EXTRA another copy under

30 March 1973

Weicker Says Plot Leader Is Still on Nixon's Staff

By CHRISTOPHER LYDON
Special to The New York Times

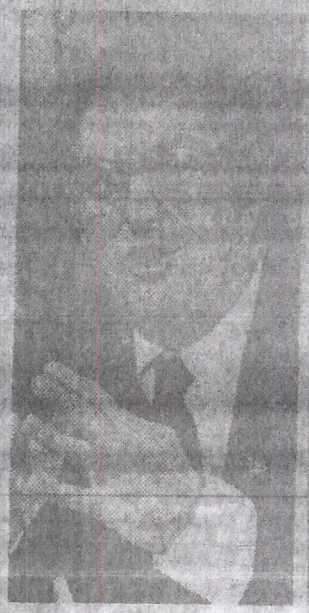
WASHINGTON, March 29—Senator Lowell P. Weicker Jr., a Connecticut Republican, said today that the unidentified mastermind of the Watergate plot was still on the White House staff, being "protected—not threatened — by selective leaks of secret testimony to Senate investigators.

Turning conventional analysis upside down, Mr. Weicker told a crowded news conference that recent charges implicating prior knowledge of the Watergate bugging to President Nixon's palace guard may actually serve to defend the very men they seem to accuse.

Mr. Weicker confirmed that James W. McCord Jr., the convicted conspirator, had used hearsay in his closed session with six Senators yesterday to implicate in the planning of the Watergate plot former Attorney General John N. Mitchell; Jeb Stuart Magruder, deputy manager of the Nixon re-election campaign; Charles W. Colson, former White House counsel, and John W. Dean 3d, the President's lawyer.

The charges against those men represent only "one-tenth" of McCord's testimony, Mr. Weicker said.

But the more defect in the charges, in Mr. Weicker's view, is that they all hang, according to McCord's own testimony, on



The New York Times

Senator Lowell P. Weicker Jr. at the news session on Watergate case yesterday.

Nixon 'Not Involved'

"Four days ago," he continued "I told my own staff of my concern that a 'tactic' would be used to lead the path of Watergate to Mr. Liddy doorstep. There should be no question that we will have to base our case and prove our case quite separately from Mr Liddy. We would be negligent in our duties if we were to succumb to this 'Liddy tactic' and forget that the scope of the committee's mandate goes far beyond the Watergate."

Mr. Weicker is one of three Republican members of a select Senate committee looking broadly into the tactics of Presidential campaigning. In calling today for a wider investigation, beyond Watergate, Mr. Weicker said he meant to get at the whole scheme of espionage and disruption