

Magruder Tells How He

Here is an excerpted text of Jeb Stuart Magruder's testimony before the Senate select Watergate committee yesterday detailing his account of the Watergate bugging and cover-up. It begins shortly after he left his White House post as special assistant to the President to set up Mr. Nixon's re-election committee in 1971 and ends with his decision to tell his full story to the federal prosecutors and the Senate committee this spring.

Magruder: We had begun discussing the 1972 campaign in early 1971. Mr. (John N.) Mitchell and Mr. (H. R.) Haldeman in particular were concerned and responsible for the campaign at that early stage, and it was decided that certain White House staff members and other individuals would begin the preparatory work for the campaign. Consequently, in May of 1971 myself and a number of others began the activities for the Committee to Re-Elect the President . . .

Approximately in March 1972, when Mr. Mitchell became campaign director, I was named chief of staff. In July of 1972, when Mr. (Clark) MacGregor became campaign director, I became deputy campaign director . . .

From the beginning Mr. Mitchell was responsible for the campaign . . . That would have been May of 1971. He was responsible for the campaign. I reported directly to him. Mr. Haldeman was basically our liaison, and his liaison activities were primarily related to him through Mr. Gordon Strachan at the White House . . .

Strachan was staff assistant at the White House and he was Mr. Haldeman's aide and liaison to our committee . . . He consolidated our work for Mr. Haldeman for whatever needs Mr. Haldeman or the President needed the information from the campaign committee. He received copies of all our documents and worked very closely with us . . .

(G. Gordon Liddy) joined our staff in December of 1971. At that point in time we had been needing the assistance of legal counsel in many areas primarily in filing for 23 primary campaigns the President was going to enter and relating to the new election law. Before this time we had been using basically (White House Counsel) John Dean and his legal staff to assist us, and John was looking for an attorney, was looking for an attorney to assist us. We had gone through a number of names and in December John indicated to me that he had found an attorney that was acceptable to the then Attorney General (Mitchell), and he brought G. Gordon Liddy to my office on a Friday early in December. He discussed with me his legal abilities and the general counsel's activities and he also indicated that he would need an individual to engage in intelligence gathering operations; that he had considerable background in this area. Mr. Dean and I and Mr. Mitchell had discussed the intelligence gathering situation previously, and Mr. Dean brought Mr. Liddy over for both those purposes and approximately a week later, December 13th, he joined our staff as general counsel . . .

The week he (Liddy) began work for us, we met on a Tuesday and discussed basically the new election law. At that time he indicated to me that he had discussed a broad gauged intelligence plan with members of the White House staff. He mentioned particularly Mr. Dean. He did mention other individuals but I cannot recall their names, and indicated he had been told he would have approximately a million dollar budget. I indicated to him at that time that a million dollar budget was a sizable budget and that he should prepare the background documents necessary to justify this budget and that he would then have an opportunity to present the budget to the Attorney General.

Dash: Now, did there come a time when Mr. Liddy did present his plan to the Attorney general, Mr. Mitchell?

Magruder: Yes. I set up an appointment with Mr. Mitchell and John Dean on (January) 27 at four o'clock in the afternoon (in Mitchell's office).

Dash: Who attended that meeting in Mr. Mitchell's office on January 27?

Magruder: Mr. Mitchell, Mr. Dean, Mr. Liddy and myself . . .

Mr. Liddy brought with him a series of charts, they were professionally done charts, and had color on each of the charts. As I recall there were approximately six charts. Each chart contained a subject matter and was headed by a code word. I cannot recall many of the code words, the one I do recall is Gemstone . . .

This was, of course, the projects, including wire tapping, electronic surveillance, and photography. There were projects relating to the abduction of individuals, particularly members of radical groups that we were concerned about on the convention at San Diego. Mr. Liddy had a plan where the leaders would be abducted and detained in a place like Mexico and that they would then be returned to this country at the end of the convention.

He had another plan which would have used women as agents to work with members of the Democratic National Committee at their convention (in Miami) and here in Washington, and hopefully, through their efforts, they would obtain information from them.

He envisioned renting a yacht in Miami and having it set up for sound and photographs . . . they would have been, I think you could consider them call girls.

Dash: What was Mr. Mitchell's reaction, Mr. Dean's reaction, your own reaction when you heard this presentation?

Magruder: I think all three of us were appalled. The scope and size of the project was something that at least in my mind was not envisioned. I do not think it was in Mr. Mitchell's mind or Mr. Dean's, although I can't comment on their state of mind at that time.

