

McCord Talks of Planes, Money From Hughes

Washington

Testimony by Watergate conspirator James W. McCord Jr. indicated yesterday President Nixon's re-election committee may have concealed campaign contributions received from elusive billionaire Howard Hughes.

McCord, testifying before the Senate Watergate committee, also quoted fellow conspirator G. Gordon Liddy as saying a "Howard Hughes plane" had been lined up for the escape of a burglary team.

He said he did not know if what Liddy outlined to him as a planned break-in at the office of Hank Greenspun, newspaper publisher, ever occurred or whether the plane eventually was used.

BURGLARY

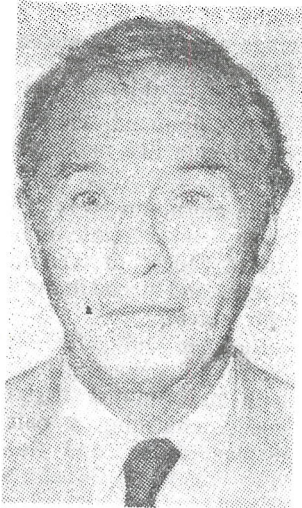
McCord said Liddy told him the burglary was to be at the office of Hank Greenspun, publisher of the Las Vegas Sun, and the aim was to obtain documents Greenspun reportedly had linking racketeers to a Democratic presidential hopeful.

In Las Vegas, Greenspun told a news conference that the Watergate conspirators may have been after his extensive files on Hughes.

"I don't think they were as much interested in the information we had on this Democratic Candidate as they were in the Hughes documents," Greenspun said. "It's very possible that they were anxious to recover those documents."

Greenspun said his files contained material on Senator Edmund S. Muskie (De-Maine) but denied that the material could have been used against the senator.

The material has never been published, Greenspun



AP Wirephotos

HANK GREENSPUN
Las Vegas publisher

said, declining to elaborate except to say that it "absolutely" did not link Muskie with organized crime as McCord had indicated.

CONTRIBUTION

McCord told the committee he had read that E. Howard Hunt, another Watergate conspirator, had handled a campaign contribution from Hughes, the wealthy recluse whose money has figured in previous campaigns by Richard Nixon.

"Gordon Liddy told me in February 1972 that he, too, had handled a Howard Hughes campaign check, a donation to the 1972 campaign," McCord said.

SUM

In reports on campaign spending and contributions filed January 31 of this year, Nixon re-election committees listed numerous \$3000 contributions from Hughes dated from November 14 through November 28.

An exact total of the Hughes contributions never was possible because of late filings, typographical errors, missing reports and other apparently inadvertent mistakes.

But Robert Bennett, a Washington public relations man who handles Hughes interests, said the total was \$100,000. Bennett also said in an interview that the contributions had been received by him and passed on to the Nixon campaign in the first week of November.

While it has been reported previously that Bennett handled the Hughes contributions, there never has been any indication that Hunt also handled Hughes contributions.

Bennett said he believed McCord may have confused the reports. He said that as far as he knew, Hunt did not handle any Hughes contributions.

In Los Angeles, a spokesman for Hughes said reference to the Hughes plane was hearsay and the billionaire would have no comment.

During 1971 and part of 1972, Liddy and Hunt did a considerable amount of traveling, frequently claiming

that they were representing the Hughes Tool Co. Bennett testified that neither man was authorized to use the company's name.