

Martha Denies Break-Up

Key Biscayne, Fla.

Martha Mitchell branded as "ridiculous . . . absolutely asinine" reports that she and her husband are breaking up as a result of the Watergate scandal.

"That's nonsensical," she said yesterday in a telephone conversation. "I really want to put the squash on that."

Asked about reports that her husband, former Attorney General John Mitchell, was "shaken" over the testimony of Jeb Stuart Magruder, his former campaign committee deputy, that Mitchell helped plan the break-in and bugging of the Democratic party headquarters at the Watergate, she said:

"He's holding up beauti-

fully . . . but of course he's shaken. He's great, absolutely great. There are a lot of people who think Magruder is a liar."

Mrs. Mitchell said that when she was working at the Committee to Re-elect the President Magruder tried constantly to get in touch with Mitchell while he was still attorney general and Mitchell "never returned his calls." She indicated that Mitchell wanted no part in political activity until he left the Justice Department. Mitchell has testified that he listened to some of the Watergate plans in his office at the department but did not approve them.

Asked if she had given her husband any advice, Mrs. Mitchell said: "He's got lawyers to do that."

She said that her husband

did not want her to talk to reporters since he was on record that he would not comment on the Magruder charges in the press.

"I'm not supposed to be talking," she said. "He can't talk about things."

Mrs. Mitchell showed some bitterness at reports that Pat Nixon feels sorry for the families of deposed White House aides H. R. Haldeman and John D. Ehrlichman. "What about the others who are suffering?" asked Martha.

Mrs. Mitchell, in her phone call from New York to this correspondent, said she had just returned with her family after a few days in the country where she "had a good time."

"I feel great," she said in a subdued voice.

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