Mr. Mitchell, in a understated way, which was his method of dealing with difficult problems like this, indicated that this was not an acceptable project.

Dash: And did Mr. Mitchell give Mr. Liddy any instructions at the end of this meeting?

Magruder: He indicated that he would go back to the drawing boards

Decided to Tell the Full Story

and come up with a more realistic plan.

Dash: Did you make any report of the meeting to anyone after the meeting?

Magruder: Yes, I made a report to Mr. Strachan at the White House . . .

Dash: Was this telephone conversation with Mr. Strachan in which you did report the general nature of the discussion consistent with your general reporting to Mr. Strachan as you did from time to time, matters that should get to the White House staff?

Magruder: Yes, everything that I did at the committee, everything that we did was staffed to Mr. Strachan so that he could alert other officials at the White House as to our activities.

Dash: Was there a second meeting on the Liddy plan?

Magruder: Yes, the following week in February, February 4th, as I recall, we met at 11:00 a.m. in the morning (in Mitchell's Justice Department office).

Dash: How did that meeting come about, who attended?

Magruder: Mr. Liddy indicated that he was ready to discuss a reduced proposal. I alerted Mr. Dean and he set up an appointment with Mr. Mitchell and we reviewed a reduced proposal.

Mr. Liddy did not have charts. He had them reduced on 8½ by 11 pages and the scope was reduced considerably. It was reduced by \$500,000 . . .

The discussion, after his discussion with us, related only to the wiretapping and photography and not to any of the other projects. They had been basically discarded.

Dash: Who was present at this second meeting, Mr. Magruder?

Magruder: Mr. Mitchell, Mr. Dean, Mr. Liddy and myself. Mr. Dean came in approximately 15 minutes or so late, but was there most of the meeting.

Dash: At this time, as you have stated, the project primarily dealt with wiretapping and photographing. Were any targets specifically mentioned, either by Mr. Liddy or anybody at the meeting?

Magruder: At that meeting, we did discuss potential targets, we discussed the potential target of the Democratic National Committee headquarters, primarily because of information we had relating to Mr. O'Brien that we felt would be possibly damaging to the Democratic National Committee. We discussed the possibility of using electronic surveillance at the Fontainebleu Hotel, which was going to be the Democratic National Committee headquarters, and we discussed the potential of using the same method at the presidential headquarters. At that time, we did not know who the candidate would be, so it was simply an indication that that would be a target of interest.

Also at that meeting, Mr. Mitchell brought up that he had information as I recall, and I think it was Mr. Mitchell—it was either Mr. Mitchell or Mr. Dean—that they had information relating to Senator Muskie that was in Mr. (Henry) Greenspun's office in Las Vegas. He was a publisher of the newspaper in Las Vegas . . .

We had had information from reliable sources that at the Democratic National Convention, they had a business exposition. The business exposition was being put on by a separate business exposition company. It was our understanding that the fee the business concern paid to this business company was then kicked back or partially kicked back to the Democratic National Committee to assist them in the payment of their debts.

Dash: Aside from that kind of information, what was the general information or general kind of information that you would be looking for in these break-ins or electronic surveillance?

Magruder: Well, I think at that time, we were particularly concerned about the ITT situation. Mr. O'Brien has been a very effective spokesman against our position on the ITT case and I think there was a general concern that if he was allowed to continue as Democratic national chairman, because he was certainly their most professional, at least from our standpoint, their most professional political operator, that he could be very difficult in the coming campaign. So we had hoped that information might discredit him.

Dash: What was Mr. Mitchell's reaction to this presentation at the second meeting?

Magruder: It still was disapproval or, let's say, I should say we agreed that it would not be approved at that time, but we would take it up later; that he just didn't feel comfortable with it even at that level.

Dash: But again, would it be true to say that at least Mr. Liddy was encouraged to continue in his planning?

Magruder: Yes, I think that is correct.

Dash: Now, after this meeting, Mr. Magruder, did you report to anyone about the meeting?

Magruder: Yes, I sent the documents that Mr. Liddy had given us at the meeting to Mr. Strachan . . . Yes, I automatically sent all documents to Mr. Strachan.

Dash: And did those documents contain all of what Mr. Liddy had presented at that meeting?

Magruder: Certainly, all of the specific discussion. They did not contain as an example, the discussion on targets because that was a discussion and that was not in the documents.

