

4 MORE ADMIT GUILT AS SPIES IN WATERGATE



Bernard L. Barker, left, and Virgilio R. Gonzalez arriving at U.S. District Court in Washington.

2 STILL ON TRIAL

Judge Dubious About Defendants' Replies to His Questions

By WALTER RUGABER
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WASHINGTON, Jan. 15—Four of the six remaining defendants in the Watergate trial pleaded guilty today in Federal Court to spying on the Democrats during last year's campaign.

They pleaded guilty to all seven counts of an indictment charging them with conspiracy, second-degree burglary and wiretapping. The action subjects them to a maximum of 55 years in prison.

The four are Bernard L. Barker, a Miami real estate agent, and three of his associates—Frank A. Sturgis, Eugenio Rolando Martinez and Virgilio R. Gonzalez.

Last Thursday, E. Howard Hunt Jr., a former White House consultant, pleaded guilty to all six charges against him in the case.

2 Insist on Innocence

Chief Judge John J. Sirica of the United States District Court



United Press International
Frank A. Sturgis at the courthouse.



Associated Press
Eugenio R. Martinez on his way to the trial.

here questioned the four defendants, who changed their pleas about their motives for spying and about the possible involvement of others, and then sent them to jail in lieu of \$100,000 surety bonds each, to await sentencing.

Testimony in the case resumed immediately with the remaining defendants, both officials of President Nixon's political organization when the spying charges arose, maintaining their innocence.

When the defendants who pleaded guilty answered Judge Sirica's questions, the replies were not directly illuminating. The four men appeared confident and even bland in their exchanges with the judge, and they confined their answers as much as possible to the allegations against them.

Judge Sirica was openly dubious about a number of their responses. At one point, after all the men said they were uncertain about the source of their money that had been supplied to them, he said, "Well, I'm sorry, but I don't believe you."

The judge did not pursue some lines of questioning in the face of limited replies, but it was later pointed out by legal observers that he was not strictly entitled to force answers on some points.

The four men were arrested inside the offices of the Democratic National Committee on June 17. They admitted today that they had gone there to install wiretaps and bugging equipment and to rifle the party's files.

Arrested with them was one

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of the remaining defendants, James W. McCord Jr. At the time of the arrests, Mr. McCord was security coordinator for the Committee for the Re-election of the President.

The second other defendant, G. Gordon Liddy, was counsel to the Finance Committee to Re-elect the President. He was not arrested at the Watergate office complex, but the Government has charged that he had been inside and was close by at the time.

Judge Sirica questioned the four men closely on whether "higher-ups" had put pressure on them and on whether they had been offered money to change their pleas.

They replied with noes and with vigorous head shaking. They also denied, in response to a specific question, that Hunt had urged them to follow his example by pleading guilty.

Barker, who has acted more or less as spokesman for the

other three men, indicated that he was prepared to implicate no one in the conspiracy beyond Hunt, a former agent of the Central Intelligence Agency more than 20 years.

Hunt, who had operational charge of the Bay of Pigs fiasco in Cuba in 1961, was Mr. Barker's immediate superior during the invasion attempt. Judge Sirica asked each of the four whether they had ever worked for the C.I.A.

"Not that I know of, your honor," replied at least two of the men—Barker and Gonzalez—in chorus, suggesting the possibility they had prepared the answer in advance.

Judge Sirica began the day with a statement on developments last Friday, all of which took place either in a closed-door session or in a series of conferences out of earshot of the spectators.

Asked to Change Pleas

He read into the record a short letter from the four defendants to their attorney, Henry B. Rothblatt of New York. They said they had been asking to change their pleas since Jan. 7, the day before the trial began.

"You have not complied with our request," the four men said. They added that defending themselves any longer was "not acceptable to us" and that Mr. Rothblatt "will no longer represent us."

Mr. Rothblatt, who received the "sincere gratitude" of the four for his performance up to that point, had made it clear from the outset that he would not represent them unless the case went to trial.

During the session in private, Judge Sirica secretly summoned an old friend to represent the four as a court-appointed lawyer. He was Alvin L. Newmyer, a Washington lawyer who celebrated his 89th birthday last week.

Apparently to avoid any possible delay should the four men change their minds over the weekend and reassert their innocence, Judge Sirica appointed Mr. Newmyer only to handle guilty pleas.

First Stratagem

Speaking softly and slowly, the elderly lawyer said his four suddenly acquired clients had at first wanted to plead guilty to only some of the counts against them, a stratagem that had been tried unsuccessfully by Hunt.

