

Beginning
Drive to
Discredit Dean
Time 2/11/74
Becks under
Att. Ummi
Speech

White House, if Nixon expressed great surprise about Dean's revelations on March 21, Dean must be in error about any previous knowledge by Nixon.

Thus Krogh told Wallace that Dean had confided to him on March 20 that "the President is being badly served. He just doesn't know what's been going on." To Krogh, this was inconsistent with Dean's claim that Nixon had been aware of the cover-up as early as September. Actually, Dean had only contended that Nixon had known about specific parts of the cover-up earlier than March 21. This knowledge did not necessarily include the precise involvement of his various political and White House aides, nor the legal ramifications.

Not Understood. Moreover, Krogh's description of Dean's comments to him on March 20 neatly coincides with a talk that Dean told the Senate committee he had held with another White House aide, Richard Moore, on that same day. Claimed Dean: "I told him that I really didn't think the President understood all the facts involved in the Watergate and particularly the implication of those facts."

Dean had testified that Nixon, on Sept. 15, 1972, had congratulated him for helping confine the Watergate indictments to seven low-level operatives; this implied that Nixon must have

known that higher officials, but not necessarily just who or in what way, were involved. In fact, said Dean, the President on Feb. 27, 1973, called his top aides, John Ehrlichman and H.R. Haldeman, "principals in the matter."

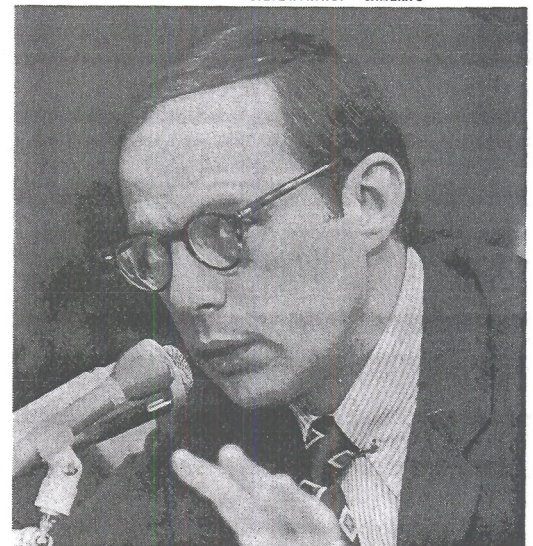
Dean claimed that he tried to warn Nixon about the serious legal implications the next day, but was rebuffed by the President. On March 13, Dean testified, he first told Nixon about payments being made to keep the seven defendants quiet. The President, said Dean, admitted having talked to other aides about Executive clemency for E. Howard Hunt for the same purpose. It was on March 21, Dean testified, that he first detailed the precise cover-up roles of specific Nixon associates.

According to the White House-prepared summary of the Dean-Nixon conversation of March 21, as reported by Anderson, Dean told the President: "This is going to take you by surprise." But this statement actually agrees with Dean's contention that Nixon did not fully understand all of the facts in the case. The White House also reported that Dean told Nixon that he [Dean] was legally implicated in the cover-up and the President replied, "Oh, John, you have no problem." This is precisely what Dean had testified that Nixon had told him. The summary quotes Nixon

as asking "Is Bob involved?" referring to Haldeman. Dean had not mentioned such a question, but it would not be unnatural for Nixon to ask it as Dean ran through the list of those he thought were implicated—nor would the question conclusively mean that Nixon did not know of any Haldeman involvement.

Other quotes from the White House

STEVE NORTHUP—CAMERA 5



DEAN DURING WATERGATE TESTIMONY
Credibility affirmed in court.

THE NATION