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NIXON DISCUSSES MITCHELL'S MOVE

Calls Him on Phone—Also Talks With Successor

Special to The New York Times

SAN CLEMENTE, Calif., July 2—President Nixon, on a working vacation at his Western White House here, telephoned today to both his just-resigned campaign manager, John N. Mitchell's and Mr. Mitchell's successor, Clark MacGregor.

Mr. Nixon made his early-morning call to Mr. Mitchell, who resigned Saturday, to discuss "personal things and to express his understanding of Mr. Mitchell's decision, according to Ronald L. Zeigler, the White House press secretary.

It was believed likely that the President and the man who directed his successful 1968 election campaign—and who was to have managed Mr. Nixon's re-election bid this year—also discussed campaign strategy. The substance of Mr. Nixon's telephone conversation with Mr. MacGregor was not disclosed.

But in Washington, Mr. Mitchell's wife, Martha, for whom he resigned to "meet the one obligation which must come first: the happiness of my wife and daughter," told Helen Thomas, a reporter for United Press International, that she was "still a political prisoner."

'Surreptitious' Call

Miss Thomas, to whom Mrs. Mitchell telephoned her first threat to leave her husband if he did not leave politics, reported that Mrs. Mitchell had also said: "I can't talk long. I am calling surreptitiously."

When she was asked if her husband's resignation made her happy, she replied, "Sure, that's what I wanted," Miss Thomas reported. Mrs. Mitchell said she was calling from their home in the Watergate apartment complex.

She wondered, she said, why no one had asked a question about her at President Nixon's news conference last week, adding: "I've been a prisoner so long."

Mrs. Mitchell, who has long had a penchant for chatty telephone calls to newspapers and reporters, called Miss Thomas from California on June 23 to say she had given her husband an "ultimatum" to get out of politics or she would leave him. She described herself as a "political prisoner."

At that point in the conversation, Miss Thomas reported, Mrs. Mitchell was heard saying: "You just get away," and the connection was broken. Attempts by Miss Thomas to be reconnected met with the word from the operator that "Mrs. Mitchell is indisposed and cannot talk."

Trip to Westchester

At the end of that week she flew to Westchester County and went into seclusion at the Westchester Country Club, in Rye. Last Sunday she again telephoned Miss Thomas to complain that the phone had been yanked out of the wall during her previous call.

On Monday Mr. Mitchell also flew to Rye, returning to Washington on Friday to tell Mr. Nixon of his decision to withdraw from day-to-day political life.

Mr. Mitchell, who served as Attorney-General until he resigned earlier this year to direct Mr. Nixon's re-election campaign, had already promised his wife that his full-time political involvement would end with the November election.

But in his letter of resignation, Mr. Mitchell wrote that "the moment has come when I must devote more time" to his wife and their daughter, Marty.

Mr. Nixon, in his letter of acknowledgement, wrote that he knew that, in political life, a wife "must share not only the disappointments and the brickbats, but must accept the frequent absences of a husband and father."

He said he was "most appreciative of the sacrifice Martha and you have both made."

Mr. Mitchell will rejoin the law firm in which he and Mr. Nixon were partners until 1968—now called Mudge, Rose, Guthrie & Alexander—in its Washington office.

23 JUN

other stories give date as 22 Jun

1 JUL

25 JUN

26 JUN

30 JUN

500