

# SENATORS BRIEFED ON McCORD TALKS; NIXON BACKS DEAN

MAR 27 1973

Committee Won't Confirm  
Reports High Officials Had  
Watergate Knowledge

LIDDY BEFORE JURORS

But Refuses to Answer 20  
Questions — 4 Other  
Men Balk at Inquiry  
NYTimes

By WALTER RUGABER

Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, March 26—  
The Senate's special committee  
on the Watergate conspiracy  
met privately today to hear a  
synopsis of two long interviews  
its staff held last week with  
James W. McCord Jr.

The committee refused to  
confirm that McCord, convicted  
in January of spying on the  
Democrats last year, had said  
that two high Administration  
officials had prior knowledge of  
the plot.

But there were published re-  
ports that McCord had attrib-  
uted such knowledge to John  
W. Dean 3d, counsel to the  
President, and Jeb Stuart Ma-  
gruder, former deputy director  
of Mr. Nixon's political organ-  
ization. The White House, on  
Mr. Dean's behalf, and Mr.  
Magruder denied the reports.

### Nixon Talks to Dean

Other developments in the  
burgeoning Watergate affair  
included the following:

¶The White House said Pres-  
ident Nixon discussed the re-  
ports of McCord's testimony  
with Mr. Dean this morning and  
that the President had "absol-  
ute and total confidence" in  
his counsel.

¶G. Gordon Liddy, a con-  
victed co-conspirator in the  
January trial, appeared before  
a Federal grand jury this after-  
noon and refused on Fifth  
Amendment grounds to answer  
about 20 questions.

¶A spokesman for four men  
who pleaded guilty in the case  
said they would not meet "in-  
formally" with Senate com-

mittee investigators as Mc-  
Cord has done but would tes-  
tify before the grand jury when  
summoned.

¶Senator Lowell P. Weicker,  
Republican of Connecticut, who  
is a member of the investigat-  
ing committee, said he had  
"always been convinced" that  
others in the White House had  
known of the espionage cam-  
paign.

"There are other persons in  
the White House who are in-  
volved," Mr. Weicker said after

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attending the committee ses-  
sion in the office of its chair-  
man, Senator Sam J. Ervin Jr.,  
Democrat of North Carolina.

"I have complete faith in the  
President of the United States  
that he personally has nothing  
to hide," the Senator said. "I  
restrict my comment to the  
President of the United States."

Senator Ervin emerged after  
the meeting to say that the  
panel had "received a small  
amount of confidential informa-  
tion which we are going to  
keep confidential." He refused  
to confirm any of the reports  
on McCord's statements.

The committee's chief coun-  
sel, Samuel Dash, had called a  
news conference yesterday  
afternoon to announce that  
McCord approached him  
through a lawyer Friday after-  
noon.

The call came, Mr. Dash  
said, within hours of the dis-  
closure in the United States  
District Court here of a letter  
in which McCord said "others"  
had been involved in the Water-  
gate conspiracy.

### Papers Gave Names

Mr. Dash said he talked with  
McCord for the rest of Friday  
afternoon and for much of Sat-  
urday afternoon. He said Mc-  
Cord had named persons who  
had escaped prosecution in the  
case, but he declined to identify  
them.

The Los Angeles Times,  
quoting a source familiar with  
the interviews, published a re-  
port in this morning's issue  
quoting McCord as having  
named Mr. Dash and Mr.  
Magruder as among those with  
prior knowledge of the spying.

The Washington Star-News  
said this afternoon that McCord,  
"encountered on a Washington  
street today," said published re-  
ports of what he had told Mr.  
Dash were correct. The Star-  
News said McCord would not  
elaborate, but it said he appar-  
ently referred to The Los An-  
geles Times account.

According to the Los An-  
geles Times account, McCord  
told Mr. Dash that Mr. Ma-  
gruder lied at the trial in January  
when he denied any advance  
knowledge of the effort to  
to wiretap telephones at the  
Democratic National Committee  
headquarters at the Watergate  
complex last year.

