

One Last Flash for Mitchell, Haldeman

By Haynes Johnson

Washington Post Staff Writer

It was the same court, the same judge, same familiar faces and the same story. One last ritual flash before the cameras, one last crush amid the mob of media and spectators, a snarl from one defendant, a sober statement from the other, and in minutes it was over.

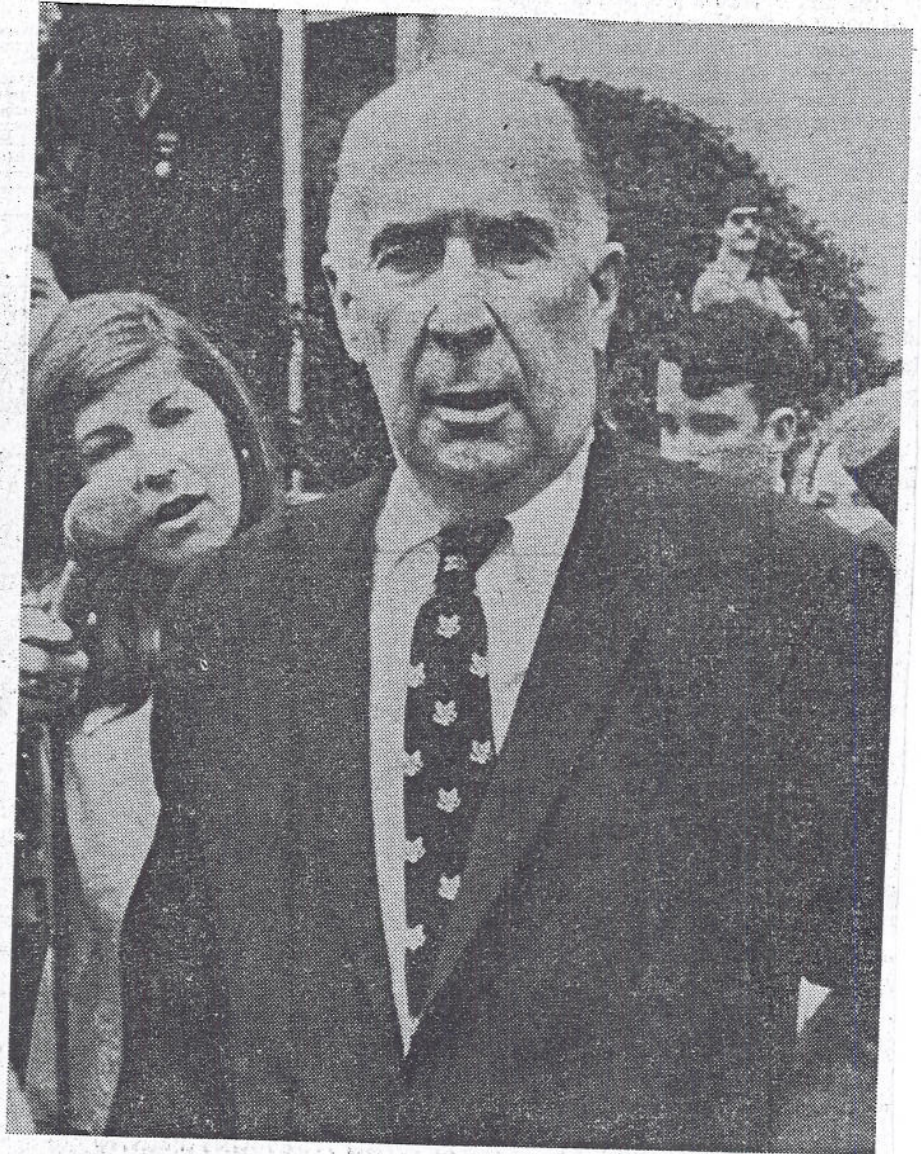
Case 4-110 closed with the judgment of the court that H.R. Haldeman and John N. Mitchell on June 22 will begin federal prison terms of from 2½ to 8 years for their part in the Watergate affair.

It has now been five years since Watergate became something more than an opulent apartment building put up by the Italians to attract people with money who liked to be near people with power. In those five years a war has ended; there have been four national political conventions and two elections, three presidents and four vice presidents. And through it all, Watergate.

The book is finally closing. Yesterday's scene at the Federal District Courthouse here was one of the last episodes.

There was John Mitchell, thinner but dour as ever, growling at the press as he barreled his way into the courthouse. "If anybody puts one of those near me, I'm going to knock it down their throat," he said into the sea of microphones and cameras surrounding him.

