

Watergate Trial NYT 12/175

A Washington jury convicted four of the most powerful men in the Nixon Administration — John N. Mitchell, H. R. Haldeman, John D. Ehrlichman and Robert C. Mardian — on all counts in the Watergate cover-up trial. They acquitted Kenneth Wells Parkinson, a lawyer hired by the Nixon re-election committee after the break-in. The verdict was reached after 15 hours' deliberation over three days. The four men found guilty face prison terms ranging from five to 25 years. Each said personally or through counsel that he would appeal the verdict. Judge John J. Sirica polled and thanked the jurors. He said that the case would be referred to probation officers, leaving the date of sentencing uncertain. A Federal grand jury had named Mr. Nixon as an unindicted co-conspirator in the case. [Page 1, Columns 1-8.]

The verdict brought few tears and only one open display of anger in the courtroom when Mrs. Robert C. Mardian, wife of one defendant, stuck out her tongue and sounded a Bronx cheer. But all defendants and their wives were shocked. Former Attorney General John N. Mitchell flushed deeply as the clerk intoned "guilty" but leaned down to whisper words of comfort to his attorney, "Don't take it so hard." [1:6-7.]