

# Crowds Hold Vigil at the White House

8/7/74  
By Haynes Johnson  
Washington Post Staff Writer

The day after the cover-up finally fell apart, the limousines of the Cabinet officers were lined up on the driveway in a neat row outside the West Wing of the White House, and a large crowd had gathered at the gates.

They stood, three and four deep, peering through the iron fence toward the Executive Mansion. Behind them, across Pennsylvania Avenue in Lafayette Park, another crowd had gathered. They were standing, too, silently facing the White House.

It was a death watch, a wake, a sharing, it seemed, in a moment in history. In the end, after the morning hours had slowly ticked away in the sultry Washington weather, it was all anti-climatic.

The President didn't resign, the Cabinet was rallying around him, the constitutional process was grinding ahead.

It didn't begin that way. Inside the White House there was an air of expectancy. In the press room, where photographers congregated early, they were talking about Gerald Ford as if he were President. "So I'm going to say to Ziegler, 'You won't have us to kick around any more,'" one photographer said.

Aside from the unusually large press contingent present, there was little else evident to signify that this might be the day that signaled the end of the Nixon administration.

Only one piece of paper was posted on the bulletin board where the President's daily public business is listed. It told of only one event for the day:

"11:00 a.m. Cabinet meeting. The Cabinet Room."

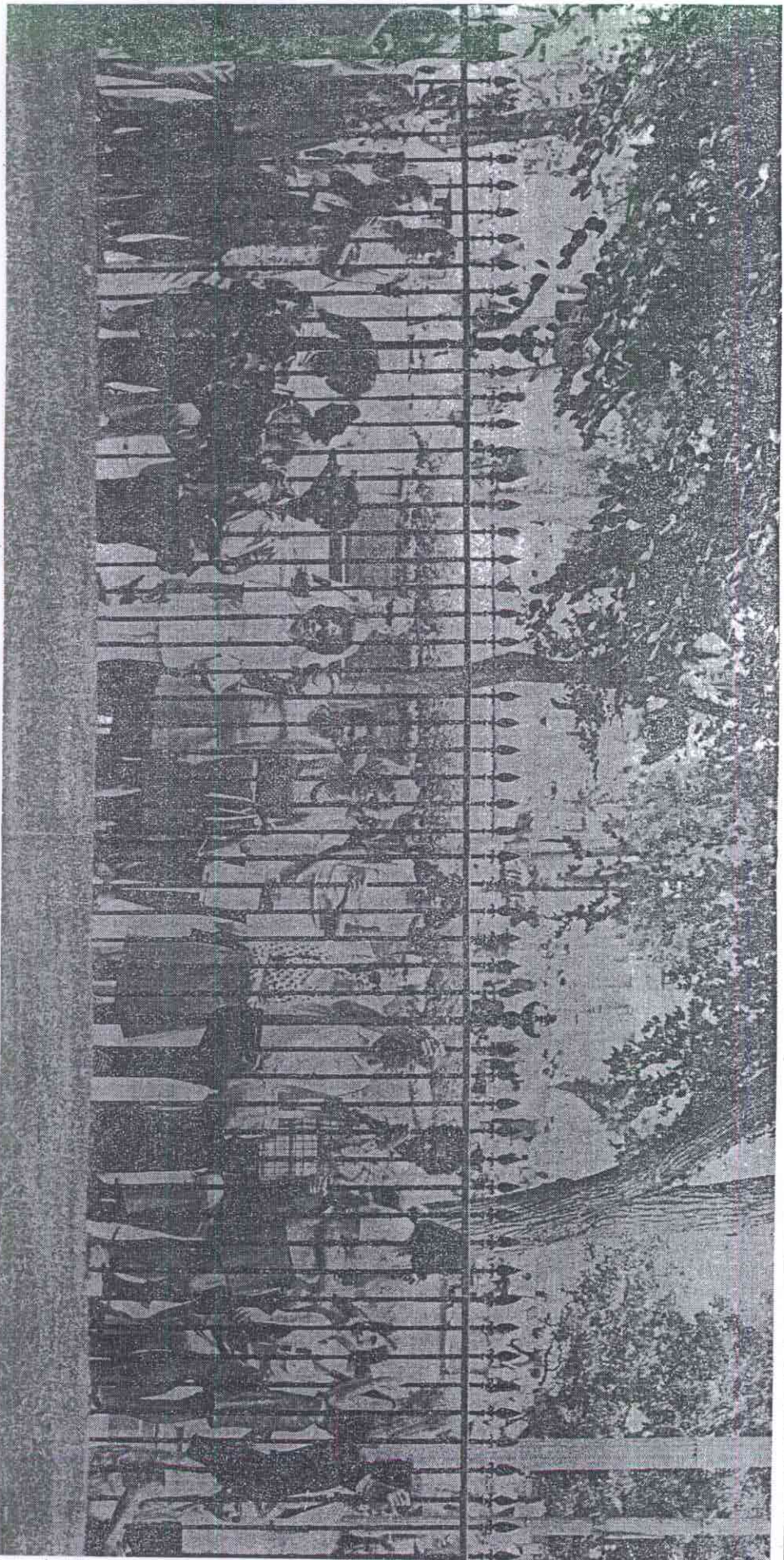
Alongside was another bulletin board bearing the label: "Information from Mrs. Nixon's press office." Nothing was posted, nothing was scheduled.

Below, in the 14 boxes provided for presidential statements and releases, all but two were empty, and they already had played a fateful role in the history of the Nixon administration.

