

Prison Date For Mitchell, Haldeman

Washington

In the final courtroom act of Watergate, the only sounds were the crinkle of legal documents and the woosh of air conditioning as John N. Mitchell and H.R. Haldeman received papers ordering them to enter federal prisons by noon June 22.

The courtroom atmosphere was low-keyed and impersonal as the U.S. legal system imposed its penalties on the two men, once powerful government officials in the Nixon administration, for trying to circumvent the system through the Watergate coverup.

Mitchell and Haldeman were the last of the major Watergate figures to be sentenced, and no further cases are in the works.

Neither defendant made a comment to U.S. District Judge

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UPI Telephoto

JOHN MITCHELL (LEFT) WITH U.S. MARSHAL
Former attorney general left in a defiant mood

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John Sirica, who sat expressionless as Haldeman, former White House chief of staff, and former Attorney General Mitchell examined and then signed the legal documents ordering them to give up their freedom for a minimum of 2½ years.

But before and after the four-minute court session, their moods and actions were strikingly different. Mitchell was defiant outside the courtroom. Haldeman, known as a stern taskmaster with cut-to-the-bone comments at the White House, was smiling and affable.

Surrounded by reporters as he entered the U.S. courthouse, Mitchell kept walking. He gestured toward a microphone that a television reporter was carrying. "If anybody puts one of those near me, I'm going to knock it down his throat," said the usually unflappable Mitchell.

After the four-minute court session Mitchell left to go to a car, and two federal marshals cleared a path for him.

"I hope nobody gets killed out of this," he said as he got into the car.

Haldeman appeared in Sirica's courtroom 30 minutes before the session was to begin.

"Back at the old stand?" he said to Frieda Reiter, a television artist assigned to the Watergate case since the coverup began to unravel in 1973. He leaned forward and kissed her on the cheek.

Outside the courthouse after the session, Haldeman stopped and



H. R. HALDEMAN
'A tough four years'

told reporters he was "prepared now to accept the results" of four years of legal proceedings.

"Do you feel any remorse?" Haldeman was asked.

"Let me say it's been a tough four years," Haldeman said, as if the question had not been asked. "But during that time I greatly appreciated the support and the consideration that's been expressed towards me by people throughout this country.

"And I especially deeply appreciate the love and the courage and understanding that my family has shown through this."

Sirica, in fixing the June 22 surrender date, apparently took note of Haldeman's request that he remain free through June 19, when his daughter, Susan, is to graduate

from UCLA law school. Haldeman said she plans to serve as a law clerk for a federal judge in Minnesota after graduation.

Lawyers for both men indicated they will follow the option of surrendering to authorities at minimum security federal prison camps on June 22 rather than returning to

Washington and surrendering to marshals.

Haldeman is expected to be sent to the prison camp at Lompoc, Calif., while Mitchell will be assigned to one on the East Coast.

A Bureau of Prisons spokesman stressed yesterday that no special security precautions will be taken for Mitchell, the vocal advocate of the Nixon administration's "law-and-order" stance, whose name appeared on legal documents related to the incarceration of a sizable number of current federal prisoners.

By June 17, coincidentally five years after the Watergate break-in, lawyers for Haldeman and Mitchell plan to ask the Supreme Court to reconsider its earlier decision not to review their Watergate coverup convictions. Such reconsideration is rarely granted.

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