

Hunt Appeals To Reverse Conviction

Washington

E. Howard Hunt, claiming that the judge who sentenced him was "more . . . a crusading district attorney than . . . a judge whose duty is to do justice," asked the U.S. Court of Appeals yesterday to reverse his Watergate conviction.

Hunt, sentenced to serve 2½ to 8 years for his role in the break-in of Democratic party headquarters in Watergate, said that if he wins a new trial that a judge other than John J. Sirica should handle the case.

The petition said Sirica's approach in sentencing five of the seven Watergate defendants to maximum provisional terms to make them talk "is too high a price to pay for the discovery of a particular crime.

The petition asked the court also to decide whether Sirica abused his discretion in denying Hunt permission to withdraw his plea of guilty. Hunt claims that after his plea and before the final sentence last November 9, the Watergate story came to light.

He told the court that the Watergate burglary as well as the earlier break-in at the office of Daniel Ellsberg's psychiatrist "had government approval" and that the government then "when difficulties arose, did nothing to protect him."

Associated Press