

Ex-Counsel, Cool and Dogged, Reads 6-Hour Story to the Nation

By DOUGLAS F. KNEELAND

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WASHINGTON, June 25 — John W. Dean 3d had his turn today.

And the 34-year-old former counsel to the President made the most of it. Back on April 19, 11 days before he was ousted from his job, he had called his own news conference to declare adamantly that he would not be made the White House "scapegoat" in the Watergate affair.

Today, tight-mouthed and abidingly serious, he sat for more than six hours under the hot television lights at the witness table before the Senate Select Committee on Presidential Campaign Activities telling his story to a watching nation.

As his wife, Maureen, blonde and outwardly serene, sat behind him, Mr. Dean, doggedly and unfalteringly, his brow dry, his flat, general American accent even and unemotional, read through a 245-page prepared statement.

To those listening and watching it seemed as though the meticulous young lawyer from Ohio must have been keeping notes forever on everybody and everything that passed his way.

'Telephone-Book' Text

On and on he read, his head bowed over his telephone-book-sized text, pausing only occasionally to sip from the glasses of water,

iced tea and cola that cluttered the table around him.

As he went on, the names that emerged in his matter-of-fact recitation of those he said were connected with the Watergate affair or its coverup could almost make up a Who's Who (or in some cases, Who Was Who) of the White House staff.

Because of his April 19 declaration that he would not be a scapegoat, Mr. Dean has been the most eagerly anticipated witness before the Senate committee to date. Last week, his testimony was postponed as the committee recessed in deference to the visit to this country of Leonid I. Brezhnev, the Soviet leader.

But last night Mr. Brezhnev went home. The uneasy honeymoon between Mr. Dean and defenders of the Nixon Administration, which was seriously marred all last week by charges and countercharges, was over.

Wide Expectations

The expectation that Mr. Dean, in his long-awaited testimony, would implicate President Nixon and other leading Administration officials in the "coverup" of the Watergate case, drew one of the largest crowds the hearings have been. Some college youngsters even camped out on the steps of the Old Senate Office Building at 1 A.M. today to be first in line.

Waits for even standing room under the ornate chandeliers of the high-ceilinged caucus room were up to two or three hours, compared with 10 or 15 minutes before the hearings last recessed.

Still, as the slender young lawyer rear through his text—his lips scarcely moving, reminiscent of Humphrey Bogart—the audience mixed, but largely youthful, was unusually silent, hanging on each word and name.

"It's so quiet," one observer said wryly, "you could hear a gullotine drop."

'Admire and Respect'

Mr. Dean, neat in a tanish suit, blue shirt and green tie, said in the beginning, "It is far more easy for me to explain my own involvement" than to testify about other people.

"Some of these people I will be referring to are friends," he said. "Some are men I greatly admire and respect." But before it was over he had implicated than a score of them.

Himself, he portrayed alternately as a sort of errand boy and messenger between others involved in the case and as a man, troubled by the whole affair, whose good advise was often ignored.

"It is my honest belief," he said. "That while the President was involved that he did not realize or appreciate at any time the implications

of his involvement, and I think that when the facts come out I hope the President is forgiven."

The President, it turned out—at least in Mr. Dean's view—had also ignored his good advice.

He said that during a meeting on March 21 he had warned the President "that there was a cancer growing on the Presidency and that if the cancer was not removed that the President himself would be killed by it."

But at a later meeting the same day, if recalled, he suddenly realized that his advice that the Watergate "cover-up" be ended was not being taken.

"The meeting with the President that afternoon with [H. R.] Haldeman and [John D.] Ehrlichman was a tremendous disappointment to me," Mr. Dean said. "Because it was quite clear that the cover-up as far as the White House was [concerned] was going to continue."

It had been well-publicized for more than a week that Mr. Dean would read a statement of at least 50 pages. During the week's delay, according to his attorneys, the statement grew as he added to it.

His attorneys, Charles N. Shaffer and Robert C. McCandless, were mindful, they conceded last week, of the impact of television a watching public that presumably

must make up its mind whether Mr. Dean is telling the truth, and they put him up there all alone to present his recollections of what had happened.

His attractive wife, in a light gold dress, her hair done up in an honest bun, was placed behind him at an angle the cameras would frequently catch. The attorney sat beside her in a little less advantageous position for the cameras.

As Mr. Dean read earnestly through to his final apology for the length of his statement, the committee members sat attentively, patiently, thumbing through their copies of the text.

Tomorrow they will question the young man who said today that he finally decided on April 17 that "I was being set up and that it was time that I let the word out that I would not be a scapegoat." Tomorrow it is their turn.