

# 'Watergate Cleared at The Top' McCord Gives Memo to Jury

WASHINGTON — (UPI) — The Watergate affair followed a discussion in the office of former Attorney General John N. Mitchell, was cleared through the White House and was set up so Mitchell later could deny involvement, the grand jury investigating the case has been told.

James W. McCord Jr., security coordinator for the Nixon campaign and one of the men arrested inside Democratic headquarters at the Watergate last June 17, provided the grand jury with a two-page memorandum describing what McCord said he was told by co-conspirator G. Gordon Liddy on how the operation was planned.

## Reportedly Verified

The memo was among grand jury testimony and documents obtained by columnist Jack Anderson. It was made available by Anderson to UPI. The evidence given by McCord on this subject was second-hand and sometimes third-hand. However, government prosecutors reportedly have verified it from other sources.

There were these other developments:

- The New York Times said summaries of transcripts of some bugged telephone conversations at Democratic headquarters at the Watergate were sent regularly to the White House. The Times account quoting federal investigators said the identity was not learned of who received the reports at the White House.

- The Washington Star-News; a Nixon supporter in

both 1968 and 1972, published a lengthy editorial calling on Nixon to fire immediately staff members — including his closest aides — who were involved in any way in the Watergate.

- A lawyer hired by Nixon's top two aides, H. R. Haldeman and John D. Erlichman — whose names have been mentioned in recent days in reports suggesting they tried to help cover up the Watergate details after the break-in — visited the White House for the second

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straight day this morning. He is John J. Wilson. Nixon met with Wilson last week but the lawyer said he was "absolutely not" providing legal counsel to the President.

- The grand jury investigating the Watergate, which expects to hear testimony shortly from White House legal counsel John W. Dean — the White House staff member most frequently mentioned in reports of alleged bugging — apparently was not in session today.

According to McCord's account of what Liddy told him, the "pros and cons of various bugging type operations" were discussed at a meeting held in February 1972 in the Justice Department office of Mitchell, who was then attorney general.

Mitchell left that job in March 1972 to become Nixon's campaign manager.

Present were Mitchell, Liddy, White House counsel John W. Dean III and former White House aide Jeb Stuart Magruder, who became deputy campaign director, according to the account.

McCord quoted Liddy as saying no decisions were made but that Liddy was left with the impression approval would be forthcoming.

"A few days later Dean told Liddy that a way would have to be worked out to undertake the operation without directly involving the attorney general so that he would have deniability about it at a future date," the McCord memo said.

"About 30 days after the February meeting in the

AG's (attorney general's) office, Liddy told me that the operation 'had been approved' and that the funding for it would be through shortly," the memo said. "My impression was that this word of the approval came from Dean, although this was not specifically stated by Liddy."

## 'No Record'

McCord said Liddy told him he had been told by Dean that funds for the bugging "would subsequently come to him through other than regular" Nixon campaign channels "so there would be no record of it."

Mitchell flatly denied last Friday that he had "approved" Watergate bugging plans but told newsmen "I have heard discussions of such things." He has been indirectly quoted as saying he sought to veto such plans

within the Nixon organization.

The McCord memo was dated March 26 and was written to the select Senate committee which also is investigating the Watergate matter. A copy was provided the grand jury at its request.

## Separate Probe

U.S. District Court has ordered a separate grand jury investigation into how this and other grand jury evidence which was supposed to be secret got to Anderson.

In his grand jury testimony, McCord also said Mitchell, after becoming Nixon's campaign manager, arranged for FBI data and other secret government reports to be provided to Nixon campaign workers worried about violence from radical groups.