

Part 4/2/80
By Art Buchwald

This month the Watergate Alumni Association honors one of its most prestigious members, G. Gordon Liddy. Liddy is a cult hero to those who thought Watergate was a noble endeavor, distorted by a vicious press. Liddy's reluctance to speak out, or blow the whistle on other members of the Nixon team, gave him the image of a brave soldier who could not be broken by the forces of evil that were investigating the conspiracy.

It now turns out that the reason Liddy held his silence for all these years is that had he spoken out earlier he would not have been protected by the statute of limitations concerning crimes he advocated when he was

The Ingenious Plots of

Capitol

one of John Mitchell's most trusted election advisers.

According to his book Liddy advocated killing columnist Jack Anderson. He also made preparations to knock off Howard Hunt, set up a floating brothel at the Democratic National Convention and organize a Cuban commando team to sabotage the air-conditioning system at Miami Convention Hall. His imagination and devotion to President Nixon's re-election have never been questioned, and the only thing that stood in his way was

foot-dragging on the part of the Nixon White House staff as well as a lack of money.

As with all Watergate heroes, Liddy is now a hot media property.

He was given more time than any author is ever allotted on the "Today" show. Time magazine bought excerpts from the book and put his picture on the cover. Talk show hosts from all over the country have been calling his

Gordon Liddy, Author

Punishment

publisher day and night to get him to appear on their programs.

I'm sure there is now bidding on the TV rights to his book, and if Liddy follows the careers of other Watergate alumni, he will soon be busy on the lecture circuit.

I believe he deserves it. A convicted criminal who believes in murder, illegal break-ins and sabotaging the election system in this country should be given the media recognition he de-

serves and also be compensated for his inspiring story. There are so many people in prisons now who never get any applause for the crimes they committed that it is heartwarming to see one of them cash in so handsomely on his criminal endeavors.

Those who still believe that President Nixon was guilty of condoning the actions of his staff are urged to read Liddy's memoirs. They will discover, much to their surprise, that the tragedy of Watergate was not that people like Liddy were caught, but that he didn't succeed in wiping out the enemies of the state.

We should all be grateful to St. Martin's Press (which had a first printing of 100,000 copies) for making it possible for G. Gordon Liddy to tell his side of the Watergate story. Without the book we would still believe that Liddy was a nut, and probably the fruitiest of all the fruitcakes in the White House. Now we can see him on television in living color, and realize he was just as sane as President Nixon.

The only thing that saddened me when I read this joyous book was that Liddy had been caught and sent to the slammer. I like to believe that, if Watergate had not surfaced, Liddy could have been the next director of the FBI.

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