

Parkinson Says Mitchell Denied Links Between Nixon Campaign and Break-In

By LESLEY OELSNER
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WASHINGTON, Dec. 17—Kenneth Wells Parkinson testified at the Watergate cover-up trial today that after he had been hired by the Nixon re-election campaign to handle the legal problems resulting from the Watergate break-in, John N. Mitchell told him that there was "no connection" between the break-in and the campaign committee.

Mr. Parkinson is a local lawyer who was hired by the Nixon re-election committee on June 22, 1972, five days after the break-in at the Democratic national headquarters at the Watergate complex, to handle the legal problems resulting from the break-in.

Mr. Mitchell, now one of Mr. Parkinson's four co-defendants, had been Attorney General and at that point was director of the campaign.

Mr. Parkinson said that Mr. Mitchell told him on the morning of July 13, 1972, to proceed in his legal representation of the committee on the basis that there was no connection between the committee and the break-in.

Denial Is Reported

He said that Mr. Mitchell had denied any personal involvement in the break-in. Mr. Mitchell repeated the denial later, he added, after Mr. Mitchell's deputy, Jeb Stuart Magruder, told Mr. Parkinson that Mr. Mitchell and others at the committee had been involved, and Mr. Parkinson confronted Mr. Mitchell with the Magruder statement.

"He said it wasn't true, what Magruder told me was not a true story," Mr. Parkinson said.

Then, under questioning by his counsel, Jacob A. Stein, Mr. Parkinson said that Mr. Mitchell never did tell him that what Mr. Magruder had told him was true.

Mr. Mitchell was by that time no longer the official director of the campaign committee, having resigned on July 1, but he was at least, as Mr. Parkinson put it, a "consultant" and the person responsible for the committee's response to Watergate.

In his testimony at the trial, Mr. Mitchell described the July 13 meeting to some extent, but he denied that the second meeting, his rebuttal of the Magruder account, had occurred.

There has been testimony, however, that at least some of what Mr. Magruder told Mr. Parkinson was true—Mr. Magruder's statement that he had been involved. The prosecution contends that the entire Magruder account is basically true.

First Public Testimony

Mr. Parkinson, testifying in public for the first time, also gave testimony that might prove damaging to a second co-defendant, former Assistant Attorney General Robert C. Mardian.

He said that after he had been hired by Mr. Mardian, who was then a committee official, to handle the committee's legal response to the Watergate affair, Mr. Mardian suggested to him a number of possible explanations for the Watergate break-in.

One, he said, was that the break-in was an operation of the Central Intelligence Agency. Another was that it was a Federal Bureau of Investigation "black bag" operation, designed to get information needed for a case.

Still another, he said, was that one of the Watergate burglars, James W. McCord Jr., had devised the break-in because he had his own private investigation agency and wanted to get material on the Democrats that could then be "marketed."

Mr. Mardian testified earlier that on June 21—before the conversation Mr. Parkinson described today—he had interviewed G. Gordon Liddy, the man who devised the break-in scheme, and that Mr. Liddy told him that the break-in was an operation funded by the Nixon campaign.

Mr. Mardian also said that Mr. Liddy indicated to him in that interview what the break-in had been authorized by former President Richard M. Nixon, with the assistance of the C.I.A.

Mr. Mardian, who began testifying last Friday, concluded his testimony this morning, several hours before Mr. Parkinson took the stand. Under cross-examination by Jill Wine Volner, an assistant special prosecutor, he conceded that he had not been "completely

honest" in his discussions with Mr. Parkinson, in that he had not recounted to the lawyer what Mr. Liddy had said.

He insisted, however, that he had withheld the full Liddy account only because Mr. Liddy had given it under Mr. Mardian's assurance that it would be protected by the attorney-client-privilege. He also testified that he had given Mr. Parkinson at least some of the substance of what Mr. Liddy had said, without mentioning Mr. Liddy's name.

Character Witnesses

At Midday today—the 55th day of the trial—after Mr. Mardian's testimony, lawyers for him and for Mr. Parkinson called a number of witnesses ranging from Senators to judges to a former Yankee left fielder to testify about the defendants' reputations.

Two Senators—Barry Goldwater and Paul J. Fannin, both of Arizona,—the chief justices of two states, a former civil rights leader, James Farmer, and the baseball player, Irv Noran, were among the 10 character witnesses for Mr. Mardian.

Under questioning by Thomas C. Green, Mr. Mardian's lawyer, each told the jury that Mr. Mardian's reputation for truth and integrity was excellent—or, as Senator Goldwater put it, "the very highest."

For Mr. Parkinson, the witnesses included three judges from the District of Columbia courts—one was a black, one was a woman and one was the chief justice of the District of Columbia Court of Appeals.

The race and sex of the character witnesses is considered to have some significance in view of the make-up of the jury—there are eight blacks on the regular jury, and all five alternates are black. Nine of the regular jurors are women, as are all the alternates.

The appearances today pointed up the difference between the cases of Mr. Mardian and Mr. Parkinson on the one hand and those of John D. Ehrlichman, H. R. Haldeman and Mr. Mitchell on the other.

Mr. Ehrlichman had no character witnesses, because Judge John J. Sirica ruled that the prosecution could ask any character witnesses he might call if they had heard of his indictment for perjury in the "plumbers" case last spring.

Mr. Mitchell was a former maid and a friend for character witnesses; Mr. Haldeman an advertising executive and a friend who insisted that she had talked to "hundreds of people" who

had read the White House transcripts and continued to believe in Mr. Haldeman's veracity.

There were other developments as well.

Judge Sirica told one of the defense attorneys for Mr. Haldeman, Frank Strickler, that the lawyer had "got in a fast one" on the judge several weeks ago when he told the jury that Judge Sirica had sentenced one of the Watergate burglars, Mr. McCord, to 20 years in jail.

The judge, speaking out of the jury's presence, said that the sentence was 6 years and 8 months to 20 years. He noted that he had pointed this out to the jury at the time Mr. Strickler made his remark, but that nevertheless the jury now knew "you can get up to 20" in the case.

"I didn't like it, Mr. Strickler," the judge said. "I thought it was a fast one."

The judge made his remarks in a discussion of a request by the Haldeman defense that the jury be informed of the recent motion by John W. Dean 3d, the prosecution's chief witness, to have his own one-to-four-year prison term reduced on various grounds, including his cooperation with the prosecution.

Judge Sirica reserved decision on the request. He suggested, though, that "it might be a good idea" to let the jurors know of Mr. Dean's sentence "to take the starch out" of their knowledge of Mr. McCord's much longer sentence.

In another development, the chief counsel for Mr. Ehrlichman, William S. Frates, said that he intended to renew his motion to take a deposition from Mr. Nixon.

Mr. Ehrlichman was Mr. Nixon's chief domestic adviser and is basing his defense in large part on the contention that Mr. Nixon deceived him.

The judge has rejected earlier requests to take Mr. Nixon's deposition because of Mr. Nixon's health and because the judge's view of the limited value of the testimony that Mr. Nixon could be expected to give.

Today, after the prosecution said that it did not intend to put on a rebuttal case, Judge Sirica said that he might be able to give his final instructions to the jury on Dec. 26.

Under the tentative schedule discussed today, Mr. Parkinson would finish his case tomorrow, James F. Neal, the chief prosecutor, would give his summation the next day, and the defense would then give summations, finishing by Monday or Tuesday.