

S, WEDNESDAY, JUNE 6, 1973

MITCHELL LINKED TO PLOTTERS' AID

Reportedly Approved Funds for Watergate Defendants

WASHINGTON, June 4 (AP)—John N. Mitchell, former Attorney General, reportedly has told Senate investigators that he approved payments to the Watergate conspirators after their arrest to avoid embarrassment to President Nixon's re-election campaign.

Mr. Mitchell made the statement in an interview with Watergate committee investigators May 10, according to a confidential summary made available to The Associated Press by Jack Anderson, the syndicated columnist.

In New York, an attempt to reach Mr. Mitchell for comment was unsuccessful.

One convicted conspirator, James W. McCord Jr., has testified that the defendants were offered "hush money" in return for their silence.

The summary provides the following account:

Mr. Mitchell, who headed the Nixon re-election committee, learned after the break-in last June 17 that two of the arrested men, E. Howard Hunt Jr. and G. Gordon Liddy, had broken into the office of Dr. Daniel Ellsberg's psychiatrist.

Although he resigned from the committee last July 1, saying his wife, Martha, issued an ultimatum, Mr. Mitchell remained active in the re-election effort, the summary says.

It continues:

"At this point, Mitchell also became aware of the fact that the defendants were seeking financial support and Mitchell went along with payments to the defendants rather than risk

having other Liddy-Hunt activities exposed before the election.

"Mitchell felt the payments should be made so as not to further embarrass the campaign," the summary says.

The size of the payments was not disclosed in the summary.

President Nixon's close friend and former personal attorney, Herbert W. Kalmbach, has told the General Accounting Office that he paid at least \$210,000 through intermediaries to the defendants or their attorneys, according to a G.A.O. report.