

Liddy Silent Before Watergate Jury3/31/73
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Watergate conspirator G. Gordon Liddy refused yesterday to answer questions before a federal grand jury after being granted immunity from prosecution by Chief U.S. District Court Judge John J. Sirica.

Liddy, described by prosecutors as "the boss" of the bugging of Democratic headquarters last June, now must appear before Sirica on Monday at a contempt of court hearing.

The role of former White House and re-election aide Liddy could be crucial in determining whether new Watergate disclosures — if there are any — are to be made.

Coconspirator James W. McCord Jr., testifying before a Senate panel, has said that Liddy told him repeatedly that high presidential aides knew of and were involved in the bugging. It would be testimony from Liddy, then, more than McCord, that would appear to be vital to Senate probes.

Liddy was sent before the grand jury for two hours yesterday afternoon before prosecutors apparently gave up in efforts to get him to talk.

In a related action yesterday, Sirica put off until June 15 the sentencing of McCord, the former security coordinator for the President's re-election committee.

McCord has testified once so far before the Senate Watergate select committee and is scheduled to appear again next week.

In arguing for immunity for Liddy, Assistant U.S. Attorney Seymour Glanzer said that Liddy's testimony "may shed light on other avenues of investigation."

Liddy's lawyer, Peter Maroulis, countered that the defendant was being asked to testify before the same grand jury that had already indicted him, a violation of his right against self-incrimination.

Liddy himself seemed unconcerned. He yawned several times and whispered occasionally to others sitting at the defense table.

In the grand jury session, sources said, Liddy adhered to the same objection his lawyer had cited in court. He invoked the Fifth Amendment to all substantive questions.

Liddy has been sentenced to a minimum of six years and eight months in jail and ordered to pay a fine of \$40,000 for his part in the Watergate bugging.

If he refuses again on Monday to answer the grand jury questions, it is deemed certain that he will be held in contempt of court.

The penalty for contempt can be as much as 18 months in jail but the sentence cannot be added to the prison term Liddy is already serving.

Judge Sirica does have an option that would seem to amount in Liddy's case to additional punishment. He could

require Liddy to remain in D.C. jail for as long as 18 months or until he testifies before the grand jury.

Liddy has asked on several occasions to be allowed to serve his term in the Danbury, Conn., federal penitentiary, which is near his home in upstate New York. On Monday, Liddy scuffled with another inmate at D.C. jail and received cuts on his ear and nose.

If Liddy were to cooperate with the grand jury, Sirica is empowered under the rules of criminal procedure to reduce his sentence. Prosecutors made a point in Court today of spelling out that provision, presumably as an inducement for Liddy to talk.

Over three days this week, the grand jury heard testimony from E. Howard Hunt, another former White House aide, who agreed to answer questions after Sirica gave him the same immunity offered to Liddy.