

Dean Ordered Clemency Offer, Witness Testifies

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Washington

Former White House official John W. Caulfield testified yesterday that John W. Dean III, the deposed presidential counsel, had ordered him to offer executive clemency to James W. McCord Jr.

Caulfield told the Senate Watergate Committee that he had "no knowledge of my own" that President Nixon had approved the offer, regarded as an effort to keep him from talking about the Watergate scandal.

But Caulfield, now an official on leave from the Treasury Department, said Dean had cited authority for the offers "from way up at the top" and that he had thought such phrases would cover "at least" John D. Ehrlichman.

DENIAL

The President, in a statement issued at the White House, denied authorizing executive clemency for any of the Watergate defendants and said he had been unaware of "any such offer."

Ehrlichman resigned as assistant to the President for domestic affairs on April 30. Neither he nor Dean, whose resignation was requested the same day, could be reached for comment.

Caulfield, looking grim and reading at a slow, measured pace, took more than an hour to get through a 26-page statement that thrust responsibility directly into the White House for the overtures to McCord.

It will still be up to Dean, whose appearance as a witness has been stalled for several weeks by the Justice Department, to confirm or deny the Caulfield account and to say whether he consulted with high White House officials on any clemency offer.

POINTS

Caulfield appeared at the

witness table in midafternoon after some slow, tedious, and repetitive testimony.

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ny by McCord in the morning. Caulfield made these major points:

- In March, 1969, Ehrlichman had sought unsuccessfully to persuade him "to set up a private security entity . . . for purposes of providing investigative support for the White House."

- A New York city detective, Anthony Ulasewicz, was paid through President Nixon's personal attorney, Herbert W. Kalmbach, to perform "a variety of investigative functions" for the White House.

- When Caulfield told Dean that McCord was being stubborn about accepting the clemency offers, the White House lawyer was quoted as saying, "Well, what the hell does he know, anyway?"

- It was suggested for the first time that one of McCord's lawyers, Gerald Alch of Boston, had been in contact with the White House about the case.

SEAT

McCord wound up his two-day appearance, then moved a few rows back from the witness table and sat expressionlessly, his arms folded across his chest, as Caulfield, a personal friend, confirmed much of the McCord testimony on executive clemency.

"I realized . . . that I was involved in questionable activity," the witness testified at one point, "but I felt that it was important for me to carry this message (on clemency) for the good of the President."

Caulfield began his statement with his date and place of birth — March 12, 1929, in the Bronx — and said that as a policeman in New York he had received promotions and "a number of awards." Newspaper accounts have

described his record as undistinguished.

Caulfield worked as a security agent in the Republican presidential campaign of 1968 and afterward pressed various officials for important jobs in the administration and, later, in the Nixon campaign of 1972.

A few days after the 1968 election, Caulfield said, he told Ehrlichman that he wanted to be chief U.S. marshal, but that word came from John N. Mitchell, who later became attorney general, that the administration wanted to "militarize" that office and that a "retiring high military official" was under consideration.

LIAISON

In a "counterproposal" to Ehrlichman's suggestion that he set up "a private security entity," Caulfield proposed joining the White House staff to provide liaison with law enforcement agencies.

That would "make him available," he said, "to process any investigative requests from the White House" and would mean using Ulasewicz, a colleague on the New York police force.

Caulfield started work at the White House on April 8, 1969, and Ulasewicz started work—on a monthly retainer from Kalmbach's Newport Beach law firm — on July 9, 1969.

The Senate committee put off its examination of Caulfield until today.

The nature of the investigative work centered in the White House was not made clear in the opening statement.

Caulfield said that he could not "fully recall all of the investigations performed," but he said that he had a list of those he did remember.

In early January, 1973, Caulfield said, he was at a "drug conference" in San Clemente, when Dean first approached him about making the clemency offer to

McCord.

TELEPHONE

Dean asked Caulfield — as Caulfield and Ulasewicz are later said to have asked McCord — to go to a public telephone for discussion of the clemency offer.

When Caulfield got to the pay phone and called Dean, the White House lawyer reportedly said that a three-part message should be given to McCord and that, although it seemed cryptic, the conspirator should understand it.

"A year is a long time," the message reportedly began, apparently a suggestion that executive clemency could be granted after this time without great public outcry. The message also reportedly said:

"Your wife and family will be taken care of; you will be rehabilitated with employment when this is all over."

DANGEROUS

The witness said that he immediately perceived that he had been "asked to do a very dangerous thing" and suggested to Dean that the task should be carried out by Ulasewicz in an effort to mask its source.

But Ulasewicz wasn't very enthusiastic, either. The audience snickered when Caulfield said that his colleague "did not wish to convey the message at first, but I convinced him to do it merely as a matter of friendship to me."

Dean called Caulfield later and said that McCord wanted a meeting, the witness testified. The White House lawyer finally overcame Caulfield's reluctance, he said, and the meeting took place on January 12.

McCord was pictured as angry because he was on trial while "people who I am sure are involved are sitting outside with their families," and he was said to have proposed a plan to win his freedom using wiretapped conversations at various embassies.