

Hunt: We Were Trapped

Says Baldwin Was Acting as Double Agent

By Lawrence Meyer
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Washington Post Staff Writers

E. Howard Hunt Jr. suggested yesterday that he and his fellow convicted Watergate conspirators were "trapped" by a "double agent" in their group who provided police with advance information about the Watergate break-in.

Hunt's statements about Alfred C. Baldwin III, a lookout during the break-in, were quickly rebutted by Sen. Lowell P. Weicker Jr. (R-Conn.), who drew what appeared to be a concessionary smile from Hunt.

But the discussion brought out into the open a theory that the committee's other two Republicans — Sens. Howard H. Baker of Tennessee and Edward J. Gurney of Florida — have been toying with since the hearings began last May.

Baker has consistently questioned witnesses involved in the June, 1972, Watergate break-in and about intricate details of the discovery of the burglary. Privately, according to informed sources, Baker has discussed his suspicion that the arrest of five men inside the Watergate on June 17 was the result of a double agent.

Baldwin, the person named by Hunt as possibly being such a double agent, is a former FBI agent who worked for the Watergate conspirators monitoring telephone conversations in the Democratic National Committee's Watergate headquarters from a motel room across the street. During the Watergate conspiracy trial, he turned up as a key prosecution witness against the other conspirators.

Asked by a reporter what difference it would make to the Watergate investigation if Baldwin were a double agent, Baker replied, "Not a bit. It would just be a fact to know. It wouldn't militate one bit against what happened."

Hunt's testimony yesterday provided few new details about the Watergate break-in and bugging or other clandestine operations in which he participated. During his testimony yesterday, Hunt told the committee:

- He had never been offered executive clemency. In addition, Hunt denied that he had ever ordered or encouraged four of the other Watergate defendants, often referred to as the "men from Miami," to follow his example and plead guilty.

- He called Bernard L. Barker, one of the men from

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HEARING, From A1

Miami, in May, 1972, prior to President Nixon's speech announcing the mining of Haiphong harbor to ask Barker to organize a telegram campaign to support the President's decision.

- He spent about 4½ early morning hours interviewing ITT lobbyist Dita Beard in her hospital room in March, 1972. Hunt told the committee he used interruptions by the attending physician to call special counsel to the President, Charles W. Colson, for instructions.

Yesterday's hearings clearly were overshadowed by events elsewhere. In mid-afternoon, NBC-TV took advantage of breaks in Hunt's lackluster testimony to announce developments in the Justice Department's decision that a federal grand jury in Baltimore would begin hearing evidence against Vice President Agnew on Thursday.

At the end of the day, before committee chairman Sen. Sam J. Ervin Jr. (D-N.C.) had recessed the hearings, television coverage abruptly shifted to the splash-down of Skylab II.

Hunt's testimony about Baldwin, who has denied being a double agent, was invited yesterday by Gurney. Gurney pointed out to Hunt that tapes placed on the doors in the Watergate the night of the break-in by the burglars had been removed by a security guard and then replaced again by convicted conspirator James W. McCord Jr.

"You, yourself, of course," Gurney said to Hunt, "testified that the second break-in did not make a great deal of sense and then after the tapes were discovered to have been removed, you thought it was certainly foolhardy to go ahead. Do you have any theories on

whether there was a double agent here or not?"

"The series of events that night, taken in their totality, Sen. Gurney, have suggested to me for many months that we might have been, as it were, trapped by information having been provided beforehand to local law enforcement authorities by a member of our unit," Hunt replied. "I would have to indicate that the most likely subject would be Mr. Alfred Baldwin."

As supporting evidence, Hunt noted that Baldwin had been hired only shortly before the Watergate incident, that he was hired by McCord through a magazine advertisement, that Baldwin "had rather intimate ties to the Democratic Party in Connecticut," and that Baldwin had failed the night of the arrests to give advance warning when plainclothes police began their search of the Watergate office building.

Hunt said that Baldwin's "intimate ties" to the Democratic Party consisted of Baldwin's being the nephew of a Democratic judge and that Baldwin had once represented himself as being the nephew of Connecticut Democratic Party chairman John Bailey.

Weicker opened his questioning of Hunt by asserting, "The only relative that Mr. Baldwin has who is or has been a judge is former chief justice of the Supreme Court, State Supreme Court, in Connecticut who would be Raymond Baldwin who was also the Republican senator from Connecticut, who was also the Republican governor from Connecticut and who is generally looked upon as Mr. Republican in the state of Connecticut."

"You indicated also relative to Mr. Baldwin, that he had indicated . . . a relationship with John Bailey. Saying that he was his nephew?" Weicker asked.

