

Local

ARCH 29, 1973

Phone 223-6000

Classified 223-8200
Circulation 223-6100

15c Beyond Washington
Maryland and Virginia 10

Mitchell Is Linked To Bugging Plans

By Bob Woodward and Carl Bernstein
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James W. McCord Jr. testified under oath yesterday that he was told by his principal superior in the Watergate conspiracy that former Attorney General John N. Mitchell had personally approved plans to bug the Democrats' headquarters, according to Senate sources.

McCord testified that his coconspirator and former White House aide, G. Gordon Liddy, told him that Mitchell had approved the plans and budget for the bugging while Mitchell was still serving as attorney general in February, 1972, the sources said.

According to the sources, McCord indicated that he knew of additional illegal wiretaps but would not discuss them with the Senate Watergate committee unless he is granted immunity from further prosecution.

McCord also said that he had been told by Liddy and former White House consultant E. Howard Hunt Jr., another conspirator, that presidential counsel John W. Dean III and former White House assistant Jeb Stuart Magruder had advance knowledge of the bugging operation, according to the sources.

In addition, the sources reported, McCord testified that he received "second-hand information" that Charles W. Colson, then special counsel to President Nixon, knew too that the Democrats' Watergate headquarters were to be placed under illegal electronic surveillance.

Colson has denied any advance knowledge of the bugging.

McCord's testimony was delivered in a 4½-hour, closed-door meeting of the Senate's select committee investigating the Watergate bugging and related acts of political espionage and sabotage. It came as Hunt was appearing before a grand jury at the same time. (Details on Page A22).

McCord is scheduled to appear again before the Senate committee next Wednesday, presumably when the committee will vote whether to grant him immunity from further prosecution.



JOHN N. MITCHELL
... named by McCord



CHARLES W. COLSON
... denies knowledge

One Senate source said that McCord's testimony about the alleged involvement of the high presidential aides was hearsay because his knowledge came from Liddy and Hunt.

Another of the sources said that McCord was very positive about the information he received from Liddy about Mitchell. "There was complete communication between McCord and Liddy about the subject," the source said.

That source, however, cautioned that McCord's information was not sufficient to prove illegal involvement of others in the celebrated conspiracy.

The sources said that McCord, the former security coordinator of the Committee for the Re-election of the President, provided leads in his testimony that could provide additional information about alleged involvement of those presidential aides.

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