

Watergate summations begin

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WASHINGTON (AP) — Chief prosecutor James S. Neal completed his summation to the Watergate cover-up trial jury Friday by accusing the five defendants of carrying the conspiracy from the Nixon White House into the courtroom of U.S. District Judge John J. Sirica, the trial judge.

John J. Wilson, lawyer for former White House chief of staff H. R. Haldeman, then began the defense summations by attacking two key prosecution witnesses, John W. Dean III and Jeb Stuart Magruder.

"They really became professional liars," Wilson said of both men, adding, "I can't emphasize too much the necessity of weighing their testimony."

Wilson dwelled longest on Dean, saying the former White House counsel "has a mastermind of chicanery, of monkey business, of flouting the law, of having no conscience."

"He's an embezzler ... He's a liar, he's a perjurer, he has a kaleidoscope of criminal activity which seems beyond the pale of an ordinary human being," Wilson said.

Over two days of his closing arguments, Neal spoke for just short of four hours.

Repeatedly, Neal referred to the change of heart in the Nixon White House toward Dean once Dean in April 1973 began telling what he knew about Watergate to federal prosecutors.

In mocking tones, Neal said defendants Haldeman and John D. Ehrlichman and former President Richard M. Nixon would say about Dean before then:

"Good John Dean, good John Dean, what a fine job you've done."

Neal spoke of Dean's own part in handling the cover-up for the White House and said until April 15, 1973, Dean "was patted on the head."

"What metamorphosis changed good old John Dean to mean John Dean?" Neal asked rhetorically.

Neal named the defendants one by one and said their motive for participating in the Watergate cover-up was "protection of the re-election of the President."

Only in the case of Kenneth W. Parkinson, whose alleged involvement Neal called "one of the sad things about

Watergate," did he fail to cite that motive.

He said Parkinson became involved in the cover-up gradually and said, "It's a matter of considerable sadness that ... Mr. Parkinson looked evil right in the face. At first he rejected it, then, he embraced it."

Charged with conspiring to obstruct the investigation of the Watergate break-in are former Atty. Gen. John N. Mitchell; ex-White House aides Haldeman and Ehrlichman; former Asst. Atty. Gen. Robert C. Mardian; and Parkinson, a Washington attorney who represented the Nixon re-election committee.

Neal said the defendants in the trial continue to blame Dean for lying and misleading them in explaining their own Watergate decisions.

As Wilson began final arguments, it appeared unlikely all defense summaries would be complete by Monday, making a Christmas Eve court session likely.

Sirica has said he plans to send the case to the jury the day after Christmas.