

Final Coverup Defendant Testifies, Denies Guilt

Washington

Nixon Re-election Committee lawyer Kenneth Parkinson told yesterday of passing notes he hadn't read, relaying messages he didn't understand and of shredding some of his files.

Parkinson, the fifth and last defendant to testify at the Watergate coverup trial, said he refused to go along with suggestions by then White House counsel John Dean that he forget about seeing secret FBI files or altering important notations in a diary.

Except for a handful of character witnesses, Parkinson's appearance on the witness stand is expected to wind up testimony in the trial, now in its 12th week.

Final arguments will begin today. U.S. District Judge John Sirica said he would give his instructions to the jury the day after

Christmas, thereby allowing the jurors a holiday with their families.

All through the questioning by his own lawyer, Parkinson insisted he acted in his professional capacity to defend the Committee for the Re-election of the President against civil lawsuits filed after the Watergate break-in. He said he had no intention of obstructing justice.

"I did not have facts; I did not know certain things. All I had was third and fourth hand information, much of which was hearsay," Parkinson said.

He is charged, along with former Attorney General John Mitchell, former White House aides H.R. Haldeman and John Ehrlichman and committee official Robert Mardian with conspiring to hide the Watergate affair.

Parkinson, 47, told of a telephone call from William Bittman, a lawyer for Watergate conspirator E. Howard Hunt, who said that he had "received a mysterious telephone call from a man named Rivers and did I know anything about him?"

Parkinson said he didn't and asked election committee official Frederick LaRue, who said, "tell Bill Bittman, Mr. Rivers is okay," Parkinson said.

When asked "Did you know Mr. Rivers was a code name for Tony Ulasewicz?" Parkinson replied: "No."

Ulasewicz was the "bagman" who delivered money raised by Mr. Nixon's personal lawyer, Herbert Kalmbach, to the defendants in clandestine ways. The day after the conversation Parkinson described, \$25,000 was left at a telephone in the lobby of Bittman's building.

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