

personal creature. From two o'clock Saturday morning, June 17, 1972, CREEP was Nixon's Frankenstein, only like all the adults in the fable of the Emperor's Clothes, all the world refused to see it. The White House and Nixon, with long experience in being seen clothed when naked, gambled first that CREEP would be considered other than Nixon's personal political Mafia, and second that it could lie about Hunt's ~~relationship~~ direct employment by Nixon.

Hunt's instinctive reaction to life-long spooking, to his long life of living lies, made the White House lies possible. When the FBI found him at his Witches ~~Island~~ Island home in suburban Potomac, Maryland, ~~the evening of~~ that Saturday evening, Hunt simply refused to say anything. Then the FBI, atypically, just fell apart, letting him get away with it. Had he been a bearded <sup>denied</sup> youth they'd have dragged him off and charges him as an accessory or as a material witness. Instead, they tucked tail. Whether or not Hunt then made any phone calls or personal visits, and it is a reasonable presumption that he did or had them made, his silence followed by ~~his~~ the first of his disappearances - which the FBI should have anticipated - made White House lying possible.

Had this not been the case, the White House would have assumed the traditional spook behavior of giving fake name and nothing else, as those arrested did as the White House knew immediately they had done.

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So dangerous was this first of the many lies that neither of the top Nixon spokesmen, Herb Klein and Ron Ziegler, dared make it. Hunt made deniability possible. But the denial what is most surprising is that Ken Clawson was on Nixon's public-relations staff at all. He was hired from Nixon's "enemy," The Washington Post. Unlike Warren and Ziegler, he had authentic news experience, which gave him understanding of what the press would want to know and how to deal with it without needlessly antagonizing it. Because he was a former reporter, other reporters were more willing to trust him. (Later, as the White House press operations became what Evans and Novak described as a "shambled" (Post 12/17/73) Such Nixon advisers as former Texas Governor John Connally and former Congressman and Secretary of Defense Melvin R. Laird urged Nixon to ditch Ziegler. Instead, with nothing to recommend it other than his capacity for straight-faced deception and outright lying, Nixon promoted Ziegler to be an "assistant to the President.)

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The press knew this, by accident. Several reporters for several major papers did the obvious and several told me personally what happened. Bob Woodward's account was printed by The Washington Post of June . (pick up)

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We shall examine what can be reconstructed to Hunt's actions and movements from the time he fled Baldwin's toilet. We do know that the FBI and Secret Service both notified the White House promptly about Hunt's involvement. So, the White House did know, promptly, that it was mired in the mess, whether or not Hunt notified it. However, when he was free and when he and his friends had close personal White House relationships, and particularly because he knew he could at any moment be deep in this himself and he was a White House employee, it does seem that as soon as he made emergency arrangement for those in the toils of the law he would have gotten <sup>a warning</sup> the word to the White House.

want to know and how to deal with it without needlessly antagonizing it. Because he was a former reporter, other reporters were more willing to trust him. (Later, as the White House press operations became what Evans and Novak described as a "shambled" ~~(Post 12/17/73)~~ Such Nixon advisers as former Texas Governor John Connally and former Congressman and Secretary of Defense Melvin R. Laird urged Nixon to ditch Ziegler. Instead, with nothing to recommend it other than his capacity for straight-faced deception and outright lying, Nixon promoted Ziegler to be an "Assistant to the President.")

Thus, at the very beginning, the press knew that Hunt was a White House employee, knew he simultaneously worked for the Mullen agency, and had all it needed for the beginning of a real investigation of Hunt. Had it not known that Hunt was a White House employee and was involved in the crime while a White House employee, normal journalistic practise would have required that Hunt alone be looked into. Because he was a White House employee and because the ~~crime involved Nixon's enemies, the~~ criminals were caught inside Democratic headquarters in the dark of weekend night, there was no excuse for not really investigating Hunt and his White House and other connections. When the press did not do this immediately, the White House had an immediate signal telling it that it dared lie.

Once Hunt was connected with a public-relations agency, there were standard sources available in the libraries of all major papers that should have been consulted. They would have provided immediate leads. Two that I used are Who's Who and Contemporary Authors. There are others, like the Reader's Guide To Periodical Literature. Anyone in public relations is probably a writer, although he need not be. So any investigation requires an immediate check on writing.

When reporters working on the story did not do this, I provided them with xeroxes. And when this did not trigger their interest, I provided explanations of the meaning. However, for a reason not consistent with diligent investigation and reporting, there was no interest.

The White House knew that any check would have turned up meaningful information on Hunt. It knew from the questions asked and not asked what had been done, or at least what had been understood, whether or not done, from the questions asked and not asked of it.

So, by the time of the first, the Clawson lie, it knew the odds were with it.

The situation of the White House during these early hours of the scandal it knew would not die soon was crucial. It had to improvise to meet existing and pressing needs. But it also had to take a long view and try to do nothing in its emergency that could later hurt it and Nixon.

