



Department of Justice

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 15, 1972

Seven persons were indicted by a federal grand jury today on charges of breaking into the Democratic National Headquarters in the Watergate Hotel to steal documents and to install electronic listening devices to intercept telephone and oral communications.

Attorney General Richard G. Kleindienst said the eight-count indictment was returned in U. S. District Court for the District of Columbia.

The seven defendants are:

George G. Liddy, former counsel to the finance committee for the Committee to Re-Elect the President;

E. Howard Hunt, a former White House consultant, described in the indictment as a friend and associate of Liddy;

James W. McCord, president of McCord Associates and former security coordinator for the Committee to Re-Elect the President;

Bernard L. Barker, president of a Miami real estate firm known as Barker Associates;

Eugenio R. Martinez, an employee of Barker's firm;

Frank A. Sturgis, described as an associate of Barker; and,

Virgilio R. Gonzalez, a locksmith in Miami who was also described as an associate of Barker.

All seven defendants were charged in one count with conspiring from May 1, 1972 to June 17, 1972 to use illegal means to obtain information from the Democratic headquarters.

OVER

The illegal means, according to the conspiracy count of the indictment, included placing wiretaps and other surveillance devices in the headquarters with the conversations transmitted to a room in the Howard Johnson's Motor Lodge across the street from the Watergate, stealing certain documents and papers and photographing others.

All seven defendants were charged in the second count with entering the Committee offices with the intent to steal property and in the third count with entering the headquarters with intent to illegally intercept telephone and oral conversations.

All seven defendants were charged in two other counts with endeavoring to intercept telephone and oral communications emanating from inside the party's headquarters.

Five of the defendants, excluding Liddy and Hunt, were charged in two counts with illegally possessing listening devices, one of which transmitted oral conversations but was made up to resemble fire detection equipment and labeled "ARI Smoke Detector," and the other a telephone wiretap.

Liddy, Hunt and McCord were charged in the eighth count with actually intercepting telephone conversations made to and from the Committee headquarters, primarily from the offices of R. Spencer Oliver and Ida M. Wells, his secretary. Oliver is executive director of the state chairman's associations of the Committee. The interceptions occurred during a three-week period from May 25 to June 16, 1972, the indictment said.

The indictment listed 20 overt acts performed by the defendants to further the conspiracy, including:

-- McCord's renting of a room at the Howard Johnson's Motor Lodge located across the street from the Watergate;

-- McCord's purchase -- for \$3,500 -- of an electronic device capable of receiving intercepted conversations;

-- the purchase by Martinez and Sturgis of surgical gloves;

-- the purchase by Martinez of film and other photographic equipment;

-- the transfer of \$1,600 in cash from Liddy to McCord;

-- the theft by McCord of documents and papers belonging to the Committee; and,

-- the reconnoitering of Senator George McGovern's headquarters at 410 First Street, S. E., by Liddy, Hunt and McCord.

Four of the eight counts -- those charging burglary and possession of intercepting devices -- were brought under the District of Columbia criminal code.

The penalty for burglary is 2 to 15 years in prison on each count. For possession of intercepting devices, the maximum penalty per count is five years in prison and a \$10,000 fine.

The other four counts allege violations of the federal criminal code.

OVER

Maximum penalty for interception and disclosure of wire or oral communications is five years in prison and a \$10,000 fine. The maximum penalty for conspiracy is the same.

Mr. Kleindienst said the investigation by the FBI and the U.S. Attorney's office for the District of Columbia was "one of the most intensive, objective and thorough investigations in many years, reaching out to cities all across the United States as well as into foreign countries."

"It was conducted in accordance with a personal directive to the head of each FBI field office from Acting Director L. Patrick Gray, III, ordering that the case be given the highest priority and that all manpower necessary to insure absolute, thorough, and imaginative investigation be made available," he said.