

Dean Sees History As Kind to Nixon

5421-1100 1/16/79
LOS ANGELES (AP) — Former White House Counsel John W. Dean III says that despite Watergate he believes Richard M. Nixon will be remembered as a good president.

The former presidential confidant said yesterday he would like to meet with Nixon, who fired him in April 1973.

Dean, who was the chief accuser in the Watergate investigation, said Nixon's accomplishments as president, particularly in foreign affairs, had the "stroke of greatness."

He added, "I think with time much of the Nixon years, which are now being cast in terms of what scandal occurred and why, will end and all this will start to roll back and then we'll be able to look at some of the good things that happened.

"Every man is capable of good and evil and it's time we also look at the good Mr. Nixon did."

DEAN SAID, however, he hopes Nixon will end his silence and answer the "unanswered questions" of Watergate.

Dean was released from federal prison at Ft. Holabird, Md., last week after serving four months for his role in the Watergate cover-up.

"I think Mr. Nixon obviously can fill in some gaps and hopefully he will," he told newsmen at a press conference he called in front of his fashionable hilltop home in Trousdale Estates.

"He was in a position where he was aware of a lot of activities and the reasons for these activities, his own motives, his own feelings, these are some of the unanswered questions," Dean said.

The former White House counsel said although he would like to meet again with Nixon, he does not know whether the former president would welcome him. He added, "I think Mr. Nixon has suffered a great deal. I don't want to see him convicted and I don't think anyone wants to see Richard Nixon in jail."

Dean said he believes the committee appointed by President Ford to investi-

gate domestic spying done by the CIA will have the opportunity to "answer the unanswered questions" involving the CIA and Watergate.

CONCERNING the CIA agents, he said "they were lurking around," but he denied any further knowledge of their role in Watergate or charges of illegal domestic spying.

Dean said his information came from his prison cellmate, former White House aide Charles Colson, who he said had "read the file and said it was quite illuminating." Colson is still in prison.

Dean said that two weeks ago Sen. Lowell Weicker, R-Conn., asked him about the CIA.

"He said he was looking into this CIA question and I thought he should see Chuck Colson," Dean said. "He said there was the question of his credibility. I said that was the problem most people had. He has talked to Colson and he said he was deeply impressed."