

SEChronicle SEP 29 1975

# Hunt Says Fortune 'Key to Acquittal'

Lubbock, Tex.

Nelson Bunker Hunt, the Dallas oilman, says that a huge fortune was the key to the acquittal last week of he and his brother, W. Herbert Hunt, in federal court of wiretapping charges.

Hunt said that he and his brother had the financial means to hire the legal talent and investigations needed to offset the government's case.

The Hunts are said to have spent almost \$1 million preparing and defending the five-year-old case.

"Ordinary people" would have been forced "to make a deal" or to plead no defense in a similar case, Hunt said, adding that it takes extreme wealth to fight government prosecutors successfully "when they are out to get you."

The Hunts, whose fortunes are estimated to be about \$400 million each, have asserted that the Justice Department has pursued them since 1966, the year that Nelson Bunker Hunt refused a request from the Central Intelligence Agency to allow it to infiltrate his Libyan oil operations.

Thomas M. Hunt, a cousin and an officer in many of the Hunt companies, said that the Libyan oil concessions had a potential profit for the Hunts of \$25 billion at today's prices.

Libya canceled the concessions in 1973, saying that Bunker Hunt was an "adventurer" interested only in making money.

Although the jury quickly acquitted the Hunts of the wiretapping charges, the brothers still face charges of conspiracy to obstruct justice in the same case.

They and three others, including Percy Foreman, a Houston attorney, were indicted earlier this year on charges of trying to buy the silence of three private detectives who did the wiretapping for the Hunts in late 1969 and early 1970.

Bunker Hunt called these charges "completely without merit and unwarranted."

"We put up some defense fees for some attorneys which we think was perfectly legal," he added.

*New York Times*