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UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

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IN RE: POSSIBLE VIOLATIONS :  
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OF 18 USC 2511 and 2512 :  
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Grand Jury Room No. 3  
United States District Courthouse  
3rd & Constitution Avenue, N. W.  
Washington, D. C.

Tuesday, January 29, 1974

The testimony of E. HOWARD HUNT was presented to  
a full quorum of the Grand Jury.

BEFORE:

RICHARD BEN-VENISTE, ESQ.  
Assistant Special Prosecutor  
U. S. Department of Justice

GEORGE T. FRAMPTON, JR., ESQ.  
Assistant Special Prosecutor  
U. S. Department of Justice

JILL VOLNER  
Assistant Special Prosecutor  
U. S. Department of Justice

GERALD GOLDMAN, ESQ.  
Assistant Special Prosecutor  
U. S. Department of Justice

LAWRENCE IASON, ESQ.  
Assistant Special Prosecutor  
U. S. Department of Justice

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C O N T E N T S

<u>WITNESS</u>	<u>PAGE</u>
E. HOWARD HUNT	3

E X H I B I T S

	<u>Marked for Ident.</u>
Grand Jury Exhibit No. EHH-1	3

21 BY MRS. VOLNER:

22 Q Now, the reason that you requested the meeting with  
23 Mr. O'Brien was to relay to him, number one, a demand for a  
24 sum of money in excess of \$100,000 and, secondly, to tell  
25 him that otherwise you were going to reveal the seamy things  
5

1 that you had done for Mr. Ehrlichman, is that not correct?

2 A Well, I've gone over this a good many times. I  
3 know repetition is the name of the game. I thought that,  
4 with imprisonment approaching, it was highly essential that  
5 if any of these commitments were going to be kept, that they  
6 be kept then and there.

7 And I mentioned to Mr. O'Brien, en passant, that  
8 other things had been done at the White House in the past  
9 and my feeling was that if anybody was going to be the reci-  
10 pient of White House largesse, if you will, it should be  
11 those who put their necks on the line for those people before.  
12 But I don't think that any quid pro quo is explicitly in there.  
13 I don't know what Mr. O'Brien's perception of the meeting was.

14 Q You've already told Mr. Colson, in November, that  
15 you were protecting the people who were involved in the Water-  
16 gate break-in, and now you're telling Mr. O'Brien that there  
17 are people involved in other seamy things besides the Water-  
18 gate break-in, and you're asking for money and you're saying,  
19 "I'll have to review my alternatives if I don't get that  
20 money." And that can't mean anything except that you're  
21 going to reveal that unless they meet your demands for money.

22 A Well, it's a manner of speaking, too. I review  
23 my alternatives, I review my options. What were my options?  
24 They were very damned slim.

25 BY MR. BEN-VENISTE:

1 Q That's precisely the point, is it not, Mr. Hunt?  
2 Your option was either to continue to keep quiet or to talk.  
3 And what you're saying is, wasn't it, that in the event that  
4 they weren't prepared to meet your demands, you'd had enough  
5 and you were about ready to talk?

6 A I knew all along that I was going to have to talk  
7 and, in fact, I began to talk within a very few days there-  
8 after. Everyone knew that.

9 Q That's not the point, Mr. Hunt. That's not the  
10 question. If everybody knew that, what was the point in  
11 mentioning that? Then you have no option.

12 That's totally inconsistent with the concept of  
13 option, if you were to suggest, now, that you had no option.

14 A Well, that's a great White House phrase -- options  
15 this, options that. It's a parlance I picked up. I was being  
16 as vague --

17 Q It meant, did it not, that you were going to see  
18 whether or not you were going to talk? Does it have any  
19 other interpretation than that?

20 A I don't know how it was interpreted.

21 Q Well, does it have any other interpretation?

22 A Well, the interpretation, again, I placed on it  
23 was that I had been involved in "seamy things" for the White  
24 House of which Mr. O'Brien might not be aware, and my impli-  
25 cation was that I, having done this kind of work for them

1 before, felt that they had, in effect, a double obligation  
2 to me.

3 Q That's the first half of it. But the second half  
4 of it is you will review your options if your demands aren't  
5 met. And what does that mean?

6 A Well, it sort of means what a parent says to a  
7 child. "If you don't bring home the car at 11:00 o'clock to-  
8 night, I'll have to give further consideration to our re-  
9 lationship."

10 I mean, in other words, what does that mean really?  
11 It's just a form of speech, I think.

12 Q You were speaking to Mr. Shapiro as a parent does  
13 a child?

14 A I would like to have. I didn't, though.

15 Q And, indeed, you were speaking to Mr. Shapiro in  
16 a manner that gravely indicates concern. You were in dead  
17 earnest.

18 A Are we talking of Mr. O'Brien or Mr. Shapiro now?

19 Q I'm sorry. Mr. O'Brien, yes. And you're saying  
20 that you would have to review your options. You were saying,  
21 as a father might say to a child, "You can't have the car  
22 anymore. I'm going to do what you don't like me to do. I'm  
23 going to punish you." Isn't that so?

24 A It's very hard for me to reconstruct my frame of  
25 mind then.

1 Q In fact, the only thing you could punish with them  
2 was to tell the story -- to tell about the seamy things.

3 A Well, these people were well on top of the case,  
4 then. They knew it was just a matter of ten days or two  
5 weeks before this was going to come before the Grand Jury.

