Burch Continues Attacks on Impeachment Move

Committee's Fairness Hit

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By Carroll Kilpatrick
Washington Post Staff Writer

SAN CLEMENTE, July 20—President Nixon's counselor Dean [illegible] charged the House Judiciary Committee's impeachment proceedings [illegible] unfair.

[illegible] White House [illegible] the fairness and impartiality of the committee and Chairman Peter W. Rodino Jr. [illegible]

Burch expressed confidence that the full House would reject a move to impeach President Nixon if it reaches the floor.

Burch said the committee has failed to make sure Rodino does not get too damn fair. "He has succeeded," Burch said.

Ziegler argued that President Nixon's remark in a March 22, 1973, White House transcript of a conversation that a Watergate defendant got a five-year sentence was a reaping of the whirlwind whereby bad procedures are the press. No sentences should be given bad results were handed down until March 23.

Ziegler said there was much speculation in the press before March 22 that the defendants could receive long sentences.

On Jan. 31, all the networks and wire services reported that the defendants could be sentenced to between 35 and [illegible] years, Ziegler said.

There were subsequent stories speculating on how long the sentences would be, the press secretary said.

However, Ziegler did not explain why Mr. Nixon spoke in the edited [illegible] about the sentencing [illegible] did not occur until the next day.

In the transcript presented Thursday by [illegible] Committee, Mr. Nixon is quoted as saying on March 22, 1973: "That, uh, judge gave him 35 years."

It was not clear from the edited White House transcript, which consisted of 27½ pages of excerpts of a one-hour, 23-minute conversation between Mr. Nixon and his then-chief of staff, H. R. (Bob) Haldeman, whether the President was referring to U.S. District Court Judge John J. Sirica's sentencing of Watergate conspirator E. Howard Hunt Jr. or G. Gordon Liddy. Immediately before Mr. Nixon's comment in the transcript, Haldeman had been discussing Liddy.

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On March 23, 1973, Sirica [illegible] White House transcript of a conversation between Mr. Nixon and Haldeman and then with White House counsel John W. Dean III on March 21, 1973—two days before the sentencing—made several references to it as a future event.

At one point Dean says, "We don't know who they will be sentenced to. There always a chance—"

The President interrupts: "Thirty years, isn't it?"

Dean: "It could be. You know, they haven't announced yet, but it—"

President—"Top is 30 years, isn't it?"

Dean—"It is even higher than that. It is about 50 years. It all—"

President—"So ridiculous."

At another point Dean says, "Well, so much depends on how Sirica sentences. He can sentence in a way that makes parole even impossible."

And Mr. Nixon replies, "He can."