

'Others Involved'

Watergate Figure Charges Coverup

McCord-- 'Political Pressure'

Washington Post Service

Washington

James W. McCord Jr. yesterday broke a nine-month silence maintained by the seven Watergate defendants, saying that others yet unnamed were involved in the conspiracy to bug the Democratic headquarters.

McCord also said that government witnesses had perjured themselves at his trial and that "political pressure" had been applied to induce defendants to plead guilty.

McCord, in a two-page letter to Chief U.S. District Judge John J. Sirica, said he wanted to talk to the judge and that he feared "retaliatory measures" against himself and his family.

At the same time, Sirica sentenced former White House Aide G. Gordon Liddy, one of the seven Watergate defendants, to serve at least six years, eight months in prison and fined him \$40,000.

Sirica deferred final sentencing of five other defendants, saying he would have to weigh as a factor "whether they now give their 'full cooperation' to continuing Watergate investigations."

SESSION

During the dramatic, two-

hour court session, E. Howard Hunt Jr., another former White House aide who was the first of five defendants to plead guilty in the Watergate incident, told Sirica that he was "destroyed as a man" and pleaded for mercy.

"I lost my employment, then my beloved wife, both in consequence of my involvement in the Watergate

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affair," Hunt told Sirica. "Humbly, with profound contrition, I ask now that your honor look beyond the Howard Hunt of last June 17 to my life as a whole. And if it please this court, to temper justice with mercy."

Sirica offered to speak to McCord before passing sentence on him, with the conditions that a full transcript be made of McCord's statements and that Sirica could release the transcript to the grand jury and the Select Senate Committee investigating the Watergate bugging and allegations of political sabotage sponsored by aides to President Nixon in the 1972 presidential campaign.

Gerald Alch, McCord's lawyer, said after a private meeting with Sirica that McCord agreed to the judge's terms. Alch said he hoped to have McCord make his statement to Sirica next week.

CHARGES

McCord, Liddy and Hunt stand convicted, along with four other men — all from Miami — of charges of conspiracy, burglary, illegal wiretapping and eavesdropping in connection with the June 17 break-in and bugging of the Democratic National Committee's Watergate headquarters. Only Lid-

dy and McCord stood trial. The other five pleaded guilty to all charges against them.

McCord, an ex-FBI and CIA agent, was security director for the Committee for the Re-Election of the President. Since arrested inside the Watergate in the early hours of June 17 along with the four men from Miami, McCord has maintained silence in public about his involvement in the Watergate affair.

In a two-page, single-spaced letter that he delivered to Sirica through a probation officer last Tuesday, McCord broke the silence, telling the judge that he was torn by legal considerations and his family's fears on the one hand and his desire to minimize his punishment and the "interests of justice" on the other.

LETTER

McCord's letter contains these statements:

- "There was political pressure applied to the defendants to plead guilty and remain silent."

- "Perjury occurred during the trial in matters highly material to the very structure, orientation, and impact of the government's case, and to the motivation and intent of the defendants."

- "Others involved in the Watergate operation were not identified during the trial, when they could have been by those testifying."

- "The Watergate operation was not a CIA operation."

- "McCord wanted to speak to Sirica in private. "Since I cannot feel confident in talking with an FBI agent, in testifying before a grand jury whose U.S. attorneys work for the Department of Justice, or in talking with other government

representatives, such a discussion with you would be of assistance to me."

- "Members of my family have expressed fear for my life if I disclose knowledge of the facts in this matter, either publicly or to any government representative." Although McCord said he did not share these concerns "to the same degree, nevertheless, I do believe that retaliatory measures will be taken against me, my family, and my friends should I disclose such facts."

McCord concluded the letter by saying that he made the statements in it "freely and voluntarily, fully realizing that I may be prosecuted for giving a false statement to a judicial official." He

had not discussed the matter with his lawyers, McCord said, "as a matter of protection for them."

TRIAL

During the trial, when Sirica expressed his dissatisfaction that all the facts concerning the Watergate incident were not coming out, the chief prosecutor, Assistant U.S. Attorney Earl Silbert, insisted several times that the government had no evidence that would support a prosecution against anyone other than the seven defendants.

Following yesterday's court session, McCord, the only one of the seven defendants who remained free, left the U.S. district courthouse with his lawyer, Alch. Asked at a brief press conference if McCord's safety was secure, Alch said, "He advises me that it is, and he is the best judge of that." Asked if any actual threats have been made, Alch said, "not to my knowledge."

A spokesman for the Justice Department said that if McCord's statement to Sirica "contains information supporting these allegations (of perjury and other criminal activity) or indicating any other violation of federal law, the Department of Justice will, of course, take appropriate action immediately."

In Key Biscayne, Fla., deputy White House press secretary Gerald L. Warren said he would have no comment on McCord's charges

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because it was the "consistent policy" of the Nixon administration "not to comment on matters in this trial, or any other pending trial. It is a policy that we will religiously follow while there is a judicial process in motion," Warren said. "I believe I would leave it at that."

CHANGES

During the court session yesterday, some of the defendants showed marked changes since they last appeared in court a month ago.

Liddy, a jaunty former prosecutor and ex-FBI agent, appeared to have lost considerable weight since he was imprisoned January 30. He greeted Hunt with a snappy salute and gave his familiar wave — a gesture that became his trademark during the four-week trial — to the packed courtroom, but there was little other display of his buoyancy of two months ago. Liddy has been held in the federal penitentiary at Danbury, Conn., most of the time since January 30.



AP Wirephoto

JAMES W. McCORD JR.
He charged perjury by U.S. witnesses



G. GORDON LIDDY
Term and fine



AP Wirephotos

JUDGE JOHN SIRICA
A Letter From McCord