

Martha's New Gripes

New York

Martha Mitchell, wife of former Attorney General John Mitchell, said she believes her husband tried to drive her insane so she would voluntarily commit herself to an institution.

In an interview in this week's edition of People magazine, Mrs. Mitchell said Mitchell tried to drive her "up the wall." She said that, after his indictment on perjury and conspiracy charges for which he is now standing trial, Mitchell became drawn and physically deteriorated.

"He wouldn't go out. He sat at his desk. He let his hair grow and wouldn't shave. He wanted me to cut his hair."

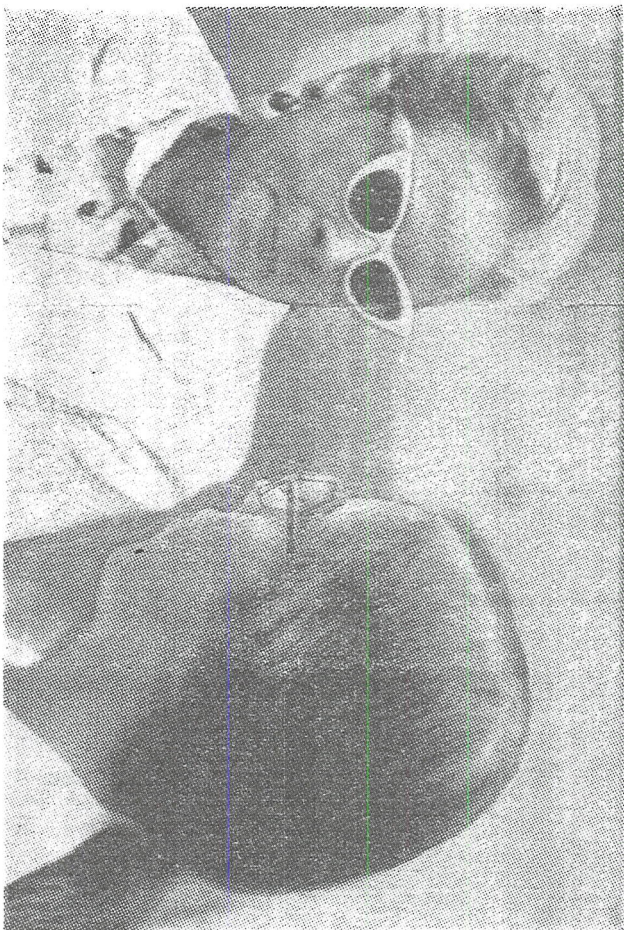
"Finally, I got a non-English-speaking barber to come in. John didn't want to see anyone. He wouldn't give me my phone calls. He'd say I was out."

"And if I answered he'd listen. He was drinking and taking tranquilizers. There were nights our daughter Marty and I and the maid had to drag him to bed."

Mrs. Mitchell still lives in the family's apartment. Her husband lives under an assumed name in a hotel in Manhattan. Mrs. Mitchell said she had not seen him for six months.

Mrs. Mitchell, who first gave a hint of the wider implications of the Watergate burglary of the Democratic National Committee headquarters in a telephone call to a reporter (her husband was indicted on charges of helping to cover up the scandal last week), said her husband took her list of telephone numbers when he moved out of their Fifth avenue apartment here last fall.

"I have searched this apartment from one end to



MARTHA MITCHELL AND HER DAUGHTER MARTY, LAST YEAR
She said husband, John, tried to drive her insane

the other, and I know he took it. You know, it's kind of funny when you think of him sneaking out of here with a few clothes and his radio under one arm and my Rolodex (telephone number file) under the other, and trying not to wake me up."

Mrs. Mitchell also said her

husband had estranged her from her 13-year-old daughter, Marty, who attends a boarding school. She quoted the girl as saying last October: "My father told me a child only needs one parent. You don't have a car and a chauffeur, and you can't take care of me. My father

says you are running with a wild set of people and you'd better watch your step."

Mrs. Mitchell conceded she once had a drinking problem, but said she hadn't had a drink since "God knows when." Instead, she said she occasionally took tranquilizers.

Reuters