwork, and so did Dean. The most promising lead, provided by Colson, was Robert F. Bennett, son of Utah Senator Wallace F. Bennett and the man who had just taken over Mullen & Company, a Washington public relations firm that had strong connections to the CIA and that had just signed Howard Hughes as a client. Bennett claimed to Dean that he knew all about the O'Brien-Hughes relationship, and promised to obtain documentation for it, but never did so. Much later, Nixon obtained IRS records that showed that O'Brien had indeed received a retainer from Howard Hughes for $160,000. By that time, however, Dean, Caulfield, and Ulasewicz had gone on to other investigations.

Within six months of arriving, Dean had made the counsel's office into a small but growing power center. He had sufficiently impressed Haldeman enough to merit more perks, such as being allowed to have an Army Signal Corps telephone in his home. He knew he had a loyal staff of three lawyers, plus Caulfield, and, as he wrote in *Blind Ambition*, "it did not take [my superiors] long to notice that the counsel's office could perform intelligence work for the White House. . . . [We] built up a reputation for such intelligence investigations—some juicy, many simply laborious—and we handled them while the ordinary legal work hummed along."

In April 1971, Dean was summoned to Haldeman's office and given specific instructions on his role in the Nixon reelection campaign. "He knew what he wanted from me," Dean wrote, describing Haldeman's worry that the Republican convention would be ruined by antiwar

protests as the Democratic gathering had been in 1968. " 'One thing that can be improved, for example, is demonstration intelligence,' Haldeman told him. 'We're not going to have a convention like the one the Democrats had in Chicago.' "

Dean soon had a chance to prove himself during the massive antiwar demonstration of May 3, 1971, that followed Nixon's decision to order military "incursions" into Laos. Dean's office became the focal point for intelligence gathered about the demonstrators, who had vowed to shut down Washington for a day by blocking roads and bridges. Special telephone lines in the command centers of the FBI, the District of Columbia police headquarters, and the Department of Justice all were linked to Dean's White House office. During that day of protest, Dean and his staff received data from the field and sent reports directly to the president; later, Dean received word that Nixon was pleased with his performance.

Haldeman patted Dean on the head, too, and tried to spur him to even greater efforts against the demonstrators, but Dean was becoming antsy with chasing protestors and felt such actions would not gain for his "law firm" the senior status he desired. But perhaps he could transfer the success in the antiwar demonstrations to a larger role for himself in the 1972 presidential election campaign, something already under intense consideration in the summer of 1971.

"I reflected on how I might take advantage of Haldeman's preoccupation" with political intelligence, Dean wrote in his memoirs.

> I knew the campaign would be a steppingstone for those who distinguished themselves. . . . If the counsel's office could play the same role at the Republican convention we had played on Mayday—special White House tie-lines, half-hourly reports—I knew we would be in the thick of things. We had a jump on other White House offices in demonstration intelligence. Why not expand our role to all intelligence that would be of interest to the President in a campaign?

In July 1971, Dean took the idea to Haldeman, seeking "a grant of authority" to prepare a regular confidential digest for the president on all domestic intelligence, from crime and drugs through "civil rights problems of note" and "political intelligence." Dean's mixed bag of types of intelligence was a cover for what Dean really sought, that is, to be the focal point for political intelligence (that would, for example, reveal the identity of contributors to opposing campaigns, personal dirt on Nixon's opponents, and Democratic and dissident Republican campaign secrets). Haldeman said such information was already being

compiled by Gordon Strachan, who worked more closely with the chief of staff, and Haldeman shot down the Dean Plan.

There is a saying in Washington that in the capital, nothing is ever completely dead. John Mitchell thought he had shot down the Huston Plan, but aspects of it came creeping back into administration policy. Haldeman thought he had shot down Dean's plan, having told the counsel to stick to demonstration intelligence. But Haldeman did not understand the degree to which Dean saw his dream of becoming campaign intelligence czar as his own ticket to the top, and what Dean would do to keep that dream alive. And Haldeman had inadvertently shown Dean the way to get what he wanted—to go through Gordon Strachan. As time went on, Dean would facilitate a misunderstanding between Haldeman and Strachan, causing Strachan to believe that Dean had been placed in charge of political intelligence, not just demonstration intelligence.

Undaunted by Haldeman, Dean soon devised a project to help get his foot in the door. On August 16, 1971, he produced a memorandum titled "Dealing with our Political Enemies," that in his own words addressed "how we can use the available federal machinery to screw our political enemies." Dean suggested that key White House staff members collect names of administration opponents whom "we should be giving a hard time" and then use various government departments and agencies to "screw them." This Dean memo was the germ that led to a White House "enemies list."