Dash: And did that include Mr. Mitchell's suggestions concerning the Las Vegas mission?

Magruder: Yes, I indicated the general context of that meeting.

Dash: And did that include Mr. Mitchell's suggestions concerning the Las Vegas mission?

Magruder: I cannot recall specifically that point, but I would assume that I probably discussed the key targets that we had discussed.

Dash: And that would include the Democratic National Committee headquarters and Mr. O'Brien?

Magruder: Yes.

Dash: Was there any special role that Mr. (Fred) LaRue played in the Committee for the Re-election of the President?

Magruder: Mr. LaRue was an adviser of Mr. Mitchell's. He was a close friend of Mr. Mitchell's. He had become a close friend of mine. He was

someone who worked with all of us. We all felt he had an astute political judgment and we worked very closely with Mr. LaRue on literally all matters that concerned the committee.

Dash: Did there come a time after the second meeting that you had some difficulty with Mr. Liddy and Mr. LaRue played some role in that?

Magruder: Yes . . . In approximately mid-March, I had requested certain things from Mr. Liddy, I think relating to his legal work as general counsel, and they had not been forthcoming. I met him, ran into him on the third floor of our building, and asked him would he be more cooperative in producing the work that we needed quickly? He indicated some disturbance with me at that time . . . I simply put my hand on Mr. Liddy's shoulder and he asked me to remove it and indicated that if I did not, serious consequences could occur.

Dash: Was he more specific than serious consequences?

Magruder: Well, he indicated that he would kill me. But I want to make it

clear that I did not, I do not regard that and I do not now regard that as a specific threat. It was simply Mr. Liddy's mannerism . . .

(Later that day) we agreed, Mr. Liddy and I, that he would terminate from the committee all activities. Then we discussed the intelligence-gathering and he indicated at one point that possibly, Mr. (Howard) Hunt could become involved directly in this area or that we could cease any consideration of that. At that time, as I recall, Mr. LaRue indicated that it would be best if we retained Mr. Liddy at least in that area . . .

What we then agreed to was to terminate him from our committee as general counsel, but retain him in the area of intelligence-gathering . . .

Dash: By the way, did you know at that time that Mr. Hunt was working with Mr. Liddy?

Magruder: At that time—I think by that time, I had been encouraged by certain staff members at the White House to be sure that Mr. Hunt was not employed by us directly, but employed by Mr. Liddy. So I think I was aware at that time that he was.

Dash: What staff members at the White House made such encouragement?

Magruder: Mr. Richard Howard . . . Mr. Colson's assistant.

Dash: What, if anything, did he say to you? What kind of encouragement did he give you?

Magruder: He indicated that Mr. Hunt had completed his assignments at the White House and since we were now engaged in intelligence activities, he thought I would find Mr. Hunt very valuable. I only met Mr. Hunt once, so I was not really quite sure in what terms he would be valuable. So I indicated to Mr. Howard that he should refer Mr. Hunt to Mr. Liddy and that Mr. Liddy would employ him. I did not know at that time that he and Mr. Liddy had worked together before.

Dash: Now, also concerning this altercation you had with Mr. Liddy and your decision to terminate his employment, did you receive any communication from any other person from the White House concerning Mr. Liddy?

Magruder: Yes, evidently Mr. Liddy after he left my office went and saw Mr. Dean and then Mr. Strachan. I received a call from Mr. Dean encouraging me not to become personally concerned about Mr. Liddy, that I should not let my personal animosity and his get in the way of the project. And then I went over to the White House and was working with Mr. Strachan on normal campaign matters and he brought up the same subject and, as we walked back to the committee, it was a Friday afternoon I recall and, it was raining, he indicated that although he had the same personal difficulties with Mr. Liddy that probably Mr. Liddy was quite professional in this intelligence gathering and we should retain him in this area.

Dash: Did Mr. Egil Krogh (another White House aide) ever talk to you concerning either Mr. Liddy or Mr. Hunt?

Magruder: Mr. Krogh did talk to me about Mr. Liddy and mentioned to me a number of times we should keep tight control over him but he was very effective.

Dash: After the Feb. 4 meeting in Mr. Mitchell's office, when the plan was not still approved, did there come a time when anyone else at the White House urged you to get the Liddy plan approved?

