

LIDDY SAID TO LINK NIXON TO '71 PLOT

Mardian Asserts He Implied
President Approved Raid
on Psychiatrist's Office

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WASHINGTON, July 19 —

Robert C. Mardian, a former Assistant Attorney General, testified today that a Watergate conspirator, G. Gordon Liddy, gave him the clear "impression" a year ago that President Nixon had authorized a 1971 burglary of the office of Dr. Daniel Ellsberg's former psychiatrist.

"I wish to be very careful here, because I don't know that

*Excerpts from testimony and
Ervin hoax text, Pages 11, 12*

he used the name of the President," Mr. Mardian said as he recited, for the Senate Watergate committee, his interrogation of Liddy three days after the Watergate break-in.

But he said that Liddy had used words "clearly meant to imply that he was acting on the express authority of the President of the United States, with the assistance of the Central Intelligence Agency" in carrying out the burglary.

President Nixon and officials of the C.I.A. have strenuously denied that they had prior

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knowledge of or involvement in the burglary carried out by Liddy and other agents of a secret White House "plumbers" unit. Liddy has refused to tell investigators anything about his covert activities.

Mr. Mardian's evident caution in reciting Liddy's belief that the "plumbers" unit—the group investigating leaks of security information—had been operating with the specific blessings of the President was underscored by Mr. Mardian's previous statements to newsmen that he was not a fan of Liddy and had once turned down his bid for a job in the Justice Depart-

ment.

Furthermore, Mr. Mardian's account today of what he had learned about the Watergate scandal clashed directly and frequently with the testimony of five previous witnesses at the Senate hearings.

James Hamilton, an assistant counsel to the investigating committee, questioned Mr. Mardian so extensively about the conflicts his testimony presented that the former Justice Department official complained, at one point, that the question resembled "an indictment."

In one of the central conflicts, Mr. Mardian disputed the testimony given last week by former Attorney General John N. Mitchell, who swore to the committee that he never approved Liddy's \$250,000 intelligence-gathering scheme that led to the break-in at the Watergate offices of the Democratic National Committee.

Mr. Mardian said today under oath that he had related to Mr. Mitchell Liddy's statement that the electronic eavesdropping scheme had the former Attorney General's approval, and that Mr. Mitchell "didn't deny it."

Although he was a close friend of Mr. Mitchell's, was one of his protégés at the Department of Justice and was an aide last year to Mr. Mitchell at the Committee for the Re-election of the President, Mr. Mardian showed no emotion today as he suggested, in effect, that the former Attorney General had not told the truth.

Mr. Mardian, a trim, baldish man, peered through his gold-rimmed eyeglasses as he calmly denied the accounts of five earlier witnesses that he had been a central character in the Watergate cover-up.

He insisted that his knowledge of the break-in and cover-up had come to him as attorney for the re-election committee, that he was therefore obliged by an attorney-client ethic of confidentiality to withhold his information and that it had troubled him so much that he had felt as if he were "caught in quicksand."

Witness Makes Denials

He made the following denials under Mr. Hamilton's interrogation:

¶He said that John W. Dean 3d, the former White House legal counsel, was "dead wrong" in testifying that Mr. Mardian had been given access to confidential investigative reports of the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

to "It was the last thing I wanted to do," said the former chief of the Internal Security Division of the Justice Department.

¶He refused to concede that

he had ever taken part in discussions specifically related to the plans of Jeb Stuart Magruder, the deputy campaign director, to advance the cover-up by giving prejured testimony last fall to a Watergate grand jury.

Mr. Mardian's participation in such discussions was illegal in the testimony of Mr. Mitchell.

Mr. Magruder and the witness who preceded Mr. Mardian today, Frederick C. LaRue. But Mr. Mardian steadfastly insisted that, to the contrary, he had always advised grand jury witnesses "they would have to tell the truth."

¶He denied that he was aware of any discussion of efforts that led to the enlistment of Herbert W. Kalmbach, the President's former personal lawyer, in raising the \$450,000 that was used to make payments to the Watergate conspirators.

To Best of Recollection

Mr. Mardian told Mr. Hamilton that the only answer he could give to support his credibility as a witness was to say that he was testifying "to the best of my recollection and ability."

He swore that Mr. Magruder had been mistaken in saying that Mr. Mardian had once suggested altering Mr. Magruder's appointment calendar to hide the trues about a meeting Feb. 4, 1972, that was related to the intelligence gathering scheme. He insisted that Maurice H. Stans, the chairman of the campaign finance committee, was in error about Mr. Mardian's involvement in efforts to secrete \$81,000 of campaign cash that had not been reported.

He also disputed Mr. Dean's testimony that it was Mr. Mardian who had suggested that the break-in defendants might be provided with "silence money" from the C.I.A., and he quarreled with the statement LaRue made yesterday that it was Mr. Mardian who had arranged a June 20, 1972, interview of Liddy in LaRue's Washington apartment.

It was at the June 20 interview, Mr. Mardian recalled today, that he learned from Liddy the "shocking" details of the Watergate break-ins — the bungled one three days earlier turned out to be the second — and of the "plumbers" unit activities that Mr. Mitchell later described as "White House horrors."

Mr. Mardian said that, unlike LaRue, a former campaign of-



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Robert C. Mardian, right, receiving some advice from his lawyer, David Bress

official who could not recall the interview with precision yesterday; he had a "pretty vivid" recollection of Liddy's account.

The recollection was bolstered by a set of notes that had kept on the witness table by Mr. Mardian's attorney, David Bress, and used for occasional whispered reminders.