

Liddy Guilty of Contempt of Congress

By ANTHONY RIPLEY
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WASHINGTON, May 10—One of the original Watergate burglary defendants, G. Gordon Liddy, was found guilty today of contempt of Congress for refusing to answer questions last July 20 before a House subcommittee.

Federal District Court Judge John H. Pratt, who heard the case without a jury, gave Mr. Liddy a suspended six-month sentence.

Mr. Liddy, looking trim and fit but slightly pale from his confinement, is now serving two other sentences. He was jailed for up to 18 months for contempt in refusing to answer grand jury questions and given a term of 6 years 8 months to 20 years for his part in the burglary of the Democratic National Committee headquarters at the Watergate office building here.

His latest conviction grew from his appearance as a witness before an executive session of the Special Subcommittee on Intelligence of the House Armed Services Committee.

Refused To Be Sworn

The subcommittee was investigating possible connections between the Central Intelligence agency and the Watergate burglary and also the burglary of the office of Dr. Daniel Ellsberg's former psychiatrist. Dr. Ellsberg was a figure in the Pentagon papers case. Mr. Liddy refused to raise his hand and be sworn in or to answer any questions.

Neither Mr. Liddy's lawyer, Peter J. Maroulis, nor Philip A. Lacovara, counsel for the Watergate special prosecutor, raised any questions about the basic facts. Thus, there was no need for a jury in this trial.



Associated Press

G. Gordon Liddy

Instead, Mr. Maroulis argued legal questions of whether the subcommittee had been properly assembled and whether it used the correct legal documents in summoning Mr. Liddy from his jail cell to the House.

Mr. Maroulis also cited a which dealt with President Lincoln's employment of spies in the Civil War. One of those spies sued for back pay and was turned down.

The Court ruled that "as a general principle" public policy forbids trials that would lead to disclosure of confidential matters.

"The service stipulated by the contract was a secret service; the information sought was to be obtained clandestinely and was to be communicated

must have understood that the lips of the others were to be forever sealed respecting the ter."

Mr. Maroulis said that Mr. Liddy's lips were sealed in court and sealed before Con-

Guilty on Two Counts

Mr. Lacovara argued that Mr. Liddy could not classify himself as a spy, and that the burglary of Dr. Ellsberg's former psychiatrist could not be called a legitimate intelligence operation.

But even if it were legitimate, he said, it would be no defense for refusing to testify before a committee meeting to consider intelligence operations and meeting in secret.

Judge Pratt rejected the defense arguments and found Mr. Liddy guilty on two counts of willfully refusing to be sworn in and refusing to testify.

Mr. Liddy told the court that he might appeal the decision, and that he had been offered an opportunity to purge himself by going before the committee, taking the oath and then citing Fifth Amendment rights in refusing to answer any questions.

"This was proposed to me, and I rejected it," he told the court. "I said, 'Let's go to trial.'"

In a related Watergate action, Dwight L. Chapin, former appointments secretary to President Nixon, filed court papers today seeking probation. He was convicted last month on two perjury counts.

His lawyer, Jacob A. Stein, argued that Mr. Chapin's family would be hurt by a prison sentence and that Mr. Chapin "does not require rehabilitation through confinement."