

Former CIA Official Pleads Not Guilty to Perjury Charges

Clarridge Denies Knowing of Iran-Contra Arms Cargo

12/7/94

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Former CIA official Duane R. "Dewey" Clarridge, wearing a camouflage jacket to federal court, pleaded not guilty yesterday to seven felony counts of perjury and false statements about a secret 1985 arms shipment to Iran.

Clarridge submitted his plea before U.S. District Chief Judge Aubrey E. Robinson Jr. and asked for a jury trial at a six-minute session. He declined to comment on his case, but explained his choice of outerwear saying: "When you're at battle stations, you might as well be prepared for battle stations." He added the jacket had been given to him by members of Britain's elite anti-terrorist unit, the Special Air Service.

Clarridge, 59, is the second former high-ranking CIA official indicted this year in the final phase of independent counsel Lawrence E. Walsh's investigation of the Iran-contra scandal.

A career officer in the CIA's clandestine service, he was accused of lying repeatedly to congressional investigating committees and a special presidential review board by denying he had known beforehand of a controversial Nov. 25, 1985, shipment of U.S. Hawk missiles to Iran.

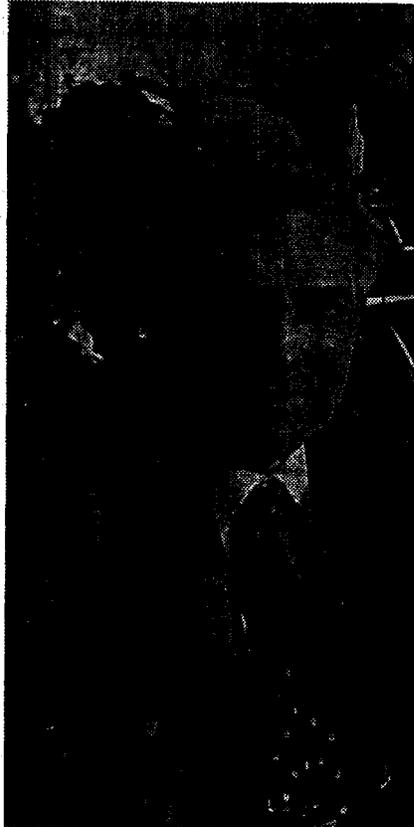
Clarridge, who was chief of the CIA's European division at the time, had been asked by then-White House aide Oliver L. North to help arrange the delivery. Clarridge told investigators that North had told him the shipment was of "sophisticated oil drilling equipment," but the indictment charges that North explicitly told the CIA official six days before the delivery was made that it contained Hawks.

The U.S. weapons were delivered from Israeli stocks as part of administration efforts to free U.S. hostages held in Lebanon by pro-Iranian extremists. The shipment was an especially sensitive one because it was illegally carried out without a requisite presidential "finding."

Clarridge, who now works for General Dynamics in San Diego, was released on his own recognizance. The judge told him to keep in close touch with his lawyer, William McDaniel of Baltimore, so he can "guide you through this maze you've been thrown into."

The case is expected to be a protracted one because of the government documents that may have to be declassified for trial use.

In an announcement that indicated the Iran-contra investigation is nearing an end, Walsh said yesterday that he has appointed Craig A. Gillen, 39, as deputy independent



BY RICH LIPSHU—THE WASHINGTON POST

Clarridge, in camouflage, leaves federal court.

counsel to direct the rest of the inquiry and remaining trial work. Walsh said he will spend most of his time in his home town of Oklahoma City, writing a final report on the scandal, and will travel to Washington for occasional staff briefings and consultations. He has been commuting to Washington on an almost-weekly basis for the past five years.