"But having been advised the court would accept pleas [only] on all [counts]," Mr. Newmyer went on, "they have agreed to change their plea to guilty on all counts of the indictment."

Barker, Sturgis, Martinez and Gonzalez were then called before the judge and warned that they would forfeit a number of constitutional rights by pleading guilty. They accepted this prospect with almost eager nods.

Judge Sirica then began to

read and to explain at length the indictment, remarking that he intended to be "very careful" and wanted "to find out if

you know what you're doing." At one point he said:

"If I'm not convinced after I finish the questions that you are doing this knowingly, voluntarily and without any coercion I don't have to accept a plea."

Beginning his questioning, he said: "I don't care who it hurts or helps. Don't pull any punches. You give me straight answers."

He added that if anyone else was involved, "I want to know it and the grand jury wants to know it."

Asks Direct Question

Turning to Martinez, Judge Sirica said he wanted him "to start at the beginning, and I want you to tell me how you got into this." Martinez told the judge he would have to pose "a direct question." The judge complied.

The 50-year-old native of Cuba denied he had been paid to participate in the spying conspiracy, acknowledging only that Barker had given him \$400 or \$500 to cover his "expenses."

Martinez said that he had owned a hospital, a hotel and a furniture factory in Cuba and that these had been taken over by the government after the Castro revolution. "Money don't mean a thing to us," he asserted.

Gonzalez, a 46-year-old Miami locksmith who is also a Cuban refugee, indicated that Barker and Hunt had said that the spy operation would advance the liberation of his native land.

"I think of my country, of the way people are suffering there," he said.

"What does Cuba have to do with the Democratic party?" the judge asked.

"They told me this had something to do with solving the Cuba situation," he replied.

Sturgis, 48, a former marine who fought with Castro during the Cuban revolution but who broke with him shortly after its success, took much the same line. He said he would do "anything" when Cuba and the "Communist conspiracy" in this country were involved.

Barker, 55, expounded on theme publicly for the first time during an interview with The New York Times last fall. He displayed a passionate hatred of Castro and asserted that many Cuban refugees believed that the election of Senator George McGovern, the Democratic nominee, "would be the beginning of a trend that would lead to socialism or communism, or whatever you want to call it."

It was also at this interview

that Mr. Rothblatt began to advance the suggestion that his clients were soldiers, taking orders from others. The others were unidentifiable, and Barker made it clear he would not implicate anyone else.

"This is the way these things are," he said. "You know it before you get there. You work, you help because you're needed. And when you're not needed, then you forget about it."

Asked About Journey

An example of the lack of elaboration today came when Judge Sirica asked Martinez why he had come to Washington in June. He had come to enter the Watergate, Martinez said, and to —

There was a pause and the defendant finished, "Whatever the charges are."

Barker was questioned extensively on \$114,000 in checks that passed through an account he controlled in the Republic National Bank of Miami. The money had been given to President Nixon's campaign organization and, the Government has charged, passed on to Barker by Mr. Liddy.

"For a definite fact," Barker said, "I cannot state who sent that money." He asserted that all of the \$114,000 had been sent to him by mail and that he had been asked to convert it to cash.

He denied that he had used any of the money to finance spying activities or for anything



The New York Times

G. Gordon Liddy during recess for lunch.

else. The judge recalled that a sizeable sum of currency had been found in his possession on June 17.

"This money came to me in a closed envelope by mail," Barker said. "I can't make a definite statement as to who sent it to me. I have an idea it was sent by those persons involved in the operation and

that it was sent for the purpose of the operation."

4 Put in Jail

After Judge Sirica accepted their guilty pleas, the four men were taken into custody and escorted by United States deputy marshals to a cellblock in the basement of the courthouse.

Both Mr. Rothblatt and Barker's wife, Clara, indicated that the men would not attempt to post the \$100,000 bonds set. They remained in the courthouse until closing, when they were sent to the District of Columbia jail.

Judge Sirica denied a motion



Associated Press

James W. McCord Jr. outside the courthouse.

by the remaining defendants for a mistrial. The jury was called in for the first time today at midafternoon and it resumed hearing testimony for the first time since Thursday.

There was no indication that the Government's case, as outlined in an opening statement to the jury before any of the five guilty pleas, would be altered by the actions of the last week.

The conspiracy count of the indictment would require the prosecution to establish, even to convict only one defendant, that the scheme took place as alleged in the original indictment.

The Government picked up its case with the testimony of Thomas James Gregory, a 25-year-old college student who had said he had been recruited by Hunt to spy on Senator McGovern and on Senator Edmund S. Muskie of Maine.

DO NOT FORGET THE NEEDIEST!