They contained what was left of the President's statement the afternoon before conceding that he had withheld critical Watergate information and that until last week "I did not realize the extent of the implications which the conversations might now appear to have." The only other box that con-

See SCENE, A9, Col. 1





*Crowd lines White House fence along Pennsylvania Avenue during President Nixon's Cabinet meeting. Afterward, the spectators were told the President is not resigning and the story continues.*

By Dennis Gribble—The Washington Post



## SCENE, From A1

tained any official White House material held a few pages of part of the President's transcribed conversations with H. R. Haldeman just six days after the Watergate break-in that clearly showed Mr. Nixon had approved the cover-up for political reasons.

The reaction to those disclosures already had been devastating. The news had swept through Congress and the White House like a tidal wave the afternoon and evening before, leaving in its wake shock and anger and expressions of sorrow and betrayal.

What little remained of the President's hardcore support in the House had crumbled. Wiggins of California, Dennis of Indiana, Latta of Ohio, those Nixon stalwarts of only the week before in the impeachment inquiry, had come out against him publicly.

Now, in the morning, that reaction was continuing and the momentum was building.

At 9 o'clock on Capitol Hill the strongest anti-impeachment tiger on the Judiciary Committee had also capitulated. Charlie Sandman of New Jersey, who had rasped and snarled his way into the hearts of the true believers of the Nixon legions, was saying the new transcripts gave "hard proof" of criminality. He predicted that the House impeachment vote "will practically be unanimous."

Had they been surprised by the reaction to the new disclosures. Longer pause, then a response: It was about what they had expected.

More questions. Finally, he said, turning to leave: "I only came out to say hello and got ambushed."

"This is not a usual day, George," a reporter remarked. And another said: "You're the first real live White House staffer we've seen in eight days."

Gerald Warren, the deputy press secretary who has been making the official White House statements while Ronald Ziegler has been silent, passed by. Earlier, he had said there wasn't anything unusual about the Cabinet meeting; it was no emergency; it had been set up in advance. (So much in advance that some Cabinet officers didn't get the word the night before and Vice President Ford had to cancel a speech at 11 a.m. for it.)

Now it was after 11, and the Cabinet members and counselors had taken their places around the long table. Seated clockwise from the President's left they were: Schlesinger, Dent, Brinegar, Scali, Rush, Lynn, Butz, Simon, Ford, Saxbe, Brennan, Ash, Bush, Burch, Weinberger, Morton and Kissinger.

It is a mark of what had happened to the Nixon administration that few Americans, and probably few even in Washington, could list them all by title and full name.

He was among those who would vote for impeachment.

On Wall Street, that most sensitive indicator of the American mood, the stock market, was reacting wildly to the drumbeats of events.

By 10.30, after only half an hour of heavy trading, the market had risen dramatically by more than 25 points. The tickers carrying that news into the White House described the spurt as an "explosive" (Reuter) and "spectacular" (United Press International) rally. The Associated Press was more sober, but it made the main point: the rally was "sparked by renewed hopes for early resolution of Watergate and the attendant problems that have stymied the market for so many months."

In less circumspect language, it meant the market was anticipating the President's imminent departure from office.

On other days the news flowing across those White House tickers would have been significant: in Moscow, the Soviet Union was calling on the United States to abide by its commitments in settling international military conflicts; in Jordan, officials were denouncing their ally Egypt over the future of the West Bank of the Jordan River; in Athens, the leading Greek paper was beginning the first of a series of four editorials on "How the Americans Cheated Greece."

And in two of the world's most sor-

Inside, the waiting began for the anticipated denouncement. The press quarters are new, built in the Nixon period over what had been Franklin Roosevelt's swimming pool. While the decor is Swedish modern, the mementoes of the past are everywhere present: the pictures of Hoover and FDR and Truman with the old press corps, the letter from Ike addressed "to my favorite (and long-suffering travelling companions)" thanking them for a Christmas golfing gift in 1957.

One picture had a peculiar poignancy. It was of Lyndon Johnson and Richard Nixon in silhouette, taken on Jan. 20, 1969, the last day of the Johnson presidency and the first of the Nixon era.

On it, LBJ had written: "To the White House press corps, eyewitness to the changing of the guard."

And eyewitness again, it seemed, under circumstances no one could have foreseen five years ago. A kind of gallows humor and morbid gossip was making the rounds. The night before, when Haig summoned the White House staff to discuss the bad news, one presidential adviser left the meeting singing "Off We Go Into the Wild Blue Yonder." Then he added audibly: "Crash!"

At 12:30 the crowds inside the White House grounds and outside the gates had grown even larger. There was a stir as the doors opened and the Cabi-

net officers began to trickle out. James T. Lynn, the Transportation Secretary, glanced briefly toward them and then walked hurriedly away down the steps toward the Executive Office Building.

William E. Simon, Frederick B. Dent and Peter J. Brennan next walked out. They hesitated as the press called out to them, and then walked slowly toward the cameras. A mob scene. Security went by the boards. Simon, who did most of the talking, was engulfed. In the pushing, milling crowd his words came through in fragments of phrases:

"The President sincerely believes he has not committed any impeachable offense. . . He intends to stay. . . his firm resolve not to let the tragedy of Watergate obscure. . . No Cabinet officer spoke of resignation. . . He explained the revelations and disclosures. . . the constitutional processes. . . We've got lots of problems outside of this tragedy. . ."

Threading his way slowly to his car, Brennan said: "He looked great. Everybody's staying on. We've got lots of work to do."

It was over—for now.

Outside the gates, voices in the crowd were shouting: "Tell us what happened. Tell us what happened." He's not resigning, the Cabinet is with him, and the story is still continuing, they were told.

But on this August day the world was watching the White House, the eye in the hurricane of the news.

Shortly before 11 o'clock the crowds were getting larger outside the iron fence, and the Cabinet officers were slowly moving indoors past the Marine guard at the portals of the West Wing. Cameras were set up on the grass facing the doors, and the press corps was quietly surveying the scene when George Joulwan walked outdoors.

