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**Mitchell Note  
Reveals Data  
Destruction**

By Carl Bernstein  
and Bob Woodward

Washington Post Staff Writers

Before resigning as President Nixon's campaign manager two weeks after the Watergate break-in arrests of June 17, 1972, former Attorney General John N. Mitchell apparently destroyed "personal communications on campaign" from Mr. Nixon and former White House chief of staff H. R. Haldeman, according to Mitchell's own handwritten notes.

The notes, a copy of which has been obtained by The Washington Post, represent the first indication that communications from either the President or Haldeman might have been destroyed following the Watergate arrests.

Written on a legal pad, apparently in preparation for Mitchell's testimony before the Senate Watergate committee last June, his notes say at one point:

"When I left Committee (7/1) the only documents that were destroyed were personal communications on campaign from R.N. and HRH.

"All other campaign documents were left in office taken over by MacGregor with exception of material on State Committees which was forwarded to State Coordina-

MITCHELL, From A1

tors." Clark MacGregor was Mitchell's successor as manager of the Nixon campaign.

Mitchell's notes offer no hint of what the destroyed documents might have said or if they were in any way related to Watergate.

Although the Senate Watergate hearings produced extensive testimony about the destruction of documents related to the Watergate break-in and Nixon campaign contributions, no testimony was developed suggesting that any material from the President or Haldeman was destroyed at any time.

Sources close to the Senate committee's investigation said yesterday that they were unaware of the existence of the Mitchell notes.

Similarly, other sources said the Watergate special prosecutor's office had not learned of the Mitchell notes or any other evidence suggesting that documents from Mr. Nixon or Haldeman were destroyed or that Mitchell knew of their destruction.

Mitchell, Haldeman and four other former presidential aides were indicted in the Watergate cover-up last March 1 by the same grand jury that named President Nixon as an unindicted coconspirator in the case.

In addition to declaring his innocence in the cover-up, Mr. Nixon has denied any foreknowledge of the Watergate

See MITCHELL, A6, Col. 1

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A copy of notes obtained by The Post telling of campaign document destruction.

bugging operation and has repeatedly stated that he was too busy with other duties to become involved in his re-election campaign.

Informed by The Washington Post of the existence of the notes, Mitchell's attorney, William G. Hundley, responded:

"Mitchell has never intimated anything like that—destroying any documents from Nixon or Haldeman . . . This is the first I've ever heard of it. He never mentioned it.

"I know what his practice was," Hundley said. "As things came up (in testimony) he'd make notes on a yellow legal pad and then we'd go over it, but I never saw this."

Later, after discussing the

matter with Mitchell, Hundley said: "He doesn't have any recollection of putting this down (on paper)." Asked whether Mitchell remembered destroying documents from Haldeman or Nixon, Hundley added: "He has no recollection of it one way or another."

Other sources familiar with Mitchell's handwriting said the copy of notes obtained by The Washington Post are written in the former Attorney General's hand.

The copy contains several pages that, judging from their content, appear to have been written around the time of Mitchell's testimony before the Watergate committee.

Unlike some other sections

of the notes, which are merely summaries of the testimony of others, the reference to the destruction of records occurs in a portion in which Mitchell appears to be reconstructing his own version of events.

Senate committee sources virtually ruled out any other explanation because of the absence of any testimony or even unsworn assertions that documents from the President and Haldeman had been destroyed at the re-election committee.

Although considerable testimony at the Senate hearings concerned the destruction of documents an examination of the record indicates that Mitchell was never specifically directed to answer whether

communications from Haldeman or the President were destroyed.

Most of the testimony about the destruction of records concerned the files on "Gemstone," the code name assigned to the Watergate bugging operation. Those files included the transcripts of conversations wiretapped in the bugging operation.

According to testimony by two campaign officials who have since pleaded guilty to charges arising from the Watergate cover-up—Jeb Stuart Magruder and Fred C. LaRue—it was Mitchell who ordered the Gemstone files destroyed, by suggesting that they be consumed in a bonfire. During his Senate testimony, however, Mitchell denied the allegation, at which point Sen. Lowell Weicker asked him:

"Did you suggest that any documents be destroyed, not necessarily Gemstone?"

The following interchange then took place:

Mitchell: To the best of my recollection—

Weicker: At the June 19 meeting at your apartment did you suggest that any documents be destroyed, not necessarily Gemstone or not necessarily documents that relate to electronic surveillance?

Mitchell: To the best of my recollection when I was there there was no such discussion of the destruction of any documents. That was not the type of a meeting we were having.

The hearing record indicates that the questioning never returned to whether such documents might have been destroyed at another time.

According to Mitchell's own testimony, he attended three meetings at which plans to bug the Democrats were discussed, but on each occasion, Mitchell has insisted, he "shut off" such plans.

And at no point before March 21, 1973—the date President Nixon has said he first learned of the Watergate cover-up—did Mitchell inform the President of any such plans, according to the former Attorney General's testimony.

During his appearance before the Watergate committee, Mitchell testified that he had only two discussions about Watergate with the President: the first in a telephone conversation June 20, 1972, and the second on March 22, 1973.