

# McCord, Lawyer at Odds

## Washington

James W. McCord Jr. contradicted his former lawyer, Gerald Alch, yesterday — charging that Alch had never told him that the government was willing to reduce the charges against him if he testified in the Watergate case.

Alch had said at the Senate Watergate committee hearings two weeks ago that government prosecutors had come to him twice last fall and had offered to drop most charges against McCord arising out of the Watergate burglary if McCord would agree to testify against other conspirators.

Alch told the Senate committee that the offers were relayed to McCord and that both times McCord rejected them.

McCord was convicted in January of all eight counts of burglary, eavesdropping and conspiracy with which he was charged.

McCord's comments on the CBS program, "Face the Nation," added another point of conflict between him and Alch.

During the Senate hearings, McCord contended that Alch had tried to persuade him to plead guilty in return for executive clemency and had encouraged him to assert that the Watergate burglary was a Central Intelligence Agency plot.

Alch denied both of those allegations. In an interview yesterday, Alch also insisted that he had told McCord of both offers of reduced charges and that McCord had turned them down.

The question of whether McCord knew that he could have pleaded guilty to a reduced number of charges if he agreed to testify bears heavily on his credibility as a witness.

Senators on the Watergate committee seemed impressed by most parts of McCord's testimony two weeks ago. But they were

never able to obtain a satisfactory explanation of why he had waited so long before telling his version of the Watergate tale.

McCord acknowledged yesterday that he had no direct evidence that associated President Nixon with either the Watergate break-in

or the subsequent coverup. But he said that he firmly believed that the President "set in motion the Watergate operation, approved it and followed through on it."

McCord said that he based his conclusion on his knowledge of the close relationship between the President

and former attorney general John N. Mitchell.

"I feel that matters of this consequence would, in fact, be conveyed to the President before Mr. Mitchell undertook or approved an operation of this breadth and of this impact," McCord said.

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