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**Prosecutor Says Mitchell  
'Stonewalled' on Cover-Up**

**In Cross-Examination, Neal Also Asserts  
Ex-Attorney General Hid the Truth—  
Witness Heatedly Denies Charges**

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Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, Nov. 27—The chief prosecutor at the Watergate cover-up trial wound up a long and often bitter cross-examination of John N. Mitchell today by charging that the former Attorney General had "stonewalled" and hidden the truth.

Mr. Mitchell heatedly denied the charges, as he denied many others earlier in the day.

When he left the witness stand, after cross-examination by lawyers for some of his co-defendants, Mr. Mitchell's attorneys and some of the other defense attorneys looked glum.

The chief prosecutor, James F. Neal, on the other hand, looked happy and confident. Some of the assistant special prosecutors grinned at one another.

Mr. Neal, in a cross-examination that began about 10 A.M. and, after a luncheon recess ended at 4 P.M., brought out various discrepancies between testimony that Mr. Mitchell had given at the trial and testimony that he had given elsewhere.

In answer to many of Mr. Neal's questions, Mr. Mitchell replied that he could not "recall" or that he had "no recollection." In answering others, he got into sparring matches with the prosecutor.

Mr. Mitchell based some of his defense on semantic differences with Mr. Neal. He contended, for instance, that some allegedly perjurious testimony he had given had been "literal-

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ly true."

He defended himself against a second perjury count by saying that the allegedly perjurious testimony had been given in response to prosecution questions containing the word "confess." As he defined the word "confess," he said, his response to the prosecution questions had not been perjurious.

Mr. Mitchell at one point told Mr. Neal that he wanted to give the jury an explanation for an earlier answer because "I have an urge, Mr. Neal, to get to the truth." Mr. Neal picked up that phrase and, quoting it back, elicited from the former Attorney General the concession that he had not told the grand jury everything he knew about the facts behind Watergate.

He also elicited Mr. Mitchell's explanation for, as the defendant put it, not "volunteering" information. The "obvious reason," Mr. Mitchell said, was that the information might damage Richard M. Nixon's 1972 re-election campaign.

Under cross-examination, Mr. Mitchell contended that various prosecution witnesses had given false testimony against him — including John W. Dean 3d, former counsel to Mr. Nixon; Jeb Stuart Magruder, Mr. Mitchell's former deputy director of the 1972 Nixon re-

election committee, and Frederick C. LaRue, a former campaign official who when he testified described himself as a close friend of Mr. Mitchell's.

Mr. Mitchell heatedly denied allegations made by these witnesses. Contradicting testimony given at the trial, he said that he did not have the "slightest idea" why hundreds of thousands of dollars in cash had been paid to the seven men who participated in the Watergate break-in on June 17, 1972.

There had been testimony that Mr. Mitchell had been in on the decision to make the payments, and that he had authorized funding for the payments later.

**Point Held Crucial**

The point is crucial to the case, for Mr. Mitchell and his four co-defendants are charged with conspiring to obstruct the original Watergate investigation through such means as paying off the seven burglars in return for their silence.

The four co-defendants are H. R. Haldeman, the former chief of staff at the White House; John D. Ehrlichman, once Mr. Nixon's chief domestic affairs adviser; Robert C. Mardian, a former Assistant Attorney General, and Kenneth Wells Parkinson, a lawyer for the re-election committee.

A hostile tone was evident throughout the day. The ex-

change over the definition of "confess" was typical.

That exchange involved a perjury count charging that Mr. Mitchell lied when he told the grand jury that Mr. LaRue and Mr. Mardian did not tell him in June, 1972 that G. Gordon Liddy, who devised the intelligence-gathering plan that led to the break-in, had "confessed" to them his role in the break-in.

Mr. LaRue testified at the trial that he and Mr. Mardian did "debrief" Mr. Liddy and report back to Mr. Mitchell on the interview, in which Mr. Liddy said among other things that the break-in had been a campaign committee project, financed with campaign funds.

This morning, under questioning by his chief attorney, William G. Hundley, Mr. Mitchell said that the reason he had given the grand jury the answers he did was that the prosecutor asking him questions then had asked whether he had been told that Mr. Liddy had "confessed."

"There was, of course, no confession," he said.

Mr. Neal, in cross-examining Mr. Mitchell, returned to the point.

**Testimony Is Read**

The prosecutor read to Mr. Mitchell the first sequence of the allegedly perjurious testimony, in which Mr. Mitchell was asked whether Mr. LaRue had told him if Mr. Liddy "had confessed to him." Mr. Mitchell's response before the grand jury was, "No, I don't recall that, no."

