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FEDERAL GRAND JURY

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15 CENTS

INDICTS 7 NIXON AIDES ON CHARGES OF CONSPIRACY ON WATERGATE; HALDEMAN, EHRLICHMAN, MITCHELL ON LIST



John N. Mitchell
Former Attorney General



H. R. Haldeman
Headed White House staff



John D. Ehrlichman
Was Presidential adviser



Charles W. Colson
Former White House lawyer



Robert C. Mardian
1972 campaign coordinator



Kenneth W. Parkinson
Lawyer for campaign unit



Gordon Strachan
Assisted Mr. Haldeman

COLSON IS NAMED

A Question of Veracity of the President Is Indirectly Raised

By ANTHONY RIPLEY

Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, March 1—A Federal grand jury today indicted seven men, all former officials of President Nixon's Administration or of his 1972 re-election campaign, on charges of covering up the Watergate scandal.

Never before have so many close and trusted advisers of an American President faced criminal accusations in a single indictment.

All were charged with conspiracy — a conspiracy, the grand jury said, that continued

Five pages of Watergate material with indictment text begin on Page 14.

"up to and including" today; six were charged additionally with obstruction of justice; two with perjury and three with false statements to the Federal Bureau of Investigation; the grand jury or both.

The indictment accused one defendant, H. R. Haldeman, he former White House chief of staff, of lying when he quoted the President as saying "it would be wrong" to raise hush money for the perpetrators of the original Watergate burglary—a break-in June 17, 1972, at the Democratic National Committee headquarters.

A Question of Veracity

This indirectly raised a question about Mr. Nixon's veracity because he endorsed Mr. Haldeman at a news conference last Aug. 22. The President recalled a meeting at the White House at which clemency for the Watergate defendants and financial support for their families was discussed. Mr. Nixon said he had told his White House counsel, John W. Dean 3d, "John, it is wrong, it won't work."

With the indictment, the grand jury handed to Chief Judge John J. Sirica of the Federal District Court here a sealed report, accompanied by a bulky briefcase reportedly containing information about Mr. Nixon's role in the Watergate affair.

This information was presumably intended for the House Judiciary Committee, which is considering a motion to impeach the President and put him on trial before the Senate.

The defendants and the charges against them are as follows:

Mr. Haldeman—conspiracy, obstruction of justice and perjury.

John D. Ehrlichman, former assistant to the President for domestic affairs—conspiracy, obstruction of justice, false statements to the F.B.I. and false statements to the grand jury.

John N. Mitchell, former Attorney General and director of Mr. Nixon's 1968 and 1972 Presidential campaigns—conspiracy, obstruction of justice, false statements to the F.B.I., false statements to the grand jury and perjury.

Charles W. Colson, former special counsel to the President—conspiracy and obstruction of justice.

Kenneth Wells Parkinson, attorney for the Committee for the Re-election of the President—conspiracy and obstruction of justice.

Robert C. Mardian, former aide to Mr. Mitchell in the 1972 campaign—conspiracy.

Gordon C. Strachan, former aide to Mr. Haldeman—conspiracy, obstruction of justice and false statements to the grand jury.

The key conspiracy count against all seven defendants

Continued on Page 16, Column 1

Continued From Page 1, Col. 8

charged that they "and other persons to the grand jury known and unknown, unlawfully, willfully and knowingly did combine, conspire, confederate and agree together and with each other" to commit several Federal offenses.

Two Statutes Cited

It cited two statutes that prohibit the making of false statements and declarations to Federal agencies and a third prohibiting efforts to prevent Federal agencies from transacting their official business "honestly and impartially."

It specifically named the Central Intelligence Agency, the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the Justice Department as agencies the defendants allegedly attempted to prevent from carrying out their duties.

The 24 separate counts in the indictment allege destruction of evidence in the case, making false statements to the Federal agencies and before the Senate Watergate committee, gathering up cash and making payments to the defendants in the original Watergate burglary trial, and giving assurances of executive clemency to the seven men accused in the break-in.

Arraignment March 9

Judge Sirica set arraignment for March 9 and, later in the day, announced that he had assigned himself to try the case.

Leon Jaworski, the special Watergate prosecutor, is expected to seek further indictments in the next few weeks.

The grand jury, which was originally sworn in June 5, 1972, was told it would have further work.

The indictment today had been delayed by the selection of a jury in New York City in the trial of Mr. Mitchell and former Commerce Secretary Maurice H. Stans in connection with an illegal \$200,000 cash

gift to the re-election campaign from Robert L. Vesco, the fugitive financier. The indictment here was released after the New York jury was sequestered.

Under American law, all defendants in criminal cases are presumed to be innocent until proved guilty and Judge Sirica

warned all involved of the dangers of publicity that might be prejudicial to the defendants.

If convicted the accused face the penalties:

Mr. Haldeman, a maximum of 25 years in prison and \$16,000 in fines.

Mr. Ehrlichman, a maximum of 25 years in prison and \$40,000 in fines.

Mr. Colson and Mr. Parkinson, a maximum of 10 years in prison and \$10,000 in fines.

Mr. Mitchell, a maximum of 30 years in prison and \$42,000 in fines.

Mr. Strachan, a maximum of 15 years in prison and \$20,000 in fines.

Mr. Mardian, a maximum of five years in prison and \$5,000 in fines.

The indictment listed five counts against Mr. Haldeman. One count stated that Mr. Haldeman lied under oath before the Senate Watergate committee when he quoted the President as saying it would be no trouble to raise \$1-million to pay in hush money to the original seven Watergate conspirators "but it would be wrong."

Mr. Haldeman stated to the committee that he had listened to a tape recording of that day's meeting and that it confirmed his recollection.

Cited as Perjury

"I am absolutely positive," he told the committee.

That remark was underscored by the special prosecutor's office as perjury.

The other counts against Mr. Haldeman included a general conspiracy count that all seven faced. It charged they conspired to obstruct justice, make false statements, defraud the government and deprive the government of its right to have its officials transact business "honestly and impartially, free from corruption, fraud, improper and undue influence, dishonesty, unlawful impairment and obstruction."

These actions, the indictment said, included attempting to persuade the Central Intelligence Agency to provide financial assistance to the original seven men convicted in the Watergate burglary, to obtain their release from jail, to remove and destroy documents, to plan deceptive and false testimony, to secretly raise and distribute money and to make offers of "leniency, executive clemency and other benefits."