



AP Wirephoto

John Mitchell (center) left federal prison — an attorney carried his bags

Medical Furlough

Mitchell Gets Out

Washington

John N. Mitchell left prison on medical furlough yesterday and returned to Washington so doctors can decide if he needs an artificial hip.

The former attorney general flew in a private jet from Montgomery, Ala., dressed in the summer suit he wore when he entered the Maxwell Air Force Base prison camp June 22. He declined a friend's offer of a topcoat in the freezing temperature.

Never known for long speeches, Mitchell told reporters at the prison gates, "It's a lovely morning." After arrival at a private portion of Dulles Airport, he was driven to an undisclosed destination.

The 64-year-old Mitchell, serving one to four years for obstructing justice, conspiracy and lying under oath in the Watergate case, is on

medical furlough until January 15.

To guard Mitchell's privacy, his lawyer, William D. Hundley, declined to say where he will be hospitalized.

If the tests indicate an operation is necessary, Hundley said, "I will then ask for a furlough to have the operation performed."

Mitchell has suffered for years from arthritis in his right hip. During the three-month coverup trial, which ended on New Year's Day 1975, he limped perceptibly.

Mitchell won't be eligible for parole until next June 21.

During the furlough, Mitchell is regarded officially as still in custody. He has to report his whereabouts daily to a probation officer.

Associated Press