

# Prober Suspects White House Aide in Bugging

Associated Press

Washington

Senator Lowell P. Weicker Jr. (Rep-Conn.) said yesterday he thinks the Watergate bugging was just a part of GOP political espionage and sabotage against the Democrats last year that, he said, was directed by someone in the White House.

Weicker told a news conference that on the basis of his own investigating he thinks he knows who this person is, but he declined to say.

At the same time Weicker said he has "absolute confidence that President Nixon knew nothing about these tactics. However, he said he wished Mr. Nixon would let top aides testify at the hearings of a special Senate investigating committee.

## McCord

Weicker, a member of the committee, confirmed press reports that convicted Watergate defendant James W. McCord Jr. had testified secretly Wednesday that he had been told former Attorney General John N. Mitchell approved plans for the bugging of Democratic headquarters in the Watergate complex.

(The Baltimore Sun reported in this morning's editions that during his secret Senate committee testimony McCord said that White House aide H. R. Haldeman was "fully aware" of the Watergate bugging incident before it happened.

(The newspaper's Washington correspondent, Muriel



AP Wirephoto

**SENATOR WEICKER  
He thinks he knows**

Dobbin, quoted congressional sources for the report.)

Weicker said there was "no corroborative evidence of any kind" — documentary or otherwise — to support what McCord reportedly testified had been told to him

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by G. Gordon Liddy, also convicted in the Watergate break-in and bugging.

Weicker said McCord's "entire testimony was based on conversations with Mr. Liddy."

Earlier Mitchell issued a statement denying he had approved plans to wiretap the Democratic headquarters.

"I deeply resent the slanderous and false statements about me concerning the Watergate matter reported as being based on hearsay and leaked out of the Ervin committee," Mitchell said.

Senator Sam J. Ervin Jr. (Dem.-N.C.), not present for Wednesday's testimony by

McCord, is chairman of the special Watergate Investigating Committee set up by the Senate to investigate the Watergate affair and other alleged political espionage and sabotage in last year's presidential campaign.

## SPEECH

The Senate devoted considerable time yesterday to the Watergate case.

Senator Charles McC. Mathias (Rep-Md.) said in a speech that this case is one reason why "a significant number of people are losing faith in the validity and purpose of our government."

Mathias spoke after Republican leader Hugh Scott of Pennsylvania said Republican senators are concerned about the growing political impact of the Watergate case.

While McCord and Liddy pleaded not guilty and stood trial in the Watergate case, E. Howard Hunt and four others pleaded guilty. McCord, Liddy and Hunt all had former Republican connections.

## JURY

Hunt was an all day witness yesterday before a federal grand jury in Washington investigating the case separately.

Principal Assistant U.S. Attorney Earl J. Silbert said McCord will be called before the grand jury next week but the date would not conflict with McCord's next session at the Senate.

McCord is scheduled in court today for sentencing but U.S. District Judge John J. Sirica indicated that the sentencing date may be postponed because of McCord's continuing testimony.

Meanwhile former presidential counsel Charles W. Colson repeated his denial of having any knowledge of the break-in and bugging. He sharply criticized the press for what he called maligning White House aides.

"I had no involvement and no knowledge of the Watergate, direct or indirect," Colson said.