

Barker Cites Hunt On Embassy 'Bug'

Part 1/1/74
MIAMI, Jan. 6 (UPI)—Bernard Barker, free on bond pending an appeal of his conviction in the Watergate burglary, says he has "no doubt" that tapes of Soviet embassy communications show the Russians had access to the Pentagon Papers.

Barker said he was told by E. Howard Hunt, who then was employed at the White House, that the embassy in Washington had been bugged and that the Russians were in the process of obtaining the papers.

"I can remember Hunt telling me, 'The Soviet embassy has been bugged and we have tapes with conversation indicating that they have some of the secret Pentagon Papers,'" Barker told the Miami Herald.

Barker would not disclose whether he had heard the embassy tapes but, he said, "I have no doubt the tapes of the bugs existed."

Barker was convicted of being the foreman of a crew that broke into Democratic party headquarters in Washington in June, 1972, and also is accused of leading a group of

"White House plumbers" who broke into the offices of Daniel Ellsberg's psychiatrist in Los Angeles in 1971.

Ellsberg was charged with conspiracy, espionage and theft after turning the secret documents on the Vietnam war over to The New York Times. The case was dismissed following disclosure of the plumbers' break-in at his psychiatrist's office.

Barker, 56, was sentenced to 2½ years in jail for his part in the Watergate burglary. He served 18 months of his term at the federal prison camp at Eglin Air Force Base, Fla., before he won his release on bond pending appeal.

He was flown from Eglin to Washington on Friday and then flew home to Miami after his release.

Barker said he still had no regrets about leading the Watergate burglary. "We agreed to cooperate because we felt it was our duty and because we felt we would engage Hunt and the White House in a debt to us which we could cash in when we needed help to free Cuba," he said.