"As a former Attorney General of the United States, a

man says he's committed a crime, that's not a confession?" Mr. Neal asked.

No, Mr. Mitchell said.

"When somebody admits to you complicity in a crime, that's not a confession?" Mr. Neal pressed on, seemingly incredulous.

"No, not a confession to the crime," Mr. Mitchell replied.

"I see," Mr. Neal said, his voice heavy with sarcasm.

The prosecutor turned to the next section of the allegedly perjurious grand jury testimony, the sequence in which Mr. Mitchell was asked whether Mr. Mardian had told him that Mr. Liddy had "confessed to him," and Mr. Mitchell had first answered "No" and then, "I have no recollection of that."

Mr. Neal asked whether Mr. Mitchell's explanation of this sequence was the same as his explanation of the preceding sequence, involving Mr. LaRue. Yes, Mr. Mitchell replied, it was. It was because of the word "Confession."

Mr. Neal nodded, saying, "I understand."

Then he turned to the final question of the grand jury testimony:

"I asked you were you told by either Mr. Mardian or Mr. LaRue or anybody else, at the

committee prior to June 28, 1972, that Mr. Liddy had told them that he was involved in the Watergate break-in?"

Mr. Mitchell's response to this was, "I have no such recollection."

"Where is the word 'confession' in that question, Mr. Neal asked.

"I took it in the total context of the series of questions asked to me," Mr. Mitchell replied.

"Is the word 'confession' contained in the question?" the prosecutor pressed.

Mr. Mitchell replied that the word "confession" had been in the earlier questions in the series.

Then he added another explanation for his testimony: Mr. Liddy had been "involved in the planning of the break-in," not "involved in the break-in."

Mr. Neal was not satisfied. Just what is a "confession," Mr. Neal asked, if it is not an admission of involvement in a crime?

**Confession Defined**

"A confession is when somebody goes to the appropriate authorities and so confesses to a stated charge against him," Mr. Mitchell replied.

Mr. Neal's face took on an expression of disbelief. He glanced toward the prosecution table, where Richard Ben-Veniste, an assistant special prosecutor, was sitting, and then turned back to Mr. Mitchell.

"You mean if I go to Mr. Ben-Veniste and say I robbed a bank last night, that's not a confession?" he asked.

"No, it's not," Mr. Mitchell said.

Toward the end of the afternoon, Mr. Neal asked Mr. Mitchell if he recalled the conversation that he had with Mr. Nixon on March 22, 1973, in which Mr. Nixon told him he wanted White House aides to "stonewall" before the Senate Watergate committee, headed by Senator Sam. J. Ervin Jr., Democrat of North Carolina.

"Remember that very well," Mr. Mitchell replied.

"And you have stonewalled, haven't you Mr. Mitchell?" Mr. Neal asked.

Mr. Mitchell reacted angrily. "No, Mr. Neal," he said. "you are again confusing apples and pears. We are talking about the Ervin committee."

Mr. Neal pressed on.

"You allowed perjury to go on, knowing it was perjury," he said. "You testified falsely before a grand jury, you participated in paying money to the defendants for their silence. You did all of this because you wanted the President to be re-elected."

**Objection Is Made**

"And you were afraid the 'White House horrors' would come out."

By the time Mr. Neal finished, Mr. Hundley was on his feet objecting, and Judge Sirica was pounding his desk, apparently to keep Mr. Mitchell from reply-

ing before the objection could be heard and ruled on.

Mr. Mitchell replied nevertheless, retorting, "Mr. Neal, your premises are absolutely incorrect."

Mr. Hundley, who had previously objected to Mr. Neal's "haranguing" of Mr. Mitchell, said that Mr. Neal was "summarizing testimony."

Judge Sirica said that that was a matter for the jury to decide. Then he allowed Mr. Mitchell to answer.

I accept none of your premises, the witness said.

Mr. Mitchell will testify again briefly Friday morning, and then Mr. Haldeman is to take the stand. Tomorrow, Thanksgiving, the court will be in recess.

WASHINGTON, Nov. 27 (AP)—Lawyers for Mr. Nixon said today that the former President opposed as an invasion of privacy the proposed broadcasting over radio and television of White House tapes used in the Watergate cover-up trial.

In papers filed with United States District Court Judge Gerhard A. Gesell, the lawyers said that the conversations on the tapes represented "the kind of blunt and off-hand remarks common in private conversations among close associates which do not necessarily represent considered judgments and which would not be made publicly."

The three major television networks have asked for the lifting of a court rule that prohibits the playing of the tapes outside the courtroom of Judge Sirica.