

Cox Wants Hunt to Name His Advisers

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Special Watergate prosecutor Archibald Cox yesterday asked U.S. District Chief Judge John J. Sirica to order five Watergate conspirators to specify who coerced them into pleading guilty or who led them to believe the Watergate break-in was legal.

Coconspirator E. Howard Hunt and four Miamians who were arrested inside the Democratic headquarters last June made those claims, among others, in separate motions filed in U.S. District Court within the last week, requesting that they be allowed to change their guilty pleas to innocent. Hunt asked as well that charges against him be dismissed.

"The court should require these defendants to submit detailed factual statements under oath in support of their motions," Cox said in papers filed yesterday.

Hunt had asked for a hearing on his attempt to change his guilty plea, claiming that his acts were lawful and that even if they weren't, he believed they were lawful.

He also contended that "high government officials" assured him of the legality of the Watergate break-in.

"His motion, however, does not specify the name of any of the government officials who directed him or gave him the assurance on which his claims are founded," Cox said.

The four Miamians—Bernard Barker, Eugenio Martinez, Virgilio Gonzalez and Frank Sturgis—asked that they be allowed to change their pleas because they were led to believe they had been directed to plead guilty to protect national security interests.

"The joint motion does not specify who directed them to plead guilty; the identities of ... 'high government officials' ... who fostered on them assumptions which led to the pleas; the identities ... who practiced deceptions upon them; and what it was that others ... said to them which induced their pleas.

"The motion contains no specific facts or allegations by the individual defendants, but merely sets forth the conclusions of the attorneys for those defendants."

Cox asked that the government be allowed to wait before filing its formal oppositions to the motions by the five men until after their claims are supported by detailed affidavits given under oath.

He quoted past legal cases to show that Sirica could order such affidavits filed, although they are not normally required for such motions.