

## Strachan Is Cleared As Sirica Dismisses 2 Cover-up Charges

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WASHINGTON, March 10 (AP)—United States District Judge John J. Sirica dismissed charges today in the Watergate cover-up case against Gordon C. Strachan, once the principal aide to H. R. Haldeman, the former White House chief of staff.

Mr. Strachan, 31 years old, was charged with conspiracy to obstruct justice and lying to a grand jury.

The Watergate special prosecutor, Henry S. Ruth Jr., had asked that the charges be dropped. He said that evidence against Mr. Strachan might not stand up in a trial because he had been granted immunity for his testimony before the Senate Watergate committee.

Mr. Ruth said that recent appeals court decisions indicated that "it is exceedingly difficult to successfully prosecute a previously immunized individual."

Mr. Strachan, who had been the liaison between the White House and Richard M. Nixon's 1972 re-election committee, was not in the courtroom for the 10-minute session. He now lives in Salt Lake City and is doing legal research for a firm there.

He was one of 11 White House and re-election committee aides charged with trying to hide upper-level involvement in the Watergate break-in.

In Salt Lake City, Mr. Strachan said today that it had been a pleasant weekend for him, his wife, Kristine, and their daughter, Lauren, after Mr. Ruth's decision, and "I was even more relieved when my lawyer called this morning to say the judge had signed the paper."

He said he had not been especially nervous that Judge Sirica would not go along with Mr. Ruth's request that charges be dropped, although the judge had dealt firmly with some Watergate defendants.

He said he now would like to apply for admission to the Utah bar and return to the practice of law. He said the people of Salt Lake City had been good to him and his family during the two years they have lived in Utah. "We hope to give something back to the community," he added.

Mr. Strachan was indicted on March 1, 1974, along with Mr. Haldeman; the former Attorney General, John N. Mitchell; the former White House domestic counselor, John D. Ehrlichman; two re-election committee lawyers, Robert C. Mardian and Kenneth W. Parkinson; and this former White House special counsel, Charles W. Colson.

Mr. Mitchell, Mr. Haldeman, Mr. Ehrlichman and Mr. Mardian were convicted New Year's Day and are appealing. Mr. Parkinson was acquitted. Charges against Mr. Colson were dismissed when he pleaded guilty to an attempt to defame Daniel Ellsberg, the Pentagon Papers figure.