He is the principal aide to Alexander M. Haig Jr., the President's chief of staff, and he had come out merely to say hello, he said.

He was immediately surrounded by reporters asking questions.

Yes, there had been a White House staff meeting at 8:30 that morning. They talked about the economy and about Cyprus. Yes, they talked about the President's situation. Had they talked about his resignation? Pause.

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# Congressmen Suggesting Grant of Immunity to Nixon

By Richard M. Cohen  
Washington Post Staff Writer

Members of Congress from both parties suggested yesterday that President Richard M. Nixon be offered a congressional grant of immunity against criminal prosecution if he resigns from office.

The suggestions, offered by some congressmen as an inducement to the President to resign, drew no response from the White House and a declaration in opposition from a key Senate Democrat, majority whip Robert Byrd of West Virginia.

"I personally would be opposed to presidential amnesty," Byrd told a breakfast meeting with reporters. "How can we tell our young people that they ought to respect the law if a man who commits a most heinous crime is granted immunity. Even if he resigns and admits guilt, I'd be opposed to any grant of immunity."

Later in the day, however, Sen. Robert P. Griffin (R-Mich.), who had called for Mr. Nixon's resignation on Monday, said he was considering drafting legislation that would offer Mr. Nixon immunity from any criminal prosecution that might follow his removal or resignation from office.

"The offenses—I mean the alleged offenses—with which he is charged may not be so serious that people want to see a former President go to jail," Griffin said. Griffin added that any immunity legislation would need bi-partisan support.

Congressional Democrats appeared unwilling to take the lead in offering Mr. Nixon immunity in the event he resigned. Rep. Wilbur Mills (D-Ark.) who first suggested the plan months ago, said through aides yesterday that he would have nothing further to say about his proposal.

A source close to Mills

said the Arkansas Democrat still stood behind his offer, which would remain open "any time up to trial by the Senate." The source added that chances of Congress passing immunity legislation were fading with every day. He, too, said Mills had received no response from the White House.

Congressional sources said the immunity idea was the subject of much discussion in the cloakrooms, but no action. One key Republican senator said the time may already have passed for the plan.

"Frankly, I don't think it would pass if it were proposed," the senator said. "That train may already have left the station."

Similarly, a Democratic source said that the Democratic leadership had not been approached by the White House on an immunity plan and there was growing reluctance on the part of some Democrats to favor one.

"They don't want to stand up and vote on a resolution or a bill," he said. He said the Democrats would prefer to work out an informal agreement with Special Watergate Prosecutor Leon Jaworski, Attorney General William Saxbe and possibly Vice President Gerald R. Ford rather than submit the issue to a formal vote.

Despite the reported reluctance of some Democrats to endorse an immunity plan for President Nixon, House Majority Leader Thomas P. O'Neill (D-Mass.) said he personally would not oppose such a plan and believes most Americans would accept it.

"I would say there would be a small element of the American people who feel this should go all the way forward," O'Neill said, "but I think the overall feeling is that . . . Nixon would have

suffered enough by losing the presidency."

House Speaker Carl Albert (D-Okla.) said he would not comment on any immunity plan until he had a chance to review the legislation.

If he resigned or was impeached and convicted by the Senate, Mr. Nixon could be criminally prosecuted like any other citizen. Congressional leaders and leading lawyers think that only an act of Congress—or an agreement with Jaworski—could hold the President immune from possible criminal charges once he is out of office.

The precedent for such a deal—a possible plea bargain of sorts—exists in the resignation of former Vice President Spiro T. Agnew. He pleaded *nolo contendere*—no contest—to a single charge of tax evasion in exchange for a guarantee from then Attorney General Elliot L. Richardson that he would not be sentenced to jail. In return for that pledge, Agnew resigned and pleaded.

While Congress could protect the President from any criminal action after he left office, legal scholars questioned by The Post yesterday agreed that it could not afford him the same protection when it comes to civil suits.

Similarly, Congress could not forbid a local or state prosecutor from instituting legal action against the President for alleged crimes committed within the prosecutor's jurisdiction, although in the Agnew case no Maryland prosecutor has moved against the former Vice President.

While the Agnew case remains a precedent of sorts, some lawyers consider it distinctly different because they believe the President has the power to pardon

himself in advance for all Watergate-related offenses.

As far-fetched as the proposition may sound, neither a spokesman for the office of the legal counsel in the Justice Department nor its pardon attorney was willing to strike it down out of hand.

"We've discussed it," said Lawrence M. Traylor, the Justice Department's pardon attorney. "I guess it's been discussed by the staff. All I can say is that presidential powers (to grant pardons) are not limited by the Constitution. I have no precedent for this. I would say that the only restriction in the Constitution has to do with impeachment."

Mary Lawton, a deputy to Robert Dixon of the Justice Department's office of legal counsel, which last summer researched the question of whether Agnew could be indicted, said her office had not yet researched whether a President could pardon himself. Like Traylor, she did not dismiss the notion out of hand.

### ***Kalmbach in Prison To Finish Sentence***

LOMPOC, Calif. Aug. 6 (UPI)—Herbert W. Kalmbach, President Nixon's former personal lawyer, has arrived at the federal minimum security camp here to serve the remainder of his 6-to-18 month prison term for Watergate-related matters.

Kalmbach, 52, arrived at the camp Friday, camp officials said today, and has been working as a surveyor on a construction crew improving the facility's sewage treatment plant.

U.S. District Court Judge John J. Sirica sentenced Kalmbach last June to 6 to 18 months and a 10,000 fine on one count and six months on a second count on Kalmbach's pleas of guilty to violating campaign practice laws during the 1970 congressional elections.



