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Role in Murder Of JFK Denied By Hunt Again

By Merwin Sigale

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MIAMI—E. Howard Hunt, the convicted Watergate conspirator and former CIA operative, denied again yesterday that he was in Dallas on the day of President Kennedy's assassination in 1963 or that he was involved in any way with Kennedy's murder.

Hunt called a news conference in Miami, where he now lives, to disclose that he had made those denials in closed-door testimony Friday to a subcommittee of the House Select Committee on Assassinations in Washington. He said the panel quizzed him for about five hours, asking hundreds of questions.

In a prepared statement to the committee, which he released here, Hunt deplored reports that appeared in two newspapers last August regarding a purported CIA memo placing him in Dallas Nov. 22, 1963, the day Kennedy was shot. One, in the Sunday News Journal of Wilmington, Del., said the memo, supposedly initiated in 1966 by then-CIA director Richard Helms, was in the committee's possession.

"I demand that the committee con-

firm or deny receipt of such a memorandum, and if the memorandum indeed exists that it be furnished me so that I may refute the contents in their entirety," Hunt said in his statement to the subcommittee.

"Because I was not in Dallas on the day President Kennedy was killed, I know that the purported memorandum is spurious. The veil of mystery surrounding it, however, is exceedingly damaging to me."

Hunt's attorney, Ellis Rubin, in whose office the news conference was held, said he had tried to track down the document and was convinced "there is no such memorandum . . . it is a fabrication." Rubin said the panel did not respond to Hunt's demand, but Rubin added, "I was assured by three staff members that they would respond."

Hunt described his treatment by the subcommittee as "very fair, very unbiased." He said he received a committee subpoena last January but his appearance was repeatedly put off, so he tried a number of times to schedule a hearing so he could "minimize" the damage he said had been done to himself and his family. "It's a crushing burden to live under," he told reporters.

The public seems ready to "forgive and forget Watergate," Hunt said, "yet the American public is never going to forget that my name has been linked repeatedly with the assassination of John Fitzgerald Kennedy, which of course is the most heinous crime of this American century. I consider it grossly unfair. It's an additional penalty for my Watergate notoriety, as far as I can tell."