

# NIXON IS SECLUDED AS HE CONSIDERS WATERGATE MOVE

**Key Advisers Stay in Capital  
While the President Visits  
Camp David Retreat**

## **PAPER TERMED FORGERY**

**Document Said to Show  
Kennedy Complicity in Diem  
Murder Linked to Hunt**

By **JOHN M. CREWDSON**

Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, April 28 —

President Nixon was reported to be in "virtual seclusion" today at his mountaintop retreat at Camp David, Md., pondering his course of action amid the mounting Watergate bugging controversy.

The President, who canceled a scheduled meeting with his economic advisers before leaving the capital last night, took with him only his personal aides.

Both H. R. Haldeman, his chief of staff, and John D. Ehrlichman, his domestic affairs adviser, who usually accompany Mr. Nixon on such trips, stayed behind in Washington.

### **Neither Aide on Trip**

Neither accompanied the President on his trip to the Key Biscayne, Fla., White House last week, but the two advisers joined him on a day-long visit to Mississippi yesterday.

There were no indications that Mr. Nixon was preparing to make any public announcement or take other action this weekend in connection with the Watergate affair.

Mr. Nixon has been in seclusion for much of the time since he announced on April 17 that he had begun his own investigation of the case. Justice Department sources have indicated that no indictments can be expected for at least a few days.

The Washington Post reported tonight that John W. Dean 3d, the Presidential counsel, was prepared to testify under oath that he gave regular reports to Mr. Haldeman and Mr. Ehrlichman, at their direction, on efforts to cover up the Watergate affair.

### **No Comment by Officials**

The Post attributed its report to reliable sources, whom it did not identify. None of the principals included in the report were available for comment.

Other White House officials reached tonight said that there was no official reaction to The Post article.

In another development, a former reporter who was given a document purported to be a State Department cable showing complicity by the Kennedy Administration in the murder of President Ngo Dinh Diem of South Vietnam said today that he had learned the document was a forgery.

The reporter, William G. Lambert, who yesterday released the text of the document, said in a telephone interview today that he had "established to my satisfaction through confidential sources" that the document, shown him more than a year ago by a White House aide, had been fabricated.

"It is clear that the source

Continued on Page 43, Column 1

# NIXON IS SECLUDED TO PONDER COURSE

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Continued From Page 1, Col. 3

who handed me the document and permitted me to make a handwritten verbatim copy was trying to use me to leak this phony thing," Mr. Lambert said from his home in Rye, N. Y.

Mr. Lambert, who worked for Life magazine before it closed earlier this year, refused to identify the aide who disclosed the fake cable to him, but the New York Times has learned that the source was E. Howard Hunt Jr., one of five men who pleaded guilty in the Watergate bugging and burglary case. Two others were convicted.

It was disclosed yesterday that on June 28, 1972—11 days after the Watergate break-in—Mr. Dean handed what he has since said were diplomatic cables forged by Hunt to L. Patrick Gray 3d, then the acting director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

Mr. Gray has told friends that he had no knowledge of the contents of the two files given to him by Mr. Dean, who reportedly told him that although they were unrelated to the Watergate case, they constituted "political dynamite" and "should never see the light of day."

Mr. Gray has said that he destroyed the files without opening them. He resigned his F.B.I. post a few hours after yesterday's disclosure of his actions.

Meanwhile, Senator William Proxmire, Democrat of Wisconsin, said that William D. Ruckelshaus, named yesterday to succeed Mr. Gray as acting head of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, could serve legally beyond May 26 only "if his name has been submitted to the Senate for confirmation before that date."

### Expects Short Term

The Senator cited an obscure Federal statute limiting appointments to 30 days without confirmation in support of his contention. But the Justice Department disagreed with his interpretation when he raised the same point in connection with Mr. Gray a few weeks ago.

Mr. Ruckelshaus said yesterday that he did not expect to serve "much longer than a few two months" before a permanent director of the bureau would be nominated.

Assistant Attorney General Henry E. Petersen, in charge of the Government investigation of the Watergate affair, has reportedly told Mr. Gray that Mr. Dean maintained the two files, each about an eighth of an inch thick, contained "fabricated State Department cables relating to President Kennedy's complicity in Diem's assassination."

It is not known for certain whether the cable made available to Mr. Lambert by Mr. Hunt, who began work as a part-time White House consultant in 1971, was among those destroyed by Mr. Gray.

However, the cable was to have been in Hunt's safe in the old Executive Office Building, next door to the White House, when it was opened June 19 on orders from Mr. Dean.

### Photocopies Shown

The alleged cable, dated June 29, 1963, was an "instruction" to Henry Cabot Lodge, United States Ambassador in Saigon at the time, that President Diem should not be granted political asylum if he was subsequently deposed.

President Diem was deposed three days later during a coup d'état organized by a group of South Vietnamese army generals who acted with the blessing of President Kennedy.

Mr. Lambert said today that in late 1971 or early 1972, a source had shown him "about 50" photocopies of what appeared to be diplomatic messages relating to the deteriorating position of the Diem regime in the last half of 1963.

Some of the document's pages bore the stamped notation "Copy to the Key Library," leading him to believe they may have been generated by the White House. But the cable in question, he said, he was told had been "fed up" during the Watergate investigation of the Pentagon papers, carried no such stamp.

### Former Officials Comment

Mr. Lambert said that in 1971, he addressed "Ambassador Lodge—Eyes Only," and was shown by six White House and State Department officials, including McGeorge Bundy, who served at the time as special assistant to President Kennedy for national security affairs. He said it was also stamped "Rusk."

Dean Rusk, the Secretary of State in the Kennedy Administration,

said yesterday that the document had never existed. Mr. Lodge said he had never received such a message, and Mr. Bundy now the president of the Ford Foundation, called it "total nonsense—the crudest kind of forgery."

Mr. Lambert said today that he learned of the document's existence in the fall of 1971, after he was advised by an unidentified source to re-read the text of a news conference by President Nixon on Sept. 16, 1971.

At that time, Mr. Nixon remarked that "... I would remind all concerned that the way we got into Vietnam was through overthrowing Diem and the complicity in the murder of Diem ..."

### Questions Raised

"The question is," Mr. Lambert said, "how far did it [the bogus cable] go? Did it go to [Secretary of State William P.] Rogers? Did it go to Nixon? Were they misled by this thing? Did the President use it to base that strong statement on?"

A White House spokesman, asked today whether President Nixon's statement was founded in any way on the cable that Hunt was believed to have fabricated, replied after checking, "The answer is no."

The purported cable to Ambassador Lodge was suspect when first revealed by Mr. Lambert yesterday, because its language did not square with that of other, legitimate messages transmitted during that time.

For example, a cable of such import sent three days before President Diem's murder would certainly have warranted comment, or at least acknowledgment, by Mr. Lodge, yet there is no record in the Pentagon papers study of such a cable, or even such intention upon the part of the Kennedy White House.

On the other hand, there is a record in several cables exchanged between the White House and the Ambassador on Oct. 30, 1963, of concern over the question of what to do about asylum for principals on either side, depending on whether the coup failed or was successful.

In addition, Hunt is known to have compiled, while at the White House, a dossier on Senator Edward M. Kennedy, Democrat of Massachusetts, the late President's youngest brother. At one point in 1971, the White House considered Senator Kennedy a potential candidate for his party's Presidential nomination in 1972.