

5 Held in Plot to Bug Democrats' Office Here

By Alfred E. Lewis
Washington Post Staff Writer

Five men, one of whom said he is a former employee of the Central Intelligence Agency, were arrested at 2:30 a.m. yesterday in what authorities described as an

elaborate plot to bug the offices of the Democratic National Committee here.

Three of the men were native-born Cubans and another was said to have trained Cuban exiles for guer-

rilla activity after the 1961 Bay of Pigs invasion.

They were surprised at gunpoint by three plainclothes officers of the metropolitan police department in a sixth-floor office at the plush Watergate, 2600 Virginia Ave., NW, where the Democratic National Committee occupies the entire floor.

There was no immediate explanation as to why the five suspects would want to bug the Democratic National Committee offices or whether or not they were working for any other individuals or organizations.

A spokesman for the Democratic National Committee said records kept in those offices are "not of a sensitive variety" although there are "financial records and other such information."

Police said two ceiling panels in the office of Dorothy V. Bush, secretary of the Democratic Party, had been removed.

Her office is adjacent to the office of Democratic National Chairman Lawrence F. O'Brien. Presumably, it would have been possible to slide a bugging device through the panels in that office to a place above the ceiling panels in O'Brien's office.

All wearing rubber surgical gloves, the five suspects were captured inside a small office within the committee's headquarters suite.

Police said the men had with them at least two sophisticated devices capable of picking up and transmitting all talk, including telephone conversations. In addition, police found lockpicks and door jimmies, almost \$2,300 in cash, most of it in \$100 bills with the serial numbers in sequence.

The men also had with them one walkie-talkie, a short wave receiver that could pick up police calls, 40 rolls of unexposed film, two 35 millimeter cameras and three pen-sized tear gas guns.

Near where they were captured were two open file drawers, and one national committee source conjectured that the men were preparing to photograph the contents.

In Court yesterday, one suspect said the men were "anti-Communists" and the others nodded agreement. The operation was described in court by prosecutor Earl J. Silbert as "professional" and "clandestine." One of the Cuban natives, The Wash-

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Suspects include an Ex-CIA employee and a Castro fighter. Page A21

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ington Post learned, is now a Miami locksmith.

Many of the burglary tools found at the Democratic National Committee offices appeared to be packaged in what police said were burglary kits.

The five men were identified as:

- Edward Martin, alias James W. McCord, of New York City and perhaps the Washington metropolitan area. Martin said in court yesterday that he retired from the CIA two years ago. He said he presently is employed as a "security consultant."

- Frank Sturgis of 2515 NW 122d St., Miami. Prosecutors said that an FBI check on Sturgis showed that he had served in the Cuban Military army intelligence in 1958, recently travelled to Honduras in Central America, and presently is the agent for a Havana salvage agency. He has a home and family in Miami. Sturgis also was once charged with a gun violation in Miami, according to FBI records.

- Eugenio R. Martinez of 4044 North Meridian Ave., Miami. Prosecutors said that Martinez violated the immigration laws in 1958 by flying in a private plane to Cuba. He is a licensed real estate agent and a notary public in Florida.

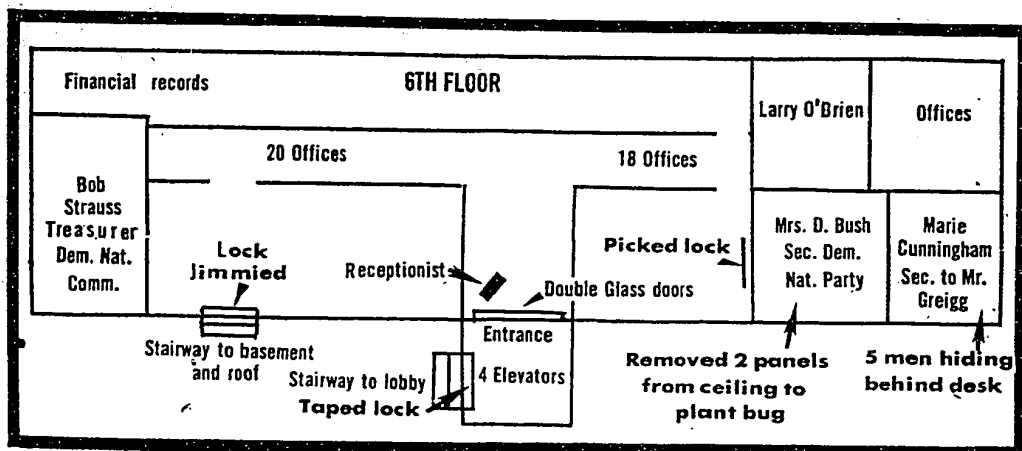
- Virgilio R. Gonzales of 930 NW 23d Ave., Miami. In Miami yesterday, his wife told a Washington Post reporter that her husband works as a locksmith at the Missing Link Key Shop. Harry Collot, the shop owner, said that Gonzales was scheduled to work yesterday but didn't show up. "He's done it before, but it's not a regular thing," Collot said. He said he thought Gonzales came to America about the time Fidel Castro became well-known, and began working for Missing Links sometime in 1959. He described Gonzales as "pro-American and anti-Castro . . . he doesn't rant or rave like some of them do."