Magruder: Yes. Mr. Charles Colson called me one evening and asked me in a sense to, would we get off the stick and get the budget approved for Mr. Liddy's plans, that we needed information, particularly on Mr. O'Brien. He did not mention, I want to make clear, anything relating to wiretapping or espionage at that time.

Dash: But in that discussion, did you have any, did you get the impression yourself that he knew what the Liddy plan was?

Magruder: Again I want to be careful. I knew Mr. Hunt was a close friend of Mr. Colson's, he had been referred to me earlier by Mr. Colson. I did make the assumption that he did know but he did not say that he did know but he did not say that he was aware of the specifics and never did say that to me at any time.

Dash: Were there any further contacts that you had with Mr. Colson's assistant (Howard), concerning the call that Mr. Colson made to you . . . Were Mr. Howard's discussions with you also urging you to try to pursue the Liddy plan?

Magruder: Yes.

Dash: Now, did there come a time when you had a third and final meeting with Mr. Mitchell on the Liddy plan on or about March 30, 1972.

Magruder: Yes. There had been a delay in the decision-making process at the committee because of the ITT hearings. Mr. Mitchell was on vacation at Key Biscayne. I went down to Key Biscayne, Mr. LaRue was there, and we met and went over approximately 30-some decision papers mainly relating to direct mail and advertising, the other parts of the campaign.

The last topic we discussed was the final proposal of Mr. Liddy's, which was for approximately \$250,000. We discussed it, brought up again the pros and cons, I think I can honestly say

that no one was particularly overwhelmed with the project. But I think we felt that the information could be useful and Mr. Mitchell agreed to approve the project and I then notified the parties of Mr. Mitchell's approval.

Dash: What was the form, by the way, of the memorandum or decision paper that was presented to Mr. Mitchell at this meeting?

Magruder: It was unlike our normal decision process where we had an "Approved, Disapproved, Comment" line at the bottom. It was simply the same 8-1/2 by 11 blank sheets typed up with the basics of the plan, the number of people he would have to hire, the number of electronic surveillance equipment and amounts he would have to purchase and so on, and I used a system which I think Mr. Reisner has discussed where I made three copies of each document that I would discuss with Mr. Mitchell, one copy went to Mr. Strachan for Mr. Haldeman.

The other two copies I brought with me to Key Biscayne, I gave Mr. Mitchell the one copy, he did some markups on some of it, I cannot recall what he marked on these papers, indicated his approval, did not indicate it in any formal sense by initialing it or writing. Just indicated (orally) the project was approved.

Dash: Now, on the project prior to going down to Key Biscayne you would send over a copy to Mr. Strachan?

Magruder: My formal position with Mr. Mitchell was we would send over key papers before we discussed it with Mr. Mitchell, so if there was any questions in those papers Mr. Haldeman or Mr. Strachan could get back to us their opinion on a subject.

Dash: All right. Now, this quarter million dollar project you say Mr. Mitchell approved in Key Biscayne, what was that project specifically as you recall?

Magruder: It was specifically approval for initial entry into the Democratic National Committee headquarters in Washington, and that at a further date if the funds were available we would consider entry into the presidential contenders' headquarters and also potential at the Fontainebleu Hotel in Miami.

Dash? When you returned to Washington, Mr. Magruder, did you communicate to anyone that the Liddy plan on the quarter million dollar budget was approved?

Mr. Magruder: . . . I called Mr. Strachan and indicated to him that the project had been approved, and I indicated to Mr. Sloan that Mr. Liddy would be authorized to draw \$250,000 over the entire period of the campaign but that he probably would need a sizable amount of that initially.

Mr. Dash: Now . . . did that also include the use of electronic surveillance or bugging?

Magruder: It included electronic surveillance and photography of documents, photographing of documents.

Dash: But Mr. Strachan was given a fairly complete report on what was approved.

Magruder: Yes.

Dash: Do you recall Mr. Sloan questioning an initial large sum of money, \$83,000 which Mr. Liddy requested after the approval of the plan?

Magruder: Yes . . . he had called me and said that Mr. Liddy wanted a substantial sum at that time, I did not recall the amount, but Mr. Sloan indicates it is \$83,000 and I would assume he is correct. I indicated that Mr. Liddy did have that approval.

Mr. Sloan evidently then went to Mr. Stans. Mr. Stans went to Mr. Mitchell, Mr. Mitchell came back to me and said why did Gordon need this much money and I explained to him this was in effect front end money that he needed for the equipment, and the early costs of getting this kind of an operation together. Mr. Mitchell understood, evidently told Mr. Stans it had been approved and the approval was complete.