Testifying in 1973, Dean admitted he had written the document, which was not signed and listed no addressee, but insisted he had been pushed into doing it by others in the White House. As far as he could remember, he told the Senate Watergate committee, he had sent the memo to Haldeman and Ehrlichman for approval, disapproval, or comment. But the only copy that ever surfaced was one in which the approve, disapprove, and comment lines were blank. In his own testimony, Ehrlichman denied ever seeing the memo.

Dean's testimony included the claim that "I was a restraining influence at the White House to many wild and crazy schemes," and as for the enemies list "I also made it very clear . . . I just didn't want to get involved in doing the sort of things they wanted." A skeptical Senator Daniel K. Inouye, the Hawaii Democrat, questioned Dean about that, but Dean's claim stood, even though the committee had White House memos addressed to Dean that indicated he was very much involved.

Two of those were memos by Gordon Strachan, who by the fall of 1971 was working more closely with Dean. In one, Strachan wrote to

Dean that "you have the action on the political enemies project" while in another Strachan forwarded a list of "fat cats" supporting Muskie and scribbled at the top of the page, "The attached should be of interest to you and the political enemies project." This interest in Muskie led to three Tony Ulasewicz assignments that focused on financial backers of the Maine Democrat.

As the reader will recall, in *Blind Ambition* Dean openly admitted to participating in intelligence assignments, including "juicy" ones, and to a desire to expand his intelligence portfolio to encompass "all intelligence that would be of interest to the President in a campaign." Strikingly, before the Senate Watergate committee, Dean did his best to portray his political intelligence role as at best peripheral.

Despite Dean's partial retreat in his book from his earlier testimony, for the past eighteen years Dean has consistently sought to bury his true relationship to Caulfield and, more to the point, Ulasewicz. He trumpeted this position first to the Senate investigating committee, suggesting, for instance, that when he took over the counsel's office the use of Caulfield and Ulasewicz diminished, that "Caulfield seldom informed me of his findings," and that "the persons on the White House staff who were most interested in political intelligence were Ehrlichman, Haldeman, and Colson." In his memoir, published after he had served a short prison term, Dean maintained the same line. He continued to adhere to it in a recent interview. Regarding Caulfield's investigative work, Dean insisted to us, "I was never in the loop on any of that" and "I scratched my head for a long time before it just sort of came out in dribs and drabs as to what he [Caulfield] was doing." As for his interest in gathering intelligence as White House counsel, Dean declared, "It just wasn't my bag. It was something I just didn't know how to do."

But we have pored over the mountains of testimony and documents, and have interviewed Caulfield, Ulasewicz, Haldeman, Ehrlichman, Mitchell, and many others, and can now present a more accurate picture of what Dean did to get around Haldeman's blocking him from the arena of overseeing the collection of politically important intelligence.

"I was working for Dean, just as I had for Ehrlichman," Caulfield told us recently. "He knew somebody was doing it. He's full of shit when he says he knew very little about Ulasewicz." In fact, said Caulfield, Dean "at my behest renegotiated the continuation of Ulasewicz's contract."

One of the more interesting of the Caulfield-Ulasewicz assignments from Dean came in October 1971. Acting on a request and a tip from

Colson, Dean had asked Caulfield to investigate the "Happy Hooker" ring in New York, with an eye toward finding out if any clients of Xaviera Hollander had been high-ranking politicians. Caulfield sent Ulasewicz, but later told Dean that the material Tony had obtained was useless because the names of too many prominent members of both parties were present in Hollander's appointment books: dirt on the Democrats would be canceled out by dirt on the Republicans. Dean didn't use the material as he had planned, in order to raise his stock with Colson, Haldeman, and Ehrlichman, but he did hint at a bit of it to scare press secretary Ronald L. Ziegler. Pulling someone else's chain was part of the macho game at the Nixon White House.

As 1971 waned Caulfield saw that Dean's appetite for political intelligence continued to increase. "I saw a desire to take greater chances as [Dean] saw the potential rewards. And the key to the ball game was intelligence—who was going to get it and who was going to provide it. Dean saw that and played the game heartily. . . . I was getting my instructions from Dean. I did whatever Dean asked . . . I would put Tony to work."

On only one job suggested by Dean did Caulfield have qualms, he told us, and that was an assignment to determine "the feasibility of getting information out of the Watergate," by which Caulfield meant the headquarters of the Democratic National Committee. It was November of 1971, that is, seven months before the actual break-ins at the DNC office. "The more I thought about the thing, the more I saw the hazards. In my view, it was a goddamn good chance if that thing failed you could bring down the president," Caulfield remembered with perfect 20-20 hindsight.

