

The Silent Man Of Watergate



Jack Anderson

ALTHOUGH G. Gordon Liddy's superiors in the White House considered him mentally unbalanced, they unleashed him against President Nixon's enemies and gave him a license, in effect, to violate the law.

White House sources say the pistol-packing Liddy, whom they called the "Cowboy," was known to be a wild man. Apparently, the President learned about Liddy's reputation shortly after the Watergate break-in.

"He must be a little nuts," the President said of Liddy during a June 23, 1972, conversation with staff chief H. R. Haldeman. "He is," agreed Haldeman.

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WE HAVE previously reported that Liddy on Jan. 6, 1971, invited a few associates to watch a Nazi propaganda film, featuring Adolf Hitler, at the National Archives. Liddy became so excited over Hitler's strutting, according to witnesses, that he rattled off a few impulsive remarks in German.

Another time, he held his hand over a flaming candle until he burned the nerve ends to prove his manliness to a female friend. He also showed the startled wife of Republican official Robert Odle how to kill a man with a sharpened pencil.

In his home neighborhood, he once hid on a garage roof waiting for some obstreperous youths and then leaped down on them like Batman. Liddy had a fasci-

nation for firearms and placed a brace of pistols on his table before receiving a delegation of angry neighbors. While casing Senator George McGovern's campaign headquarters for a possible burglary, Liddy whipped out a pistol and shot out a street light.

Then there was the time he misunderstood Jeb Magruder's crack that "It'd be nice if we could get rid of Jack Anderson." Liddy unhesitatingly started off to assassinate me but was stopped, happily, before he got out of the building.

Yet this same Liddy was kept on the President's payroll, with a mandate to commit burglaries, tap telephones and otherwise violate the law.

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NOW BEHIND prison bars, where he promptly got into an altercation with another inmate over a hairbrush, Liddy has become known as the silent man of Watergate.

But he has a dark humor about his plight. For instance, he recently agreed to meet with Attorney Mitchell Rogovin, who wants to question him about a Watergate civil case. Without promising to answer the questions, Liddy wrote from jail:

"As to convenience of place, we must make a virtue of necessity, i.e., the rotunda of the D.C. jail . . . You may select a date at your convenience with the reasonable expectation that I shall be here when you arrive."