

Text of McCord memo attached.

MCCORD CHARGES PLOT AGAINST C.I.A.

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In a Memo He Says He Was Asked to Involve Agency in Watergate Break-In

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WASHINGTON, May 8—

James W. McCord Jr. has charged that he was pressured on two occasions before his trial early this year to assert that he and his colleagues were working on a covert operation for the Central Intelligence Agency at the time of their arrest in the Watergate break-in.

In a memorandum to Federal and Senate investigators made

Text of McCord statement is printed on Page 28.

available to The New York Times today, McCord said that at one point Gerald Alch, his attorney, told him that his personnel records at the C.I.A. could be altered, if needed, to show that he had been restored to active duty by the agency. McCord retired from the C.I.A. in 1970 after 19 years of service.

McCord quoted Mr. Alch as

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saying that James R. Schlesinger, the newly designated Director of Central Intelligence, "could be subpoenaed [to testify at the trial] and would go along with it."

At no point in the document did McCord say what individuals he thought were the source of the pressure. But he said that, by the time the actual trial began in January, "I was completely convinced that the White House was behind the idea and ploy which had been presented, and that the White House was turning ruthless, and would do whatever was politically expedient at any one particular point in time to accomplish its own ends."

McCord said he had refused to go along with the plan, thus preventing its use and incur-

ring the anger of E. Howard Hunt Jr., a fellow member of the Watergate break-in team who had served in the C.I.A. for 20 years.

A.C.I.A. spokesman expressed surprise at McCord's memo but said there would be no immediate comment.

Mr. Alch, a partner in the Boston law firm of F. Lee Bailey, declared through an associate that "it would be inappropriate to comment at this time, because of the attorney-client relationship" with McCord. Mr. Alch is still representing McCord in the criminal case stemming from the Watergate arrests.

However, another lawyer who was involved in the case confirmed that there had been serious discussions among the defendants and their lawyers about the possibility of contending that the men had been participating in a C.I.A. mission. The lawyer, who requested anonymity, said:

"The general thought was that the C.I.A. would keep a discreet silence. We figured that they wouldn't dare come forth."

He added that he "got the impression that C.R.P. [the Committee for the Re-election of the President] certainly had no objection to that kind of a defense."

In his memorandum, which was dated May 4 and delivered to the investigators yesterday, McCord noted:

"There had been indications as early as July that the Committee for the Re-election of the President was claiming that the Watergate operation was a C.I.A. operation."

McCord quoted Hunt's wife, Dorothy, who reportedly handled money for the Watergate defendants after their arrests, as saying that Paul L. O'Brien, an attorney for the re-election committee, had first told her that the break-in at the headquarters of the Democratic National Committee was a C.I.A. operation.

Mr. O'Brien, who is known to be under investigation by the Federal Grand jury in connection with any cover-up of Watergate, was unavailable for comment.

McCord further quoted Hunt as saying on more than one occasion before the trial that he [Hunt] had information in his possession that "would be sufficient to impeach the President."

The memorandum did not provide any further amplification or explanation, but McCord went on to quote Mrs. Hunt as saying that her husband had delivered a bitter letter to Kenneth W. Parkinson, another Republican attorney, in

which Hunt threatened "to blow the White House out of the water." The threat was apparently made because Hunt was not receiving enough money from the re-election committee in the months after his arrest, other sources have said.

Mr. Parkinson, who also is a target of the current grand jury investigation to determine whether there was any obstruction of justice after the break-in, denied any knowledge of a plan to describe the bugging as a C.I.A. operation.

At the time of his arrest last June 17, McCord was the "security coordinator" for the re-election committee. He subsequently refused to talk to the Federal prosecutors and was convicted on a number of counts of illegal electronic eavesdropping and burglary.

Gave Court a Letter

But before his sentencing in March, McCord gave the court a letter in which he declared that there had been "political pressure" applied to him and other defendants to plead guilty. Breaking publicly with his colleagues for the first time, he asserted that there had been perjury during the trial and he declared that other officials were involved who had not yet been identified.

In his letter he also said:

"The Watergate operation was not a C.I.A. operation. The Cubans [four of the defendants were Cubans from the Miami area who had been recruited by Hunt] may have been misled by others. I know for a fact that it was not."

McCord's subsequent testimony to the grand jury and to the Senate investigating committee led to disclosures implicating other officials.

In his memorandum, McCord, who at one time was chief of security for the C.I.A., said that he had become convinced that high-level White House officials were trying to get control over the C.I.A.'s intelligence assessments and estimates, "in order to make them conform to 'White House policy.'"

Helms Dismissed

McCord said that he had become convinced that the White House dismissed Richard Helms as Director of Central Intelligence last fall "in order to put its own man in control." Another purpose, the memo said, was "to lay the foundation for claiming that the Watergate operation had been a C.I.A. operation" and that "Helms had been fired for it."

The New York Times reported Sunday that sources close to the Watergate case had said that the Commandant of

the Marine Corps, Gen. Robert E. Cushman Jr., had acknowledged to the Federal Bureau of Investigation that while serving as deputy director of the C.I.A., he authorized the use of C.I.A. material and research in the September, 1971, burglary of the office of Dr. Daniel Ellsberg's psychiatrist in Los Angeles.

Hunt and G. Gordon Liddy, another member of the Watergate break-in team, are said to have taken part in that operation, along with two Cubans from the Miami area.

Pentagon spokesmen said today that General Cushman had cut short a European inspection trip to return to Washington to begin preparing an affidavit for the Justice Department about his role in the Ellsberg burglary. Marine Corps officials indicated that his return was imminent.

No Evidence Provided

McCord provided no evidence for his allegations about the White House's attempt to dominate the C.I.A., but he did suggest that some specific information about the move had been supplied to him by Robert C. Mardian, an Assistant Attorney General who was transferred to the re-election committee early in 1972.

"Based on an earlier discussion with Robert Mardian in May, 1972," McCord's memorandum said, "it appeared to me that the White House had for some time been trying to get political control over the C.I.A."

He noted that "this smacked of the situation which Hitler's intelligence chiefs found themselves in when they were put in the position of having to tell him what they thought he wanted to hear instead of what they really believed."

"When linked with what I saw happening to the White House under Pat Gray [L. Patrick Gray 3d, who resigned two weeks ago as acting director of the F.B.I.]—political control by the White House," McCord said, "it appeared then that the two Government agencies which should be able to prepare their reports, and to conduct their business with complete integrity and honesty in the national interest, were no longer going to be able to do so."

"That the nation was in serious trouble," the memorandum said, "has been confirmed by what happened in the case of Gray's leadership of the F.B.I."