

Hunt Tells of Early Work For a C.I.A. Domestic Unit

By SEYMOUR M. HERSH
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WASHINGTON, Dec. 30 — E. Howard Hunt Jr., a Watergate burglar who pleaded guilty, told the Senate Watergate committee last year in still unpublished testimony that he served as the first chief of covert action for the Central Intelligence Agency's Domestic Operations Division.

Mr. Hunt, testifying before the Senate investigators in closed session on Dec. 18, 1973, revealed that his domestic activities included the secret financing of a Washington news agency as well as the underwriting of the popular Fodor's travel guides.

A copy of Mr. Hunt's testimony before the Watergate committee, marked "confidential," was made available today to The New York Times.

In a telephone interview today, Mr. Hunt said that he spent about four years working for the Domestic Operation Division, beginning shortly after the unit was set up by the C.I.A. in 1962.

Mr. Hunt, who is now free and living in Miami pending the appeal of his Watergate conviction, denied any involvement

or knowledge of domestic spying on radicals and other dissidents by the Domestic Operations Division. But he said that some of his projects from 1962 to 1966—which dealt largely with the subsidizing and manipulation of the news and publishing organizations—did seem to violate the intent of the agency's charter.

The New York Times, quoting a former undercover agent for the Domestic Operations Division, said in Sunday editions that the agent was directly involved in the monitoring of antiwar dissidents and radical groups in New York City beginning with the student uprisings at Columbia University in 1968.

Mr. Hunt's testimony suggests that questionable domestic activities by the C.I.A. had apparently begun under the Kennedy Administration, continued during the Johnson Administration and, as well-informed sources have told The Times, reached a peak during the antiwar outbursts in opposition to President Nixon's

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Vietnam policy.

The Times also reported Sunday that the new domestic unit was formed in 1964, but Mr. Hunt recalled that it was assembled shortly after the failure of the Bay of Pigs operation in late 1961. Many agency men connected with that failure were shunted into the new domestic unit, Mr. Hunt said.

Today, the Times, quoting well-informed sources, reported that three more former high-level officials of the C.I.A.'s counterintelligence division had resigned, effective tomorrow, following the revelations earlier this month of massive domestic operations by the agency. The sudden retirement of James Angleton, director of the counterintelligence division, was made known last week.

Comment Is Refused

The White House and C.I.A. refused today to discuss the reported shake-up in the counterintelligence division.

"Whatever is happening at the C.I.A., the President is being kept informed of it," mon Nessen, the White House press secretary, told newsmen at Vail, Colo.

The three newly retired C.I.A. men—Raymond Rocca, Mr. Angleton's chief deputy; William J. Hood, executive officer of the counterintelligence division; and Newton S. Miller, chief of operations—are reliably known to believe that much more spying and other illegal activities were conducted by the Domestic Operations Division than by counterintelligence agents.

Precisely what role the Domestic Operations Division did play in the domestic spying could not be immediately learned.

Mr. Hunt, in his Senate testimony, told of being ordered to arrange for the daily pick-up of "any and all information" that might be available in 1964 at the Presidential campaign headquarters of Senator Barry Goldwater, Arizona Republican, then running against President Johnson. The Goldwater documents, Mr. Hunt said, were to be delivered to a White House aide, Chester L. Cooper, a former C.I.A. official.



Associated Press

E. Howard Hunt Jr.

Ordered by Johnson

"I was opposed to this as a Goldwater Republican," Mr. Hunt testified. "I was told that it didn't make any difference that President Johnson had ordered this activity and that Cooper would be the recipient of the information."

Asked by telephone today about that operation, Mr. Hunt said he had been "shocked by this intrusion into Barry Goldwater's affairs."

"But I did it," he said, "and you must know my thinking on this. Since I'd done it once before for the C.I.A., why wouldn't I do it again [inside Watergate in June, 1972] for the White House?"

The Domestic Operations Division has received little public attention, although its existence was revealed in 1967 by the Washington journalists, David Wise and Thomas B. Ross, in their book, "The Espionage Establishment."

In the interview, Mr. Hunt said that there was strenuous opposition to its establishment in 1962, particularly from Richard Helms, who later became the C.I.A. director, and Thomas H. Karamessines, who later became the agency chief of clandestine operations.

Mr. Hunt, who retired in 1970 after serving more than 20 years with the C.I.A., told the Watergate committee that the domestic operations division had "established field stations in Boston and Chicago and San Francisco, to name a few cities. These were parallel to the extent overt C.I.A. establishment [already set up those cities] and a large variety of domestic based operations were conducted by this division."

"My staff ran a media operation known as Continental Press out of the National Press Building in Washington," Mr. Hunt added. "We funded much of the activities of the Frederick D. Praeger Publishing

Corporation in New York City. We funded, to a large extent, the activities of Fodor's Travel Guide, distributed by the David McKay Corporation."

No listing for Continental Press could be found in the current Washington telephone directory and Mr. Hunt recalled during today's telephone conversation that the news agency was used mostly to supply news articles—or propaganda—to foreign clients.

Kenneth L. Rawson, the president and editor of the David McKay Company, Inc., said in a telephone conversation from his home tonight that in the years referred to by Mr. Hunt his company simply distributed the Fodor guides published then by Fodor's Modern Guides, Inc.

Mr. Rawson said he had no knowledge of Mr. Hunt's allegations or of any outside financing of the guides' publication in the early nineteen-sixties. In 1968, Mr. Rawson reported, McKay bought Mr. Fodor's publishing company and became publisher as well as distributor of the guides.

The C.I.A.'s link to the Praeger Publishing Company became known early in 1967 and Mr. Praeger acknowledged then that his concern had published "15 or 16 books" at the suggestion of the agency.

The C.I.A.'s involvement with the publication of the Fodor's travel book series had not been publicly known before today.

It was this operation, Mr. Hunt testified last December, that distressed him.

"I was not a fan of the idea," he said. "I thought that it was (A) unnecessary; Fodor and McKay didn't need the money; and (B) that it was an improper extension of C.I.A. activity into the domestic field."

Called a C.I.A. Agent

In response to a question a moment later, Mr. Hunt depicted Fodor's Travel Guides, Inc., as ed Eugene Fodor, president of a former agent for the C.I.A. in Austria. The C.I.A. chief of station in Austria, Mr. Hunt said, "had undertaken to help him form his publishing organization, and it continued on through the years—I suppose a matter of 12 to 15 years."

"We'd undergo his losses," Mr. Hunt said, "and he was on the C.I.A. payroll and may still be for all I know."

Mr. Fodor, a native Hungarian who became an American citizen in 1942 could not be reached for comment at his home or office in Litchfield, Conn.

In a related development, Senator Hubert H. Humphrey, Democrat of Minnesota, announced today that he would introduce legislation when Congress convenes next month to create a permanent Joint Committee on National Security to oversee intelligence operations.

"The time has come for Congress to face up to a responsibility it has shirked for too many years," he said in a statement issued from his office in Minneapolis.