

Martha: John Was 'Taken'

By Helen Thomas
 United Press

San Clemente

Martha Mitchell said yesterday her husband, John, is "broken up" about the Watergate affair and that she and John no longer are talking to each other.

She added that she plans to stand by him at least until all charges are resolved.

In a telephone call from her New York City apartment, Mrs. Mitchell pictured her husband, a former attorney general and President Nixon's campaign manager, as being in an extended state of depression as a result of the Watergate scandal and related allegations against him.

She said that she and Mitchell are still living together, but "I don't talk to him any more—I can't get through to him."

"He never moves, he won't see our friends, he's broken up," Mrs. Mitchell said.

"That's what the doctors say. He's remote. He's been taken. He took a tremendous loss. Nixon cut him off and his law firm has been miserable to him. He stays in the apartment 24 hours a day."

CHARGE

Mitchell has been charged with obstruction of justice and lying to a grand jury in connection with a \$200,000 cash contribution from Robert L. Vesco, a New Jersey financier, solicited while Vesco was under investigation for a charged "looting" millions of dollars from four mutual funds.

Mitchell and former Commerce Secretary Maurice H. Stans, another defendant in the case, are to go on trial September 11.

SFChronicle AUG 28 1973
Mitchell's
Lawyers Say
He's Fine

New York

Lawyers for John Mitchell said yesterday that although the former attorney general is undergoing considerable strain, he has not gone into seclusion and appears to be "bearing up quite well under the circumstances."

They said they have seen a different side of Mitchell from the one depicted by his wife, Martha, yesterday in a telephone call to United Press reporter Helen Thomas at San Clemente.

Mitchell's top Washington lawyer, William Hundley, said he saw Mitchell just last week. "He came out to my house for dinner and put up with my six kids and that takes a spirited man. He enjoyed himself, he was even playing with them," said Hundley.

"He is tired and under a lot of strain, but he certainly does not appear in the throes of a deep depression," Hundley added.

"He's not a man who is jumping up and down, but he's certainly bearing up a heck of a lot better than I would under the same circumstances."

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Mrs. Mitchell said she has been consulting a lawyer but gave no indication she plans to seek a separation.

"I have to hold up until John is convicted or disbarred or cleared," she said. "I'm not going to do anything against my husband. I lived 17 years with him. I don't believe there are many women in the

country who have been so faithful.

"I love him very much. He loves me because I've stood up for him. But he is defending the President, who planned the whole god-damned thing. I'm talking to you in front of God."

BOOK

Mrs. Mitchell repeated a previous statement that before her husband became 1972 campaign manager he was given a leather-bound, two-inch thick book marked "Eyes Only" which contained campaign strategy.

"I saw the book in my house," she said. "John was sitting in his chair reading it. He said to me, 'Boy, they really have got a good plan for surveillance.'"

"He said it was foolproof. God, I wish I had taped it all down."

Asked what happened to the "campaign strategy" book, Mrs. Mitchell said:

"The whole damn thing has been shredded to bits—are you kidding?"

DENIAL

At the Western White House, presidential spokesman Gerald L. Warren denied the report and said the President stands by his statement that he did not have anything to do with the planning of his 1972 campaign.

Mrs. Mitchell said she knows "a thousand other things" about Watergate, adding, "You have no idea how much I know, but I'm afraid I'm dealing with the Mafia."

In her call, Mrs. Mitchell sharply criticized Mr. Nixon.

"He bleeds people," she said. "He draws every drop of blood and then drops them from a cliff. He'll blame any person he can put his foot on. I've never seen

anything like it in history. We need a new government."

Mrs. Mitchell said her husband "had a fine reputation on Wall street until he merged his firm with Nixon's firm."

She said that for a time she accepted Mitchell's assurances that things would turn out all right.

"In those days I believed him," she said. "I kept thinking maybe I am a fool. Maybe I am crazy."

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