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(C) ~~W~~ 1973 Washington Star-News

Washington, Jan. 18 -- E. Howard Hunt used White House stationery to write a letter said to be soliciting a former agent of the Central Intelligence Agency to join the spying effort against the Democrats.

The letterhead stationery was apparently only part of the White House prerogatives used by Hunt, a former White House aide, in the effort that led to his arrest along with four others in the attempt last June to bug the Democratic party's national headquarters at the Watergate complex here.

Hunt apparently also used a special telephone in the White House executive office building to make 11 calls to Bernard Barker, who has also entered a guilty plea at the trial here on the bugging attempt.

Hunt, a former CIA agent, wrote the letter to Jack Bauman, also a former CIA agent, who was working as a security specialist in Winter Haven, Fla.

The letter, dated Dec. 20, 1971, reads:

"Jack:

I am coming down in Fla. a few days after Xmas, and plan to call you. I have some things going in which I think you might be interested if your time and health permit. Best, Howard Hunt."

In his opening statement at the Watergate trial, prosecutor Earl Silbert said the letter "inquired as to whether or not Mr. Bauman himself was available for some work, a kind of vague assignment in the letter -- Mr. Bauman having retired from the CIA."

Silbert said that around Dec. 28 Bauman met with Hunt and another man at the Playboy Plaza Hotel in Miami where they had discussed Bauman's possible employment.

Although Silbert told the jury that Bauman could not remember the man who had accompanied him, Bauman's date book lists an appointment at 4:30 p.m. at the hotel on Dec. 28 with "HH" and "George Leonard," an alias used by G. Gordon Liddy, another Watergate defendant.

Beneath the notation of the meeting, Bauman's note pad listed a telephone in the District of Columbia, 347-0355.

That number was a special White House line used by Hunt on several occasions to call Barker. The phone was in a basement room in the old executive office building.

The secret number was billed to a former White House secretary's home in Alexandria, Va. White House press secretary Ronald L. Ziegler has said the phone was installed to trace news leaks in the administration.

After the meeting in Miami, Bauman discussed the job offer again with Hunt at a local hotel here.

"Things were pretty vague," Silbert told the jury last week. "Mr. Bauman understood the job to involve development of security capability for the Republican party and it was also explained to him at that time this was a legitimate enterprise."

Bauman later returned to Florida and wrote Hunt a letter turning down the job offer. For his trip to Washington Bauman received \$400.

In another letter, dated Jan. 14, 1972, on his own stationery, Hunt expressed his regret over Bauman's decision.

"George and I appreciate the trouble you went to on our account," Hunt wrote, "and for my part it was rewarding to see an old valued friend. I assume your verbal offer to cooperate peripherally still holds."

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The prosecution has not included Bauman on its witness list. Silbert did not say in his opening statement why Bauman was not scheduled to testify.

The Hunt-Bauman correspondence involving the White House letterhead and the date book entry with its secret phone number were obtained exclusively by the Washington Star-News and have not yet figured in the trial.

Placed in evidence yesterday were address books of Barker and Eugenio Martinez, another defendant, which included handwritten entries listing the undercover White House phone number, 347-0355.

It was the first of three ~~number~~ numbers for "HH" (assumed to be Hunt) in the Barker book. The next was an official White House number, 456-2282.

Martinez's book used Hunt's name, office and regular White House number, followed by "George ... 347-0355," apparently indicating Liddy could also be reached at the covert number.

A former White House secretary, Kathleen Chenow of Milwaukee, who worked with Hunt and Liddy in the executive office building a year ago, told the Washington Post last month that the secret telephone had been billed to her home address, then in Alexandria.

"They apparently wanted it in my name because they didn't want any ties with the White House," she said. Miss Chenow told the Post she had given the bills to an aide in the office of presidential assistant John Ehrlichman for payment.

Ziegler said that the covert telephone had been installed for use in trying to track the sources of information leaks to newsmen in late ~~ix~~ 1971, and that Hunt and Liddy were on a team of White House "plumbers" tracing that.

Ziegler had claimed it "would be folly" to link the secret telephone with the Watergate case because the phone was in use only from August, 1971, to March 15, 1972.

In addition to the appearance of the same White House number in the Bauman, Barker and Martinez books, a prosecution summary also shows that it was one of four telephones used by Hunt to make 102 long-distance calls to Barker.