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FREDERICK C. LaRUE AT COURTHOUSE
Nixon campaign aide pleaded guilty to conspiracy

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LaRue Guilty-- He'll Cooperate

Washington

Frederick C. LaRue who was special assistant to John Mitchell at the Committee for the Re-election of the President, pleaded guilty yesterday to charges of conspiracy to obstruct justice.

He has agreed to cooperate with the Watergate special prosecution force and to testify as a government witness at possible future trials.

LaRue, who traveled in the highest political circles of the President's re-election campaign, became the first figure to fall in the second round of investigations into the events surrounding the June 17, 1972, burglary of Democratic National Headquarters at the Watergate complex.

The pleas was entered before Chief Judge John J. Sirica in U.S. District Court. Sirica delayed sentencing him until after the disposition of any new indictments.

LaRue, a once-wealthy Mississippi oilman who was involved in President Nixon's "Southern Strategy" to break the Democratic party's hold on the Deep South, read a short statement to the court.

He said he attended a meeting in late March, 1972, at which the Watergate bugging was discussed but "I recommended against the plan" and "it was not approved in my presence."

After the Watergate burglars were arrested inside Democratic headquarters,

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"my knowledge and involvement increased," he said.

"I learned from Mr. Gordon Liddy on June 20 that he, an official of the committee, had in fact been involved in this fiasco."

STORY

He went on to say that he sat in on meetings with Jeb Stuart Magruder, who was deputy director of the re-election committee, and others where they discussed the "protective" story Magruder would tell federal investigators.

"I joined in that coverup, at least by acquiescence" he said.

Also, LaRue said, he received and distributed cash that went to the Watergate defendants and their lawyers. James W. McCord Jr., convicted in the first trial, has said that those payments were made so that all seven defendants in that trial would plead guilty and remain silent.

John W. Dean III, President Nixon's former counsel, has said that demands for those payments escalated to the point of blackmail in the case of one of the defendants, E. Howard Hunt Jr.

DELAY

In delaying sentencing of LaRue, Sirica stated that the special prosecutor indicated that further indictments were "forthcoming in what we call the Watergate matter."

He said such indictments would presumably include "references to activities in which LaRue has been involved."

Both sides agreed to the delay "until after the disposition of those new indictments," as Sirica put it.

LaRue could face five years in prison and a \$10,000 fine at the most.

BAIL

He was released without bail. He is to stay in the Washington area except for visits to his Jackson, Miss., home or to New York where another aspect of the Watergate scandals is under investigation.

LaRue waived his right to go before a grand jury to weigh an indictment against him and instead pleaded

guilty to information filed with the court by the special prosecutor.

The indictment cited seven "overt acts of conspiracy," which included:

- At a meeting June 19, two days after the Watergate burglary, he met with "others unnamed" and they agreed to destroy "certain incriminating records" relating to the break-in, James F. Neal, of the special prosecutor's office, identified these as wiretapping logs and summary sheets.

- On July 19, a month later, he delivered "a sum of money" to Herbert M. Kalmbach at the old Executive Office Building. Kalmbach was President Nixon's former personal lawyer and one of his chief fund-raisers.

- He delivered on July 26 another unspecified sum of money to Kalmbach.

- Prior to Aug. 16, 1972, he met with "others unnamed" at the re-election headquarters "where Jeb S. Magruder's false, misleading and deceptive statement, previously made to the Federal Bureau of Investigation, was further discussed."

- On August 16, Magruder falsely testified before the grand jury investigating the case.

- On Sept. 19, 1972, he received \$29,900 in cash and on December 1, \$280,000, again in currency.

On June 12, Archibald Cox, the special Watergate prosecutor, had written to Fred M. Vinson Jr., LaRue's lawyer, arranging for the plea. In the letter Cox said all other charges surrounding the Watergate incident and the cover-up relating to LaRue would be dropped, including possible violations of the Federal Election Campaign Act and the Corrupt Practices Act.

"This understanding," Cox wrote, "is predicated on Mr. LaRue's complete cooperation with the governate, full and truthful disclosure of all information in his possession."

He said this would mean testifying at trials or in other cases. Cox said the extent of his cooperation "will be brought to the court's attention before sentencing."

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