## Inducement for Resignation

# Congressional Grant of Immunity Eyed

By Peter Milius

Washington Post Staff Writer

Vice President Ford yesterday called on the country to look beyond impeachment — which may mean to his administration — and to join the government in driving down inflation, “Public Enemy No. 1.”

In a speech delivered by a stand-in because he was called to yesterday morning's Cabinet meeting, the Vice President sought to avoid being presumptuous while giving his views on the leading economic questions of the day.

The speech suggested there will be no change in the twin fundamentals of current economic policy — a slowdown in both federal spending and the growth of the money supply — if the Vice President succeeds Mr. Nixon.

“We must veto ‘budget-busting’ legislation,” Ford said. “We cannot afford optional luxuries. . . . Reduced expenditures mean reduced government borrowing, reduced interest rates and help for the Federal Reserve in its efforts to slow the inflationary expansion of money and credit.”

But the speech suggested the Vice President, if elevated to the presidency, will call on the country to make a new start.

“At home,” Ford said in remarks prepared some days ago for delivery to a farm group here, “it is apparent that we must strive for a new confidence in our domestic capacity to deal with inflation. We have made economic predictions that turned out to be wrong. We have all made mistakes. But instead of dwelling on the errors of the past, let us unite and cooperate to face the future. Let us seek a new sense of confidence in ourselves and in our nations.”

He said “all the victims of inflation—business and labor, agriculture and indus-

try, employed and unemployed, Democrats and Republicans — must rally as Americans. Restoration of economic confidence requires willingness to cooperate for the common good.”

There were indications that Ford would have cooperation if he became President, at least at first.

“I think he would have the support of trade unions,” AFL-CIO President George Meany said Monday in Chicago, after again calling for President Nixon's resignation or removal. “My inclination is to cooperate with Ford in every possible way.”

The stock market also showed signs yesterday that investors look upon Ford's possible ascension with approval. The Dow-Jones industrial average leaped about 25 points in the first hour of trading yesterday on news that Mr. Nixon had called his Cabinet into session. It later fell on news that he would not resign, and was up only about 13 points at the close.

The substance of the Vice President's speech yesterday was no different from what he has said before, but the tone had changed. In a speech 11 days ago he spoke about what “this administration asks you to support.” There were no such references to the administration yesterday.

He also spoke 11 days ago of the need to elect an “inflation-proof” rather than a “veto-proof” Congress this November, and said that would mean electing more Republicans. Yesterday he spoke instead as a conciliator.

“I welcome the involvement of Congress in efforts to deal with inflation,” Ford said. “Neither impeachment nor the November election campaign must interfere with immediate bipartisan efforts to bring inflation un-

der control,” his audience was told.

In the speech impeachment was mentioned neutrally: “These proceedings are in full accordance with our constitutional processes.”

“Reasonable and just people are differing,” Ford went on. “But reasonable and just people are also capable of simultaneously joining in a national, non-political campaign against inflation irrespective of their other legitimate involvements.”

Ford reiterated the White House view that Congress is threatening to lift spending to \$312 billion this fiscal year and that the budgeted spending total of \$305 billion should be cut back instead. He also called for a balanced or surplus budget next fiscal year.

The Vice President departed somewhat from the White House position in other areas. The president said in his economic speech two weeks ago that the public ought to spend less and save more. Ford said yester-

day, as he had earlier, that “it serves no purpose to lecture the harassed public, especially the low- and middle-income people who have been the main losers from inflation.”

He said “certain groups—older Americans, persons on fixed incomes, the unemployed—may require special help within budgetary limitations” while inflation continues and the government deliberately slows down the economy.

“Certain industries such as the public utilities, housing, financial institutions and others” may also require such help, Ford said.

Aides say since Ford became Vice President he has had discussions on economic questions with a variety of people in and out of government. One is conservative economist Alan Greenspan, Mr. Nixon's choice as new chairman of the Council of Economic Advisers. One aide said Ford “regards Greenspan very highly,” indicating he would be kept on if Ford becomes President.



# 1 Subpoenaed Conversation Never Taped, St. Clair Says

By William Claiborne  
Washington Post Staff Writer

Defense lawyers for President Nixon said yesterday that one of 13 new White House conversations subpoenaed by the Watergate special prosecution force was never recorded, and that another is of "poor audio quality."

Presidential special counsel James D. St. Clair said that a half-hour telephone conversation June 21, 1972, between Mr. Nixon and former counsel Charles W. Colson was never taped, because the President apparently placed the call from his second-floor White House bedroom.

It is the second conversation the White House has said was not taped for the same reason. Last November, presidential lawyers said a June 20, 1972, telephone call Mr. Nixon made to former Attorney General

John N. Mitchell could not be found because it apparently was made from a telephone in the President's living quarters.

The President's Oval Office and a suite in the Executive Office Building were wired for automatic recording of telephone conversations, but the family quarters were not.

In an index and analysis of the 13 subpoenaed tape recordings submitted yesterday to U.S. District Court Judge John J. Sirica Jr., St. Clair made no mention of the substance of the President's telephone conversation with Colson that apparently was not recorded.

However, St. Clair said that "it would appear that" a tape of a 17-minute telephone talk between the President and Colson the preceding day, June 20, 1972, relates to the alleged Watergate cover-up.

St. Clair said the tape is flawed by "poor audio quality," but he did not specify the nature of the flaws.

The call was recorded in the Executive Office Building beginning at 8:04 p.m., three days after the break-in at the Democratic National Committee headquarters.

The tapes were among 13 turned over to Judge Sirica on Friday as a result of the Supreme Court decision against Mr. Nixon's claim of executive privilege.

Most of the tapes reportedly were reviewed by Mr. Nixon in May in connection with an out-of-court settlement that Watergate Special Prosecutor Leon Jaworski had proposed to resolve the subpoena dispute.

