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STATEMENT BY SENATOR GEORGE McGOVERN

The American people have begun to realize how serious the spreading scandal of the Watergate is. Almost every day, another lead opens up, another violation is found, another government official, or agent of the campaign to re-elect Nixon walks through a line of newsmen, hiding his face from the cameras, or refuses publically to discuss the ethical and moral questions that have been raised. What has been called a caper is in fact a serious crime with connections reaching deep into the Republican apparatus.

It now appears that the headquarters of one of the two major political parties in the United States was treated, for a prolonged period, as if it were the headquarters of a foreign enemy. Our opponents invaded our building in the dead of night. They bugged our offices and tapped our phones. They secretly copied our private letters. They made transcriptions of what we said to each other, for the purpose of circulating it to their superiors, either in the Committee to Re-elect the President, or the United States government, or both. As soon as it became apparent that I would be the Democratic nominee, they tried to do the same thing to my personal headquarters. A group of them gathered there at three in the morning to plant eavesdropping equipment. Unfortunately for them, my young volunteers work late. This part of their plan was foiled.

The political process of our nation is based upon the two party system. That system has served our people well for almost 200 years. But it depends upon some degree of decency and mutual trust. Elections can, and have been, bitterly contested. But all of our parties--up to this year--have played the game within the rules of the American system. They have respected the law. They have respected each other's rights as American citizens. They have conformed to the usages and traditions of our free system. Because of this, our parties have always been able, once the campaigns were over, to unite to serve the country.

In the planning and execution of the Watergate burglary, these fundamental rules of fair play and decency have been torn apart. Everyone who considers himself a Democrat can justifiably be outraged that their party, their leaders and their campaign has been subjected to this kind of treatment.

All who believe in the two party system have reason to fear for its future. History shows us it is but a single step from spying on the political opposition, to suppressing that opposition, and the imposing of a one-party state in which the people' precious liberties are lost.

It is imperative that the voters know, well before the election, how high into the government the responsibility for these actions goes, who approved this espionage team and who read the fruits of their activities. Officials capable of these kind of operations against the loyal opposition today would have no qualms, tomorrow, about violating the privacy of the voting booth, or the church, or your home if it were necessary to carry out their pusposes. And those dangers are even greater, coming from an Administration that has already abused personal rights and privacy by claiming the power to wiretap without judicial warrant and to look at bank accounts without the knowledge of the depositor.

Our forefathers and many of us went to war in distant lands, to save our precious freedoms from the kind of governments who spy on political opponemts . We fought to preserve a country and a system where political freedom, as well as individual privacy and freedom, were paramount. What happened at the Watergate goes a long way toward eroding those freedoms. It is essential that we learn the whole truth, as the only way to make sure it never happens again.

There is another most serious aspect to this scandal, which needs further clarification. It has been established that the monies used to finance this conspiracy against the Democratic Party came from secret funds, channelled through foreign banks, passed from hand to hand, converted from currency to negotiable instruments and back again in an apparent effort to cover up its source. The General Accounting Office, an arm of the government outside the control of the Administration, has listed several apparent and possible violations of federal criminal law in connection with these transfers.

The wiretap money and the eavesdropping money were part of a slush fund of over $10 million raised in secrecy for my opponent's re-election. Because the opposition still refuses to tell us where it came from, we do not know what the motives of its contributors were or what they expected in return.

Aside perhaps from spying and eavesdropping, nothing more corrupts the political process that the solicitation of campaign funds in secrecy. Many of our states, and recently the Congress, have passed tough legislation to; end this abuse. I have from the beginning voluntarily accounted for every penny I have both spent and received. The Republicans say they join me in this. They claim that if these names are revealed, the contributors may be annoyed by the public, and perhaps stop contributing. I believe there is a deeper motivation. My opponents are afraid to let the people see who is behind their campaign and well they might be. We look at the long pattern of special favors granted over the last four years, from the Lockheed loan to the ITT scandal to the oil import quotas, to the windfall profits in the Russian grain sale. We review, as well, the dismal failure to act effectively to keep corporations from raising their prices. We note in published documents that one company was currying "good will" at the Price Commission, and another was urging its executives to send their personal contributions to the corporate president because there would be "great benefit" in presenting them to Maurice Stans as a unit. In the face of this accumulated resord, it is fair to ask how much of the $10 million came from those who received special favors in the past. How much in anticipation of special favors in the future? What is it all going to cost the people in higher prices and higher taxes? In sum, is the Presidency being bought in 1972?

If this election is to mean something, it must affirm that the White House is not for sale. The Administration has an obligation to open up the books of the $10 million secret fund, and to tell the publ;ic how high up the knowledge, direction, and fruits of the Watergate affair go.