The Times also quoted Mc-  
Cord as having told the Senate  
investigator that Mr. Magruder  
should have identified Mr. Dean  
as another official who knew  
about the espionage operation  
before it was broken up.

### Hunt Pressure Reported

McCord also told Mr. Dash,  
The Times said, that E. Howard  
Hunt Jr. had exerted pressure  
on four co-conspirators to plead  
guilty, telling them they would  
receive "executive clemency"  
and money for doing so.

Hunt, a one-time consultant  
to the White House, pleaded  
guilty at the outset of the trial  
and was joined by Bernard L.  
Barker, Eugenio R. Martinez,  
Frank A. Sturgis and Virgilio  
R. Gonzalez.

Ronald L. Ziegler, White  
House press secretary, denied  
"flatly" today "any prior  
knowledge on the part of Mr.  
Dean regarding the Watergate  
affair," and Mr. Magruder also  
denied the reported charge.

Mr. Dean was assigned by  
the President to conduct an in-  
vestigation of the affair, and  
it was on the basis of his still  
undisclosed report that Mr.  
gave assurances that no one  
"presently employed" in the Ad-  
ministration had been involved.

During the Senate hearings  
on the confirmation of L. Pat-  
rick Gray 3d to be permanent  
director of the Federal Bureau  
of Investigation, it was dis-  
closed that Mr. Dean had re-  
ceived F.B.I. reports on the  
Watergate investigation.

### Now Commerce Official

Mr. Magruder, after serving  
as deputy director of the Com-  
mittee for the Re-election of  
the President, became head of  
the Presidential Inaugural Com-  
mittee. He is now an official  
of the Commerce Department.

As a Government witness in  
the Watergate trial, Mr. Ma-  
gruder testified that the committee  
had budgeted \$250,000, most of  
which was paid to Liddy in  
cash, for a political intelligence  
operation.

Mr. Magruder said the pri-  
mary purposes of Liddy's opera-  
tion were to have been the  
guarding of prominent Repub-  
licans touring on Mr. Nixon's  
behalf and to provide security  
at the Republican National Con-  
vention.

Mr. Dean's personal attorney,  
Thomas F. Hogan, said today  
that Mr. Dean had asked him  
to warn newspapers that pub-  
lication of the charges by Mc-  
Cord was potentially libelous.

It was also learned that the  
White House counsel was con-  
sidering legal action against  
news organizations that report  
McCord's allegations concern-  
ing him.

In addition to its support for  
Mr. Dean, the White House also  
criticized Mr. Dash's announce-  
ment of the interviews as a  
"hastily convened news con-  
ference" that did not appear  
"to be an orderly and judicious  
method of procedure."

### Urged to Cooperate

All seven men convicted in  
the Watergate trial are now  
under heavy pressure from  
Chief Judge John J. Sirica to  
cooperate with the Senate com-  
mittee and with a Federal grand  
jury.

The jury, consisting of those  
who indicted the seven men  
last September, went into ses-  
sion today and summoned Liddy  
from the District of Columbia  
jail as its first witness.

Liddy, who was sentenced  
by Judge Sirica to serve be-  
tween six years eight months  
and 2 3/4 years in prison for con-  
spiracy, burglary and eaves-  
dropping, appeared pale and  
gaunt.

His ear had been cut during  
an early fist fight with a fel-  
low prisoner over a hair brush.  
His testimony was delayed  
when his lawyer, Peter L. Mar-  
oulis of Poughkeepsie, N.Y.,  
balked at Liddy's appearing in  
his blue denim uniform.

### Rejects 20 Questions

Finally, Liddy, dressed in a  
dark blue business suit, was  
taken before Judge Sirica in an  
effort by Government lawyers  
to obtain a formal grant of im-  
munity from further prosecu-  
tion under which he could be  
forced to answer questions.

Liddy, during an hour's ap-  
pearance before the grand ju-  
rors, declined to answer about  
20 questions, including one  
dealing with whether anyone  
else had advance knowledge of  
the Watergate operation.

