

Mitchell Outlines His Senate Testimony

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WASHINGTON, July 9—John N. Mitchell, the former Attorney General and one-time confidant of President Nixon, met with Senate investigators for four hours today to outline the testimony he will give tomorrow when the Senate Watergate hearings resume.

Neither Mr. Mitchell nor officials of the Senate panel would disclose the details of the private testimony today by the former Attorney General, who had directed Mr. Nixon's re-election campaign until he resigned abruptly 15 days after the Watergate break-in that occurred June 17, 1972.

But Mr. Mitchell was said to be prepared to be the first in a series of Senate witnesses challenging the charges by John W. Dean 3d, the former White House legal counsel, that the President was an active participant in the Watergate cover-up.

Another of the key witnesses scheduled to appear before the committee this month — John D. Ehrlichman, the President's former assistant for domestic matters — declared in an interview published today that much of the testimony Mr. Dean gave during five days last month was "contrived."

Denial by Ehrlichman

Mr. Ehrlichman was quoted in The Seattle Post-Intelligencer as having directly denied Mr. Dean's charge that the President had approved an offer of

executive clemency to maintain silence by the original defendants in the Watergate conspiracy case.

According to Mr. Dean's testimony, the President acknowledged to him in January that Mr. Nixon had discussed the clemency offer with both Mr. Ehrlichman and Charles W. Colson, a former special counsel to the President.

But Mr. Ehrlichman's account, in the interview with the Seattle newspaper, was that he had warned the President a year ago that, "Sooner or later, you' going to be confronted with the suggestion by somebody that these fellows be given clemency."

Mr. Ehrlichman said that the President had agreed with him that the subject was "extremely dangerous" and therefore should not be entertained by Mr. Nixon.

"I adhered to that," said Mr. Ehrlichman. "It was never discussed."

Mr. Mitchell was described by Mr. Dean and, earlier, by Jeb Stuart Magruder, who had been the deputy director of the Nixon re-election campaign, as a participant in three meetings early last year to plan a secret intelligence-gathering operation that culminated in the Watergate break-in and arrests. Mr. Dean also alleged that Mr. Mitchell had been deeply involved in the subsequent cover-up effort.

But officials close to the Senate Watergate Committee said that Mr. Mitchell had denied having authorized the

burglary and bugging of the Watergate headquarters of the Democratic party and rebutted the suggestion that he had knowledge of any Nixon involvement in the cover-up.

The Senate committee appeared to have abandoned—or at least shelved—its public efforts to persuade the President to appear at the hearings. Mr. Nixon said Saturday in a letter to the committee chairman, Senator Sam J. Ervin, Jr., Democrat of North Carolina, that he would not appear formally or informally before the committee.

Mansfield Support

Mike Mansfield, the Senate Democratic leader, endorsed the President's view today, saying to newsmen that Mr. Nixon's was "the proper reaction at this time." He said that it would be appropriate for the White House, the Senate panel and the nation to "wait and see what facts are forthcoming" before deciding whether a Presidential response was necessary.