

The Washington Merry-Go-Round

Hunt Seen as Romantic Spy, Novelist

By Jack Anderson

We have already written about the bizarre behavior of White House burglar G. Gordon Liddy. His partner in crime, E. Howard Hunt, is equally strange. The two men who tried to steal psychological data about Daniel Ellsberg seem more in need of psychological study themselves.

While Liddy acted out his daydreams by posturing with guns and threatening those who got in his way, Hunt found an outlet for his fantasies in the pages of his 45 obscure novels. He went by many names both as a spy and a novelist.

He was a romantic spy who ran about in a preposterous red wig, committing burglaries, conspiring to wiretap and engaging in intrigue. When he was caught, he allegedly tried to blackmail the White House for \$1 million to keep his mouth shut.

Cash Payments

Several large cash payments were delivered to him. But instead of sharing the money with his fellow defendants, he allegedly kept most of it himself. Prosecutors believe he still has more than \$100,000 stashed away.

Yet five months afterward, surrounded by the wreckage of Watergate, Hunt was still telling friends: "I've spent a

lifetime serving my country and, in a sense, I'm still serving it."

Much of his past is wrapped in the secrecy that surrounds all former CIA men. But this much is known:

He was one of the planners behind the Bay of Pigs, although he withdrew from the operation in protest after Manolo Ray, a leader of the anti-Castro Cuban left wing, was included in the revolutionary council.

While the ragtag troops were training in Guatemala, Hunt sought to use them to defend the Guatemalan president against an uprising. He was overruled by Washington, which thought they should fight one revolution at a time.

Ploy Failed

Earlier in Uruguay, as his tour of duty was coming to an end, he promised that country's president several U.S. helicopters if the President would intercede to keep him in Montevideo. The ploy failed and the episode later kept him from a desirable post in Spain.

As a burglar, Hunt attempted to reconnoiter the Watergate and slipped into a dining room. He found he couldn't open a connecting door without alarming a guard. So he spent the night in a closet, waiting to escape in the anonymity of the daytime crowd.

Yet astoundingly, this neu-

rotic pair, Liddy and Hunt, were brought into the White House where they were permitted to implement their wild schemes. They were supposed to be the James Bond specialists, who would handle "Mission Impossible" assignments for the White House. They were paid higher salaries than the young White House aides who served as their nominal supervisors. Our White House sources say the young aides held Liddy and Hunt in awe and listened respectfully to their schemes.

If Hunt had written the Watergate story as one of his novels, it would have been dismissed as too wild to be believed.

Headlines and Footnotes: In a memo marked for the "eyes only" of President Nixon, Vice President Agnew urged the dismantling of Lyndon Johnson's Great Society. The memo was solicited by the President after his re-election. Agnew responded with an appeal that their landslide victory was a "mandate" to end Johnson's social programs . . .

Former White House aide Charles Colson, who has been accused in the Watergate testimony of forging documents framing President Kennedy for the murder of South Vietnam's President Diem and fabricating a new version of Chappaquiddick, recently tried to make his peace with Sen. Ted Kennedy (D-Mass.). Col-

son made three requests for an appointment, but Kennedy refused to see him . . .

The man who had so much to say to Senate investigators, John Dean, hasn't communicated with his 5-year-old son since Easter Sunday. Then, according to his divorced wife Karla Dean, it was only a telephone call. Dean also gave his former wife one big surprise. He had never been talkative about his adventures in the high councils of government. Karla told us: "There's no one who loves a secret more than Johnny" . . .

While checking out security in New York City for the November Group, the Nixon advertising agency created just for the 1972 campaign, Waterbugger James McCord made the mistake of confiding his plans to bug the Democrats to old FBI friends. The word spread through the investigative community, reaching us in Washington two months before the celebrated Watergate break-in. The version we heard was that the November Group was behind the bugging scheme, so we were busy investigating the November Group when the Waterbuggers struck . . .

Although President Nixon managed to obtain nearly \$2 million in public financing to renovate his California and Florida homes, future Presidents are going to find it difficult to do the same.