Dash: Do you recall a discussion that you had with Mr. Liddy concerning an effort to enter the McGovern headquarters?

Magruder: Yes. As I recall, it was after the first entry of the DNC headquarters. Mr. Strachan and I were in my office and Mr. Liddy came in, not in a formal meeting sense, just came in and indicated that he had had trouble the night before, that they tried to do a survey of the McGovern headquarters and Mr. Liddy indicated that to assist this he had shot a light out. at that time both Mr. Strachan and I both became very concerned because we understood from Mr. Liddy that he would not participate himself nor would anyone participate in his activities that could be in any way connected with our committee.

Dash: Now, when there was this entry into the Democratic National Committee headquarters, which we have had testified before this committee, occurred May 27, around Memorial Day weekend of 1972, did Mr. Liddy report that to you?

Magruder: Yes . . . He simply indicated that he had made a successful entry and had placed wiretapping equipment in the Democratic National Committee . . .

Dash: When did you get any of the fruits of the results of this bugging and photography operation?

Magruder: Approximately a week, a week and a half after the initial entry we received, I received, the first reports, they were in two forms, one was capitulated of the telephone conversations.

They were done in a form in which you would know they were telephone conversations but they were not direct references to the phone conversations. And the second, photography, the pictures of documents that they had taken at the Democratic National Committee headquarters.

Dash: Was there any special feature about these photographs?

Magruder: Well, the famous fingers

were on the photographs, the rubber gloves with the fingers.

Dash: Now, the documents from which you say the capitulation of the telephone conversations, where were they, what was the form of those documents?

Magruder: They were under the Gemstone stationery. You have seen it since I have . . .

Dash: Did you show these so-called

Gemstone materials with the photographs to anybody?

Magruder: Yes, I brought the materials in to Mr. Mitchell in my 8:30 morning meeting I had each morning with him . . .

He, as I recall, reviewed the documents, indicated, as I did that there was really no substance to these documents and as I recall it was at that time he called Mr. Liddy up to his office and Mr. Mitchell indicated his dissatisfaction with the results of his work.

Dash: Well, did he tell him anything more than he was dissatisfied. Did he ask for anything more?

Magruder: He did not ask for anything more. He simply indicated that this was not satisfactory and it was worthless and not worth the money that he had been paid for it . . .

There was no information relating to any of the subjects he hoped to receive and Mr. Liddy indicated there was a problem with one wiretap and one was not placed in a proper phone and he would correct these matters and hopefully get the information that was requested.

Dash: Did you show these documents, the so-called Gemstone documents, to Mr. Strachan?

Magruder: As I recall, because of the sensitive nature of these documents, I called Mr. Strachan and asked would he come over and look at them in my office rather than sending a copy to his office, as I recall I only had one copy of these documents. As I recall, he did come over and look over the documents and indicate to me the lack of substance to the documents.

Dash: Now, in fact, Mr. Magruder, Mr. Liddy, Mr. Hunt and others did go into another break-in of the Democrat National Committee headquarters in the early morning hours of June 17, 1972. Where were you when this occurred?

Magruder: I was in Los Angeles, California . . . I was with Mr. Mitchell, Mr. LaRue, Mr. Porter, Mr. Mardian, and we had a number of political activities in California that weekend . . .

There were a number of us, probably eight or 10 of us at breakfast. I received a call from Mr. Liddy and he indicated to me I should get to a secure phone and I indicated to him there was no way I can get to a secure phone at this time. He indicated there had been a problem the night before. I said well, what kind of a problem or something of that type and he indicated that our security chief had been arrested at the Watergate and I said you mean Mr. McCord and he said yes.

I think I blanched to say the least and said, "I will call you back immediately on a pay phone to get more detail," and I did that.

Dash: Now, did you report that back to anybody?

Magruder: Yes, I first talked with Mr. LaRue and indicated the problem, and Mr. LaRue then talked to Mr. Mitchell and then Mr. Mitchell and Mr. LaRue and I discussed it again together. We knew that Mr. Mardian who was there was a closer friend of Mr. Liddy's than any of us and Mr. Mitchell asked Mr. Mardian to call Mr. Liddy and ask him to see the Attorney General, the current Attorney General, Mr. Kleindienst, and see if there was any

possibility that Mr. McCord could be released from jail.

