

## McCord Charges Backed

## Source Calls Allegations 'Disturbing'

By Bob Woodward and Carl Bernstein

Washington Post Staff Writers

Senate sources confirmed yesterday that James W. McCord had identified two high aides to President Nixon as having advance knowledge of the Watergate bugging and a high Republican source said the allegations were "convincing, disturbing and supported by some documentation."

The two officials named by McCord were presidential counsel John W. Dean III and former White House aide Jeb Stuart Magruder, who was first acting director and then the No. 2 man in Mr. Nixon's re-election drive.

Watergate conspirator McCord, formerly the security chief for Mr. Nixon's re-election committee, made the charges against Dean and Magruder in long sessions Friday and Saturday with investigators from the Senate select committee probing the Watergate bugging and other alleged acts of political espionage and sabotage.

McCord implicated Dean in the planning of the bugging and indicated that Magruder committed perjury at the Watergate trial when he said he had no knowledge of the bugging before the June 17 arrests at the Democrats' Watergate headquarters, the sources said.

President Nixon personally telephoned Dean yesterday to express his "absolute and total confidence" in the White House counsel, according to presidential press secretary Ronald L. Ziegler. "Following that conversation," Ziegler said, "and based on that conversation, I will again flatly deny any prior knowledge on the part of Mr. Dean regarding the Watergate matter." Magruder earlier issued a denial.

In other developments yesterday:

• Sen. Lowell P. Weicker (R-Conn.), one of the seven members of the Senate Watergate committee, said he has established independently that

White House aides were involved in the bugging, as well as other sabotage and espionage activities against the Democrats. Weicker said he has no evidence that President

See WATERGATE, A10, Col 1

Nixon condoned such "illegal practices that demean the American process," but the senator expressed "a thorough disgust with the men around the President."

• During a closed-door meeting, members of the Senate's Watergate investigating committee were briefed on McCord's information and voted to allow live television coverage of the committee's upcoming hearings. Sen. Sam J. Ervin, chairman of the select committee, said the hearings definitely will begin before May and other members expressed hope they will begin in two or three weeks with McCord as one of the lead witnesses.

• E. Howard Hunt Jr., another Watergate conspirator, was reportedly considering providing information about the bugging, but will refuse to voluntarily talk to the Senate committee because of a fear of leaks to the press, according to a source close to Hunt.

• G. Gordon Liddy, who the government alleged was the "boss" of the Watergate operation, took the Fifth Amendment 20 times yesterday as he appeared before the federal grand jury which yesterday reopened its investigation and asked him about the possible involvement of others.

• Washington Star-News Staff Writer Mary McGrory said that she encountered McCord yesterday coming out of a Cleveland Park drugstore and he confirmed to her that he told Senate investigators that Dean and Magruder had previous knowledge of the bugging.

Sen. Weicker's comments appeared to reflect increasing unhappiness among Senate Republicans about the White House. Another GOP senator, who asked not to be named, described the recent Watergate disclosures as "absolutely appalling" and said "the President would be well advised to clean out his house."

Weicker, who has been conducting his own inquiry into the Watergate case and related matters since his appointment to the select committee, said his preliminary information alone is sufficient "to come forth with some sort of sensational disclosures."

Senate sources familiar with Weicker's inquiry said he has developed "pretty hard evidence" on White House involvement in the bugging and other undercover activities.

In comments to reporters yesterday, Weicker observed that specific violation of the

law "is not the only issue involved, although some people in the administration would like to have it drawn that way, as narrowly as possible." He added: "It's just as bad in my book for certain persons at the presidential level to condone illegal practices . . . I don't give a damn if there's a law on the books against it or not."

"Does the Watergate lead directly to the President?" Weicker was asked. He replied: "Well, I am not prepared to go ahead and name any names unless I have the facts to back it up. Do I think that I will have the facts and will there be other names? The answer is yes."

