

Friends of 4 Watergate Convicts Appealing for Defense Funds

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MIAMI, Oct. 7—Friends of the four jailed Watergate conspirators from Miami have publicly appealed for funds to continue their legal defense.

At a dinner meeting here, executives of the Miami Watergate Defense Relief Fund, organized last February as a Florida "charitable organization," said that the four defendants owed more than \$40,000 to their lawyers.

The four—Bernard L. Barker, Virgilio R. González, Eugenio R. Martínez and Frank A. Sturgis — are all Cuban-Americans.

However, prominent or wealthy Cubans were noticeably absent from the meeting, and Manuel F. Artime, one of the fund's executives, complained that few Cubans here had contributed toward the defense of their jailed compatriots.

Mr. Artime said that he hoped that this "apathy" would change soon. He added that a Spanish-language magazine and a television station had started a drive asking Cubans in Miami and elsewhere to donate \$1 each and that a \$50-a-plate fund-raising banquet would be held here later this month.

Bank Balance of \$9

Carlos Perdomo, one of the relief fund's directors, said that the fund's bank balance was \$9 as of Tuesday.

The 43-year-old Miami carpet layer said that after paying the \$30,000 legal debt, much more money would be needed to continue legal efforts aimed at releasing the four men from jail.

The four men were sentenced last March by Federal Judge John J. Sirica to provisional 40-year jail terms after they had pleaded guilty to the Watergate break-in and to conspiracy charges. Recently, however, Judge Sirica said that he would not give the defendants the maximum sentence.

Earlier, the four had filed a

petition with Judge Sirica for a retrial. The petition is pending.

Their lawyer, Daniel Schultz of Washington, argued that his clients had been deceived into believing that by pleading guilty they were protecting "national security interests" and that they now realized that they were victims of a "cruel fraud."

"As far as money is concerned," said one of the fund's executives, "my friends are essentially in the same predicament as Vice President Agnew, who is also collecting funds for his legal defense, except that they're in jail and have no wealthy supporters."

Show to Raise Funds

Mr. Artime said that next month the fund would present a fund-raising artistic show at the Miami Beach Auditorium, featuring Cuban and American performers.

Speaking after the dinner, Mr. Schultz described his clients as men who had followed orders believing they were working for the Central Intelligence Agency.

"Their names had been submitted for clearance to and approved by Washington," he said. "They knew from past experience that if in trouble C.I.A. agents have their expenses and their families taken care of. But this has not happened here. These men have been used, have been abandoned and have been discarded."

According to published reports, initially about \$22,000 in "support" funds was provided to the four Miamians, mainly from E. Howard Hunt Jr., who is also in Federal prison for his role in the Watergate break-in.

Mr. Schultz said that the "principal organizers" of the Watergate affair were not in jail and that it was not fair that "we should punish just the soldiers and not the generals."