

Mitchell Files Clemency Plea

Washington

Imprisoned Watergate conspirator John Mitchell filed an urgent plea for executive clemency yesterday, citing a "compelling need for hip surgery" and fears for the future of his 16-year-old daughter.

The former Attorney General filed the petition for early release through his attorney, William Hundley, who presented it to Attorney General Griffin Bell along with a letter of his own saying he fears the medical and other problems could prove too much "even for a strong man like John Mitchell."

Mitchell, 64, confined to the minimum security prison at Maxwell Air Force Base, Ala., and not eligible for parole until June 20, also said in his petition he is suffering from a "cardiomegaly," or enlargement of the heart, "apparently caused by hypertension."

The Justice Department said the petition had been turned over to pardon attorney John Stanish, who will make a recommendation to President Carter. The prison's warden said he had been unaware of the petition until a reporter told him of it.

Of his daughter Martha, better known as Marty, Mitchell wrote: "Now that I am incarcerated and may no longer help with her formative years, I fear for her unpredictable future. Petitioner's continued imprisonment will place the greatest burden of the whole affair upon my teen-age daughter."

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