

KPFA news (transcribed from tape)
Joe Belden

20 April 1973

[From tape of Mitchell speaking with reporters following his testimony before grand jury.]

Q -- It is also alleged that you had some connection with paying money to the seven Watergate defendants, either to procure their silence or [unintelligible]. Had you anything to do with money that went to the defendants ?

A -- I have never met any of the defendants. I have never met any of their counsel, and I have never handled any money.

Belden: A few seconds later the reporter persisted. "Mr. Mitchell, it's suggested here that you didn't quite answer my question. Did you have any connection with the payment of the money?" Mitchell: "I answered your question fully and completely." Reporter: "Why did you wait till now to talk about having listened to discussions ? Why didn't you talk about it months ago?" Mitchell: "well, that involves a large number of subjects matters being investigated by the grand jury, and I think I'll leave it right there." And there he left it.

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In another development today, convicted Watergate defendant James McCord filed a lawsuit against the Committee to Re-Elect the President. McCord, who had been hired by Mitchell as chief of campaign security, asked for one and a half million dollars in damages for "damage to reputation, severe physical, mental emotional strain and intense mental anguish."

McCord alleged in his suit that he had been led to believe that what he was doing was sanctioned by the highest officials in the President's re-election campaign. [All other radio accounts heard during the day on his allegation in McCord's suit said only that he had been led to believe that what he was doing was not illegal.]