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Haldeman Joins Mitchell as Court Sets Prison Date

WASHINGTON, June 6 (AP)—In a four-minute ceremony, with Watergate never mentioned, H. R. Haldeman and John N. Mitchell were ordered today to begin serving their prison terms by noon on June 22 for their role in conspiring to cover up the historic burglary.

Case No. 74-110, the Watergate coverup conspiracy prosecution, was closed as Federal District Judge John J. Sirica signed the commitment order for two of the most powerful men of the Nixon Administration.

No pleas were made by lawyers for the two and neither man spoke. The time was consumed by Judge Sirica who gave the men the option of reporting to the Federal marshal in the District of Columbia at 10 A.M. on June 22, or turning themselves in at prison by noon. Both men were later photographed and fingerprinted.

It has been two and one-half years since Mr. Haldeman and Mr. Mitchell were convicted and the string of appeals has all but run out for them.

"More than four years ago I started on a legal process I thought was proper," Mr. Haldeman said outside court. "I knew it was going to be difficult. I still think it was right. I am prepared now to accept the results."

Mitchell Comments on the Crowd

Mr. Mitchell, 63 years old, commented only on the crowd of reporters and cameramen that jostled him. "I hope nobody gets killed out of this," he said as he entered his car. When he enters prison, somewhere in the Eastern part of the country, he will be the first former Attorney General in American history to be incarcerated.

Mr. Haldeman, 50, who wielded wide power as chief of staff to President Nixon, will report to a minimum security facility at Lompoc, Calif.

John D. Ehrlichman, the third member of what an appeals court called "a wide-ranging conspiracy," has served eight months of his 2½-to-8-year prison sentence—the same as Judge Sirica imposed on Mr. Haldeman and Mr. Mitchell. Mr. Ehrlichman is at a work camp in Arizona.

Unless their lawyers succeed in getting the sentences reduced, both men must serve a minimum of two and one-half years.

Under judicial rules, they can apply to Judge Sirica for a sentence reduction within 120 days after the Supreme Court declined to review their case. The Court's denial was issued May 23, and both men asked for a rarely granted reconsideration.

Mr. Haldeman appeared tanned and in good spirits as he arrived in the courtroom. But Mr. Mitchell was less affable. As reporters crowded around him, extending their microphones, he said:

"I'm going to get through here first, and if anyone puts one of those things [microphones] near me, I'm going to knock it down his throat."