

Mitchell-Stans Testimony Ends

New York

Testimony ended yesterday in the federal criminal conspiracy trial of former Attorney General John N. Mitchell and onetime Commerce Secretary Maurice H. Stans as the court proceedings entered their tenth week.

U.S. District Judge Lee P. Gagliardi scheduled closing arguments for today and tomorrow, and indicated the jury of nine men and three women would get the case late tomorrow.

In all, 59 witnesses were called, three of them appearing for both sides.

Mitchell and Stans are accused of conspiring to impede a Securities and Exchange Commission fraud investigation into the international financial complex of multi-millionaire Robert L. Vesco, in return for his secret \$200,000 cash contribution to President Nixon's 1972 re-election campaign.

Among final rebuttal witnesses called by the government yesterday were Washington Post reporter Sally Quinn and ousted White House counsel John Dean III.

Miss Quinn testified that Mitchell had an opportunity to tell a volunteer Republican campaign aide, Daniel Hofgren, to "stay away" from the Vesco matter.

She did not, however, say she saw Mitchell and Hofgren together at a fund-raising dinner where the remark was said to have been passed. Mitchell denied he ever saw Hofgren at the affair.

Hofgren testified that at the fund-raising gala at the Washington Hilton hotel March 8, 1972, he asked Mitchell if he'd seen Vesco that day and that the defendant told him, "Stay away from that." Hofgren said they bumped into each other at a reception that preceded the dinner and that he left before the actual dinner began.

Mitchell's denial of this account is the basis of a perjury count against him in the indictment. He said that he and his wife, Martha, arrived after the 7 p.m. reception was over and went directly into the banquet room to find most of the nearly 2000 guests already seated for dinner.

Miss Quinn testified she covered the Washington Hilton dinner that night and interviewed the Mitchells for three or four minutes when they arrived about 8 p.m. The text of her subsequent story was not allowed into evidence at the trial.

"Then they went through the ropes and into the reception area," Miss Quinn continued, estimated it subsequently took 20 to 30 minutes to clear the reception area and get the guests into the banquet room.

"Did you see where they



AP Wirephoto

SALLY QUINN
Reporter was on the stand

went?" Miss Quinn was asked on cross-examination, regarding the Mitchells.

"Yes," she replied.

"Did they go straight through the reception hall?"

"They went into the crowd of people," Miss Quinn said.

The 35-year-old Dean's latest appearance was intended by the government to refute certain aspects of Stans' testimony. For example, the former commerce secretary said he had reported on Vesco's SEC troubles in a Nov. 13, 1972, telephone conversation with Dean.

"No, I have no recollection of that conversation," Dean testified.

Stans said the two talked again later about Vesco during a plane flight from Washington to New York.

"Did you have a conversation with Mr. Stans about Vesco on that flight to New York?" Dean was asked.

"No, I did not," he replied.

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