

Watergate's Gordon Liddy Gets a Parole

Washington

His code of silence unbroken and his motives for the Watergate burglary still a mystery, G. Gordon Liddy won parole from prison yesterday. The U.S. Parole Commission set his release for September 7.

By then, the onetime lawyer for Richard M. Nixon's re-election committee will have served 52 months in prison, more than two years longer than any of the other 24 men sentenced for Watergate and related crimes.

Liddy, whose planning and direction of the Watergate burglary set in motion the events that forced Nixon's resignation, must still pay his \$40,000 fine or have it "otherwise disposed of according to law before release."

His lawyer, Peter Maroulis, said yesterday "that means to me if he has the funds he must pay them or he must file an affidavit of indigency, indicating he doesn't have the funds."

And, Maroulis added: "He doesn't."

Liddy devised the Republican intelligence plan that included the bugging and rifling of files of Democratic party headquarters in the Watergate Office Building. He and another former White House aide, E. Howard Hunt, recruited the five burglars who were arrested inside Watergate on June 17, 1972, during their second entry.



Frances Liddy and two of her five children, Tom and Roy, got the good news in Oxon Hill, Md.

AP Wirephoto

Subsequent White House efforts to hide administration links to the burglary, including the alleged approval of the plan by former Attorney General John N. Mitchell, were behind the coverup that toppled Nixon and sent his top aides to prison.

With Liddy's release, only

Mitchell and former Nixon lieutenants H. R. Haldeman and John D. Ehrlichman still will be serving Watergate sentences.

Ironically, it was through the intervention of a Democratic president, Jimmy Carter, that Liddy's parole eligibility was advanced from May, 1981. Last April, Carter commuted Liddy's 20-year sentence

to eight years, making him eligible for parole any time after July 9.

"He's happy to have a definite date," Maroulis said after talking with Liddy, who is at the Allenwood, Pa., federal prison camp. "He's disappointed he won't be with his children this summer. By the time he gets out, they will be back in school."

Liddy's wife, Frances, said: "I was a little disappointed that it was as long as September, but that's better than October."

With the exception of 99 days' freedom, while one of his many appeals went through the courts, Liddy has been in prison since the jury convicted him on Jan. 30, 1973.

His unwavering refusal to talk about Watergate, even with a grant of immunity from prosecution, caused U.S. District Judge John J. Sirica to tack an 18-month concurrent sentence onto Liddy's original sentence of six years and eight months to 20 years.

Liddy also refused to give his name at a congressional hearing and got a suspended sentence for that. In addition, he was convicted of burglarizing the office of Daniel Ellsberg's psychiatrist, but the resulting one-to-three year term was made concurrent with the main sentence.

When Liddy applied for a reduction of sentence, Sirica turned him down, saying "he has not shown the court the slightest remorse or regret for his actions and has not given the court even a hint of contrition or sorrow."

In his commutation order last April 12, Carter said, "the ends of justice do not require that the aforesaid sentence be served in its entirety."

The President acted after his

counsel, Robert Lipschutz, granted Mrs. Liddy an interview. Liddy's petition for commutation had been filed in the waning days of Gerald Ford's presidency.

During an early state of the Watergate crisis, Liddy made a pledge of silence to Nixon's counsel, John Dean. Later, after Dean became the first to talk, Liddy commented, "I think in all fairness to the man you'd have to put him right up there with Judas Iscariot."