

HUNT SAYS DEAN MISREAD REQUEST

Terms \$120,000 Bid After Watergate Routine, Not a Blackmail Attempt

By ANDREW H. MALCOLM
Special to The New York Times

MILWAUKEE, May 10— E. Howard Hunt Jr., the convicted Watergate conspirator, said today that John W. Dean 3d's youth, inexperience and unfamiliarity with clandestine activities had caused him to incorrectly characterize Mr. Hunt's request for \$120,000 as blackmail money to prevent disclosures of "seamy activities."

In his first extensive statement outside a court or hearing room on the Watergate break-in, Mr. Hunt said such subsequent financial support for agents involved in clandestine activities was standard operating procedure in all his espionage experience.

"As far as I was concerned," said Mr. Hunt, "it [his request for money] was perfectly routine."

Mr. Hunt made this and other observations during and after videotaping here of "Firing Line," the television interview program of William F. Buckley Jr., the columnist, who is a close family friend. The program is scheduled to be broadcast Sunday night.

Fear of Being Scapegoat

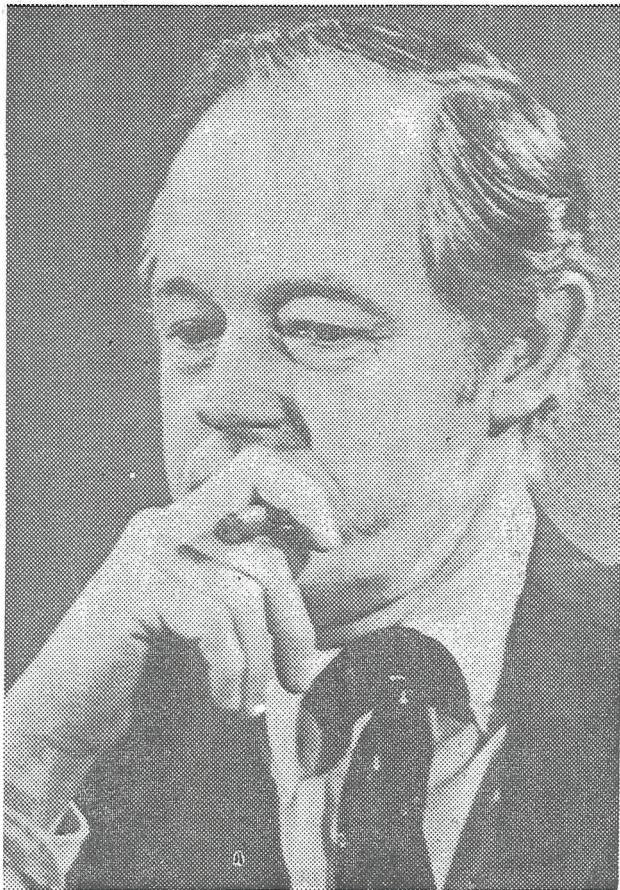
During the hour-long interview, recorded before a small group of students in an office building on the campus of the University of Wisconsin at Milwaukee, Mr. Hunt discussed his concern over being made a scapegoat for the Administration, his opposition to the second Watergate break-in, his disillusionment with President Nixon and the conspirators' belief that "high Justice Department officials" would free them from jail within hours of their capture in June, 1972.

Mr. Hunt received a 2½-to-8-year sentence for his role in the break-in. He has been free since last December, pending an appeal of the case.

In the interview, Mr. Hunt said that, given the same circumstances, he would again break into the Democratic National Committee offices.

"We had been told," he said, "that this office in the Watergate building was the Democratic National Committee and they had received clandestine funds from a foreign power. It didn't matter to us whether that office was the Democratic National Committee or the Salvation Army."

Looking pale but dapper in a



Henry A. Koshollek/The Milwaukee Journal

E. Howard Hunt Jr. taping interview yesterday at the University of Wisconsin in Milwaukee.

gray suit, the 55-year-old Mr. Hunt puffed on a cigar and answered questions from Mr. Buckley and a three-member local panel. He seemed confident and later said this was the first of many public appearances he planned to explain his side to the nation.

Queried on Impeachment

Only once did he seem flustered. On camera, Nina Bernstein, a reporter for The Milwaukee Journal, asked if he thought President Nixon should be impeached.

There was a long silence interrupted by Mr. Buckley, who said his guest was not invited to answer that question. Mr. Hunt then said, "I've been subjected to the course of American justice, and I expect others to be, too."

After sketching the detailed care with which intelligence services assure the financial security of an agent's family should he be captured, Mr. Hunt, a former employe of the Central Intelligence Agency, said he had submitted his "statement" requesting funds ("I wouldn't call it a demand") to Paul O'Brien, a lawyer for the Committee to Re-Elect the President.

Mr. Hunt said he had requested \$120,000, which he said equaled two years salary, for his family's security plus payment of overdue defense attorney fees demanded by his lawyer. He continued:

"I did not threaten to dis-

close any seamy activities. I said 'Look, you people are in arrears [to me], I'm going to jail in a few days, and if you didn't know it, I also took part in some seamy activities for the White House on the West Coast.'" This alluded to the break-in at the office of Dr. Daniel Ellsberg's former psychiatrist.

Mr. Hunt said Mr. O'Brien had evidently recounted the conversation to Mr. Dean, former White House counsel. Mr. Hunt added:

"John Dean by virtue of his youth, inexperience and never having taken the middle-level government course in crisis management, he construed it according to his likes, and like Chicken Little he went running to the President."

"It was a total misperception on his part," Mr. Hunt said at another point in the interview, "due to his youth and total unfamiliarity with clandestine activities."

Mr. Hunt said he had viewed the money request in the traditional sense. "Obviously, others did not," he said.

"Did you consider revealing the acts if the money was not forthcoming?" asked Mr. Buckley.

"No," replied Mr. Hunt.

Mr. Hunt said the White House strategy with its emphasis on "hunt the blackmailer" now seemed to be aimed at making him a scapegoat for the Administration. This and

the side of President Nixon revealed in the recently released White House transcripts, Mr. Hunt said, made him very surprised, discouraged and disillusioned with Mr. Nixon.

"I was an ardent supporter of the President," Mr. Hunt said. Asked later if he still was, Mr. Hunt replied, "I'm an ardent conservative."