

Story of Escape At the Watergate

Washington

Two former White House aides were actually inside the Watergate office building and narrowly escaped arrest at the time of the June 17 break-in and alleged bugging of National Democratic headquarters there, according to a source close to the federal investigation of the incident.

The two, G. Gordon Liddy and E. Howard Hunt Jr., carrying at least one walkie-talkie, were warned that police had arrived by a person or group acting as a lookout at the Howard Johnson motel across the street, according to the source.

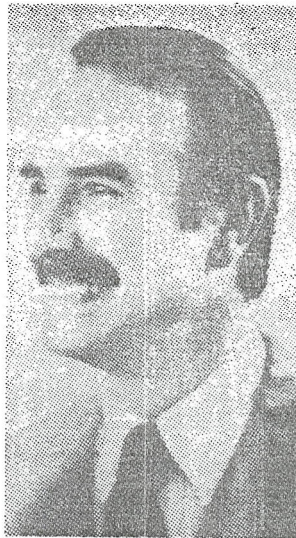
On the night of the bugging arrests, the five men found inside Democratic headquarters also were warned but were unable to elude police.

Hunt and Liddy, who had been in a stairwell or corridor in the Watergate, may have gone directly to the motel across the street, the source said. Earlier reports had placed them in the motel at the time of the incident.

Liddy, a former FBI agent, was finance counsel to President Nixon's reelection committee at the time of the incident. He was later fired because he refused to answer FBI questions about the incident.

Hunt is a former CIA agent, a prolific writer of spy novels, former White House consultant and friend of Charles W. Colson, a special counsel to President Nixon who specializes in behind-the-scenes political operations.

Liddy and Hunt have repeatedly declined to discuss



AP Wirephoto

G. GORDON LIDDY
A close call reported

the Watergate incident or any other matter with reporters. A federal grand jury is still investigating the matter, and Republican officials have said they expect indictments — but not against “key names.”

Shortly after the break-in, police reported that some of the men arrested had registered at the Watergate on May 26 and stayed until May 29, and that the Democratic headquarters had been broken into during that period.

In another development yesterday, Alfred Wong, chief of technical security at the White House for the Secret Service, gave secret testimony to the Democrats' lawyer, Edward Bennett Williams.

The testimony is part of the Democrat's \$1 million invasion of privacy suit against the five men. A federal judge has ordered all depositions in the suit sealed with the court and kept secret pending his order.

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