The President considered the proposal briefly, but then turned it down after listening to what was on at least some of the recordings. Sirica has already listened

to some of the tapes for any relevant evidence they might contain, and has said he expects the review to occupy him until the Watergate cover-up trial is to begin Sept. 9.

Of the 13 presidential conversations summarized in St. Clair's index, the White House is claiming executive privilege on parts or all of eight.

Taking into account the three transcribed conversations released by the White House Monday — in which the President is shown as directing the early Watergate cover-up efforts — St. Clair's report to Sirica contains only two previously undisclosed tapes for which the President is making no claim of executive privilege.

When the White House produced the first 20 subpoenaed tapes July 30, it submitted an eight-page report claiming executive

privilege for 23 scattered segments. At that time St. Clair also disclosed that there was more than five minutes missing from one tape because a reel was replaced while a conversation was going on.

Still left unanswered by St. Clair's analysis yesterday is why a nine-minute, face-to-face conversation between the President and his chief of staff, H. R. (Bob) Haldeman, on June 23, 1972, covered only one page in the typed transcript released by the White House Monday.

In the conversation, the President discussed Haldeman's attempts to impede an FBI Watergate investigation by invoking the Central Intelligence Agency, and also mentioned political concerns.

The conversation ends in mid-sentence while the Presi-

dent is talking, and the only explanation in the White House transcript is the notation, "voices fade."

There is no mention in the index and analysis of any gaps or extraordinary circumstances that would account for such a brief conversation covering nine minutes' time. There was also no claim of executive privilege for any portion of the conversation.

An answer to that question could be provided in Sirica's courtroom at 1:30 p.m. today, when White House lawyers are scheduled to turn over tapes of 31 additional conversations. The White House also is expected to deliver a report on those who had custody of the tapes, and Mr. Nixon's daily logs for 64 dates covering all of the subpoenaed conversations.



# Ford's Day— Routine, but Still Unusual

By Jules Witcover  
Washington Post Staff Writer

As expectations grew that he will soon be President of the United States, Jerry Ford tried to steer a level, business-as-usual course yesterday, with mixed results.

The day started out normally enough for the Vice President. At about 6:30 a.m., he rose and swam his customary several laps in the backyard pool of his home in Alexandria. Then he dressed and stepped out of the house, where he encountered the first evidence that this would not be quite a normal day for him.

Television cameras clicked and TV newsmen shouted questions at him. But in keeping with his statement of Monday night that he would bow out of the impeachment debate, he declined comment, got into his government limousine and headed for Capitol Hill.

There, he attended a routine breakfast with eight Republican congressmen, to discuss the state of the economy. The host, Rep. Clarence J. Brown (R-Ohio), said the congressmen honored Ford's decision of Monday night and no questions were raised about impeachment or about Ford's own plans.

Instead, according to Brown, the congressmen expressed dissatisfaction with Mr. Nixon's recent speech on the economy and urged Ford to press for a clear-cut administration commitment to a balanced budget for the next fiscal year.

From the breakfast, the Vice President returned to his Executive Office Building office, where he spent an hour conferring with staff aides. Then he went to the 11 a.m. Cabinet meeting at which the President reiterated that he had no intention of resigning.

The Vice President had

scheduled a speech to the National conference of the Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service at the Statler-Hilton. But he sent John O. Marsh, a staff assistant who usually specializes in defense affairs, to deliver it for him while he attended the late-scheduled Cabinet meeting.

In the jumpy atmosphere prevailing around town, that cancellation in itself bred speculation that something momentous might be in the offing. But yesterday, at least, was not the day most everyone now seems to believe is inevitable—the day of Ford's elevation to the presidency.

The Cabinet meeting ran nearly two hours, obliging the Vice President to cancel some Capitol Hill meetings with congressmen.

Instead, according to his press secretary, Paul Miltich, Ford ate at his desk on the second floor of the EOB and spent the afternoon talking to a number of callers.

First, he discussed with officers of the National Association of Home Builders policy recommendations they offered. Then he conferred with Philip Buchen, his former law partner in Grand Rapids who is now executive director of the Domestic Council Committee on the Right of Privacy—a special problem area assigned to the Vice President.

He met with a group of

Japanese legislators and then gave interviews to Vermont C. Royster, columnist for The Wall Street Journal, and Betty Beale, a reporter for the Washington Star-News. In between, he conferred briefly with Republican National Chairman George Bush. Miltich said they discussed a party TV fund-raiser in Los Angeles at which Ford is to speak Thursday night.

In late afternoon, he went to his ceremonial office at the Capitol for a meeting with three Democratic and two Republican senators who were the original co-sponsors of a resolution calling for a continuing "domestic summit conference" on the economy consisting of the House and Senate leadership and com-

mittee chairmen particularly involved with economic legislation and policy. The group was headed by Sen. Pete V. Domenici (R-N.M.), prime sponsor of the resolution in the Senate.

Then, in the early evening, the Vice President went

home to Alexandria for dinner with his family.

It was, as vice presidential days go, fairly routine, except for the atmosphere of expectation that surrounded it. Tighter security prevailed in the EOB than usual. Visitors were discouraged, and once inside the dim corridors, were asked to conduct their previously stated business and leave. One who tarried outside the Vice President's second-floor office was not only asked to leave but was escorted, courteously, by a White House policeman to the main entrance—and exit.

Among the Ford staff, scattered in mostly unmarked offices along the second-floor corridor where the Vice President's office is located, the mood seemed to be one of quiet, unrejoicing expectation—approaching inevitability.

"It's like waiting for the other shoe to drop," one staffer said. "We know he's going to be President now." But the Ford people were circumspect, avoiding any comment about a Ford administration and what it might be like.

