

McCord Raps Nixon On Silence

By Jules Witcover
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James W. McCord Jr. yesterday accused President Nixon of "impeachable offenses" in knowing and not reporting, two days before McCord and six other convicted Watergate conspirators were brought up for sentencing a year ago, that hush money had been paid to Watergate defendants.

McCord said he would take the matter to the House Judiciary Committee's impeachment in a detailed letter Monday.

McCord charged that the President had knowledge of "tampering with parties of a court proceeding," a federal crime, and "had the obligation of his oath of office to immediately transmit this information of tampering (and of other violations) to the trial judge then handling the sentencing."

Mr. Nixon also had the obligation, McCord said, to send then-White House counsel John W. Dean III, who the President said told him of the hush money payment, directly to the judge. "He did neither," McCord wrote. It was his sec-

ond open letter on the matter in two days.

"Tampering, whether involving a juror or a defendant, is of the most serious order, and Congress made it a federal crime for that reason," McCord said. The President, as a lawyer, "knew the requirement by statute" to report any such activity, which is a felony violation of Section 1503 of the Federal Criminal Code, McCord said.

"President Nixon withheld this information," he wrote, "therein committing as well the impeachable offenses of criminal nonfeasance and criminal malfeasance in office."

Yesterday's charge came a day after an initial open letter in which the Nixon re-election committee's one-time security officer said the President had "deliberately concealed and suppressed" knowledge of hush money payments to the Watergate defendants.

Both charges were predicated on what McCord called "a fantastic admission" by Mr. Nixon in his press conference Wednesday night.

Then, the President said that in the meeting on March 21, 1973—two days before the scheduled sentencing of McCord and the others—Dean "told me that payments had been made to defendants for the purpose of keeping them quiet, not simply for their defense."

In Friday's letter, McCord said the President in keeping silent about what Dean had told him had violated a federal statute against concealment of a felony, disclosure of which "would have overturned the convictions of the seven Watergate defendants."