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The Real Martha Speaks

By Donnie Radcliffe

Martha Mitchell was back on the telephone yesterday, this time making it clear that an imposter—not she—had called a national news service this week to comment on former Attorney General John Mitchell's first day of testimony before the Senate Watergate committee.

Declaring that she had not talked "to a damned soul," Mrs. Mitchell told United Press International reporter Helen Thomas: "I want you to put out a denial. I'm sick and tired of people picking up the phone and saying they are Martha Mitchell."

The call was the latest in a series placed by women identifying themselves as Mrs. Mitchell to such media as Time magazine, the National Broadcasting Co. and

The Washington Post. In most cases, intensive questioning has led newsmen to become suspicious and dismiss the calls as fictitious.

According to Miss Thomas, a woman impersonating Martha Mitchell, had called another UPI reporter early Wednesday. *6/13/73*

In a subsequent UPI dispatch, the woman was quoted as saying: "I want you to know that my husband is absolutely correct in all his testimony. He is completely honest. I'm standing completely beside him because I know he's telling the truth."

Yesterday, according to Miss Thomas, Mrs. Mitchell angrily rejected those remarks as her own.

"Wait till they're over and I'll tell you what I think of the hearings," Mrs. Mitchell said, reserving comment on Mitchell's statement that he

withheld facts about the Watergate burglary from President Nixon, fearing it might hurt his reelection chances.

In previous calls to Miss Thomas and others before the hearings began, Mrs. Mitchell has demanded Mr. Nixon's resignation and has said of the Watergate bugging and cover-up: "If John knew about it, then Nixon knew about it."

Yesterday, in a call that reached Miss Thomas around 10 a.m., Mrs. Mitchell said she was "mad that anyone would think that I did not stand by everything I've said in the past . . . I stand on the whole shooting match—from A to Z."

According to Miss Thomas, Mrs. Mitchell said it was 9 a.m. where she was calling from and told of being "down South running around, seeing old friends and getting a tan."