Tony Ulasewicz recalled in his book that Caulfield told him that "Dean wants you to check out the offices of the Democratic National Committee." (Caulfield places Ulasewicz's entry in November of 1971. Ulasewicz told us that it was in April of 1972, but wrote in his book that it was the end of May of 1972. We are convinced that Caulfield and not Ulasewicz is correct because, among other reasons, Caulfield left the White House in March of 1972.) There was no break-in; Ulasewicz simply walked in as a visitor and noted the location of various offices within the floor that was occupied by the DNC. He reported back, Ulasewicz told us, telling Caulfield "there was nothing that would be of particular interest. It was a business office, it was a kind of a place you would send donations, it was a similar business office to what the Republicans would have, a place for records of donors, sending out brochures, making arrangements for dinners and

fund-raising programs, hiring people out in the field, contacts with newspapers and all the routine matters."

Ulasewicz says he reported, " 'I don't know what you think is in this office.' My street smarts told me when Dean's asking me this kind of thing, there's something that they are after. Something hot. I told him, 'It's not there.' "

We asked Dean about these Caulfield and Ulasewicz accounts that he assigned Tony to check out the DNC offices at the Watergate. "I can absolutely flat out tell you that isn't true," he first responded. When the subject came up a second time Dean said, "I don't have any knowledge" of sending Ulasewicz in but that perhaps Caulfield "came into my office and said, 'John, I think Tony should go in' [to the DNC]." At that moment, Dean suggested, he may have been "in the middle of something else. [I] don't even reflect on it, and say, 'Whatever you think, Jack.' You know, which I did a lot. 'Just go and do it.' "

The story of Tony Ulasewicz's visit to the Democratic National Committee represents the first time anyone in the Nixon administration had mentioned the Watergate complex as a target of investigation. We will come back to this unusual Ulasewicz walk-through in later chapters, and ascertain its full significance then.

By the spring of 1971, Caulfield had begun to think about leaving the White House in order to set up the private security business that Ehrlichman had suggested to him in 1969. He'd create an outside entity that could provide security to the 1972 Nixon campaign, and much more. He wrote up his suggestions in a memo for John Dean, suggesting $500,000 to fund what he called Operation Sandwedge.

Sandwedge would provide "offensive intelligence and defensive security" to counteract what Caulfield warned could be "a strong, covert intelligence effort mounted against us in 1972 by the Democratic nominee." He had looked into a security firm organized by former Robert Kennedy–era Justice Department employees known as Intertel. Howard Hughes was an Intertel client, and the Sandwedge memo analyzed Intertel and concluded that it was a group controlled by Larry O'Brien and the Kennedys. Sandwedge's offensive side included clandestine operations: "penetration of nominees [*sic*] entourage and headquarters; 'Black Bag' capability . . . to minimize Democratic voting violations in Illinois, Texas, etc.; surveillance of Democratic primaries, convention, meetings, etc.; and derogatory information investigative capability world-wide." Caulfield suggested that the principals in the Sandwedge organization include Rose Mary Woods's brother Joe the former sheriff, and IRS official Vernon Acree.

Caulfield told us that Sandwedge was "my initiative, but it really involved a lot of discussions with John Dean about what I would do after my departure from the White House." Dean tried to sell Sandwedge to Mitchell and Haldeman, but both rejected it. Having struck out with the senior people, Dean dropped down a level, pushing the Sandwedge proposal to Gordon Strachan, Haldeman's eyes and ears on political matters, and to Jeb Magruder, a former Haldeman aide who now worked for the Nixon reelection committee as deputy campaign director. But, though Strachan queried Haldeman repeatedly about increasing Dean's involvement in intelligence-gathering, Dean once again found no takers for the Sandwedge operation that Caulfield had proposed.

As an alternative, Dean arranged for Caulfield to have an interview with John Mitchell, who was slated to leave Justice in early 1972 to become the head of Nixon's reelection campaign. That interview was held on November 24, 1971.

In later testimony before the Senate, Dean would claim that he was not present during the entire meeting, but that Caulfield had reported to him that Mitchell had wanted Caulfield to do some investigative work on the New Hampshire campaign of Paul N. "Pete" McCloskey, the California congressman who was challenging Nixon for the Republican nomination.

