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Evidence Ruled Invalid**Mitchell Wiretaps Anger Judge****Miami**

U.S. District Judge William Mehrrens said yesterday he has suppressed wiretaps showing "overwhelming" evidence of guilt in 11 federal gambling, narcotics and bribery cases because former Attorney General John Mitchell "believed he could ignore an express command of Congress."

"It is with the greatest reluctance that I suppress the evidence in this and the other ten cases," Mehrrens said in the order. "The evidence of guilt derived from the wiretaps is overwhelming."

But Mehrrens said he was forced to act because a hearing here last month, at which Mitchell was subpoenaed to testify, showed that the wiretap orders were illegally authorized.

The Omnibus Crime Act provided that only the attor-

ney general and a few designated assistants could authorize wiretaps. But it was revealed during the hearing that others in the Justice Department had improperly signed wiretap authorizations while Mitchell was attorney general.

"A series of thorough and extensive investigations extending over a period of months are in effect wasted and it is quite clear that... the officers in the field had no means of knowing that the applications were improperly authorized," the judge said.

"The blame for this waste of public resources, however, does not rest with the court. It lies squarely in the office of the attorney general of the United States.

"For some reason unknown to this court the highest law enforcement officer in this country (Mitchell) believed he could ignore an

express command of Congress."

"In such times as this," the judge said, "it is especially important that the law not be bent or ignored in the name of expediency especially by the highest enforcement officer in the country.

"In a government of laws, the very existence of the government is imperiled if it

fails to observe the laws scrupulously. When the government becomes a lawbreaker, it breeds contempt for laws. Against such pernicious conduct, this court resolutely sets its face."

The cases involved in the ruling were from several states and were consolidated for a single hearing on the wiretap issue. *Associated Press*