

6 in Watergate Case Implicated by Witness

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Thomas James Gregory, a 25-year-old college senior who said he was recruited by E. Howard Hunt Jr. to spy on two Democratic Presidential candidates, yesterday implicated at least six of the seven persons

charged in the Watergate bugging trial during testimony in U.S. District Court.

Gregory, who will resume his testimony today, briefly described a meeting he said he attended at a Washington hotel in which at least six of the defendants were present. The prosecution con-

tends the purpose of the meeting was to plan a break-in at Sen. George S. McGovern's campaign headquarters. Gregory was unable to say positively whether defendant Eugenio R. Martinez was at the meeting.

Hunt and six other persons were charged in an eight-count indictment with breaking into the Democratic National Committee's Watergate headquarters on June 17 to steal information and to conduct illegal wiretapping and eavesdropping.

Prior to Gregory's testimony yesterday, Hunt, a former White House consultant, pleaded guilty to all six counts of conspiracy, burglary and illegal wiretapping and eavesdropping with which he personally was charged.

Hunt's admission of guilt to all the charges against him followed Chief U.S. District Judge John J. Sirica's refusal to accept a guilty plea to only three counts of conspiracy, burglary and illegal wiretapping.

Sirica accepted Hunt's guilty plea to all six counts and ordered him to post a \$100,000 surety bond, in addition to a \$10,000 bond he

posted earlier, before he could be released pending sentence. Hunt was placed in the court lockup and released when he posted the bond.

The jury, which has been sequestered from the beginning of the trial, did not hear Hunt's plea. Sirica informed the jurors, "You are no longer to be concerned with the case of the United States against E. Howard Hunt Jr."

Although Hunt no longer is a party to the trial of the other six defendants — G. Gordon Liddy, James W. McCord Jr., Bernard L. Barker, Frank Sturgis, Virgilio Gonzales and Martinez — testimony yesterday continued to focus on Hunt's role in the alleged conspiracy.

From the opening statements of principal Assistant U.S. Attorney Earl J. Silbert Wednesday, it appears that an explanation of Hunt's role is central in proving that a conspiracy existed. In

See WATERGATE, A4, Col. 1



E. HOWARD HUNT JR.

... free on bond



THOMAS GREGORY

... testimony to resume

WATERGATE, From A1

calling Gregory, whose main ties were to Hunt, as a witness, the prosecution seemed to be following the same course expected had Hunt not pleaded guilty.

Silbert refused comment yesterday on whether Hunt might be called as a prosecution witness. Silbert has said Hunt will be called to testify before the grand jury that investigated the Watergate incident and returned the indictment. Hunt's grand jury appearance is not expected until after the trial is concluded. Calling Hunt to testify in the trial, according to some legal sources, would pose difficult legal problems.

However, William O. Bittman, Hunt's attorney, said Hunt could legally be called to testify against the six remaining defendants, but that the prosecutor has not indicated an intention or a need to call Hunt.

During testimony yesterday, Sirica instructed the jury that, in weighing the conspiracy count, it could not consider testimony against only one defendant as applying to any of the others.

Gregory, the fifth witness called by the prosecution, was the first witness to say he saw as many as six of the defendants together in one place at one time. The meeting described by Gregory took place on May 22 or 23 in the Manger Hamilton Hotel at 14th and K Streets NW, according to his testimony.

Gregory's testimony about the meeting, taken out of the jury's presence to see if it was admissible, did not go into the purpose of the meeting or what was actually discussed.

While the jury was in court, Gregory testified that he had been contacted by Robert Bennett Fletcher, an old friend from New Jersey.

Fletcher had testified earlier that Hunt had asked him if he had any friends in the Washington area "who were strong Republicans but who might be interested in

joining the Democrats for the purpose of getting information and turning it over."

Fletcher is the nephew of Hunt's employer at the time, Robert F. Bennett. Fletcher said he told Hunt he could think of no friends in the area but that if he thought of any others, he would let Hunt know.

Fletcher said he later thought of Gregory, contacted him and Gregory was agreeable after thinking the

