

Magruder Resigns U.S. Job First Among Watergate Figures to Quit

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Jeb Stuart Magruder, a former White House aide who served as President Nixon's 1972 deputy campaign director, resigned abruptly from the Commerce Department yesterday.

His lawyer, James Bierbower, confirmed last night that Magruder had quit. His resignation from his \$36,000-a-year post as director of policy development is expected to be formally accepted today.

The first official among those mentioned in the Watergate case to leave the government in the wake of recent disclosures, Magruder reportedly told federal prosecutors on April 14 that former Attorney General John N. Mitchell and presidential counsel John W. Dean III approved and helped plan the bugging last year of Democratic National headquarters.

He has also been reported as saying that Mitchell and Dean subsequently arranged to buy the silence of the seven convicted Watergate conspirators.

Earlier in the day, White House press secretary Ronald L. Ziegler told reporters that no White House staff resignations had been offered or requested.

During the Watergate trial, Magruder was named as the man who hired convicted Watergate conspirator G. Gordon Liddy for the President's re-election effort.

Magruder testified at the trial that he had no knowledge of the Watergate bugging but said that he helped

establish what was supposed to be a "legal" and "ethical" intelligence-gathering operation.

He subsequently "chose to talk because he felt the

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walls were coming in on him," one source reported.

A clean-cut, boyish-faced man with a background in merchandising cosmetics and women's hosiery, Magruder served at the White House as a deputy to chief of staff H. R. (Bob) Halde- man and later as Mitchell's principal assistant at the President's re-election committee.

Magruder is not believed to have testified yet before the Watergate grand jury.

Mitchell acknowledged publicly last week for the first time that bugging plans were broached in his presence at several meetings before the Watergate break-in, but insisted that he rejected the proposals when they came up.

There were these other developments relating to the Watergate affair:

- The Association of the Bar of the City of New York, the nation's oldest organized bar group, called on President Nixon to appoint an independent lawyer to conduct an investigation of the Watergate.

The present arrangement whereby presidential appointees are conducting the investigation "has resulted in justifiable doubt concerning possible conflict of interest, as well as problems relating to professional ethics," a letter from the bar group said.

- Former presidential adviser Robert H. Finch was reported to have declined an offer to return from private life in California to a White House job. A congressional Republican leader said Finch told him this week he had received and declined the offer.

- Ziegler denied a Washington Post report that former Defense Secretary Melvin R. Laird was asked to conduct a staff reorganization at the White House.

Howard Simons, managing editor of The Post, replied: "We stand by our story."

- Vice President Agnew told a group of Harvard University students that he would "resign and speak out" if he ever found himself in "deep disagreement" with the President on an is-

sue of conscience.

While expressing "utter confidence" in the President, Agnew said, in reply to a question during a meeting in his office with members of the Harvard Republican Club, that if he found himself in disagreement with the President on a matter of conscience "I wouldn't stay here as Vice President and use this as a pulpit to criticize the President. I would resign."

"This doesn't mean that I have any intention of resigning, because I still have confidence that the President has not been involved in a way that would shock my conscience."

- Treasury Secretary George P. Shultz said in an interview with Elizabeth Drew of the Public Broadcasting Service that the Watergate case would not undermine the President's capacity to govern. Shultz said that while Watergate "is a very difficult and unpleasant problem" for the President he will take vigorous action to determine the facts.

- John J. Wilson, an attorney representing presidential aides H. R. (Bob) Halde- man and John D. Ehrlich- man, spent some time at the White House yesterday morning but did not see Mr. Nixon, Ziegler said.

Later, Wilson was seen entering the office of the federal prosecutor in the Watergate case, Earl J. Silbert.

Wilson remained at Silbert's office for about a half hour. On leaving, he said that neither Haldeman nor Ehrlichman had been subpoenaed to appear before the grand jury. Wilson would not say whether the two had been invited to appear.

Ziegler maintained that the President has not talked to anyone about replacing anyone on the White House staff.

The President is continuing his investigation and consulting daily with Assistant Attorney General Henry E. Petersen, Ziegler said, but he added that "the processes of government are going on."

While Mr. Nixon has held two meetings with Wilson, he does not plan to meet him again, Ziegler said.

Orville H. Schell Jr., president of the 10,000-member New York City bar associa-

tion, made up of some of the nation's most influential lawyers, released the letter to the President which he said was delivered at the White House early yesterday.

The letter, sent with the unanimous support of the bar group's executive committee, said, "We feel that it must have occurred to you that lawyers and laymen alike would have greater confidence if all proceedings were under the independent

and direct control of an eminent lawyer, who has no connection with the Department of Justice or any of the persons under investigation.

"We therefore urge you to appoint such special counsel from amongst the numerous leaders of the bar, who could accept such an assignment and discharge their obligation without fear or favor."

Sen. Jacob K. Javits (R-N.Y.), who is a member of the bar association, termed the move "most constructive" and said he supported it.

Clawson Ordered To Testify Soon

United Press International

A federal judge yesterday ordered a White House aide to testify in a suit which claims that the White House is using tax money for a "massive publicity" campaign to defeat bills pending in Congress.

Kenneth W. Clawson, deputy White House, director for communications, was ordered to give pre-trial testimony May 2 in the suit filed by the Ralph Nader group, Public Citizen Inc. U.S. district judge Barrington D. Parker granted the organization's request that Clawson testify early in the case before certain bills come up before Congress.

The organization claimed in its suit that the White House, under Clawson's direction, has "orchestrated a massive publicity and propaganda campaign designed to effect the defeat" of about 15 bills opposed by President Nixon and to gain support for bills he has submitted.

The suit alleges that tax money is being spent for distributing certain materials to the media "designed to influence the passage" of certain bills.