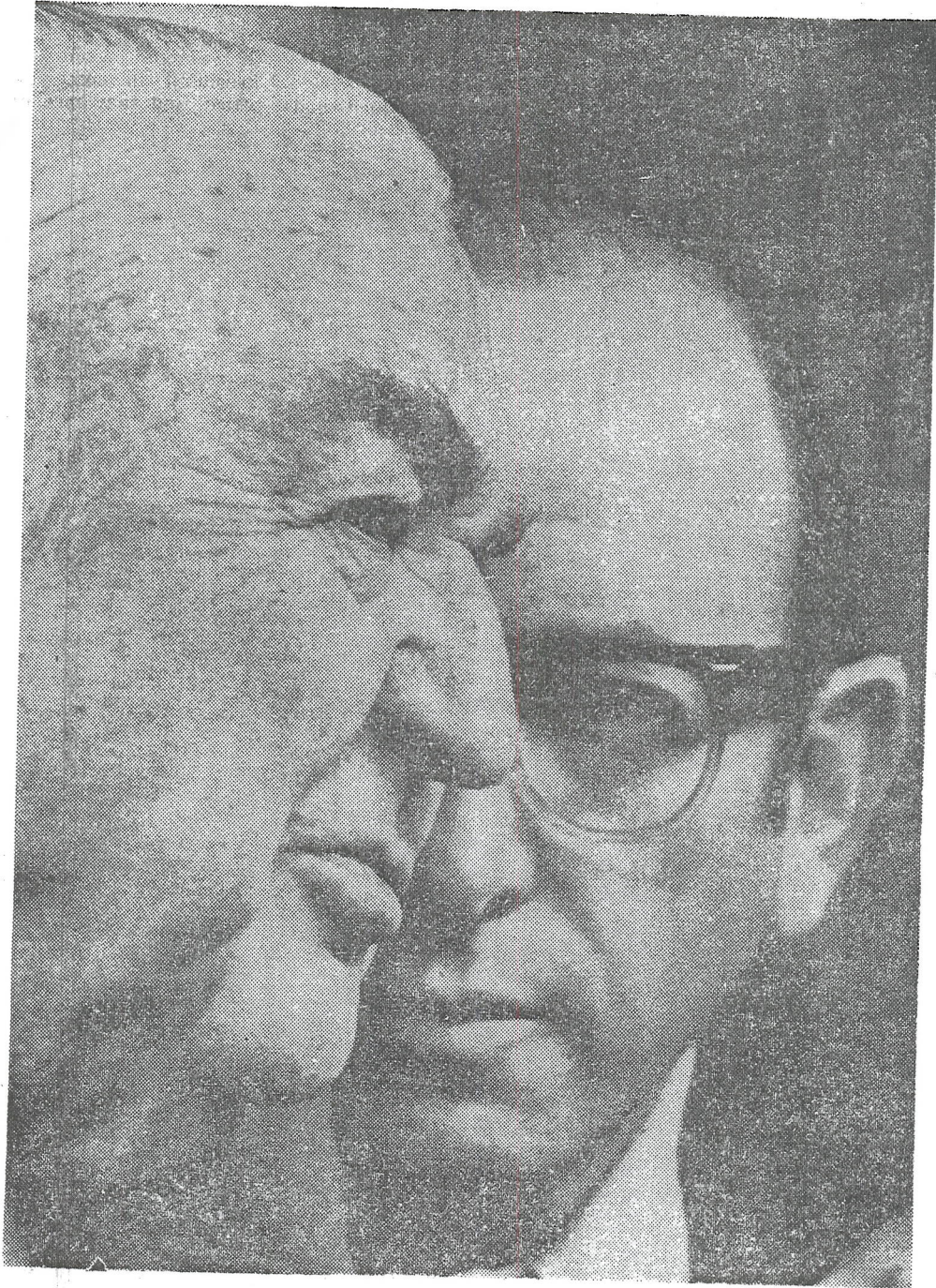
"I know he qualified

that," Hunt replied. "I was given to understand by Mr. McCord that at the time the floor plan of the Democratic National headquarters was being compiled, Mr. Baldwin represented himself to the

receptionist of the Democratic National Committee and said that he was a nephew of John Bailey and given the red carpet treatment."

"So if in fact you were going to case the Democrat

National Committee headquarters, it would certainly be far more appropriate to identify yourself with John Bailey rather than Robert Dole (former chairman of the Republican National Committee) or Clark Mac-



Associated Press

Sen. Sam Ervin, left, confers with counsel Samuel Dash at Watergate session.



Associated Press

Alfred C. Baldwin III denied he told police of the plan to plant bugs in the Democratic headquarters.

Gregor (former director of the Committee for the Re-election of the President), wouldn't it?" Weicker asked.