6 Q The point is, Mr. Hunt, we're dealing with a con-  
7 versation, at this time, and we're asking you, under oath  
8 before this Grand Jury, if you can provide any other explana-  
9 tion other than what the plain words mean that you would  
10 review your options.

11 A Well, I know that at one point I was contemplating  
12 suicide.

13 Q Mr. Hunt, that is not in your mind at the time.  
14 You were not threatening or stating to Mr. O'Brien, at this  
15 time, were you, that if these monies were not paid that you  
16 would commit suicide?

17 A No.

18 Q You don't mean to seriously suggest that?

19 A No, I don't. But you're asking me now to project  
20 for you what was in my mind. This is one of the things that  
21 was in my mind.

22 Q That had been in your mind earlier but, at this  
23 time, you were saying to Mr. O'Brien, "Look, in addition to  
24 what I know about Watergate and the chain of command, I've  
25 done a lot of things for Mr. Ehrlichman.

1           To this extent, this is new information that you're  
2 conveying to Mr. O'Brien that, to your knowledge, he didn't  
3 know about before, and you were saying this in the context  
4 of making demands for an extraordinary amount of money but,  
5 in the face of your going away to jail and losing whatever  
6 bargaining position you had at that time, you clearly under-  
7 stood that that was the situation. That unless you got these  
8 commitments acted on, at that time, that your chances were  
9 substantially diminishing in being able to argue your own  
10 case from jail later on. Isn't that right?

11           A     What do you mean? Arguing my case in jail?

12           Q     In respect to getting your commitments. In respect  
13 to getting your money.

14           A     Oh.

15           Q     That was clearly foremost in your mind?

16           A     Right.

17           Q     And in the same connection, you're telling him, now,  
18 that you will review your options in the event that he's not  
19 responsive to your immediate demands.

20           A     He told me that he was impotent; that he was becom-  
21 ing very ineffective; that he was really not the one that I  
22 should be talking to, and so forth.

23           Q     Well, of course, you told him to pass on this de-  
24 mand to Mr. Dean and tell Mr. Dean what it was.

25           A     I don't think I knew that Mr. Dean was his principal,

1 at that time. I said "to whomever." I don't believe Mr.  
2 O'Brien identified Mr. Dean. I could be wrong about that.

3 Q So it's quite possible that if Mr. O'Brien recol-  
4 lects that you said, "Pass it on to Mr. Dean," that Mr.  
5 O'Brien could be accurate in his recollection?

6 A I beg your pardon, sir?

7 Q That if Mr. O'Brien recollects you said, "Pass it  
8 on to Dean," that you wouldn't quarrel with that particularly.

9 A I wouldn't quarrel particularly with it. I would  
10 say that, at that juncture, I had no knowledge that John  
11 Dean was active in this thing, as he turned out to be.

12 I presumed, all along, that O'Brien's principal was  
13 John Mitchell.

14 Q And you were expecting it to be passed on to John  
15 Mitchell rather than Mr. Dean?

16 A To the best of my current recollection, yes.

17 Q But Mr. Ehrlichman was at the White House, where Mr.  
18 Dean was, and Mr. Mitchell was up in New York on Wall Street,  
19 at the time.

20 A I didn't know where Mr. Mitchell was.

21 Q Well, you knew where he wasn't.

22 A Did I?

23 Q Didn't you know he was no longer Attorney Genera?

24 A I didn't know that he wasn't living down at the  
25 Watergate.

1 Q Well, you knew he wasn't in the White House?

2 A That's correct.

3 Q Now, going back to the initial question, Mr. Hunt,  
4 is there any other interpretation one could place other than  
5 the plain meaning when you said you would review your options  
6 other than the fact that unless they met your demands you  
7 would tell about the seamy things?

8 A I would like to consult with counsel on that point.

9 THE FOREMAN: Go ahead.

10 THE WITNESS: With your permission.

11 (Whereupon, the witness left the Grand  
12 Jury Room.)

13 (Whereupon, the witness returned to  
14 the Grand Jury Room.)

15 BY MRS. B. VOLNERI:

16 Q Mr. Hunt, have you had time talk to your attorney?

17 A I have.

18 Q Are you now prepared to answer the question?

19 A I am.

20 Q Would you answer the question, then?

21 A Could I trouble you to restate the question?

22 BY MR. BEN-VENISTE:

23 Q The question was one which has been restated several  
24 times, but, again, is there any other interpretation other  
25 than the clear meaning of the words that you would review  
your options for alternatives other than that you would tell

1 about these so-called seamy things unless they met your  
2 demands?

3 A No.

4 MR. BEN-VENISTE: Thank you.

5 BY MRS. VOLNER:

6 Q And what seamy things did you have in mind at the  
7 time, Mr. Hunt?

8 A I was thinking about the Fielding episode -- things  
9 like that -- that were not integral with the Watergate itself.

10 Q And what other things besides the Fielding break-in?

11 A Oh, I think most of the items that have come out  
12 subsequently.

13 Q Can you tell the Grand Jury, please?

14 A Well, we're casting back, now, to just about a year  
15 ago. At that time, the Ellsberg thing was uppermost in my  
16 mind and I think, if I had actually gone ahead and done any-  
17 thing, I would have made a list of those dirty tricks and  
18 things as these things have come up.

19 Q There were numerous items that would have been on  
20 your list?

21 A That's correct, yes.

22 Q And I'm asking you what those things were.

23 A Oh, my. The Segretti involvement, I suppose. The  
24 Vietnam cables. Principally, the whole Fielding-Ellsberg  
25 thing.