



AP Wirephoto

JEB MAGRUDER
Ex-Nixon campaign aide

Magruder Pleads Guilty --Conspiracy

Washington

Former Nixon campaign aide Jeb Stuart Magruder pleaded guilty yesterday to conspiracy in the Watergate bugging and its coverup — including a plot to claim falsely that the CIA wanted the investigation limited.

The boyishly handsome Magruder, 38, showed no emotion as he stood before chief U.S. District Judge John J. Sirica to answer a one-count "information" charging conspiracy to wiretap, to obstruct justice and to defraud the United States.

"I plead guilty," he said quietly in the same courtroom where he lied under oath in January at the trial of the seven original Watergate defendants.

Sirica postponed sentencing indefinitely and freed Magruder on his own recog-

Conspiracy carries a maximum penalty of five years in prison and a \$10,000 fine.

"I feel as good as you can under the circumstances," Magruder told reporters out-

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side the federal courthouse after the 30-minute hearing. "I decided it was best to plead guilty to the charges as stated and I feel comfortable having done so."

He said he had not heard the President's Watergate speech Wednesday night, but that he did not think Mr. Nixon had advance knowledge of the bugging incident.

SECOND

Magruder, who was the number two man at the Committee for the Re-Election of the President, was the second high Nixon campaign official to waive indictment and plead guilty in the Watergate case.

Frederick C. LaRue, another key aide to former Attorney General and Nixon campaign manager John N. Mitchell, pleaded guilty to a one-count conspiracy information June 27 and, like Magruder, will be a government witness at forthcoming Watergate trials.

Sirica said he would not sentence Magruder or LaRue until those trials are over.

CHARGES

The information filed by special Watergate prosecutor Archibald Cox charged that Magruder and "other co-conspirators not named" plotted together to bug the Watergate offices of the Democratic National Committee, to hamper the investigation, to conceal evidence and to lie under oath.

"It was further a part of the conspiracy that certain co-conspirators would misrepresent that the Central Intelligence Agency had an interest in limiting the investigation," the charge said.

The co-conspirators were not identified. However, there has been considerable testimony before the Senate Watergate committee that top presidential advisers H. R. Haldeman, John D. Ehrlichman and John W. Dean

III went to CIA officials shortly after the June 17, 1972, bugging arrests and suggested the agency tell the FBI that a full-fledged Watergate investigation might compromise CIA activities.

LIED

Magruder admitted under oath before the Senate Watergate committee in June that he had lied to the FBI, to the grand jury and at the January Watergate trial about how much campaign money had been funneled to Watergate mastermind G. Gordon Liddy to finance a wide-ranging political espionage effort on Mr. Nixon's behalf.

He also testified that Mitchell had approved the Watergate bugging plan at a meeting in Key Biscayne, Fla. on March 30, 1972, and had seen fruits of the wiretaps in reports code-named "Gemstone."

Mitchell denied Magruder's charge as a "palpable, damnable lie," contending he had rejected such proposals three times — a \$1 million plan advanced by Liddy at a meeting in Mitchell's Justice Department office Jan. 27, 1972; a scaled-down \$500,000 proposal a week later, and the final \$250,000 package presented at the Key Biscayne meeting.

Magruder had been a special presidential assistant before he went to the Committee for the re-election of the President as the deputy campaign manager. Following Mr. Nixon's landslide victory in November, he was made executive director of inaugural festivities and later was named to a high Commerce Department post.

He quit that job April 26 after a series of stories in the news media linked him to the Watergate scandal.

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