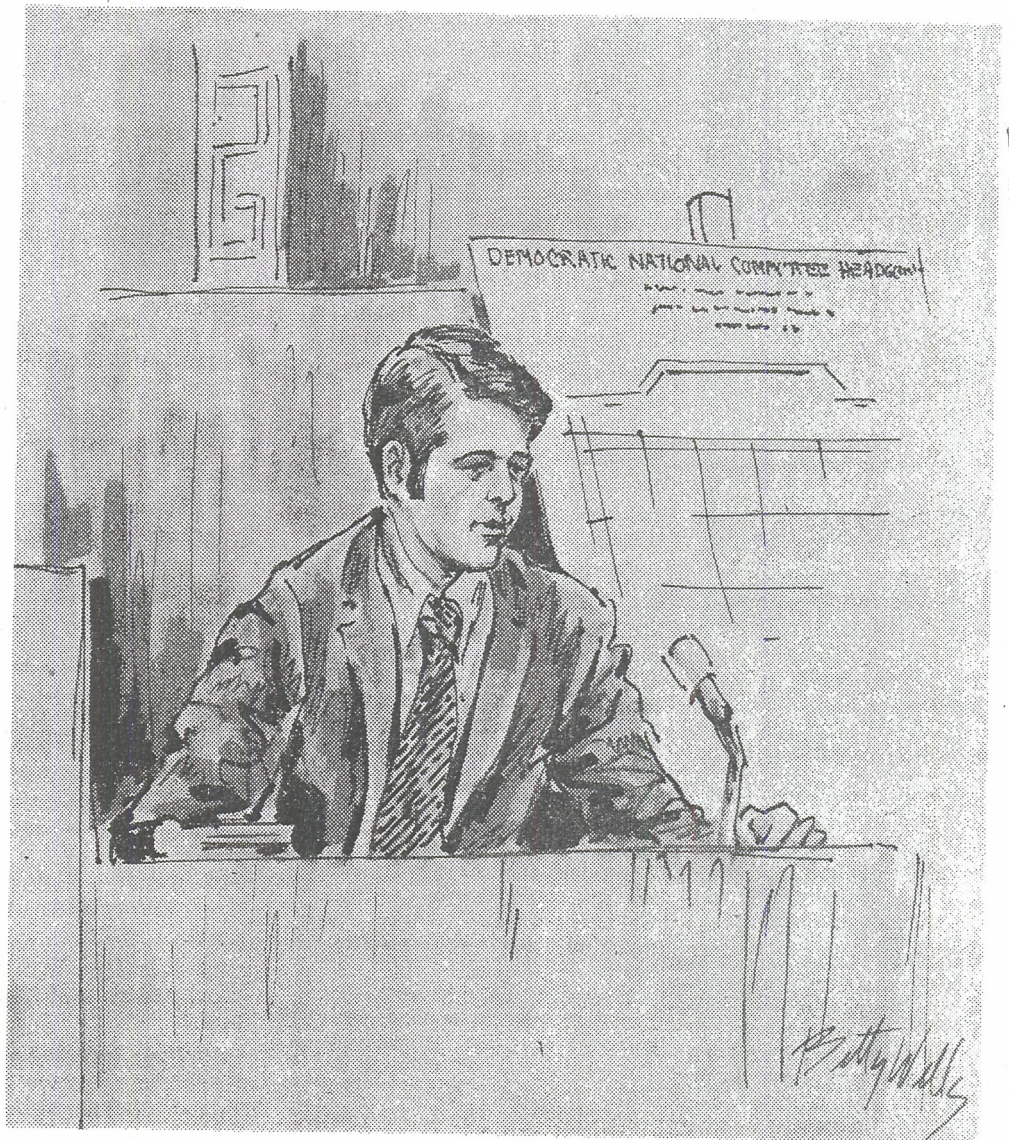
matter over for a day or so.

Gregory, a rosy-cheeked, slight student of history at Brigham Young University, with neatly trimmed hair, testified that after Fletcher's call he received two letters—one signed "Earl Warren" and the other "Ed Warren," aliases used by Hunt. One letter contained a round-trip ticket for Gregory to fly to Washington, which he said he did on about Feb. 20, 1972.

Gregory said he met with

"Warren" the same night. Gregory identified "Warren" as Hunt from a picture shown him by Silbert.

Hunt, Gregory said, "asked whether I had any qualms about what he had asked me to do and what he had asked me to do was to work for Muskie (Sen. Edmund S. Muskie) campaign headquarters and supply him (Hunt) with information . . . I said no. Then we talked about my going down there the following day to



Sketch by Betty Wells

Thomas James Gregory testified that he was recruited by E. Howard Hunt to spy.

Muskie headquarters and trying to get on as a student intern."

Gregory said he went to work for Muskie about March 1, endeavoring to get for Hunt the information he requested. Gregory said Hunt wanted "to know as far as possible what the contents of speeches were . . . He also wanted me to inform him of any major advisers he (Muskie) had. He (Hunt) wanted to know if there was any dissension in the headquarters and if so, between what parties." Hunt also wanted him to find out about Muskie contributors, Gregory said.

Hunt, Gregory said, told him the information would be given to "Bob Fletcher and the gentleman 'Mr. Warren' (Hunt) referred to as the man who would give him the money to pay me."

Gregory said Hunt "indicated that there was a friend or friends in town to whom the information would be of great value." Gregory gave no indication in his testimony that he knew if the information he was giving Hunt was being turned over to the Committee for the Re-election of the President.

Silbert had indicated in his opening statement that the alleged conspiracy involved at least six surreptitious intelligence operations aimed at the Democrats.

Once a day, Gregory said, he called Hunt on an unlisted phone. They met once a week, sometimes more often, at a drugstore at 17th and K Streets NW. "We'd come in at different times and meet in the back of the drugstore and I'd give Mr. Warren a white envelope . . . with typed information heley (-R-N.Y.). There are no had requested, such as the scheduling of Sen. Muskie," Gregory said.

"He would give me a white envelope also, with \$175 in it." That sum was his weekly salary, Gregory said. Also in the envelope was a receipt for him to sign and occasionally a slip with

Sometimes he would ask me questions orally," Gregory said.

In mid-April, Gregory said, when Muskie's campaign faltered, Hunt told him to sign on as a volunteer with McGovern and try to get the same type of information he had sought from Muskie. The weekly meetings were switched to the lobby of the Roger Smith Hotel, at 18th Street and Pennsylvania Avenue NW, Gregory said.

In mid-May, Gregory testified out of the jury's pres-

ence, Hunt introduced him to another man, whom Gregory identified in court as McCord, then the security coordinator for the re-election committee.

Hunt previously had asked Gregory to obtain a floor plan of McGovern's campaign headquarters, "indicating windows and doors. He also asked me about two 'some questions about information I had given him. Those two rooms according to Gregory, were the offices of Frank Mankiewicz and Gary Hart, McGovern's two top aides.

McCord, according to Silbert's opening statement, later visited McGovern headquarters and tried unsuccessfully to plant a bug in Mankiewicz's office while Gregory distracted others.

Also in mid-May, Gregory said, Hunt introduced him to another man, who sat wearing dark glasses in the rear of a car driven by Hunt. The three of them stopped at a McDonald's "for hamburgers and something to drink," Gregory said. "The gentleman took his dark glasses off."