"Other names . . . in the White House?" the senator was asked. "That's right," he replied. "Do I have a broader picture that I am trying to substantiate? The answer is yes. Do I think it goes beyond Watergate? The answer is yes. Somebody had to start it. Somebody had to abet it. Mr. Hunt and Mr. Liddy and Mr. McCord, et al, didn't just get together in a barroom one night and decide they were going to do something gratuitous for the Republican Party."

While generally issuing denunciations of the leak of McCord's testimony to the Senate Watergate committee, a number of Republican senators called on the President to put the information about the Watergate on the public record.

It was learned, for example, that members of the Republican leadership in the Senate have advised the President to permit Dean to testify before the select committee at public hearings. The President has said he will not let Dean or any other present or former White House aide appear before any congressional committee.

The two sources confirmed elements of a Los Angeles Times' account of McCord's statements, including allegations that:

Other persons, probably higher up in the White House and the Nixon campaign organization, also had knowledge of the bugging and would later be named by McCord.

• During his testimony at the Watergate trial, Magruder should have told of Dean's and his own involvement.

Watergate conspirator Hunt persuaded the four defendants from Miami to follow his lead and plead guilty at the Watergate trial.

• McCord himself was pressured to plead guilty, but did not.

DeVan L. Shumway, a spokesman for the Committee for the Re-election of the President, said yesterday that the leaks from the Senate investigating committee "are irresponsible and almost unforgivable."

"It is a star chamber proceeding in which innocent persons are charged," Shumway said. He said it is "unimaginable" that the information was leaked to the press without the knowledge of Samuel Dash, the chief counsel to the committee. Dash has denied leaking the information.

At a press conference Sunday, Dash announced that he and McCord had met in two long tape-recorded sessions Friday and Saturday, during which McCord "named names" and began "supplying a full and honest account" of the bugging operation.

If McCord's allegations are true, they contradict testimony at the trial by Magruder, who said he authorized the payment of about \$235,000 to Watergate conspirator Liddy. Magruder said the money was only to be used for "legal" and "ethical" security operations.

Magruder also testified that Dean recommended Liddy for the job as general counsel to the Nixon committee, emphasizing that Dean had noted that Liddy, an ex-FBI agent, would be useful to assist in any "intelligence-gathering" problems.

McCord met with Dash after a court hearing Friday during which McCord said in a letter that he had knowledge of "perjury," "political pressure" and the involvement of others in the Watergate.

Meanwhile, at the U.S. District Court building here yesterday, Watergate conspirator Liddy invoked the Fifth Amendment 20 times in testimony before the grand jury.

Liddy, who has been sentenced to six years and eight months for his role in the break-in and bugging of the Democratic Party's Watergate

\* Ziegler says, 11 Jun 73, that it was Haldeman who called Dean, not Nixon. (SFChronicle [WXPost] 12 Jun 73.)



headquarters, was called before the federal grand jury investigating the incident and questioned by federal prosecutors about the possible involvement of others, according to the official minutes of the one-hour, 15-minute session.

Principal Assistant United States Attorney Earl J. Silbert, the chief prosecutor in the Watergate trial, refused to comment when asked whether Dean would be called before the grand jury or whether Magruder, who testified prior to the trial, would be called back.

In a related development, Daniel E. Schultz, the attorney for the four Miami defendants who pleaded guilty at the Watergate trial, issued a statement denying a story in Sunday's Washington Post.

The story quoted informed sources as saying that New York attorney Henry B. Rothblatt, formerly the attorney for the four men, planned to re-enter the case to seek a new trial on grounds that they were pressured to plead guilty.

"We have no desire to have Mr. Rothblatt re-enter this case on our behalf," according to the statement released by the four men, Bernard L. Barker, Frank A. Sturgis, Eugenio R. Martinez and Virgilio Gonzalez.

The statement said that "no such motion as was described in the article . . . is being contemplated." The statement did not deny that the four men were pressured to plead guilty.

It is known that Rothblatt visited his former clients at least twice after Jan. 12 when he was fired as their attorney because he would not let them plead guilty.