"Yes, Senator," Hunt replied with a fleeting smile.

Hunt also was asked by Sen. Daniel K. Inouye (D-Hawaii) whether, if Baldwin had notified the police in advance of the break-in, "did you consider that his actions were wrong or illegal in notifying the police of the burglary."

"My assumption, of course, Sen. Inouye, was that the project itself was legal," Hunt replied. "Now, Mr. Baldwin's actions in disclosing the project or setting up an entrapment really is another matter. Certainly, it was a matter of the greatest disloyalty to his employer and to those of us who comprised the entry group. The courts have yet to decide the legality or nonlegality of the operation itself."

During the morning session, Hunt gave the committee a detailed account of his visit in March, 1972, to interview lobbyist Dita Beard in a Denver hospital. He said he was sent on the assignment by Colson, then special counsel to the President, to determine whether a controversial memo attributed to Mrs. Beard was fraudulent.

The memo, reported by syndicated columnist Jack Anderson, alleged there was a direct connection between the Justice Department's settlement of antitrust cases involving the International Telephone and Telegraph Corp. and an ITT offer to

help bring the 1972 Republican national convention to San Diego.

Hunt described yesterday how, wearing a disguise and using an assumed name, he interviewed Mrs. Beard, who was hospitalized at the Rocky Mountain Osteopathic Hospital and being treated for a heart ailment.

The interview took place one night between 11 p.m. and 3 o'clock the next morning, Hunt said, and whenever he was interrupted by an attending physician he would leave Mrs. Beard's room and put in a call to Colson in Washington.

Mrs. Beard was under heavy sedation, he said, and he never got a clear answer when he asked her if the memo was a forgery. (Mrs. Beard eventually did say the memo was "a hoax" and a forgery, some three weeks after Anderson first reported its existence.)

Mrs. Beard's son, Robert D. Beard, told reporters earlier this year that his mother had been visited in the hospital by a "very eerie" man who wouldn't give his name, and who had "a red wig on cockeyed, like he put it on in a dark car."

Richard Helms, former Central Intelligence Agency director, whose agency had furnished Hunt the wig, told the committee good-humoredly earlier this summer that the wig wasn't red but brown, and that the CIA technicians who provided it were indignant at the suggestion they would supply an ill-fitting red wig. Hunt cited Helms' testimony yes-



E. Howard Hunt Jr., right, finds a light moment with his lawyers before resuming testimony in the Watergate hearings.

By James K. W. Altherton—The Washington Post

terday and said with a smile that, in fact, the wig was brown.

Hunt said he was sent on the Beard mission by Wallace Johnson, then a member of the congressional relations staff at the White House, to whom he was referred by Colson.

Inouye noted that Colson, under oath, has testified elsewhere that the idea of interviewing Mrs. Beard was Hunt's. Hunt said it wasn't, and that he didn't know where the idea originated although it was Colson who brought him into the affair by sending him to Johnson.

In other questioning yesterday, Weicker sought to clarify what he saw as a discrepancy between the amount of money Hunt said he and the other Watergate defendants received from Nixon administration and campaign officials and the amount other witnesses have mentioned.

Hunt has testified that he received a total of at least \$217,000 in various installments, \$156,000 of which was given his former attorney, William O. Bittman, in legal fees.

Former New York City politician Anthony Ulasevitz and Nixon campaign aide Frederick C. LaRue testified that they distributed \$266,000 to Hunt's wife and to Bittman. Why, Weicker wanted to know, was there a difference between the amount of money Hunt remembered receiving and that which the other witnesses said they supplied?

Hunt was unable to give a clear answer and Weicker did not press the matter. The Connecticut senator did say that he found the \$156,000 in fees given to Bittman to be "unusual," especially as the four Cuban-Americans who were codefendants with Hunt in the Watergate case had combined legal fees of only \$36,000.

During the day, Hunt said several times—as he did on Monday—that he felt "let down" by the White House's failure to support him and his codefendants, more strongly. The Watergate break-in, he maintained, he still believes to have been a legal act carried out on the instruction of high government officials for legitimate national security purposes.

The committee remained in session later than usual last night to allow Hunt to complete his testimony. The hearings will resume today at 10 a.m. with White House aide Patrick Buchanan as the witness.

Television to Cover Today's Hearings

The Senate Watergate hearings will resume at 10 a.m. today with testimony by Patrick J. Buchanan, a White House aide.

Channel 9 (CBS-WTOP) will televise the hearings live, beginning at 10 a.m. Channel 26 (WETA) will rebroadcast the sessions, starting at 8 p.m.

The networks have announced no plans for coverage beyond today.



By James K. W. Atherton—The Washington Post

E. Howard Hunt Jr. chats with son St. John and daughter Lisa during a break.