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Nixon Re-Election Aide

6 Months in Prison for LaRue



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FREDERICK LaRUE
Watergate coverup

Washington

Frederick LaRue, a high-ranking official in former President Nixon's 1972 re-election campaign, was sentenced to six months in prison yesterday for his part in the Watergate coverup.

LaRue, 46, who was a White House aide before joining the re-election effort, was given until April 1 to report to prison.

He has been free on bond since entering his plea more than 20 months ago. He was the first participant in the coverup to plead guilty after the original Watergate break-in trial, and his plea was seen as important by prosecutors at the time in that it placed pressure on other potential defendants and witnesses to cooperate with the continuing probe.

LaRue's attorney, Fred M. Vinson Jr., emphasized the early cooperation in his pleadings before U.S. District Judge John Sirica yesterday. He asked that LaRue not be jailed.

He said LaRue was unique among Watergate defendants in that he never sought immunity "in any form from anybody" because he did not want to benefit from his testimony, which he knew would be damaging to several long-time friends.

LaRue, who spoke briefly in his own behalf, also focused on his cooperation as the reason he should not be jailed.

"My testimony contributed to the goal" expressed by Sirica in the Watergate cases as a "search for the truth," LaRue said.

He added: "To the extent my activities contributed to Watergate, I am truly sorry."

Sirica then imposed the

six-month jail term on LaRue, conceding at the same time the amount of LaRue's cooperation.

However, he said a prison term was necessary to avoid a wide disparity in the sentencing of convicted Watergate defendants.

After completing the

six-month term, LaRue will be on probation for two years.

Sirica asked the federal Bureau of Prisons to pick a facility in the next two weeks where LaRue can begin serving his sentence.

LaRue, who worked as former Attorney General John

Mitchell's right-hand man at the Committee for the Re-Election of the President, pleaded guilty June 23, 1973, to one count of conspiracy to obstruct justice. He could have been sentenced to five years in jail and fined \$10,000.

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