

Liddy Sought to Buy Pistol 'Arsenal'

By Jack Anderson

G. Gordon Liddy flashed his White House pass in an effort to buy a "small arsenal" of pistols a year ago, apparently for arming his Watergate burglary-wiretap team.

Unfortunately for Liddy, the Virginia gun dealer to whom he nervously showed his credentials had recently been in trouble for selling anti-tank guns to a man who used one to stick up a Brink's vault.

So the dealer turned Liddy down and called up the Treasury Department's gun control unit to report the visit. There an official verified that Liddy held a White House pass. But Liddy never came back for the five to 10 pistols he had sought.

If he had, the Watergate might have erupted in gunfire on the morning of June 17, when Liddy's team was trapped inside Democratic National Headquarters. On the other hand, if Treasury had pursued the case of Liddy's attempted purchases, the White House or the Nixon campaign committee might have become sufficiently alarmed to fire him.

Instead, it was left to the sleuths of Rep. John Murphy (D-N.Y.), a strong advocate of

gun controls, to turn up Liddy's mysterious Virginia mission. The gun dealer, who had provided Murphy with leads on his gun bill, quietly notified the congressman's aides of the Liddy visit a few weeks ago.

'Something Wrong'

The dealer, exacting a vow of silence on his name, told the Murphy gumshoes that Liddy came to his shop about a year ago, shortly after leaving his White House job to join the Nixon campaign staff as general counsel.

"There was something wrong about him," recalled the dealer, "you know, he acted a little flaky." Liddy, said the dealer, wanted to buy "a small arsenal" of pistols.

As the dealer remembered it, Liddy gave the strong impression that the guns were not just for himself, but also for associates involved in a mutual venture.

Liddy has a large collection of guns. He is so fanatical about firearms that he was regarded as the gun lobby's "man in the White House." While at the White House, he tried to kill the very statutes that permitted the dealer to refuse to sell him the pistols.

Murphy has quietly turned over his findings to Sen. Sam

Ervin (D-N.C.), whose special committee is investigating the Watergate break-in and related political sabotage and espionage.

Footnote: Liddy's wife rented a safety deposit box at the Marine Midland Bank of Southeastern New York in Poughkeepsie, N.Y., last Aug. 7. At the same time, she left a padlocked trunk valued at \$2,500 in the bank's "silver storage room." Mrs. Liddy confirmed to us she made the rentals, but insisted it was for "personal" effects. When we asked whether she wanted to say anything about the trunk, she snapped, "What I would like to tell you is unprintable." Liddy reportedly has been paid large sums of hush money to keep his mouth shut about the Watergate case.

Phony Report

The Social and Rehabilitation Service has been accused by one of its own chiefs of presenting "phony figures" to Congress.

The figures were Associate Administrator DeGeorge to the Appropriations Committee to prove how much money, Texas, \$1

total savings for the 1973 fiscal year, he claimed of \$65,992,462.

These figures have now been challenged by Jim Rice, chief of the Program Monitoring Division, in a blistering internal memo. He charged that the DeGeorge report "is primarily cosmetic in nature having little substance" and objected that "the phony Tex figures remain in the report despite the strong efforts to change it."

Rice suggested that member sit down with DeGeorge "to clarify the fact that fictitious figures of this sort are being used and certified and appeal to the Accountants' Association, the phony figures are being reported to Congress."