

## Watergate Break-in

## The Bugging Trial Begins

## Washington

U.S. District Judge John J. Sirica began selecting jurors yesterday for the long-awaited Watergate bugging trial, for which several past and present White House aides were named as prospective government witnesses.

An attorney for four of the seven defendants charged

with bugging Democratic National headquarters last spring denied reports his clients would plead guilty to avoid the publicity of a full-scale trial.

But the lawyer, Henry B. Rothblatt, hinted later that they might accept a reduced charge if the prosecution offered "something attractive and palatable and consistent with justice" in any plea ne-

gotiations.

More than 250 prospective jurors from a list of 1000 jammed the ornate courtroom of the Federal Court building at the foot of Capitol Hill when Sirica began the trial midmorning.

He told them he expects the proceedings to last four to six weeks.

Sirica has ordered that the jury be sequestered during

the trial because of the controversial and political nature of the case and the widespread publicity it has drawn.

"Don't blame any attorney or defendant or the Government," Sirica said. "It is my decision."

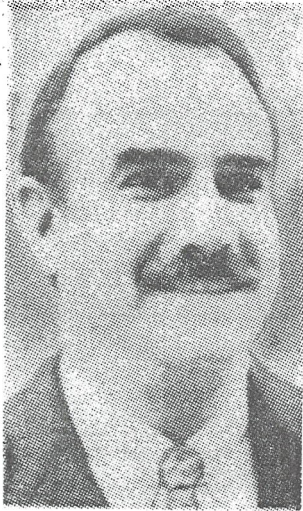
## FIND

About 100 eliminated themselves as jurors almost immediately.

They stood in response to Sirica's question of how many would find it difficult to serve as sequestered jurors because of such personal circumstances as caring for children or elderly persons.

When yesterday's six-hour session ended, 150 had been excused from jury duty, five had been dismissed for cause, and no jurors had been selected. The next session will begin at 11 a.m. EST today.

Defendants in the trial, delayed for two months past the November 7 presidential election, were James W. McCord, former chief security officer for the Committee for the Re-election of the President; former White House aides G. Gordon Liddy and E. Howard Hunt, and



AP Wirephotos

GEORGE LIDDY

E. HOWARD HUNT

JAMES McCORD

Three charged in the bugging of Democratic National headquarters

Bernard L. Barker, Eugenio R. Martinez, Virgilio R. Gonzales and Frank Sturgis.

## COMPLEX

All but Liddy and Hunt were arrested inside Democratic offices at the Watergate office-apartment complex here on June 17.

The seven were charged with conspiracy, second degree burglary, illegal eavesdropping and possession of illegal wiretapping devices.

A dapper Liddy waved

and smiled as he was introduced to the prospective jurors. Hunt, whose wife was killed in a recent plane crash, looked gray and haggard as he rose in the crowded courtroom.

McCord managed a slight smile.

## AIDE

Prosecutor John M. Silbert said his list of 60 prospective government witnesses includes Fred Field-

ing, a White House attorney working with presidential counsel John Dean; Jeb Magruder, executive director of the Presidential Inauguration Committee and former Deputy director of the re-election committee and aide to White House communications director Herbert G. Klein; and Bruce Kehrli, a secretary to White House chief of staff H. R. Halde-

man.

No high-ranking past or present administration officials were on the prosecution's witness list.

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