

More Pieces for the Watergate Jigsaw



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SOURCES close to the Watergate investigation have put together for us a few more jigsaw pieces in the puzzle. Here are the latest fascinating facts which investigators have established:

- Presidential counsel John W. Dean III, despite vigorous White House denials, lied to FBI agents when he claimed not to know whether Watergate conspirator E. Howard Hunt had a White House office. This is spelled out clearly in FBI reports which have now been circulated outside the FBI. So many people have read the reports that acting FBI director L. Patrick Gray had no alternative, under oath, but to agree that Dean "probably lied." It is a federal violation to make a false statement to the FBI.

- Both Hunt and Gordon Liddy, another White House consultant convicted of Watergate crimes, indiscreetly mentioned several big names to their co-conspirators. Although Hunt and Liddy had direct contact with the White House inner circle, their five-man wiretapping team had no access to the likes of John Mitchell, John Dean, Jeb Magruder and Charles Colson. These bigwigs' link to the illegal activities, therefore, is now strictly heresay.

- Aside from this name-dropping, the conspiratorial Hunt and Liddy whose di-

rect testimony could implicate the higher-ups, always followed the old CIA rule: "When three people know a secret, it is an open record." Investigators describe Hunt as a CIA-trained professional sworn to keep his mouth shut. Liddy is regarded as eccentric, with an obsessed sense of mission. Of the two, Liddy was most inclined to brag and drop names.

- James McCord, the member of the Watergate conspiracy who is now talking, worked with the White House staff as a CIA agent. One source told us McCord's CIA activities brought him into direct contact in the 1950s with Richard Nixon, then the Vice President. McCord has acknowledged that he was hired as President Nixon's security chief for the 1972 campaign through his old White House contacts. Investigators describe McCord as solid, honest, intensely patriotic, with an almost fanatic hatred of Communism.

- McCord has acknowledged that he was promised executive clemency and financial support for his family if he would plead guilty and keep quiet about his involvement in the Watergate crimes. At a hush-hush huddle shortly before Christmas, Hunt made the same offer to the other Watergate defendants. McCord didn't attend this meeting which was held at the Arlington Towers across the Potomac from Washington.