Caulfield says that on November 24 he only discussed with Mitchell the possibility of his working on the forthcoming campaign as a security official. Did Mitchell ever ask him to penetrate the McCloskey campaign? "No," Caulfield told us. "I'm certain that he didn't." Caulfield assumes that it was Dean who ordered the McCloskey probe "because that was the guy I was working for at the time." Mitchell also confirmed that future security work was the substance of their conversation, and that there was no discussion of snooping around McCloskey or of any other investigative task.

It's an important distinction, because Dean later used this meeting between Caulfield and Mitchell effectively to shift responsibility for initiating intelligence-gathering activities to Mitchell and to exculpate himself. To support his position, Dean submitted to the Senate Watergate committee a memo of an "investigative report that Mr. Caulfield prepared for Mitchell on the McCloskey New Hampshire campaign."

The committee didn't look at the memo very carefully, for the document clearly showed it could not have resulted from the November 24 meeting, as Dean claimed. It actually described an investigation

conducted (by Tony Ulasewicz) from November 18 to November 21, three days prior to the date that Mitchell saw Caulfield in his office.

Dean submitted to the committee a second memo addressed to the attorney general from Dean dated December 1, 1971, attaching "some additional information which Jack [Caulfield] has collected re McCloskey's operation."

There is also a problem with this second memo. The memo bears no trace of having come from the White House—no letterhead, and no initials, such as characterize other documents that originated in the White House during that period of time. Did Dean prepare this memo after leaving the White House, for the purpose of shoring up his contention that it was Mitchell who ordered the McCloskey investigation?

He may well have done so. Dean submitted to the committee another of his memos addressed to Mitchell, dated January 12, 1972, that—again—was not written on White House letterhead and bears no initials. This was a memo on a purported Dean-Mitchell conversation that said, "As a result of our recent conversation, I asked Jack Caulfield to prepare a summary of his activities so that you could review them. However, because of the sensitivity of this information, I would like to suggest that you briefly meet with Jack and go over this material. Operation Sandwedge will be in need of refunding at the end of this month so the time is quite appropriate for such a review." This does not square with two facts.

First, Dean testified that Sandwedge had been killed by November of 1971, in part because Mitchell rejected it. When asked by the skeptical Democratic Senator Inouye to explain why Mitchell would want to refund Sandwedge in January of 1972 if the plan had died "a natural death" months earlier, Dean again implicated Mitchell by transferring his own actions to the attorney general. Dean first concocted the story that Caulfield "continued to do various investigative assignments" for Mitchell after the November 24 meeting. And he then said that Mitchell assumed that Operation Sandwedge was a handy label for all the Caulfield-Ulasewicz activities, and so Dean's mention of it in the January 12 memo to Mitchell was merely a shorthand device. However, at that time the label "Sandwedge" was a code name used by Dean and Caulfield for Tony Ulasewicz investigations; the label was not something Mitchell would have known.

Second, Sandwedge-Ulasewicz had in fact been refunded months earlier in the fall of 1971 in the amount of $50,000. Caulfield says that Dean himself was involved in getting Ulasewicz's contract extended through 1972, renegotiating the continuation with Herb Kalmbach. It

was not the half-million that Caulfield had originally envisioned for Sandwedge, but it was enough to keep Ulasewicz on board. In his book, Ulasewicz described meeting with Kalmbach and Caulfield in September of 1971 for the purpose of arranging his payments through the upcoming election. And Gordon Strachan, reflecting a conversation he'd had with Dean, wrote a memo on October 27 saying that "Sandwedge has received an initial 50," meaning $50,000.

Furthermore, the "summary of [Caulfield-Ulasewicz] activities" Dean claimed to have "asked Jack Caulfield to prepare" so that "you [Mitchell] could review them" was unavailable to the Senate committee. Dean had promised that summary to them, but couldn't produce it. "I thought earlier I did have a list," he testified. "I have searched my records that were available and I have no such list available." No such list was ever given to the committee. But Dean's testimony on the matter stood, and so he had implicated John Mitchell as Caulfield's action officer for campaign espionage and covered up his own role as director of the Caulfield-Ulasewicz operation.

Mitchell denied he had anything to do with Ulasewicz's activities. "No, sir," he answered to Watergate committee chief counsel Sam Dash when asked if he was aware that Tony Ulasewicz was working at the White House for Dean, or for anybody else. "I didn't know who Ulasewicz was until the spring of 1973," Mitchell told us. Caulfield insists that it was Dean who initiated all such operations and received reports on them. The president's private eye, though hired by Ehrlichman and paid by Kalmbach, had become for all intents and purposes the exclusive gumshoe of White House counsel John Dean.