

Watergate's Split In the White House

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Experts on the White House now say the new outburst of re-creminations on the Watergate affair shows a clear pattern of factional strife that threatens the top command of the executive branch.

"The Haldeman-Ehrlichman side of the White House is in open warfare with the Mitchell-Dean side," said one of President Nixon's senior advisers. "It is a brutal battle."

Some of the angry principals openly admit a spirit of "every man for himself." Yet observers also see a rallying of allies along two main lines of power and

loyalty within Mr. Nixon's top staff.

One part of the executive structure, as presidential confidants now describe it, was recruited, led and protected by former Attorney General John N. Mitchell. The other side looks to White House chief of staff H. R. Haldeman as its captain, and to John D. Ehrlichman, a presidential counselor, as his deputy.

After more than five years of cordial rivalry, the two groups are in a struggle that some White House insiders say could bring down both factions.

A scorecard lineup of the two Nixon groups, as compiled

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against the white house; it was Hugh Sloan, a Haldeman man, who refused to let then-Secretary of the Interior, Walter Hickel see President Nixon in the summer of 1970, precipitating an angry letter from Hickel and Hickel's dismissal from the government.

Some members of the Haldeman group snickered privately when Mr. Nixon's first two nominees to the Supreme Court, Clement F. Haynsworth and G. Harold Carswell, were first cleared by Attorney General Mitchell and then rejected by the Senate.

Mitchell snickered in return at the failure of the hard-hitting White House campaign for Republican Senate and House candidates in 1970. Mitchell told friends that Haldeman had designed the 1970 strategy.

OVERLAP

In many enterprises, of course, the two groups overlapped or were intertwined. In the Watergate affair, it is unclear whether either faction can pin the blame on the other.

The key to this and other mysteries, sources close to the case suggest, may be G. Gordon Liddy, who declined to take the stand at his own trial and has maintained complete silence ever since.

Liddy's standing with regard to the Haldeman-Mitchell division is not yet clear. It was Dean, a Mitchell man, who recommended Liddy for a job at the Nixon re-election committee. But it was Magruder, a Haldeman man, who hired him and was supposed to supervise his work.

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by ranking officials and former officials, sheds considerable light on last week's charges and countercharges.

PLANNING

Last week, a Haldeman man, Jeb Stuart Magruder, told federal prosecutors that Mitchell and John W. Dean III, a young Mitchell protégé, had been in on the original planning to bug the Democratic National Committee offices in the Watergate complex during the presidential campaign last year.

The 38 year old Magruder — a Californian and a marketing man, like many in the Haldeman faction — first served the Nixon administration as deputy to Herbert G. Klein, the director of communications for the executive branch and an old friend of the President.

During the summer of 1971, after Mitchell appointed one of his own young lieutenants, Harry S. Fleming, to organize a Nixon re-election committee, Haldeman countered by sending Magruder in to help run the early operation. By the spring of 1972, Magruder was understood to have cut

off most of Fleming's influence.

Immediately after news leaked that Magruder was implicating Mitchell and Dean in the Watergate plot, Dean's friends put out the story that Haldeman had helped to conceal the truth about the bugging by intercepting and distorting the results of the investigation that Dean, as White House counsel, conducted for the President.

Dean, 34, had been called "Mitchell's fair-haired boy" since 1969 when he was the attorney general's trouble shooter in the Justice Department.

Dean warned last week that he would not be made a "scapegoat" in the Watergate scandal. He drafted a statement himself and had his secretary telephone it to news outlets after Ronald L. Ziegler, the White House press secretary, refused to put it out through the normal channels.

Ziegler, who once worked for Haldeman in the J. Walter Thompson advertising agency, has always been considered a part of Haldeman's White House machinery.

In the Nixon administration's happier days, the Mitchell and Halderman

groups shared responsibility and credit for the President's domestic success. But members of both groups now say that there were always tensions between them.

The "hard core Mitchell group," according to one member, was assembled on the organizational side of the 1968 campaign, which Mitchell eventually managed, and much of its strength was later concentrated in the Justice Department.

The Mitchell men, one says, considered themselves the organizers and grass-roots politicians in the administration. The Haldeman group "tended to be advance men and image guys," he said. "You never heard the Mitchell group talk media, but that talk dominated the other crowd. I always had the impression that their group tolerated the political side, but had no feel for politics."

The "hard-core" Haldeman group "came from the world of advertising and, directly or indirectly, from California.

DIFFERENCES

There were other early differences between the Mitchell and Haldeman groups. Mitchell's allies tended to identify with the Cabinet

Haldeman	Mitchell	Liddy -
Ehrlichman	Dean	Mitchell?
Magruder	LARUE *	Haldeman?
Ziegler	FLEMING *	
Sloan	MAROLAN	
CHAPIN **		
STRACHA ***		