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Mitchell Leaves N.Y. Law Firm

New York

Former Attorney General John N. Mitchell took a leave of absence yesterday from one of Wall Street's most prestigious law firms.

Mitchell, indicted by a federal grand jury for conspiracy to obstruct justice and defraud the U.S., issued a statement saying that his name was being withdrawn from that of the firm at his own request.

The firm was known as Nixon, Mudge, Rose, Guthrie, Alexander and Mitchell before Mr. Nixon's election as President. It has recently been Mudge, Rose, Guthrie, Alexander and Mitchell.

Mitchell joined the firm in 1966 when it absorbed his own smaller but lucrative legal practice, principally in the field of municipal bonds.

He left when he became attorney general and returned when he resigned from that government post.

Mitchell did not mention Watergate or his indictment — along with former Commerce Secretary Maurice Stans, New Jersey financier Robert L. Vesco and New Jersey Republican leader Harry L. Sears.

His statement, released by Mitchell's office, said:

"John N. Mitchell stated that he had taken a leave of absence from Mudge, Rose, Guthrie, Alexander and Mitchell in order to devote his time and attention to his personal affairs and that, at his request, his name had been withdrawn from the firm name."

Meanwhile, U.S. Attorney Whitney North Seymour Jr. said that "senior officials" in the Justice Department's criminal division in Washington were advised of the progress of the grand jury investigation that led to the indictment.

Associated Press