

# Haldeman Lashes Out at Nixon

Washington

Former White House chief of staff H.R. Haldeman, asking to be freed from a prison sentence for his part in the Watergate coverup, charged yesterday that former President Richard M. Nixon "was

the principal actor" in obstructing justice in the case.

Haldeman, in the harshest words he has used publicly about his former boss, said Nixon had made "a clear confession of guilt"

in his latest televised interview with David Frost.

"Moreover, he brags about a desire to destroy incriminating evidence and thus, for a second time,

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obstruct justice," Haldeman said in a motion for reduction of sentence filed here with U.S. District Judge John J. Sirica.

In a similar motion, former Attorney General John N. Mitchell said Watergate was the cause of what his lawyer described as "the increasing mental conflicts" of Mitchell's late wife, Martha.

This was a contradiction of Nixon's statement on the last Frost interview, broadcast earlier this month, that if it had not been for Mrs. Mitchell's "mental and emotional problem that nobody knew about ... there'd have been no Watergate."

Mitchell, however, made no criticism of Nixon in his court papers. Instead, he cited his medical problems, which have worsened since he entered federal prison. He said he is suffering from a severe degenerative disease affecting his right hip that has impaired his mobility, and from heart problems resulting from hypertension.

Both men said the huge legal fees they have paid amount to severe "fines."

Haldeman and Mitchell began serving 30-month to eight-year prison sentences three months ago for their role in the Watergate coverup.

In their motions Friday, they expressed regret for their roles in the coverup conspiracy, their first declarations of contrition to Sirica, the judge who sentenced them.

"Counsel is authorized by Mr. Mitchell to advise the court that he is truly sorry for and regrets those actions of his that resulted in his conviction," Mitchell's lawyer, William G. Hundley, said in one motion.

Haldeman's attorney, John J. Wilson, said in the other that his client was writing Sirica "of his remorse and regret that the events and actions which form the basis of the indictment took place."

Haldeman's motion made caustic reference to Nixon's televised interviews with Frost, describing the latest one as "probably the queerest one of all."

"He (Nixon) has proclaimed to the world that he ordered the destruction of tapes which would have incriminated him, but Haldeman omitted to do so," the motion said.

"Nixon does not care what he now says since he is wrapped in an immunizing pardon and his pockets are lined with \$600,000," Haldeman said.

The former Nixon aides appealed for treatment "as near as possible" to Nixon's.

"Haldeman, a Republican criminal, cannot expect the benign and generous treatment from President Carter that Nixon's grateful appointee, ex-President (Gerald R.) Ford, arranged through an emissary," he said, presumably in a reference to Ford's pardon of Nixon.

The greatest punishment for Haldeman, who is working as a laboratory chemist in the prison sewage processing plant, is "The total frustration and desperation" of a man who is prohibited from doing something worthwhile and productive, his motion said.

"He has experienced the indignity, shame, horror, fear, disgust and all the other overwhelming emotions that assail a thinking man who is required to enter prison," the motion said. "He has been punished (and) society has had its retribution."

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