

Magruder Admits Withholding Funds

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Jeb Stuart Magruder admitted yesterday that he had held onto \$6,000 in Nixon campaign money for his own "self preservation" when he started talking to government prosecutors last year.

Testifying at the Watergate cover-up trial here, Magruder said he had held onto some of the money until the Committee for the Re-election of the President paid his "initial legal fees."

The former deputy director of the Nixon campaign, Magruder, 39, insisted, however, that the legal expenditures were all for what he described as "committee business."

He said that when he first hired a lawyer to represent him in the Watergate case, he took former Attorney General John N. Mitchell's advice "not to tell the attorney the truth."

Now serving a 10-month to four-year prison term for his role in the cover-up conspiracy, Magruder candidly admitted that he finally decided to make the "best possible deal" for himself and began confessing first to his lawyers, and then to government prosecutors in mid-April of 1973.

The boyish-faced witness outlined it all again in U.S. District Court Judge John J. Sirica's courtroom yesterday, suggesting a cover-up in which everyone was, above all, looking out for himself.



JEB STUART MAGRUDER
... retained \$6,000

Despite the admissions about his own self interest, Magruder stood by his account of conspiracy in high places as soon as the Watergate bugging and break-in was discovered on June 17, 1972.

He said he was even told that then-President Nixon was "particular pleased" with his initial success in blocking the government's investigation.

Magruder said he got the plaudits in early August of 1972 from White House counsel John W. Dean who also as-

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etrate.

"Someone mentioned that McCord was an ex-CIA agent," Magruder recalled of the hurried strategy session that followed in Mitchell's hotel suite. He said it was proposed then that perhaps the CIA could be used to divert investigators from the Nixon campaign. "Everybody thought that was a good suggestion," Magruder added.

As a result, Magruder said, Mitchell toll Mardian to contact Attorney General Richard G. Kleindienst in an effort to get McCord out of jail "before his alias was discovered."

Mardian, the jurors were

be rebuffed by the Attorney General.

The next day, Sunday, June 18, 1972, Magruder said H. R. (Bob) Haldeman called from Key Biscayne, Fla., around 6 a.m. Eastern time, asking what had happened.

Magruder said he told the former White House chief of staff "that it was Liddy's operation" and then read a press release that had been drafted the day before in Mitchell's name denying that the Nixon campaign was in any way involved. By then, McCord's true identity had surfaced. The release said in part: "We want to emphasize that this



Associated Press

Magruder outside court on second day of testimony.

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sured him that "if anything happened, I would be taken care of in the same way" as the Watergate burglars.

"It was my understanding," he said blandly, "that they were being paid funds to keep them from telling the truth."

When the first five arrests

were made at Democratic National Committee headquarters here, Magruder was on the West Coast with Mitchell, former Assistant Attorney General Robert C. Mardian, and Nixon campaign aide Frederick LaRue.

He said their involvement began immediately with a hurried telephone call from the leader of the break-in, G. Gordon Liddy, who told Magruder what had happened. One of those arrested was James W. McCord, security chief of the re-election committee, who was picked up under an alias that the police had yet to pen-

told, tried to get Kleindienst on the telephone but was told he was at the Burning Tree

golf course. Magruder said Mardian then left the room in an effort to contact Liddy and

have him go to the golf course to seek Kleindienst's help.

Mardian has denied making the call, but somehow or other, Liddy wound up on the golf course that day, only to

man and the other people involved were not operating either in our behalf or with our consent."

Haldeman, the jurors were told, ordered the press release to be made public "as soon as possible," even though Magruder said he told the White House aide that the \$5,300 found on the burglars "was probably our money . . . CREEP money."