Thus the failure of the press to do the obvious was a significant indication to the White House worriers. It was an encouraging indication because it told the White House that while it was being questioned, which was inevitable, the questions disclosed that the press was not on the ball, did not know what it could have known, meaning that it was not diligently pursuing the obvious leads.

There are many turning points in this story about how Nixon got away with murder. In looking back on them, the first of the important ones and the one that history may prove to be the most important single one is the initial failure of the press to make any real investigation of Hunt ~~when~~ his identification and his White House and <sup>H</sup>ullen connections were known to the press from the first.

Without this there would have been no White House deniability, no possibility of separating Nixon from the initial crime. And no possibility of divorcing him from the others only some of which thereafter were exposed.

Without this the White House would not have been able to beat the series of strategic retreats the press and the Congress let it get away with, that long series of lies in denial all soon enough established as lies but not until after the election.

Without this the White House would not have been able to condition and numb the public and political senses and get away with all it had done.

All this unprecedented <sup>"Nixonian crime,</sup> ~~for which there exists no~~

Hunt was an important man, if not as he conceived himself to be important. Not as a hero - as Nixon's villain.

The White House knew it. The press should have. In fact, it did know it, But it did nothing. It really refused to do anything. This failing of the press was not from ignorance. It was a deliberate policy determination, a spontaneous agreement, not a conspiracy among owners and editors, that caused the easy investigation of Hunt never to be made. The investigation was not made when the story broke, not made before the indictments and the later trial, not made prior to Hunt's appearances before the Congressional committees and with even less excuse, never made after his public testimony before the Ervin committee, whose defecencies were glaringly obvious.

That the Ervin committee would be part of the covering up was a separate, major

story. It was supposed to ask and answer all questions. Before Hunt testified there were abundant, consistent proofs that the committee at best set its sights too low and at worst was deliberately covering for Nixon, regardless of how it explained its course to itself. With Hunt's testimony there was no possibility <sup>of</sup> ~~if~~ doubt. By then the media knew the questions that were not asked and saw and heard the leads that were closed off. And all of the media not in the Caucus Room of the Senate Office Building had it all on TV September 24 and 25. For all the major elements of the media and all the perceptive minor elements, it should have been clear enough that there was still covering up with the testimony relating to Hunt taken by the committee in earlier sessions. Covering up and new crime -beginning with new perjuries - were apparent in the testimony of all the top CIA and Justice Department people, most of all during the appearances of ~~Hunt~~ Helms, former CIA head, and the former and current assistant director, Generals Robert E. Cushman and Vernon Anthony Walters.

To put this another way, Nixon and his henchmen knew not only from the beginning but from the beginning on and through all the so-called investigation that it was being covered and from this ~~misdirection~~ he and they made their own readings on what they could dare do. The record shows their readings to have been dependable.

So, in this negative way, Hunt really was an important man. The entire story of The Watergate revolved around him. The entire covering up, all the lies, deceptions and misrepresentations, were possible only because there was never any real investigation of him. The re-election of Richard Nixon was possible because ~~after~~ there was no investigation of Hunt. This is to say that all of history turned on him. And by his silence during the crucial days he controlled history.

How much more important can a man be?

Not as the phoney hero of his trashy books but in real life, Everette Howard Hunt, as official criminal and as silent official criminal was one of history's most important men. His silence continued through all of his public talking. That he had an ongoing, operative deal as of the time the Ervin committee had him on coast-to-coast TV was also obvious to those who understand such proceedings. Hunt remained important because his mouth remained closed on all those things about which he was not asked.

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Here, however, we are concerned about the first moments, those moments that controlled all that followed.

Without exception and even when reporting what indicated otherwise, the press faithfully reported the White House opening lie as fact. In this it divorced Nixon from the break-in. It then enabled him to pretend that CREEP was something separate from him and this CREEP crime was not his crime. In turn this later permitted the false pretense of all the top CREEPs, that they had no connection with their own crimes, those done for them, financed and authorized by them, for their Nixonian purpose ~~to~~ to get him re-elected by unnecessary criminal means.

The White House lies, beginning with this first one, were not really good lies. None of Nixon's long history of lies ever were good lies. He got away with them because the press and the Congress preferred them to exposing them. Crooked dog-catchers lead to vigorous exposures. But the total corruption of the political system is never exposed.

Nixon knew this from his Checkers speech on.

If he did not know there was a good chance he could get away with the same thing on history's largest scale he might not have dared try it.

That he got away with it begins with Hunt's silence and the success of his lies about Hunt.

Hunt did know when not to blab.

His long lifetime of knowing what can happen to those who say the wrong thing, sometimes anything, his personal insurance, prepared him as much as anything could for this personal crisis like nothing in any of his fictions.

Hunt is not James Bond, though he thinks he is.

But were all of that Bond stuff real, it is without the meaning of all that devolved upon and revolved around this pitiful man whose silence when it counted changed all of history.