

Martha's Watergate Phone Call

New York

"I'm wearing a black dress in honor of the second anniversary of Watergate. I should be wearing mourning crepe," Martha Mitchell said yesterday.

Making her debut as co-hostess for a week on the WCBS-TV "Pat Collins Show," the estranged wife of the former attorney general said she knew nothing about Watergate until she read about it in the newspapers.

Recalling the sequence of events after the break-in at the Democratic National headquarters two years ago yesterday, she said:

"John and I had a double bed. We were sleeping late after a big celebrity party at the Beverly Hills Hotel.

"The phone rang. It was on my side of the bed.

"A voice said, 'This is Mr. Haldeman calling.'

"John got up out of bed and he never came back."

"Mr. Haldeman" is H. R. Haldeman, who was President Nixon's chief of staff at that time. He has been indicted for conspiracy to obstruct justice in investigation of the burglary.

Mrs. Mitchell said she was told nothing when her husband got the call and did not learn about Watergate until

she read a Los Angeles newspaper after Mitchell and other Republican leaders had flown back to Washington.

Mrs. Mitchell reiterated that her husband resigned as director of Mr. Nixon's 1972 campaign because she demanded that he do so. "Mitchell resigned because it was either Martha or the campaign," she said.

Associated Press