He also refused to say  
whether he had furnished in-  
formation gleaned from the  
wiretaps to anyone else and  
whether he had discussed with  
anyone else whether the tele-  
phones had been tapped.

Mr. Maroulis, after the un-  
answered questions had been  
read in court, asked Judge  
Sirica to postpone the immu-  
nity hearing to let him study  
the queries. The judge gave  
him until Thursday to outline  
his position.

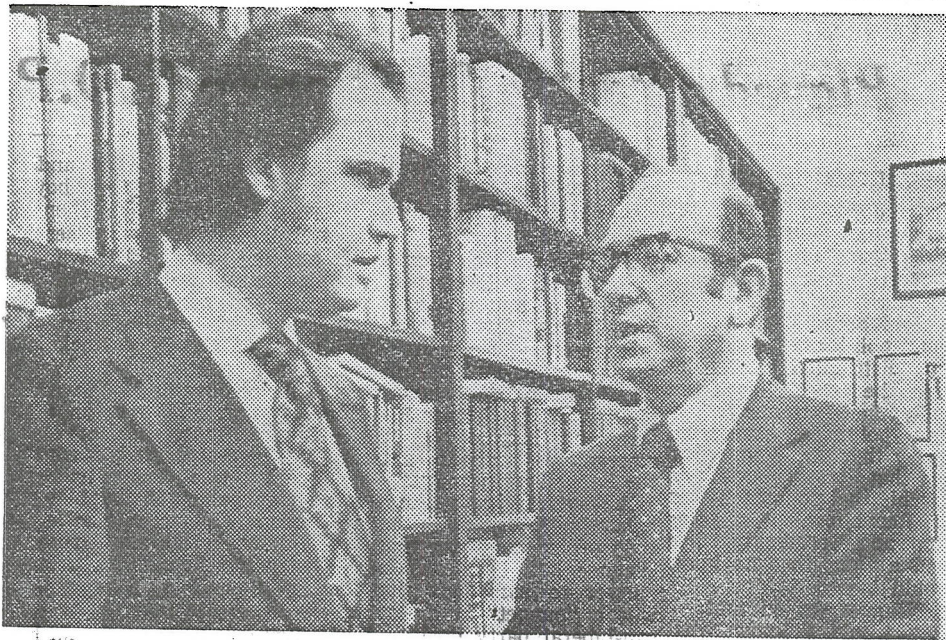
Meanwhile, a spokesman for  
Barker, Martinez, Sturgis and  
Gonzalez said they would ap-  
pear before the grand jury but  
would seek immunity if the  
questioning went beyond the  
scope of the crimes for which  
they have been convicted.

The four men will also ap-  
pear before the Ervin commit-  
tee if subpoenaed, the spokes-  
man said, but do not intend  
to meet informally with Mr.  
Dash or talk about details of  
the case in a private session  
with Judge Sirica.

### May Meet This Week

McCord asked the judge for  
such a session, and the judge—  
who warned that a transcript  
of it might be made public  
later—is expected to hold such  
a meeting later this week.

Sources close to the families  
of the four Miami men agreed  
that they would go before the  
grand jury to answer questions



The New York Times/George James

Fred Thompson, left, minority counsel, and Samuel Dash, chief counsel of a special Senate committee investigating the Watergate conspiracy, in Washington yesterday.

and said McCord's move had increased the pressure on them to testify.

"If anybody expects great revelations from these guys they're goin gto be sorely disappointed," the spokesman for

them said, alluding to reports that they had been on the edges of the plot.

McCord's interviews with Mr. Dash were held in the offices of Bernard Fensterwald, a Washington lawyer who said today that he had been stand-

ing in for Gerald Alch of Boston.

Mr. Alch, who had been McCord's chief defense counsel during the trial, was at a Chicago trial today. He said he had been unaware that his client would talk with Mr. Dash Friday or Saturday.

#### Took Initiative

Mr. Fensterwald said that McCord took the initiative in meeting with Mr. Dash immediately after Friday's court session. He said the accounts of McCord's revelations were "very interesting," but he would not confirm them.