

# Magruder fights scapegoat role

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WASHINGTON (AP) — Jeb Stuart Magruder testified Friday at the Watergate cover-up trial that top Nixon campaign officials accused him of stealing funds in an effort to make him a scapegoat for the entire Watergate scandal.

During cross-examination by Jacob Stein, lawyer for defendant Kenneth W. Parkinson, Magruder was asked about an accusation he had "stashed away large sums of money that belonged" to Richard M. Nixon's re-election committee.

"I never took any money from the committee and you know that," Magruder retorted.

"That was another part of the efforts of the defendants to make me a scapegoat," he added.

Stein had brought out earlier the fact that former Atty. Gen. John N. Mitchell had told Parkinson in July 1972 that Magruder was a liar and that he had "sticky fingers" in handling committee funds.

Stein pressed Magruder repeatedly about why he waited until April 1973 before starting to tell authorities the truth about Watergate. Before that Magruder lied repeatedly by his own admission to investigators as well as at the Watergate break-in trial.

"I've admitted my guilt," he said. "I've admitted my perjury many times."

Then Magruder added:

"I had made a terrible, terrible blunder, a terrible tragic mistake that I'm trying to rectify and I'm in prison for it."

Magruder is serving 10 months to four years in prison, having pleaded guilty to conspiring to obstruct justice.

Before the day's session started, U.S. District Judge John J. Sirica rejected a request from Robert C. Mardian, a former assistant attorney general, for a separate trial on the grounds that his principal lawyer, David G. Bress, is ill.

Sirica said he hoped Bress would

return shortly. Meanwhile, Thomas Green, a Bress associate, was handling Mardian's defense.

Parkinson, Mitchell, Mardian and former White House aides H. R. Haldeman and John D. Ehrlichman are on trial on charges they conspired to block the investigation of the Watergate break-in.

Magruder, former deputy director of the Nixon re-election committee and the third prosecution witness, had testified he told Parkinson all he knew about Watergate in a long conversation on July 13, 1972.

Parkinson had just come on as an attorney defending the committee against civil suits resulting from the break-in.

When Parkinson asked Mitchell, who resigned July 1 as director of the campaign committee, about Magruder's story, Mitchell accused his former deputy of lying.