

Baker to Say CIA Helped Hunt Get Job

By Laurence Stern

Washington Post Staff Writer

Testimony indicating that a Central Intelligence Agency official recommended the employment of Watergate conspirator E. Howard Hunt Jr. by a Washington public relations firm which has served as a CIA "cover" will be released today by Sen. Howard H. Baker Jr. (R-Tenn.).

The public relations firm is Robert Mullen & Co., whose relationship with the CIA forms a central theme of the Baker report cleared by the CIA for release last weekend.

Hunt was recommended to the Mullen firm at the time of his retirement from the agency in 1970 by a CIA official identified as Frank O'Malley. There have been unsubstantiated allegations in the case that Hunt was recommended to Mullen by former CIA Director Richard M. Helms.

Both the CIA and officials of the Mullen company have acknowledged their mutual ties, which included providing a corporate cover for CIA operatives in Mullen & Co. offices in Singapore and Amsterdam.

Sources who have examined the report say it provides no conclusive links between the CIA and the original Watergate break-in such as have been hinted by former White House aide Charles Colson and by Baker.

However, it includes documentation in the form of three CIA memoranda

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which point to covert efforts by officials of the agency to minimize its involvement in the Watergate investigation.

There is also some evidence that Robert F. Bennett, president of Mullen and son of Sen. Wallace F. Bennet (R-Utah), was tipped off prior to the Watergate burglary that a White House break-in team was targeting McGovern campaign headquarters for a political intelligence raid.

Bennett has privately acknowledged that he was given advance knowledge of the operations of the burglary team. But it was unknown whether he passed this information on to the CIA.

The memos upon which Baker drew in the preparation of his report were drafted by Eric W. Eisenstadt, chief of the central cover staff for the CIA's clandestine directorate; Martin J. Lukasky, Bennett's "case officer" within the agency, and subordinates of former CIA security director Howard Osborn, who recently took an early retirement from the CIA.

The Eisenstadt and Lukasky memos

recount the CIA's relationships with Mullen & Co. and recount claims by Bennett that he planted unfavorable stories in Newsweek and The Washing-

ton Post dealing with White House aides, including Colson. The object of these stories, the Baker report will indicate, was to draw attention away from CIA involvement in the Watergate case.

The Osborn material, as presented by Baker, suggests that the former CIA security director provided misleading information to the FBI on the identity of a former federal investigator who helped Watergate burglar James W. McCord Jr.'s wife destroy CIA records at their home immediately after her husband's arrest in the Watergate break-in case.

Osborn's retirement, according to one official familiar with the handling of the case, was an outgrowth of the internal memorandum prepared in Osborn's office which resulted in the transmission of misleading information to the FBI.

Rep. Lucien N. Nedzi (D-Mich.), who has reviewed a draft of the Baker report, said Sunday on the CBS program "Face the Nation" (WTOP) that it contained "no bombshells." Nedzi, chairman of the House Armed Service Intelligence Subcommittee, has taken testimony from CIA officials on a number of allegations made in the

draft version of Baker's report.

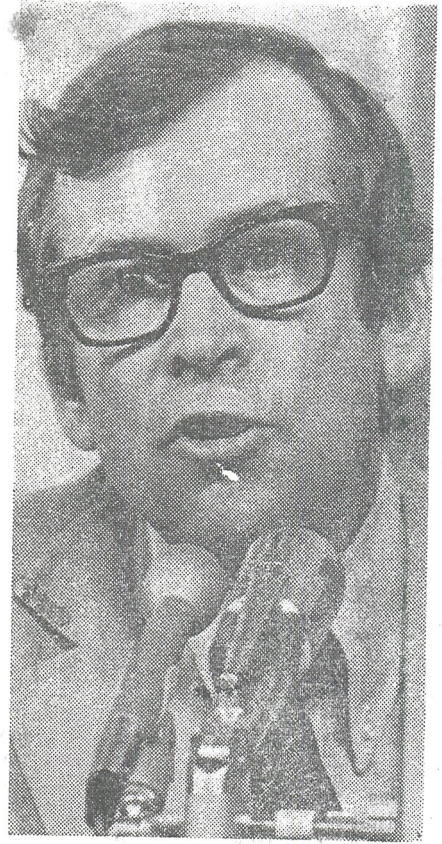
The Michigan Democrat is said to be in contact with the CIA's congressional liaison office on an almost day-to-day basis as new allegations have arisen suggesting new involvements by the agency in the Watergate scandal.

Some of Baker's colleagues on the Senate Watergate committee, of which he served as co-chairman, have charged that Baker has sought to implicate the CIA in the scandal to divert attention from the White House role in the break-in and ensuing cover-up.

The report also questions why photographs found in the CIA file taken by members of the White House "plumbers" team during the Ellsberg break-in were not turned over to the FBI, even though agency officials were aware of their evidentiary significance.

By and large, the Baker report reaches no definite conclusions but it suggests continued investigation of the relationships between the CIA and Watergate and names prospective witnesses to be examined.

The Senate Watergate committee has gone out of existence but will issue its final report next week.



SEN. HOWARD H. BAKER JR.
... probes CIA involvement