

Hunt Changes Plea In Watergate Case

Post 9/18/73

WASHINGTON (AP) — E. Howard Hunt Monday sought to withdraw his guilty plea in the Watergate case. In another court move involving last year's presidential campaign, Donald H. Segretti agreed to plead guilty to violating federal election laws.

Segretti, an underground political operative for President Nixon re-election campaign, also agreed to cooperate with federal prosecutors investigating sabotage in 1972.

Hunt, one of five men who pleaded guilty in the Watergate trial early this year, asked a federal judge to withdraw his plea and dismiss the charges against him.

In a motion filed in U.S. District Court, Hunt said evidence that would have enabled him to defend himself against the conspiracy, burglary and wiretapping charges had been withheld from him.

Last Friday, four other men

who had pleaded guilty to charges stemming from the June 17, 1972, burglary of Democratic National Committee headquarters asked the court to withdraw their pleas.

Months after the Watergate trial, which opened in January, it was disclosed that files from Hunt's White House safe had been given to then-acting FBI Director L. Patrick Gray III who destroyed them.

The four men who last week asked to withdraw their guilty pleas are Bernard L. Barker, Eugenio R. Martinez, Frank Sturgis and Virgilio R. Gonzala-

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lez.

They said their guilty pleas had been "premised on false assumptions which had been fostered on them by others, including co-defendant E. Howard Hunt Jr., and ultimately, high officials in the executive branch of the government."

The move by Segretti was made earlier in the day.

One charge against Segretti alleges involvement in a bogus letter accusing two Democratic opponents of Sen. Emund S. Muskie of Maine with sexual misconduct. The letter on Muskie stationery was distributed during the Florida Democratic presidential primary campaign.

Segretti's decision was disclosed at a brief appearance before a federal magistrate at which he agreed to have a case filed against him in Tampa, Fla., transferred to Washington.

No date was scheduled for Segretti to enter his guilty plea. The magistrate set Oct. 1 for his next appearance.

A federal grand jury in Tampa returned a four-count indictment Aug. 24, charging Segretti with conspiracy to violate federal election laws and illegally publishing unauthorized political statements during the Florida primary. It had remained sealed until Monday.

Segretti had received money from Nixon's former personal attorney and campaign fund raiser for an alleged campaign of political sabotage in Florida and elsewhere.

Special Watergate prosecutor Archibald Cox has assigned a team of lawyers to investigate the reported political espionage activities.

Segretti, 32 years old Monday, had pleaded innocent in Tampa on May 17 to a two-count indictment charging him with election law violations. A Tampa accountant, George A. Hearing, pleaded guilty to one count of the same indictment and is serving a maximum one-year prison term.

A spokesman for the special prosecutor's office said the expanded indictment disclosed Monday supercedes the earlier one.