There was instead a tone of commiseration toward the Nixon people. One Ford aide told of seeing White House speechwriter and media expert Patrick J. Buchanan leaving the building the night before, and a colleague calling to him: "Have you packed your bag?"

Outside the Vice President's suite, with the seal of his office hanging over the door, a solitary White House policeman sat at a desk, and a single Secret Service man, his ear wired to a walkie-talkie, stood guard in the tranquil corridor.

As columnist Royster



came out, a smiling vice President came to the door, looking relaxed in a conservative gray business suit. He said goodby to Royster and hello to Miss Beale, and laughed his hearty, country-boy, all-stops-pulled guffaw, then disappeared into the office again.

As the pressure mounted just across the street in the Oval Office of the White House, Jerry Ford was going about his business.



# Amidst Mussed Hair and

By William Greider

Washington Post Staff Writer

The smoking gun which they found on the President's desk was almost buried by the clutter of warped trivia which occupied his mind.

Richard Nixon and his accomplice, Haldeman, talked about so many things on that fateful day in 1972, six days after the Watergate break-in, while the secret tape recorder took down their words for posterity.

The President's pick for all-time greats of baseball, Jews and the arts and his desire to stay away from both of them. The problem of helicopter prop-wash mussing his wife's hairdo. The prospect of homosexuals embarrassing the Democrats at Miami Beach.

Scattered among those random topics are the words which now threaten to bring down the Nixon government, the President's own expression of consent for the cover-up conspiracy that has blossomed into a historic scandal.

Beyond the damaging words themselves, their context seems so shocking now, two years later. The fatal words, the directive to cover-up Watergate involvement, seemed utterly routine and self-assured, set in a conversation on meandering banality, one item of chit-chat among many.

"Three or four things," the President said. "Pat raised the point last night that probably she and he and the girl's ought to stay in a hotel on Miami Beach. First she says the moment they get the helicopter and get off and so forth, it destroys their hair and so forth."

No problem, says Haldeman, they'll

go by car. But what about the traffic? "They should have an escort," his aide promises.

A few moments before, his aide was promising to shut off the dangerous FBI investigation of Watergate.

"You call them in," Mr. Nixon said.

"Good deal," said Haldeman.

h "Play it tough," the President advised. "That's the way they play it and that's the way we are going to play it."

He does not seem so tough, though, in that rambling dialogue of June 23. Like the earlier transcripts which the President reluctantly made public in April, this conversation draws its own debasing portrait of Nixon the man, quite apart from the evidence it provides toward his impeachment. His petty concerns and obsessions, his folk prejudices, are as clear as the pistol.

Mr. Nixon, for instance, had a thing about his own past, reliving his failed campaign of 1960, pouring over his own autobiographical account of his career, "Six Crises." He kept returning to the book, re-reading it at night in search of lessons, urging it upon his subordinates.

"Actually, the book reads awfully well," the President told Haldeman, who agreed.

"... that Six Crises is a damned good book," the President reminded Haldeman at another point, "and the (unintelligible) story reads like a novel—the Hiss case—Caracas was fascinating. The campaign, of course, for anybody in politics should be a must because it had a lot in there of how politicians are like."

Haldeman assured him that he had

read the book several times. Mr. Nixon mentioned another memory from its pages.

"Is that in the book?" Haldeman asked.

"It's in the book! Hell yes, it's in the book," the President exclaimed.

Distribute the book among the campaign staffers, Nixon insisted. Order them to read it. For a moment, he wondered aloud about his old writer, Alvin Moscow, who helped with the volume. The more Mr. Nixon thought about his

## Commentary

past, the better it seemed to him.

"It may be," he mused, "that our '60 campaign (unintelligible) was extremely much more effective..."

The President's political obsessions were obvious. He returned to the smallest detail, the Gallup Polls of Eisenhower, Johnson and Kennedy compared with his own ratings, the camera set-up's for photos with friendly congressmen, the Washington Post's lead editorial on George McGovern.

They were discussing debt-ceiling legislation when Mr. Nixon offered a cynical appraisal: "Their ain't a vote in it... There's no votes in it, Bob." Haldeman agreed.

"Well what the hell," said the President, "why not accomplish one thing while we're here."

"Maybe we will," said his lieutenant.

"Yep, not bad."

"In spite of ourselves," Haldeman added.



# Baseball, the Smoking Gun

"O.K." said the President, "what else have you got that's amusing today?"

The transcript's endless political talk refutes one of the main defense arguments which Mr. Nixon has offered from time to time over the past two years, namely, that he was too busy in the summer of 1972 with high diplomacy and foreign policy to bother with the details of Watergate. On the contrary, the June 23 meeting shows him intrigued with political trivia and turned off by the foreign-policy issues.

"You get the report that the British floated the pound?" Haldeman asked.

"No, I don't think so," Nixon replied. "They did."

Mr. Nixon brushed aside the British pound. "I don't care about it," he said. "Nothing we can do about it." Haldeman continued anyway. "It's too complicated for me to get into," the President insisted.

He had even less time for the Italian lira.

"Burns is concerned," Haldeman reported, "about speculation about the lira."

"Well, I don't give a (expletive deleted) about the lira," the President answered.

Foreign policy issues were useful, however, for votes, especially the China and Russia tours. "I just think you've got to hit that over and over again," Mr. Nixon said. "We gotta win—"

Like those earlier transcripts, this new one also reveals flashes of Mr. Nixon's personal distastes, even for an old friend, like Herb Klein, his political

ally for a generation. Klein had arranged a meeting between the President and TV executives which Mr. Nixon didn't like because the businessmen sounded off.

"And look," the President said, "you've just not got to let Klein ever set up a meeting again. He just doesn't have his head screwed on. You know what I mean. He just opens it up and sits there with egg on his face. He's just not our guy at all is he?"

