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**Mitchell Expected to Say
He Knew About Cover-up**

By WILLIAM M. BLAIR
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WASHINGTON, June 29 — Former Attorney General John N. Mitchell is prepared to testify before Congressional investigators that he was aware of the Watergate break-in but did not actively participate in the cover-up, according to persons close to Mr. Mitchell.

He reportedly will remain loyal to President Nixon before the Senate Watergate committee despite a White House suggestion that Mr. Mitchell was behind the intelligence-gathering scheme that led to the Watergate break-in. Mr. Mitchell is scheduled to appear before the panel when it resumes hearings on July 10.

According to informed sources, Mr. Mitchell will testify that he thought he had "shot down" the 1970 intelligence plan advanced by White House aides to gather secret information through wiretapping, burglary and other clandestine acts.

Further, one source said, Mr. Mitchell will testify that he thought he had permanently thwarted the plan of G. Gordon Liddy, one of the convicted Watergate conspirators, to break in and bug the Democratic National Committee's offices in the Watergate complex.

The White House pictured John W. Dean 3d, former counsel to the President, as the mastermind of the cover-up and suggested that Mr. Dean had acted to protect his "patron, Mr. Mitchell," in the plans. Mr. Dean formerly worked under Mr. Mitchell at the Department of Justice before joining the White House staff in 1970.

The White House assertions that Mr. Dean had misled the President on the scope of the Watergate conspiracy were in a long summary read into the record of the Senate committee yesterday. The summary was prepared by J. Fred Buzhardt Jr., the special White House counsel on Watergate matters, who subsequently said that it merely gave a "hypothesis" and not a formal White House response.

Friends of Mr. Mitchell said he was prepared to admit that he authorized the payment of money to the five burglars and two other conspirators after the Watergate break-in on June 17, 1972. But he will testify, said the source, that the money was "support money" for legal fees and living expenses before they were sentenced to jail after a trial last January. He will maintain that in no way was the money "hush money" to buy the silence of the conspirators. Mr. Mitchell has been alleged in testimony before the Senate committee and the Federal grand jury investigating the affair.

Senate committee members are expected to question Mr. Mitchell closely on his conversations with President Nixon before and after he resigned as the President's campaign manager a year ago.

The informed sources said that Mr. Mitchell was prepared to answer "all questions" and would not invoke constitutional rights against self-incrimination.

These sources also said that Mr. Mitchell had no information that would incriminate the President in the bugging or cover-up. This was affirmed by his lawyer, William G. Hundley, who restated today that Mr. Mitchell "definitely has no information implicating the President in the Watergate bugging or the cover-up."

Mr. Hundley declined to discuss Mr. Mitchell's possible testimony, saying that "to protect our legal position, I cannot and will not outline the specifics of that testimony beyond its relation to the President."

One source close to Mr. Mitchell contended that the former Attorney General "probably had more to do with setting down" the intelligence-gathering scheme spawned in the White House than the late director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, J. Edgar Hoover. President Nixon withdrew the plan reportedly after Mr. Hoover objected to it.

A New Denial

The sources said Mr. Mitchell would again deny that he approved the Watergate break-in and bugging plan at a meeting with Jeb Stuart Magruder, a former White House aide, in late March of 1972 in Key Biscayne, Fla.

Mr. Magruder has testified under oath before the Senate committee that Mr. Mitchell approved the plan, although reluctantly.

Furthermore, they said, Mr. Mitchell will not seek to "point the finger" of blame at anyone because he has no direct knowledge of whether such major White House aides as H. R. Haldeman and John D. Ehrlichman were involved. Mr. Haldeman and Mr. Ehrlichman resigned on April 30, the day Mr. Dean was dismissed.

It was not until after Mr. Mitchell had resigned as campaign manager that he reportedly began to hear of the break-in at the office of Dr. Daniel Ellsberg's former psychiatrist in Los Angeles and the alleged proposal by Charles W. Colson, a former Presidential counselor, to fire-bomb the Brookings Institution.

By then, friends said, Mr. Mitchell had personal problems, involving his wife, Martha, and had no conversations about the events with Mr. Colson, Mr. Dean or others.



The New York Times/George Tames

John W. Dean 3d, left, his wife and his lawyers, Robert C. McCandless, right, and Charles N. Shaffer, reacting to "story telling time," as Senators Sam J. Ervin Jr. and Howard H. Baker Jr. reminisced.