

Watergate burglar freed in car thefts

Associated Press

MIAMI — Convicted Watergate burglar Frank Sturgis and two companions have been found innocent of one federal charge of running stolen automobiles to Mexico, but may be tried again on two similar charges.

A federal court jury yesterday cleared the three men of one count of interstate transportation of stolen cars, but was deadlocked on two other counts — one of conspiracy and another of transporting stolen cars across state lines.

U.S. District Judge Clyde Atkins said he would try to schedule a retrial on the two

charges as soon as possible.

However, Assistant U.S. Attorney William Northcutt said the government has not decided whether to go ahead with the case.

Sturgis, Jerry Buchanan and Max Gonzales were indicted by a federal grand jury earlier this year on charges of conspiracy and illegally transporting stolen cars from Florida and Texas across the Mexican border in 1968.

The defense contended the three men had been in Mexico to launch a government-sanctioned invasion of Cuba but the prosecution charged the Mexican activities were just a coverup for a car theft ring.