

MCCORD TESTIFIES FELLOW PLOTTERS CITED NIXON AIDES

Watergate Figure Says He
Was Told Mitchell Served
as 'Boss' for Espionage

SENATORS GIVEN REPORT

MAR 30 1973

Former Attorney General
Calls Assertion 'False'—
Haldeman Also Named
NYTimes

By WALTER RUGABER

Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, March 29 —

James W. McCord Jr. has testified under oath that his fellow conspirators in the Watergate affair gave him the impression that they had cleared their clandestine operations with ranking officials in the Nixon Administration.

McCord, former chief of security for President Nixon's reelection campaign organization, told a Senate committee in secret session yesterday that his confederates often invoked the names of prominent officials who he said were behind the plot.

According to reliable sources, McCord, convicted in January in the break-in and bugging last June at the Democratic National Committee headquarters in the Watergate complex here, cited hearsay among his co-conspirators as the basis for the following major assertions.

John N. Mitchell, who left his post as Attorney General to serve as Mr. Nixon's campaign director, approved the espionage activity and served as "over-all boss" of the team that mounted it.

John W. Dean 3d, counsel to the President, sat in on a planning meeting with two men ultimately convicted as conspirators, heard their plans, and later reported that the operation had been approved. McCord apparently did not say who had given the approval.

H. R. Haldeman, the White House chief of staff, "knew what was going on" at the Committee for the Re-election of the President. One source said that McCord had not elaborated on this assertion.

Robert C. Mardian, former Assistant Attorney General in charge of the Internal Security Division, had been in contact with McCord, who invoked the Fifth Amendment's protection against self-incrimination when

Continued on Page 21, Column 2

Continued From Page 1, Col. 8

asked the circumstances.

Charles W. Colson, former special counsel to the President and was thought by McCord to have received a detailed plan for the Watergate operation from E. Howard Hunt Jr., who pleaded guilty in the conspiracy.

Colson Role 'Unclear'

McCord was said to have told the select committee that he was "unclear" as to what role Mr. Colson had played, but he added that the former White House adviser, who recommended Hunt as a parttime White House consultant, had been "knowledgeable" about the Watergate plot.

Mr. Colson, like the other officials named by McCord, has denied allegations that he was involved in the conspiracy. He denounced the report today as a "goddamned lie."

"It's simple untrue," Mr. Colson said in an interview. "That's my response. I've testified under oath three times that I had no knowledge of it, and that is my answer again."

Mr. Colson, who recently left the White House and is now in private law practice here, recommended Hunt for employment as a consultant and once served as his superior.

Statement by Mitchell

Mr. Mitchell, who resigned as head of the Nixon campaign committee about two weeks after McCord and four other men were arrested in the Democratic headquarters at night, issued a statement today through the President's political unit. It said:

"I deeply resent the slanderous and false statements about me concerning the Watergate matter reported as being based on hearsay and leaked out. I have previously denied any prior knowledge of or involvement in the Watergate affair and again reaffirm such denials."

The statements by Mr. Mitchell and Mr. Colson were based on reports published today citing parts of McCord's testimony involving them. These reports were officially con-

firmed this afternoon by Senator Lowell P. Weicker, Republican of Connecticut, a member of the senate committee.

Mr. Weicker, at a news conference in a Senate hearing room, asserted that the reports today covered only about "one-tenth" of the information provided by McCord yesterday.

The Senator also said that the Watergate operation and related political espionage last year in the election campaign had been coordinated by an overall "chief" who is still a ranking member of the White House staff.

Disclosures Deplored

Mr. Weicker deplored the disclosures about the McCord testimony on the ground that it could undermine the credibility of the Select Committee on Presidential Campaign Activities, headed by Senator Sam J. Ervin Jr., Democrat of North Carolina.

While further news of McCord's testimony leaked out of the capitol, Hunt spent more than four hours before a Federal grand jury summoned back into session to investigate the case.

It was the third day of testimony by Hunt. He went before the 23-member panel yesterday after Chief Judge John J.

Sirica of the Federal District Court here granted him immunity from further prosecution after Hunt invoked his Fifth Amendment right against self-incrimination.

There was no sign from Government prosecutors as to how the interrogation of Hunt was proceeding. But there was no move to take the witness back before Judge Sirica and charge him with contempt of court for refusing to answer questions.

Meeting With Mitchell

McCord's statements to the Senate committee, The New York Times learned, included a number of disclosures important to the Watergate case besides those naming prominent Government figures.

The witness, it was said, recalled that his superior in the spying activity, G. Gordon Liddy, began to talk about a forthcoming meeting to brief Mr. Mitchell on the Watergate operation two or three weeks before it was held.

A series of charts, one of them 4 feet by 4 feet, were prepared by Liddy as an apparent aid in briefing Mr. Mitchell at a gathering in February, 1972, according to the testimony.