

Nixon to Yield

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Data Telling 'All'

Says Transcripts Prove Innocence In Watergate

From News Dispatches

President Nixon announced last night that he will turn over to House impeachment investigators, and will make public, edited transcripts of White House conversations that "will tell it all" and show him innocent in the Watergate affair.

He said the transcripts cover everything relevant to questions raised about his knowledge of the Watergate break-in and the subsequent cover-up.

Mr. Nixon said he has nothing to hide, and the transcripts will show it. *Some!*

He also announced that he will permit the top Democrat and Republican on the House Judiciary Committee to listen to the subpoenaed White House tape recordings from which the transcripts were made to satisfy themselves that the transcripts cover everything relevant to Watergate.

As the President spoke on nationwide radio and television, the transcripts were stacked beside his Oval Office desk, each set in a notebook.

One, emblazoned with the presidential seal, faced the television cameras.

Mr. Nixon said the notebooks contain more than 1,200 pages of transcripts of private conversations he held between Sept. 15, 1972, and April 27, 1973, with regard to Watergate, and include all relevant portions of all subpoenaed conversations.

The President said he would make public not only these transcripts, but also transcripts covering tape recordings of 19 other conversations, and more than 700 White House documents, which have already been delivered to the House committee and the Watergate special prosecutor.

He acknowledged that there are ambiguities in the transcripts, and that they include material that will be embarrassing to him and to his aides.

In releasing them to the committee and the public, Mr. Nixon said, he is breaching the principle of presidential confidentiality, but considers it necessary to do so to clear up the Watergate case.

Mr. Nixon said that "month after month," his former counsel, John W. Dean III, had al-

See **PRESIDENT A10**, Col. 5

PRESIDENT, From A1

leged that the President had acted improperly and that this "sparked the demand for impeachment."

He said he was turning over transcripts of conversations he had with Dean, former White House chief of staff H. R. (Bob) Haldeman, former White House domestic adviser John D. Ehrlichman, former Attorneys General John N. Mitchell and Richard G. Kleindienst and Assistant Attorney General Henry E. Petersen.

He said these transcripts would provide "the grist for many sensational stories in the press," as well as frequently embarrassing him and the persons who participated in the discussions.

Describing the transcripts, he said "names are named," but he cautioned that the comments were "no more than hearsay or speculation that took part in exchanges as I was trying to find out what really happened."

The President said that when he first learned of the Watergate break-in, he wanted "to find out just exactly what happened and who was involved," but was concerned about the reputations of those close to him.

"I was concerned about the political condition—a potentially devastating blow to the administration," he said. "I wanted to do what was right, but I wanted to do what would cause the least damage in a highly charged political situation."

"John Dean charged in sworn testimony that I was fully aware of the cover-up" during a meeting Sept. 15, 1972, Mr. Nixon said.

"These transcripts show clearly I first learned of it when Mr. Dean himself first told me of it in this office March 21, 1973 — some six months later."

The President said the transcript had Dean saying, following more than 150 questions from Mr. Nixon, "I can just tell from these conversations that there are things you have no knowledge of."

Mr. Nixon said that while there were ambiguities on the tape, "The records of my actions are totally clear now and I still believe they were totally correct then."

Turning to the well-known 18½ minute gap in the tape of a conversation he had June 20, 1972 with Haldeman, the President said, "How it was caused is still a mystery to me." He said it was also a mystery to most experts who had tried to find the cause.

"But of one thing I am certain," he said. "It was not caused by my secretary, Miss Rose Woods, or any of my White House assistants."

Miss Woods has said she may have eliminated part of the tape by accident in trying to transcribe it last fall. A panel of independent experts has reported that the gap almost surely did not occur accidentally.