

Supreme Court Refuses to Hear Haldeman Plea on Cover-Up Indictments

Special to The New York Times
 WASHINGTON, Nov. 11—The Supreme Court removed today the last obstacle to continued prosecution of the Watergate cover-up case by refusing to hear a major legal objection raised by H. R. Haldeman, one of the defendants.
 Mr. Haldeman, White House chief of staff under President Nixon, attempted to block the current trial with a lawsuit contending that the term of the Watergate grand jury had been illegally extended and that the indictments it voted were thus invalid.
 The grand jury was impaneled on June 5, 1972, and would normally have expired 18 months later, on Dec. 4, 1973. Congress however, approved legislation extending

the jury's life by six months and the cover-up indictments were handed up during that extension.
 Federal District Judge John J. Sirica denied Mr. Haldeman's motion to dismiss the indictments on the ground that the grand jury was not legally in existence when they were voted. The United States Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia refused to review Judge Sirica's ruling.
 By declining to take the case today, the Supreme Court in effect rejected Mr. Haldeman's argument that only the Justices and not Congress could change the Federal Rules of Criminal Procedure that limit regular grand juries to 18 months.
 As is normally true when they refuse to review a lower

court decision, the Justices did not make public any statement of their reasons.
CORPORATE POLITICAL AID
 In another ruling, the high court agreed to decide whether a stockholder could sue a corporation for damages for an alleged violation of the criminal prohibition against the use of corporate funds for partisan political purposes.
 The case involves Richard A. Ash, a stockholder in the Bethlehem Steel Corporation, who sued its president, Stewart S. Cort, and other officials after the corporation financed a 1972 advertising campaign that Mr. Ash said was aimed at promoting a Republican victory.
 The ads the corporation paid for carried the headline "Let's Keep the Campaign Honest"

and urged voters to mobilize "truth squads" to alert the news media to possible distortions by Presidential candidates. It did not openly favor either major political party.
 Federal District Court ruled for the corporation, saying that Mr. Ash could not base a civil suit on the criminal ban on corporations making political contributions. But the United States Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit reversed and ordered a trial on whether the advertisement had a "partisan purpose."
REPOSSESSION OF CARS
 On a relatively quiet decision day, the Justices also declined to review five decisions from three states that upheld the right of automobile dealers to repossess cars bought on the

instalment plan, without a court order or notice to the buyer, when there is a default in payments.
 The buyers had argued unsuccessfully that such seizure deprived them of their property without due process of law. The high court issued apparently conflicting rulings on the issues during the last few years.
NAMES OF WAR DEAD
 The high court declined to review a decision denying a group of Vietnam veterans an injunction against an Oklahoma law that prohibits the display on placards of the names of war dead during a protest.
 The Oklahoma Supreme Court had reversed a decision that the statute was unconstitutional, holding that the pro-

testers could not get an injunction against a criminal law. Presumably, they could raise the free-speech issue again if they were arrested for such a demonstration.
TAX LIABILITY IN DIVORCE
 The Justices also refused to hear a protest by a divorced husband who had been required by the Internal Revenue Service to pay a capital gains tax on the increase in value of stock that was allocated to his former wife as part of a property settlement.
 The stock originally cost \$83,000 but was worth more than \$500,000 when it passed to the wife, and the lower court ruled that tax liability for the difference remained with the husband, despite the divorce.