

THE NEW YORK TIMES, TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 21, 1976

# LIDDY CONTINUES FIGHT FOR RIGHTS OF INMATES

## Former Counsel to Nixon Is Seeking Penalties Against U.S. Warden

DANBURY, Conn. (AP)—Once he was counsel to Richard Nixon's re-election committee, Now G. Gordon Liddy is a power-plant clerk in the Federal prison here, fighting for inmates' rights.

Already he has won a broader definition of privileged mail—that which can be opened only in the presence of an inmate. Now he is complaining in Federal

court that privileged mail is still being opened when the inmate is not present.

Mr. Liddy represents himself when he appeared in United States District Court in Hartford in August to present complaints from himself and other prisoners about privileged mail. He also contended that prisoners at the Danbury Federal Correctional Institution—like himself—who were placed in "administrative detention did not get adequate explanations for the disciplinary action.

In April, Federal Judge Jon O. Newman ruled that prisoners who were put in detention must get written explanations. At the same time he designated more categories of mail as "privileged."

Mr. Liddy, who organized the Water-gate break-in team, is serving six to 20 years on burglary and related charges for his part in the June 1972 burglary

at Democratic National Headquarters in Washington. He is eligible to be considered for parole in 1981.

In February he was placed for several days in one of the small, locked cells reserved for disciplining Danbury inmates. He was accused of being insolent to a guard but was later cleared after an administrative hearing.

Warden George C. Wilkinson said any violations of the Federal court's orders had been due to "human errors," not policy decisions.

The warden will not discuss the case because it is still pending before Judge Newman. But he did say that Mr. Liddy spent "a lot of time at the law library."

Mr. Liddy has asked Judge Newman to hold Warden Wilkinson in contempt for alleged continued violations of policy at Danbury.

He also suggested the following:

¶That prisoners whose rights have been violated be compensated by having their sentences shortened. Judge Newman said he originally had suggested that remedy during the April hearing, on the theory that "time is the principal currency" of a prison.

¶That a Yale University faculty member monitor compliance of privileged-mail and administrative-detention regulations at the Danbury prison and provide monthly reports.

¶That Warden Wilkinson be fined \$500 and that a fine of \$50 per incident be established for future violations.

¶That the prison's mail room be attended by two clerks rather than one. Judge Newman said testimony indicated there was such a volume of mail that some mistakes in policy were inevitable.