

# Hunt Admits All 6 Charges As Judge Bars Partial Plea

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Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, Jan. 11—E. Howard Hunt Jr., a former White House consultant, pleaded guilty today to all six charges against him in connection with the break-in and alleged bugging of the Democratic national headquarters.

He took the step after Chief Judge John J. Sirica, of the United States District Court here, refused to accept his offer of yesterday to plead guilty only to three charges.

Hunt, one of seven defendants in the Watergate case, was later freed on \$100,000 surety bond to await sentencing.

Hunt originally offered to plead guilty to conspiracy, one count of burglary and one count of eavesdropping. The three other charges, to which he also subsequently pleaded guilty, also involved counts of burglary and eavesdropping.

When Hunt, also a former agent of the Central Intelligence Agency, emerged from the United States Courthouse here, he was asked whether there had been a wider conspiracy involving Government "higher-ups."

"To my personal knowledge there was none," he replied. Hunt repeated the statement but did not make clear whether he knew positively that no others had been involved or whether he meant only that he knew of no others besides his co-defendants.

The 54-year-old Hunt told reporters that the Government's detailed outline of its case against him and the six others had been "substantially correct."

"Anything I may have done I believed to be in the best interests of my country," Hunt said. He added that he had understood during and after his activities the possible consequences of them.

After the guilty plea, the Federal jury heard the first testimony against six remaining defendants facing charges on conspiracy, burglary, and eaves-

dropping.

The day's major witness was Thomas James Gregory, a 25-year-old student at Brigham Young University in Provo, Utah, who said that Hunt recruited him early last year to



E. Howard Hunt Jr., left, free on bond after pleading guilty in the Watergate case, leaving court in Washington with William O. Bittman, one of his lawyers, yesterday.

Associated Press

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spy on two Democratic Presidential candidates.

Mr. Gregory said that he had received \$175 a week for passing to Hunt information from within the campaign headquarters of Senator Edmund S. Muskie of Maine and Senator

Continued on Page 24, Column 6

Continued From Page 1, Col. 2

George McGovern of South Dakota, the eventual nominee.

The history student testified that Hunt had stressed the importance of learning travel schedules and that one indicated "there was a friend or friends in town to whom the information would be of great value."

#### Jury Outside Courtroom

The resolution of Hunt's efforts to plead guilty came up first this morning before Judge Sirica. The jury remained outside the courtroom during that proceeding.

Yesterday, William D. Bittman, one of Hunt's lawyers, proposed to the judge, with the prosecution's concurrence, that Hunt plead guilty to conspiracy, one count of burglary, and one count of eavesdropping, and that three other counts in the indictment against him would then be withdrawn. The government said that this would make no material difference in sentencing.

Earl J. Silbert, the principal Assistant United States Attorney, explaining that the remaining counts would be unlikely to draw consecutive sentences, said that the arrangement would reduce the maximum possible prison term to 35 years from 45.

Judge Sirica rejected the proposal, saying that he had considered "several matters." Some of these, he said, "relate to the apparent strength of the Government's case" against Hunt.

He also held that the public had an interest in "not only the substance of justice but also in the appearance of justice." Judge Sirica said that he would not accept a plea except to all six counts of the indictment.

Mr. Bittman then said that Hunt would plead guilty to the entire indictment. Legal observers said that Judge Sirica was required under the rules of criminal procedure to accept a competent plea to all the charges.

The judge called Hunt and Mr. Bittman to the bench to explain that he was waiving various rights and to outline the indictment. He asked Hunt whether he had committed each crime.

"I did your honor," Hunt replied. He spoke softly, his hands clasped before him. He had been pale and tense in court, and Mr. Bittman said Hunt has lost 14 pounds since his wife was killed in a plane crash last month.

Judge Sirica put bond at \$100,000 and announced that he would hold Hunt in custody until he could raise it. Mr. Bittman appealed for a lower amount, arguing that Hunt was "not a man of means."

#### Hunt Escorted From Court

In addition, Mr. Bittman said, Hunt has three children ranging in age from 9 to 21 years and has no close relatives in the area to care for them. He added that Hunt was the author of 46 novels and was finishing work on three more.

"You can argue to Doomsday," the judge said at one point. "That is my decision."

Hunt was escorted from the court by two deputy United States marshals, receiving a pat on the back in passing from one defendant, G. Gordon

Liddy.

Hunt was detained by the marshals inside the courthouse. He would have been moved to the District of Columbia jail at the end of the day, but bond was arranged by 2 P.M.

When the jury returned, Judge Sirica informed it only that it was "no longer concerned" with the case against Hunt. It developed, however, that one juror had heard the news of the plea.

That juror, Gabriel Oleaga, 60, a waiter, was replaced at this point without explanation by one of six alternate jurors, John J. Burnett. Mr. Burnett, 39, is a statistical clerk at the Census Bureau.

Courtroom informants said Mr. Oleaga had been dismissed because his wife had blurted out the news of Hunt's plea in what was described as a "freak accident." The sources said that the judge had warned them not to elaborate.

#### Jurors Are Locked Up

questered for the duration of the trial. They spent last night on the seventh and eighth floors of the courthouse, and it had been understood they would have no contact with their families.

A defense motion for a mistrial, said to have been based on Hunt's guilty plea and consequent removal from the trial after its start, was made out of open court and was denied by the judge in his chambers.