

Liddy's Jail Term Raised for Defiance Of Watergate Jury

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WASHINGTON, April 3—Gordon Liddy, a key participant in the Watergate conspiracy, was found in contempt of court today and sentenced to up to 18 months for refusing to answer a grand jury's questions about the case.

Liddy, who was convicted in January of spying on the Democrats last year, balked at an order to testify that was issued Friday by Chief John J. Sirica of the Federal District Court here.

Among more than 30 questions Liddy declined to answer were several dealing with whether "any other persons" had prior knowledge of the raid on the Watergate offices of the Democratic National Committee last June.

Liddy, former counsel to the Finance Committee to Re-elect the President, was described by the Government during his trial as the "boss" and as the "mastermind" of the Watergate operation. Today's contempt penalty was added to the term of 6 years, 8 months to 20 years he had already received.

Liddy has been described as the source of many of the statements delivered secretly to a Senate committee last week by

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James W. McCord Jr. McCord, who was also convicted at the trial in January, is said to have cited earlier confidences by Liddy in mentioning to the Senators the names of a number of ranking advisers to President Nixon.

There were the following other developments in the Watergate affair today:

¶The seven-member Senate panel, moving to stop further leaks of testimony, canceled a closed session with McCord and announced that until he appeared publicly, only its staff would hear his allegations.

¶Senator Lowell P. Weicker Jr., a Connecticut Republican who is a member of the committee, said H. R. Haldeman, the White House chief of staff, should accept responsibility for the scandal and offer his resig-

nation.

¶McCord, who testified privately in civil litigation related to the Watergate affair, was scheduled to appear Thursday before the grand jury that sought to question Liddy.

Fifth Amendment Invoked

Liddy made several appearances before the 23-member grand jury last week and was granted immunity from further prosecution by Judge Sirica after invoking his Fifth Amendment right to avoid self-incrimination.

Under Federal law, the immunity grant strips a witness of his constitutional protection and compels him to answer questions. But Liddy cited his pending appeal of last January's conviction and remained mute.

Judge Sirica sent Liddy to



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G. Gordon Liddy

the District of Columbia jail until he was willing to testify, providing that the sentence would end with the term of the grand jury or in 18 months, whichever came first.

The usual term for a grand jury here is 18 months, and the panel investigating the Watergate case is scheduled to sit for nine more months. Its life can be extended.

At Least 9 Months

Thus, continued silence by Liddy will mean at least nine extra months in prison, and an extension of the current grand jury or defiance of a new panel could mean a greater penalty.

Judge Sirica stayed execution of Liddy's earlier sentence "to give meaning and coercive impact to the court's contempt powers in the interest of protecting the court's integrity."

The longer sentence will resume after the end of Liddy's contempt term, Judge Sirica ordered.

The judge's requirement that Liddy's contempt sentence be served in the district jail rather than in the more amenable Federal Correctional Institution at Danbury, Conn., was viewed as applying extra pressure. Liddy has lost weight and has

engaged in at least one fist fight during his stay in the overcrowded city institution.

Earlier, he won Judge Sirica's recommendation that he go to Danbury.

The grand jury questions Liddy refused to answer were read at today's contempt proceedings. They included several dealing with "logs" kept by eavesdroppers on conversations heard on the Democratic party telephones.

He refused to say whether he

was familiar with the logs or whether he had received any of them from Alfred C. Baldwin 3d, a Government witness who compiled them and on one occasion, took them to the offices of the President's political organization.

McCord is understood to have informed the Senate's Watergate committee that he had delivered the wiretapping information to Liddy and that he had seen copies of it on Liddy's secretary's desk.

Liddy was also asked during the grand jury proceedings whether anyone not already convicted had "participated in any way" in the bugging,

whether anyone had sought his "advice or help" on it, and whether he knew its purposes.

The Senate committee's decision not to hear secret testimony came a day after the White House press secretary charged that the panel had been plagued by "irresponsible leaks of tidal wave proportions."

The panel, under Senator Sam J. Ervin Jr., Democrat of North Carolina, met for less than half an hour at the Capitol. No specific measures to end the leaks were disclosed, but Mr. Ervin said he had "reminded the committee" of the importance of confidentiality.

He also told reporters after

the session that he thought the leaks had come from McCord and his lawyers.

One of McCord's attorneys, Bernard Fensterwald of Washington, denied this and said he and his client had been "equally concerned" about the disclosures. Some of the disclosures were accurate, and some were "completely inaccurate," he added.

In canceling tomorrow's secret session, Senator Ervin said the panel "does not anticipate" more closed meetings with McCord "or any other individual from whom the committee may seek information."

"It is commonly expected in

investigations of this kind that all individuals will cooperate fully with the investigative staff in preparation for public hearings," the Senator said. The staff, he added, is "relatively small" and presumably less leak-prone.

Mr. Ervin was asked how soon the committee would begin public hearings with McCord and others. His answer was, "soon after about 10 days."

Senator Weicker said at a breakfast meeting with reporters that he had no evidence that Mr. Haldeman had participated in or directly orderly

any specific illegal acts.

But he asserted that the White House official had been aware of "a disruption crew" at the Committee for the Re-election of the President during last year's campaign.

"I think clearly he has to accept responsibility as chief of staff," Mr. Weicker said. Mr. Haldeman oversaw "the personnel and the policies" of the committee, the Senator declared, and it would be "quite proper" for him to offer to resign.

The White House declined comment on Mr. Weicker's suggestion.