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E. Howard Hunt Jr.: No longer an anonymous spy

Watergate

Mystery, Comedy, etc. —And Dirty Tricks

WASHINGTON—Scandal, like a lot of other things, never quite made it as an issue in the 1972 Presidential campaign. Last week, with the election two months past and the Inauguration at hand, there were some footnotes and some entirely new chapters in the scandal dossier.

● The Justice Department, on Thursday, charged the Finance Committee to Re-elect the President with eight criminal violations of the Campaign Spending Law. The committee spent \$31,300 without reporting it as re-

quired, the Government said. The General Accounting Office had audited the committee's records last August and had reported a series of "apparent violations" involving about \$350,000. The Justice Department said its charges last week stemmed "in part" from the G.A.O. report.

● It was alleged in court papers that President Nixon's personal lawyer, Herbert W. Kalmbach, had been a major solicitor of the dairy industry contributions to the Republican Party that came after the Administration reversed

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itself and raised milk price supports. According to a deposition in a law suit, Mr. Kalmbach first asked "quite unequivocally" for money and then tried to stop at least some of the gifts when industry officials made it plain they would make the donations public as required by law.

● Criminal Case No. 1827-72, the United States of America v. George Gordon Liddy, et al., came to trial on Monday in the United States District Court for the District of Columbia. Thus the first formal exploration of the Watergate affair got underway.

It had been by far the most malodorous item in the scandal bag, stemming as it did from the arrest on June 17 of five men—some of whom had links to the White House—inside the offices of the Democratic National Committee, and from the indictment on Sept. 15 of the five and two others.

The first five days of trial, like the six months of inquiry, speculation, and debate that preceded them, produced vast amounts of significant information, confusion, comedy, mystery, and pathos. The most important developments were these:

E. Howard Hunt Jr., author of 46 novels, onetime spy for the Central Intelligence Agency, and more recently a consultant to the White House, entered a plea of guilty to all charges of conspiracy, burglary, and eavesdropping that had been placed against him. Hunt showed up in court looking bad. He had lost weight since his indictment, his face was very pale, his expression somber. Hunt's wife was killed last month in a plane crash, leaving him with three children at home between the ages of nine and 21. He is free on \$100,000 bail, pending sentencing.

The publicity—as a C.I.A. agent he was anonymous for 20 years—seemed to bother Hunt more than it did any

of his co-defendants, and he worked hard to avoid it. He was the most enigmatic of the defendants and perhaps because of that, the most interesting.

Bernard L. Barker of Miami, who served under Hunt in the planning of the Bay of Pigs fiasco, has said he would follow his old boss "to hell and back." By the end of the week there were reliable indications that he and three other defendants wanted to join Hunt in pleading guilty.

The legal situation was immensely complicated. The two other defendants, Liddy and James W. McCord Jr., both officials of the President's campaign organization at the time of the Watergate arrests, showed no signs of wanting to follow Hunt in changing their pleas. Since conspiracy is the major charge in the indictment and since Liddy and McCord are among the alleged participants, it appeared that as long as both or either of them stand trial the Government's case would have to be presented in full, regardless of the other guilty pleas.

The case was outlined in an opening statement to the jury by the principal Assistant United States Attorney Earl J. Silbert. The prosecutor sought to implicate no one except those charged, but he was scarcely shy in discussing the President's Campaign Committee. He said he would prove that the committee had paid Liddy \$235,000 for an "intelligence operation" during last year's campaign. It was unclear, the prosecutor said, how most of this money—all of it was in cash—had been spent.

A previously unreported spy was also unveiled. A college student, Thomas James Gregory, testified that Hunt, who was alleged to have joined Liddy in recruiting for the intelligence effort, had hired him to get information from the campaign offices of Senators McGovern and Muskie.

—WALTER RUGABER