My understanding is that they went out to the Burning Tree Country Club, where Mr. Kleindienst was playing golf, and Mr. Kleindienst rebuffed Mr. Liddy. . . .

Dash: Did you call Mr. Strachan?

Magruder: Oh, yes, I called Mr. Strachan that evening. . . . I told him — of course, he knew no more than we knew. He knew that they had been apprehended and we had a problem and just discussed in a sense that we had a problem and we did not quite know what to do about it. At that time, we had heard that there was some money at that time found on the individuals and we had hoped that it was money that had been found at the Democratic National Committee, but unfortunately it was our money. So we, in effect, just discussed the problem. We had no answers, obviously, at that time.

Dash: Did you receive a call from Mr. Haldeman?

Magruder: Yes. The next morning, on Sunday, I received a call from Mr. Haldeman. He asked me what had happened. Again, I told him basically —

Dash: From where was he calling?

Magruder: Key Biscayne, Florida. He just asked me the basic background of the break-in and what had happened. I just told him what had happened. He indicated that I should get back to Washington immediately, since no one in any position of authority was at the committee. . . .

Dash: Now, you did return to Washington?

Magruder: Yes, I did. . . . Mr. Mitchell flew back that Monday with Mr. LaRue and Mr. Mardian. We met in his apartment with Mr. Dean. That would have been Mr. Mitchell, Mr. LaRue, Mr. Dean, Mr. Mardian and myself, and the general discussion again was what were we going to do about the problem?

We had very little information. We did not, of course, know what type of investigation would then be held. And we talked about types of alternative solutions. One solution was recommended in which I was to, of course, destroy the Gemstone file. . . .

Dash: Now, Mr. Magruder, is it not true that after you returned to Washington from California and during the months of, say, June or July and August, that there came a time when you agreed to make up a story about how the break-in and the bugging took place and who was involved?

Magruder: Yes. I want to state here, though, that there was never any feeling on my part, no one asked me to do anything. I personally felt that it was important to be sure that this story did not come out in its true form at that time, as I think did the other participants. So I want to make it clear that no one coerced me to do anything. I volunteered to work on the cover-up story.

Dash: But who participated with you without coercing you in the working up of the fabricated story?

Magruder: Well, there were, from the time of the break-in to my second grand jury appearance and then actually into my third grand jury appearance in September, a series of meet-

ings. These meetings did not appear on my calendar because they were ad hoc meetings, they were not planned meetings. They were mainly held in Mr. Mitchell's office. The main participants typically were Mr. Mitchell, Mr. LaRue, Mr. Mardian, Mr. Dean, although many other people who met in these meetings. Much of the meetings would be on subjects that were perfectly, I think, acceptable to discuss.

You know, it is very hard for me to pinpoint exactly when and how we came up with the cover-up story, but it became apparent when we found out the sums were in the \$200,000 range that we had to come up with a very

good story to justify why Mr. Liddy would have spent that amount of money on legal activities. . . .

What we did was we simply took factual activity that we had asked Mr. Liddy to do and we exaggerated to a great extent the amount of money spent on those activities to the tune of the 230—some thousand dollars.

I asked Mr. Porter to, would he be willing to work with us on this cover-up story and as he has testified he indicated that he did.

So he took care of, in effect, \$100,000 and I took care of, in effect, \$150,000 by indicating that Mr. Liddy had legal projects for us in the intelligence field, and we worked over this story with Mr. Mitchell and Mr. Dean, Mr. La Rue, Mr. Mardian, although Mr. Mardian was, participated, to a much lesser extent with me than the others did. My primary contacts on the story were Mr. Dean and Mr. Mitchell.

Dash: Could you tell us why the story required that the break-in involvement be cut off at Mr. Liddy and not at you?

Magruder: Well, there as some discussion about me and I volunteered at one point that maybe I was the guy who ought to take the heat, because it was going to get to me, and we knew that.

And I think it was, there were some takers on that, but basically, the decision was that because I was in a position where they knew that I had no authority to either authorize funds or make policy in that committee, that if it got to me, it would go higher, whereas Mr. Liddy, because of his past background, it was felt that that would be believable that Mr. Liddy was truly the one who did originate it. And, of course, it was true, I think, that Mr. Liddy did originate the plan, was basically the one who did come up with these ideas in specific terms.

(At this point, Magruder told the senators that he precluded himself by telling the agreed story to the FBI, the federal grand jury investigating Watergate and the jury at the Watergate conspirators' trial in January, 1973.)

