

Strachan Case Is Dismissed

Washington

U.S. District Judge John J. Sirica yesterday dismissed Watergate coverup charges brought more than a year ago against former White House aide Gordon C. Strachan.

Sirica acted at the request of Special Prosecutor Henry S. Ruth, who cited Strachan's "limited role" in the coverup and "substantial" legal issues in urging that Strachan not be forced to stand trial.

In the Nixon White House, Strachan, a lawyer, worked as a political assistant to H. R. Haldeman, the former's President's chief of staff.

Since his indictment March 1, 1974, Strachan has been living in Salt Lake City, where he is working as a clerk in a law firm.

Strachan, 31, is a member of the bar in California and New York. He said yesterday in a telephone interview he probably will seek to practice in Utah.

Strachan had been scheduled to stand trial along with John N. Mitchell, John D. Ehrlichman, Haldeman and Robert C. Mardian, who were all convicted New Year's Day for their parts in the coverup.

But a few weeks before the trial began October 1, Sirica agreed that Strachan should be tried separately because of claims by his defense lawyer that earlier promises of immunity from prosecution had been broken.

With the Strachan issue



AP Wirephoto

GORDON STRACHAN
Utah law clerk

now past. Sirica has only one remaining task in the Watergate coverup case, the sentencing of Frederick LaRue on Friday.

Larue, a former aide to Mitchell on the 1972 Nixon re-election committee, pleaded guilty to conspiracy for his part in the coverup. He could receive up to five years in jail.

Testimony in the coverup trial showed that Strachan's main role consisted of the delivery of \$350,000 from a special White House fund to LaRue. The money eventually was used as hush money for Watergate defendants.

Strachan had described the cash delivery to prosecutors on the promise the information would not be used against him.

Associated Press