

McCord Links Mitchell to Records of Watergate Wiretaps

By Edward Walsh

Washington Post Staff Writer

Convicted Watergate conspirator James W. McCord says he was told that logs of wiretapped conversations were delivered to former Attorney General John N. Mitchell while Mitchell was President Nixon's campaign director, the Associated Press reported yesterday.

McCord also said that he was told that Mitchell wanted the Watergate bugging crew to get into operation as quickly as possible and that Mitchell and former White House counsel John W. Dean III had approved a \$250,000 espionage budget, with another \$100,000 available, the AP said.

McCord made the statements under oath April 30 and May 1 in a deposition taken in connection with the Democratic Party's civil lawsuit against the Committee for the Re-election of the President. The deposition was filed in court yesterday.

In his statement, McCord said he was told about Mitchell's and Dean's involvement by G. Gordon Liddy, another of the convicted Watergate conspirators, the AP said.

Mitchell headed the Nixon re-election campaign between March and July, 1972, when he resigned.

According to the AP, McCord said there were periodic discussions between him and Liddy about the proposed Watergate break-in as early as December, 1971.

"My best recollection of the conversation (is that) he referred to the fact of previous approval of the operation and that Mr. Mitchell . . . in effect had told him that let's go ahead and be prepared to get into operation as quickly as possible and he said by that Mr. Mitchell meant within 30 days if possible, . . ." the AP quoted McCord as saying.

Meanwhile, at a press conference of Capitol Hill, Sen. Sam J. Ervin (D-N.C.) indicated yesterday that the indictments in New York of Mitchell and former Commerce Secretary Maurice H. Stans will not prevent the Senate select committee investigating the Watergate case from taking testimony from them.

Ervin, chairman of the Senate committee, said Mitchell and Stans "still may be witnesses before the committee," but that a final decision will not be made until he has studied the

New York indictments and discussed the question with other committee members.

He said he would be inclined to recommend that Mitchell and Stans be called to testify, but that they not be questioned about matters relating to the indictment.

Mitchell, who served briefly as President Nixon's campaign manager in 1972, and Stans, finance chairman of the Committee for the Re-election of the President, were indicted by a federal grand jury in New York yesterday on charges of conspiracy to obstruct justice in connection with the dealings of financier Robert L. Vesco. Both Mitchell and Stans are among the witnesses the Senate select committee has called to appear at public hearings that are scheduled to begin next week.

Asked about former White House counsel John W. Dean III's statement yes-

terday that there were efforts "to get me" and to prevent him from telling all he knows about the Watergate affair, Ervin said, "It's customary for people who fear a man's testimony to try to discredit it in advance. Beyond that, I don't think I'll comment."

Ervin also rejected charges that the Senate investigation is interfering with Justice Department efforts to obtain indictments and convictions of those allegedly involved in the Watergate affair.

"It's much more important for the American people to find out the truth about the Watergate case than it is to send one or two people to jail," he said. "Our investigation can't impede actions in the courts. Certainly there can't be much more publicity."

In other Watergate developments yesterday:

- In Houston, a federal grand jury began an investigation into a \$100,000 Nixon campaign contribution, \$89,000 of which is a er found as way to the bank account of one of the seven convicted Watergate conspirators, the Washington Star-News re-

ported. The contribution, since returned to the donor, was sent through Mexico in an effort to conceal the identity of the donor, according to the account. The money was given by Robert H. Allen, president of a Houston-based mining firm.

- Kenneth Rietz, youth director for the Nixon re-election campaign, spent 90 minutes with federal pros-

ecutors in the Watergate case and later told reporters he had no knowledge of any youth spy ring operating during the 1972 campaign because "there was none." Rietz, who now works for MGM records in Hollywood, quit abruptly several weeks ago as director of a Republican campaign organization for the 1974 elections.

- Lawyers for the Democratic National Committee announced that they intend to take a deposition from former White House counsel Dean on May 17. In papers filed in U.S. District Court, the lawyers also asked that Dean bring with him all documents relating to the Watergate break-in and an alleged administra-

tion cover-up of the affair. Dean has said he has such documents in an Alexandria bank safety deposit box.

In another motion filed in their civil suit growing out of the Watergate case, Democratic Party lawyers asked for a court order to compel former White House aide Jeb Stuart Magruder to answer questions he refused to answer on May 1.