Dash: During your appearances before the grand jury or preceding it and, when the story that was indicated was being developed, what if anything was told to you or discussed with you or by you concerning the question of executive clemency for yourself or for those who were going to accept the blame in the story?

Magruder: Again I would like to be very careful here. I think that—during the time, of course, since I knew I was a target of the grand jury, I was somewhat concerned about what would happen to me if I was indicted. So I went through the same type of thing that the other defendants in the trial did and asked Mr. Mitchell and Mr. Dean for the kind of assurances that they did. . . .

They made assurances about income and being taken care of from the standpoint of my family and a job afterwards, and that type of thing, and also that there would be good opportunity for executive clemency. But having worked at the White House and being aware of our structure there, I did not take that as meaning that had a direct relationship to the President at all. In fact, the use of his name was very common in many cases where it was inappropriate; in other words, where he had not had any dealings in the matter. So I knew that this did not necessarily mean it came from the President or anyone else other than Mr. Dean or Mr. Mitchell.

Dash: Did you have a meeting with Mr. Haldeman in January, 1973 (before the Watergate trial)?

Magruder: Yes, I did.

Dash: Could you briefly tell us what the nature of that meeting was and what was discussed?

Magruder: The meeting was for two purposes, it was to discuss, I was the director of the inaugural at that time and was to discuss future employment regarding myself and also at that time there was a problem regarding Mr. (Herber Porter's employment and I had made certain assurances, Mr. Mitchell had, about his employment and I wanted to be sure Mr. Haldeman was aware of that.

And then, thirdly, and I realize now that these were probably taped conversations, I had some conversations with Mr. Dean in his office where he indicated a certain lack of memory to events, and I became rather concerned. He indicated at one point that wasn't that surprising how this plan was ever put into operation, and I said, "Well, John, surely you remember the meetings we attended" and he didn't seem to remember those meetings, and I said to myself something is going to happen here if that continues.

I think as it turned out these conversations were taped, so I thought I had better see Mr. Haldeman and tell him what had actually happened. I thought probably that this may be, was becoming, scapegoat time and maybe I was going to be the scapegoat, and so I went to Mr. Haldeman and I said I just want you to know that this whole Watergate situation and the other activities was a concerted effort by a number of people, and so I went through a, literally, monologue on what had occurred. That was my first discussion with Mr. Haldeman where I laid out the true facts.

Dash: Do you know what day or date approximately in January that occurred?

Magruder: It would have been before the inaugural because we were still working on the inaugural but I would have to look in my diary as to what date specifically.

See TEXT, A15, Col. 3

TEXT, From A15

(On Wednesday, March 28, after new revelations brought about several new investigations, Magruder went to see Haldeman again.)

Dash: Who was present?

Magruder: Mr. Haldeman, Mr. Mitchell and myself. . . . we discussed the same things (Magruder's fear of implication) that I discussed with Mr. Mitchell (the day before). Mr. Haldeman was very careful to indicate to me that he would help me in any way as a friend but could make no commitments for the President; indicated that the real problems were differences of opinion over meetings, particularly the January and February meetings, where, of course, my view was that since the three, Mr. Mitchell, Mr. Dean

and I, had agreed to my testimony that they, therefore, should stay with that agreement.

Mr. Mitchell indicated, of course, he was willing to do this but Mr. Dean indicated that he had some question about it.

Dash: Everybody knew that that agreement was an agreement based on a false story, was that not true?

Magruder: Yes, that is correct.

Dash: And Mr. Haldeman knew that then, did he not?

Magruder: I cannot recall in my meeting with him in January whether —yes, I am sure I did discuss those meetings, yes.

Dash: So the attempt to get together and agree on that meeting was an attempt to get together and agree on at least from your point of view, would be the full story?

Magruder: That is correct, Mr. Haldeman recommended that Mr. Dean and Mr. Mitchell and I meet, which we did that afternoon.

Dash: What was the result of that meeting?

Magruder: I realize that Mr. Dean had different opinions then as to what he would do probably, and so then my —I thought that probably it was more appropriate that even on that Monday that I get separate counsel so that I could get advice independent of the individuals who had participated with me in these activities.

(And after retaining his own attorney, Magruder testified, he decided to go to the federal prosecutors and began telling them his story. He said he has agreed to plead guilty to one felony count of conspiracy and testify at any future criminal trials.)