The President also expressed some distaste for Jews. His daughter, Julie, he complained, had been scheduled for an appearance at an art museum in Jacksonville, Fla.

"... now the worse thing (unintelligible) is to go anything that has to do with arts," the President insisted. "... the arts, you know—they're Jews, they're left-wing—in other words, stay away. Make a point."

"Sure," said Haldeman.

"Middle America—put that word out," Mr. Nixon directed. "... relate it to Middle America and not the elitists ..."

One touching note was Mr. Nixon's ambivalence toward his family. He discusses his wife and two daughters coldly as a valuable political commodity, but he is also concerned that they are being over-worked or sent to embarrassing events.

"Of course, as you know, our primary aim is to see that they are on television (unintelligible) coming into the hall (unintelligible) shooting the Hall (unintelligible) plan on television," the President said of his family.

"My point is I think it would be really great if they did the delegations of the big states."

Haldeman warned against over-exposure: "There's a strong view on the part of some of our strategists that we should be damned careful not to over use them and cheapen them. That they should—there is a celebrity value you can lose by rubbing on them too much."

The President complained that his daughter Tricia had encountered some rude moments in recent campaigning, booing demonstrators and hostile reporters.

"What's your off-hand reaction on that, Bob?" he asked. "I do not want them, though, to go in and get the hell kicked (unintelligible)."

The President seemed satisfied, however, with his own limited campaigning. The day before, he had held a rare press conference in the Oval Office, filled with political promises on bus-ing, tax reform, food prices, arms limitation.

"How's your coverage?" he asked.

"Good newspaper play—lousy television," Haldeman reported.

At the press conference, there was one question about Watergate and Mr. Nixon was ready with an answer.

"... As Mr. Ziegler has stated, the White House has had no involvement whatever in this particular business," the President told the American public two years ago. "As far as the matter now is concerned, it is under investigation, as it should be, by the proper legal authorities ..."



# CIA Gets Watergate Vindication

By Laurence Stern

Washington Post Staff Writer

The newest installment of White House transcripts strongly vindicates the Central Intelligence Agency in its long standing denials of any direct involvement in the Watergate break-in.

The transcripts of the tape recordings reveal — in the President's own utterances — that the CIA was injected into the Watergate case by Mr. Nixon and his top aides. Their efforts delayed for nearly two weeks the FBI investigation of the first major evidentiary link between the Watergate burglars and the 1972 Nixon campaign organization.

But the strategy ultimately failed when former CIA Director Richard M. Helms persistently refused to give a written declaration to former acting FBI Director L. Patrick Gray III that the bureau's investigation threatened to expose covert CIA activities in Mexico.

The plan concocted in the White House by the President and his chief of staff, H. R. (Bob) Haldeman, was to direct the CIA to tell the FBI to "stay the hell out of" (Haldeman's words) the investigation of Nixon funds which were laundered through a Mexico City bank account and ended up in the pockets of the Watergate burglars.

The new evidence wholly undermines the President's repeated claims that he was motivated by national security considerations in implicating the CIA. Mr. Nixon said on May 22, 1973, that his initial suspicions of CIA involvement were incorrect. But he did not concede, until the release of the latest bombshells of evidence, that the concern was to cover up Watergate-White House connections.

True to its institutional ways, the CIA had no comment yesterday on the latest developments. But there is little doubt that the tape disclosures provided a certain joy in Langley in the

aftermath of the hammering the CIA has taken throughout the unfolding Watergate scandal.

There was one fleeting and cryptic presidential comment in the new transcripts relating to Helms on which no informed officials could shed light. It was the President's remark that "well, we protected Helms from one hell of a lot."

Previous testimony in the CIA-Watergate affair has revealed that the White House acted through the CIA's deputy director, Gen. Vernon Walters, a former military aide to Mr. Nixon in his vice presidential days, to carry the message to the FBI.

Walters initially complied with the White House directive that he tell Gray the FBI investigation in Mexico endangered covert CIA operations. But he reversed himself in the face of the insistence of his boss, Helms, that there was no basis for such a stand by the agency. Helms, who had a reputation as an adroit maneuverer in Washington's bureaucratic minefields, was pursuing a strategy of "distancing" the agency from the scandal.

Despite the confirmatory revelations of the new tapes, the CIA does not emerge from the episode with its skirts in spotless condition.

Item. The agency did, in 1971, agree to provide—at high-level White House direction—spy paraphernalia to White House "plumbers"

E. Howard Hunt and G. Gordon Liddy which was used in the Daniel Ellsberg break-in. The CIA's defense was that it did not know what the equipment would be used for.

Item. After turning off the initial assistance to Hunt in August, 1971, when it became suspicious of his activities, it once again resumed dealings with him in connection with the White House-requested psychiatric profile of Pentagon Papers defendant Ellsberg.

Items. In testimony to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee early in 1973 Helms testified that the CIA had no dealings with Hunt or any of the other Watergate break-in figures subsequent to their retirement from the agency. It was Helms' successor, James G. Schlesinger, who broke the story of the 1971 assistance to Hunt to investigating congressional committees.