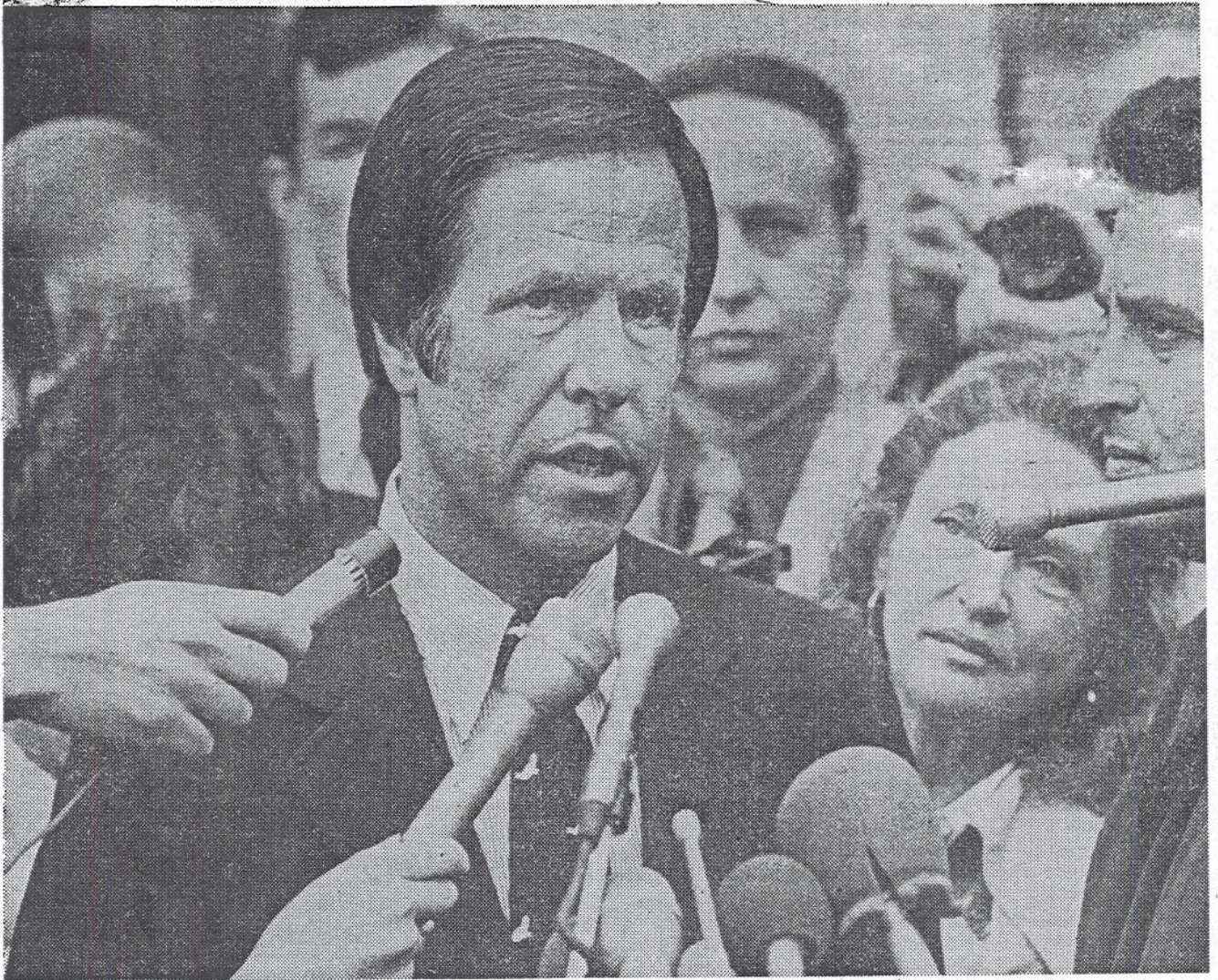
There was H.R. Haldeman, slim and cool as ever, speaking with that old assurance and a certain righteous tone as he calmly addressed the press: "I'd like to say simply that more than four years ago I started a legal process I felt was going to be difficult. I believed it was right. I still believe



United Press International

Ex-Attorney General Mitchell leaves courthouse after sentencing by Judge Sirica.

See WATERGATE, A4, Col. 2



By Gerald Martineau—The Washington Post

Haldeman makes a statement to reporters after being ordered to begin serving his jail term June 22 in Lampoc, Calif.

For Haldeman and Mitchell, A Last Crush Amid the Mob

WATERGATE, From A1

that was the right decision. I'm prepared now to accept the results."

There was Judge John J. Sirica, wearing his robes of office and sitting behind the same bench in Court Room No. 2, speaking with the same solemn demeanor as before. "The court will grant each of Mr. Mitchell and Mr. Haldeman until Wednesday, June 22, to put their personal affairs in order," he said immediately after ordering them to begin serving prison terms.

It took the judge only four minutes to reject the defendants' petitions for delay and conclude the proceeding. He gave them a choice of either surrendering in the District of Columbia at 10 a.m. on the 22d or at the prisons where they will serve their terms. They are expected to go directly to jail.

Mitchell, the former Attorney General, probably will surrender at Allentown, Pa. Haldeman, Nixon's chief of

staff, will turn himself in at Lompoc, Calif., near his home in Los Angeles.

The Supreme Court already has rejected their petitions to review their convictions for conspiracy, obstruction of justice and perjury in the Watergate cover-up trial.

For Haldeman and Mitchell, once two of the most powerful men in the world, the final date for their final appeal falls five days before their prison sentences are to begin. That's June 17, 1977, exactly five years to the day when those burglars first made their way into Watergate.