- Bernard L. Barker of 5229 NW 4th St., Miami. Douglas Caddy, one of the attorneys for the five men, told a reporter that shortly after 3 a.m. yesterday, he received a call from Barker's wife. "She said that her husband told her to call me if he hadn't called her by 3 a.m.; that it might mean he was in trouble."

All were charged with felonious burglary and with possession of implements of crime. All but Martin were ordered held in \$50,000 bail. Martin, who has ties in the area, was held in \$30,000 bail.

In court yesterday, prosecutors said Sturgis also used the alias Frank Fiorini—an assertion confirmed by Miami area police.

(In 1959, the Federal Avia-



June 18, 1972 By Joseph Mastrangelo—The Washington Post

This is the layout of the sixth floor suite occupied by Democratic National Com-

mittee at the Watergate complex. Five men were arrested there Saturday morning.

tion Agency identified Fiorini as the pilot of a plane that dropped anti-Castro leaflets over Havana. Described in newspaper clippings as a "soldier of fortune," Fiorini reportedly was head of the International anticommunist Brigade, after the Bay of Pigs invasion, that trained 23 Cuban exiles who in 1962 landed by boat in Cuba's Matanzas Province and set up guerrilla operations.

(Fiorini reportedly is a native of Norfolk, Va., who fought with the Marines in the Pacific during World War II. An early supporter of the Cuban revolution, he reportedly fought with Castro and was named by the premier to be overseer of gambling operations in Havana before the casinos were shut down by the premier.)

The early morning arrests occurred about 40 minutes after a security guard at the Watergate noticed that a door connecting a stairwell with the hotel's basement garage had been taped so it would not lock.

The guard, 24-year-old Frank Wills, removed the tape, but when he passed by about 10 minutes later a new piece had been put on. Wills then called police.

Three officers from the tactical squad responded and entered the stairwell.

From the basement to the sixth floor, they found every door leading from the stairwell to a hallway of the building had been taped to prevent them from locking. At the sixth floor, where the stairwell door leads directly into the Democratic National Committee offices, they found the door had been jimmied.

Led by Sgt. Paul Leper, the tactical force team, which also included Officers John Barret and Carl Sholler, began searching the suite, which includes 29 offices and where approximately 70 persons work.

When the officers entered an office occupied by a secretary to Stanley Griegg, deputy party chairman, one of the suspects jumped up from behind a desk, put his hands in the air and cried "Don't shoot," police said.

According to police and a

desk clerk at the Watergate, four of the suspects—all using fictitious names—rented two rooms, number 214 and 314 at the Watergate Hotel around noon on Friday. They were said to have dined together on lobster at the Watergate Restaurant on Friday night.

Yesterday afternoon, the U.S. Attorney's office obtained warrants to search the hotel rooms rented by the suspects. They found another \$4,200 in \$100 bills of the same serial number sequence as the money taken from the suspects, more burglary tools and electronic bugging equipment stashed in six suitcases.

One of the bugging devices found at the scene of the Democratic National Committee offices was described as being about the size of a silver dollar and capable of being hidden underneath a telephone or a desk.

According to police the break-in at the Democratic National Committee offices yesterday was the third incident there since May 28.

On that date, according to police, an attempt was made to unscrew a lock on the door between 11 p.m. and 8 a.m.

According to one police source, at least some of the suspects registered as guests at the Watergate Hotel on that date.

On June 7, police said, a safe at the Committee headquarters was reported broken into and \$100 in cash and checks stolen. That break-in occurred about 9 p.m. but there was no door jimmied since the suite was unlocked and people were still working there.

Within hours after the arrests, the suite was sealed off and scores of metropolitan police officers directed by acting Chief Charles Wright, FBI agents and Secret Service men were assigned to the investigation.

Caddy, one of the attorneys for the five, said he met Barker a year ago over cocktails at the Army-Navy Club in Washington. "We had a sympathetic conversation — that's all I'll say," Caddy told a reporter.

Caddy said that he was probably the only attorney

whom Barker knew in Washington.

Caddy, who says he is a corporate lawyer, attempted to stay in the background of yesterday's 4 p.m. court hearing. He did not argue before Superior Court Judge James A. Belson himself but brought another attorney, Joseph A. Rafferty Jr., who has experience in criminal law, to do the arguing.

In that 30-minute arraignment, Assistant U.S. Attorney Earl Silbert, the No. 2 man in the chief prosecutor's office, unsuccessfully urged the court to order the five men held without bond.

Silbert argued that the men had no community ties and would be likely to leave the country to avoid trial. He said they gave false names to the police after they were arrested and refused to cooperate.

"They were caught red-handed," Silbert said. With such strong evidence against them, their apparent tendency to travel abroad and their access to large amounts of cash, the men should not be released, Silbert said.

Silbert called the men professionals with a "clandestine" purpose.

Rafferty said the five men didn't have firearms and didn't harm anyone, and should be released on bond.

In setting the bond at \$50,000 for the Miami men and \$30,000 for Martin, Judge Belson also placed restrictions on their movements.

He required the four Miami men to stay in the Washington area and check in daily with the court, if released. Martin would have to check in weekly if released, Belson ruled.

Griegg, deputy party chairman, called it "obviously important" that some of the suspects come from the area around Miami and Miami Beach, where the Democratic National Convention will be held next month.

Contributing to this story were Washington Post Staff Writers Bob Woodward, Carl Bernstein, Bart Barnes, Kirk Scharfenberg, Martin Weil, Claudia Levy, Abbott Combes, and Tim O'Brien.