Item. Helms also denied in testimony to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee that the CIA was involved in an interagency White House domestic intel-

ligence program launched in 1970. Subsequent publication of the so-called "Huston Plan" (drafted by former White House aide Tom Charles Huston) confirmed that Helms personally participated in the White House program. The CIA is prohib-

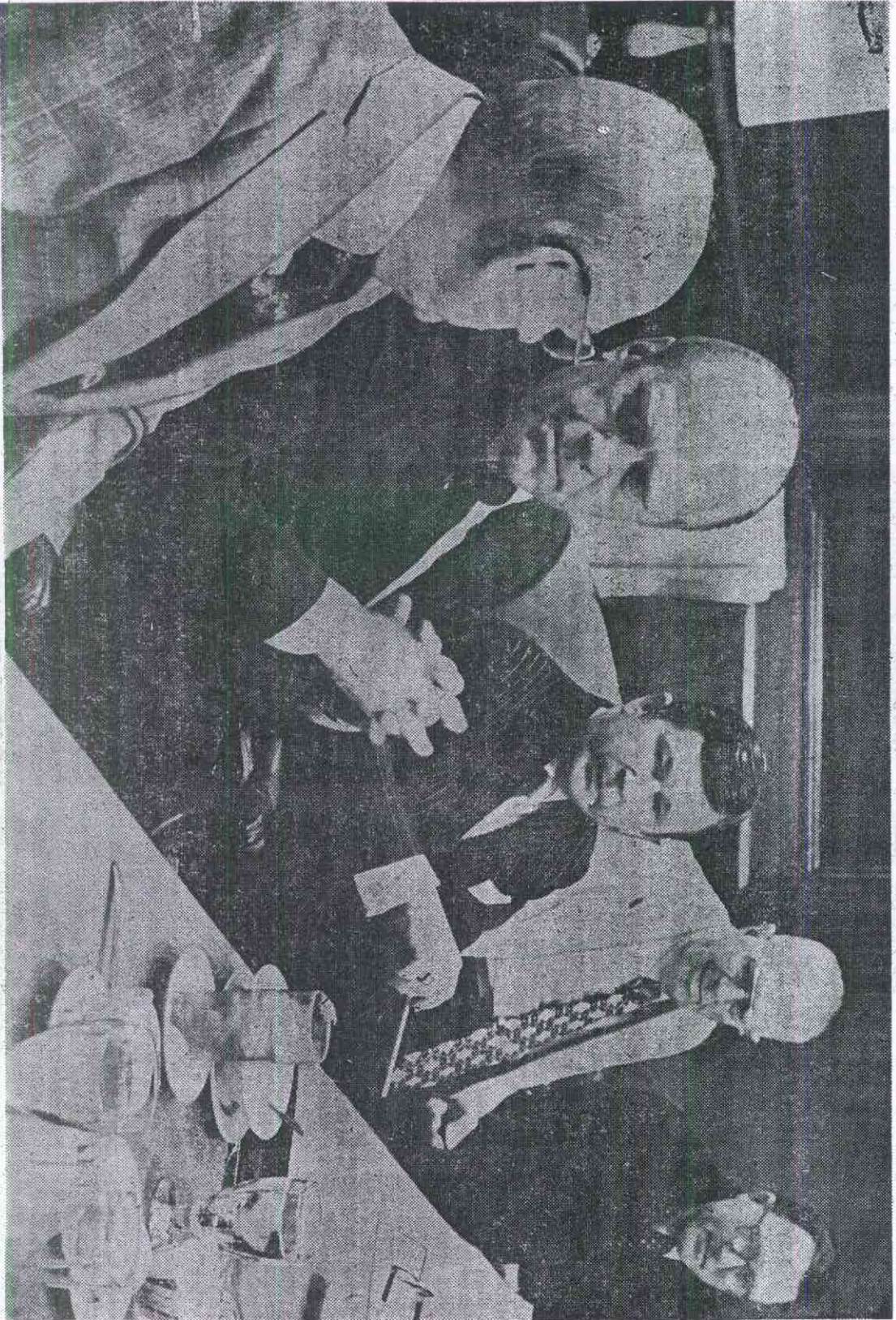
ited by its congressional charter from becoming involved in internal security enforcement matters.

But on the crucial question of CIA involvement in Watergate, the White House instigated effort to suspend the FBI's investigation of the

re-election committee cash, Helms stood firm against what must then have seemed awesome presidential pressures.

The new tapes gave some measure of how powerful those pressures must have been.





Vice President Ford at a Senate GOP policy luncheon. From left: Sen. Bennett, Ford, Sens. Tower, Cotton and Griffin.

By James K. W. Alberton—The Washington Post



# Ford Supporters See Rockefeller As His Choice for Vice President

8/7/74

By Lou Cannon and Stuart Auerbach  
Washington Post Staff Writers



**NELSON A. ROCKEFELLER**  
... "fits the needs"

The same Republican forces that persuaded President Nixon to choose Gerald R. Ford as the replacement for Spiro T. Agnew predicted yesterday that Nelson A. Rockefeller would become Ford's Vice President.

Melvin R. Laird, the long-time GOP congressman who served in the Nixon administration as Defense Secretary and presidential counselor, said he favored Rockefeller.

"Ford and Rockefeller will form a winning combination for the Republican Party," Laird said.

Laird has been credited with persuading the President to submit Ford's name to Congress as Vice President at a time the President favored John B. Connally—who since has been indicted for allegedly obstructing justice, committing perjury and receiving illegal payments.

But it is not Laird alone who is pushing for a Rockefeller nomination.

A source close to a lead-

ing Midwestern Republican senator said "Rockefeller fits the needs perfectly."

He said it is important to Republicans in Congress and elsewhere that Ford's choice not be someone likely to be a candidate in 1980. Rockefeller will be 72 that year.

If Ford takes office in 1974 and is elected in 1976, as is now widely assumed by Republican political leaders, he would be constitutionally ineligible to run for re-election in 1980.

Two Rockefeller associates said there is little doubt the former New York governor would accept the vice presidency if Ford selected him. One said he thought Rockefeller would accept because "it's now in the framework of a believable call to duty."

He also noted that Ford asked to remain on the National Commission on Critical Choices For Americans after he became Vice Presi-

See FORD, A16, Col. 1