

Bond Is Cut To \$50,000 On McCord

By Peter Osnos

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U.S. District Judge John J. Sirica yesterday substantially reduced the bond for convicted Watergate conspirator James W. McCord and granted McCord permission to travel anywhere in Maryland, Virginia or the District.

Acting on a motion filed by McCord's lawyers, Sirica cut the bond from \$100,000, of which all the money had to be posted, to \$50,000, of which only a 10 per cent deposit is required. As for the travel, McCord had previously been confined to the Washington metropolitan area.

Sirica did not act, however, on McCord's motion for a new trial on the ground that perjured testimony and the government's withholding of pertinent evidence had deprived him of a fair trial last January.

McCord was security director of the Committee for the Re-election of the President until he was arrested inside the Watergate headquarters of the Democratic National Committee on June 17, 1972. At the January trial, he was convicted of burglary, wiretapping and conspiracy.

Sirica postponed sentencing of McCord in March after McCord said he wished to testify before the grand jury and the Senate Select Committee on the Watergate about what he knew about the Watergate affair. McCord's testimony in both those forums has been generally credited as the first to link top level Nixon administration and campaign committee officials to the Watergate bugging and cover-up.

No date has been set for his sentencing.

Sirica also yesterday denied the American Civil Liberties Union permission to file a brief in support of McCord's motion for a new trial. The ACLU said that all seven men convicted in the case are entitled to a new trial because of perjured testimony in January.

On another matter, Sirica yesterday granted limited immunity from prosecution to Gordon Strachan, a former aide to former White House chief of staff H. R. (Bob) Haldeman, and ordered Strachan to testify before the Sen-

ate Watergate committee.

Strachan, 29, is reportedly prepared to testify that he sent Haldeman advance plans for the Watergate bugging given to him by Jeb Stuart Magruder, then deputy director of the Nixon campaign committee. Strachan's immunity means that his testimony at the Watergate hearings cannot be used against him in any future criminal trial.

Strachan appeared in court yesterday, but refused to talk with reporters. He is scheduled to testify in the Senate hearings later this month or in early August.

Meanwhile, Senate committee sources and sources close to former Attorney General John N. Mitchell denied yesterday that any request had been made to Mitchell to keep his wife from accompanying him to the hearings when he testifies next week.

A source close to the Mitchell family said that there had been no discussion with the Senate committee about Mrs. Mitchell accompanying her husband and that as of this time, Mrs. Mitchell had no plans to attend.

The Arkansas Gazette, published in Little Rock near Mrs. Mitchell's birthplace in Pine Bluff, responded yesterday to reports that Mrs. Mitchell had been asked not to attend with an editorial saying she is "just as entitled to her wifely rights as any of the others whose husband have been called to the Senate witness stand."

"Indeed," the newspaper added, "a case could be made that Martha is more entitled than the others to her seat behind her husband. She is, after all, the only one of the wives who made her husband get out of the dirty business in which so many of the highest figures in the administration were involved."

In Bangor, Me., yesterday, Sen. William D. Hathaway (D-Me.) said there has been sufficient evidence presented to the Senate Watergate committee to warrant impeachment proceedings against President Nixon.

"Something could turn up which would throw all of (Former White House Counsel John) Dean's testimony out the window," Hathaway said, "but it is doubtful this could happen."

Hathaway added, however, that his remarks should not be interpreted as a stance in favor of impeachment because, he said, "I am in a position of being one of the jurors if it ever gets as far as the Senate." Hathaway made his comments in a meeting with the editors of the Bangor Daily News.