

2 Arrested For Theft of Tapes, Notes

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By Jim Lairders

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Two Washington youths have been arrested in connection with the theft of tapes and notes concerning Watergate from the office of ABC news correspondent Bill Gill, metropolitan police reported yesterday.

The two juveniles, aged 15 and 17, were caught by a security guard on the second floor of the ABC building at 1124 Connecticut Ave. NW early Saturday and processed under juvenile charges of burglary, police said.

Further investigation led to the recovery from the youths of a tape recorder and cassette tape taken from Gill's office earlier this month, police said.

"We have closed the case with the arrest of two District youths," said detective Sgt. Herbert Wanamaker. "We are satisfied that there is no connection between this incident and the current Watergate scandals."

Wanamaker said the evidence connecting the two youths with the burglary of Gill's office would be presented to juvenile court for possible charges as soon as the police investigation is completed.

On Aug. 10, ABC reported to police that five cassette tape recordings, two tape recorders, a portable radio and a fifth of bourbon were stolen from Gill's office on the third floor of the ABC building. Gill later reported the theft of a folder of Watergate notes apparently taken in the same burglary.

"Two of those tapes are damn sensitive politically," Gill said. He described them as containing "conversations I recorded with sources close to the Watergate investigation that named names and dates" of campaign activities and contributions in the 1968 and 1972 presidential campaigns.

Police said the tape recovered from the two youths had been erased and retaped with music.