

HINT OF DECISION IN JURORS' FACES

Solemn Panelists Asked by Sirica Not to Talk About Their Deliberations

By ANTHONY RIPLEY

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WASHINGTON, Jan. 1—The decision was tucked inside a large brown envelope as the 12 jurors walked into Judge John J. Sirica's courtroom this afternoon.

But traces of that decision—four men guilty and one not guilty in the historic Watergate cover-up case—were on their solemn faces, too.

The jury foreman, John A. Hoffar, ashen-faced on ordinary days, carried the envelope and gave it to a court clerk.

As he sat he looked particularly pale. Those who have watched him in the three months of the trial, noted only one small difference: He seemed to rock a bit in his chair and it seemed, for an instant, that he might smile and break the mood along the two rows of faces.

The court clerk, James Capitanio, began to read the contents of the envelope and the word "Guilty" was snapped off 14 times and "Not guilty" only twice.

And then the jurors were thanked by the judge, requested—but not ordered—not to discuss what had gone on in the jury room and dismissed.

Jurors Don't Comment

Accompanied by United States marshals, the jurors went by chartered bus back to the Sheraton-Park Hotel where they have stayed for the last three weeks, ran a gantlet of reporters and cameramen and said nothing.

Once again, only Mr. Hoffar gave any sign, and that was to indicate with a shake of his head and a palms-up gesture that there was nothing he could do or say.

They canceled their evening

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dinner and the marshals said they would be escorted home.

The jurors appeared tonight to be heeding the judge's urging not to talk about the case, refusing to comment in several instances. One of them, reached at home, said:

"One of the last things Judge Sirica said to us was that in respect to the jury system this should be kept private for a while. I'm sort of numb. I've got a king-sized headache and it's all sort of a jumble."

Since Oct. 11 the nine women and three men had lived the oddly divided life of watching one of the nation's major trials during the day, then retreating each night into a tightly guarded hotel, shut off from their normal world.

Advice by Sirica

And when their verdicts were finally given, they still were cautioned by Judge Sirica to keep silent.

"There very well may be many people who would like to hear your views on the case. I urge you strongly and advise you not to speak to anyone," the judge said, explaining that his advice concerned discussions held inside the jury room. "Of course," he added, "I cannot keep you from talking."

Besides Mr. Hoffar, the jurors were Sandra V. Young, 28 years old, a pharmacists' assistant; Dock Reid, 60, a hotel-doorman; Ruth C. Gould, 57, a loan specialist with the Department of Agriculture; Vanetta N. Metoyer, 49, a waitress in a dime store lunch counter; Marjorie M. Melbourn, 55, a retired international relations officer for the Agency for International Development; Jane N. Ryon, 63, a retired Justice Department secretary; Roy V. Carter, 27, chief supply clerk for George Washington University; Anita E. King, 57, a matron with the Washington city schools; Thelma L. Wells, 68, a widow; Helen D. Pratt, 63, a retired embassy maid; and Gladys E. Cartier, 40, an office machine operator at a Washington hospital.

They originally were taken each night to the Mid-Town Motor Inn, where an entire floor of \$22-a-day rooms had been blocked off for them.

Then three weeks ago they were moved to the seventh floor of the Sheraton-Park, where a wing with about 14 rooms and a suite for meetings was set aside.