

Haldeman: Nixon spawned Watergate

NEW YORK (AP) — Richard Nixon's top White House assistant says the former president was the driving force behind the Watergate burglary and that, afterward, Nixon may have been blackmailed by Charles Colson.

"I believe the initiative for the Watergate break-in came from Nixon through Colson," H.R. Haldeman says in a new book written from prison. "Nixon lit the match, handed it to Colson, who in turn touched off the fuse."

Nixon, he says, "was in on the cover-up from Day One, although neither he nor we considered it a cover-up at the time."

The former president's reaction to the charges was contained in a one-sentence

statement issued by his office in San Clemente, Calif.:

"Former Pres. Nixon's memoirs will published in May."

Nixon has consistently denied any role in or foreknowledge of the burglary. He resigned Aug. 9, 1974, after making public a tape recording that showed he ordered containment of the FBI investigation of the June 17, 1972 burglary.

Haldeman writes that he believes the CIA monitored the Watergate burglary through-out "with 'plants' to keep it under control," that the break-in was deliberately sabotaged, and that the saboteur may have been

James McCord Jr., a retired long-time CIA agent who was among the burglars who were caught red-handed inside Democratic Party headquarters.

Haldeman also says, "My own theory of who initiated the Watergate break-in: Richard Nixon himself caused those burglars to break into O'Brien's office."

The burglars had put taps on the tele-phones of Lawrence O'Brien, who was chairman of the Democratic Party, and an assistant. The reason, Haldeman writes, probably was O'Brien's connection to industrialist Howard Hughes, whom, Halde-man said, Nixon hated.

Colson has denied any involvement in the break-in, though he has acknowledged that Nixon had sought information on O'Brien.

Haldeman also says that in 1969 the Soviet Union moved a massive arsenal of nuclear missiles near its border with China and invited the United States to join a pre-emptive nuclear strike against the Chinese.

"Nixon turned the Soviets down, but was then informed, to his horror, that the Soviets intended to go ahead on their own," says Haldeman, who was Nixon's chief of staff until Watergate forced his resignation on April 30, 1973.

World at a glance

From Associated Press reports

Carter defends arms sale

WASHINGTON — The Carter administration defended its proposed sale of top-quality jet planes to Saudi Arabia Thursday while Israeli Foreign Minister Moshe Dayan met here with Secretary of State Cyrus Vance.

Dayan, the hero general of the 1967 Mideast war, is trying to get the decision on aircraft sales reversed. He probably is fighting an uphill battle. Dayan also is trying to offset Arab gains in U.S. policy and with the American public.

Meanwhile, Pres. Carter told Dayan that the date of Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin's visit to Washington will be March 14-15 and that the visit may be three days long.

Assassination arouses fear

RAMALLAH, Occupied West Bank — The assassination of one of this town's most powerful Arab figures has aroused fears among Israeli occupation forces that Arab guerrillas have decided to strike at Israel through suspected collaborators.

Wealthy merchant Abdel-Nur Khalil Janhu, 55, gunned down outside his shop, was the third Arab connected with the occupying forces killed in Ramallah in the past two months.

He was known to work closely with the military government, a serious crime under the unwritten code of the Palestinian Liberation Organization.

'Thar's oil in them thar hills'

BEVERLY HILLS, Calif. — There's oil in Beverly Hills, where riches and beauty already gush. Oil may make the place richer, but it won't do much for its beauty. And that, in this town, is a dilemma.

The school district wants to put a 130-foot drilling tower on the Beverly Hills High School campus, looming above 26 acres of palm trees, lawns and six tastefully designed buildings where 2,540 pupils — many the children of film stars — learn about the world outside.

The well would pour money into the 5,700-student district and the town and into the pockets of several hundred residents.

Alaska pipeline sabotaged

FAIRBANKS (AP) — Sabotage forced a day-long shutdown of the trans-Alaska pipeline, but oil flow resumed Thursday and tanker shipments of the precious crude oil to the lower 48 states were not interrupted.

Meanwhile, Alaska State Troopers said they had no suspects and did not know what kind of explosive had been used to blast a two-inch hole in the pipeline Wednesday afternoon.

John Ratterman, Alyeska Pipeline Service Co., said oil flow resumed at 10 a.m. AST, less than 24 hours after the explosion was reported.

And there was enough oil in holding tanks in the pipeline port of Valdez that no delays in tanker shipments was anticipated, Ratterman said.

Thousands of barrels of thick crude oil — there

was no estimate available Thursday — gushed from a two-inch hole in the half-inch thick steel pipe. The spilled oil formed into pools and sprayed a black film over four acres of frozen tundra before workers could place a temporary patch over the jagged gash.

Environmental officials were unable to assess the damage immediately because the area was covered by three feet of snow. Alyeska said the oil had not gotten into the Chena River, which was more than a mile away.

The largest previous spill on the pipeline had occurred during last summer's startup, when a worker accidentally drove a truck into a valve on the 800-mile line. That had spilled less than 1,000 barrels.

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Produced for OFNS by
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