

Highlights Of Testimony

Washington

These are highlights of John W. Dean III's testimony yesterday before the Senate Watergate committee:

His Role

Dean acknowledged that he had participated in many aspects of the coverup after the bugging in June, 1972, of the Democratic headquarters, but he insisted that he knew nothing about the wiretap plans in advance. In general, he depicted himself as a restraining influence inside the White House regarding some of the illegal proposals for political and radical surveillance that were made after he became White House counsel in 1970. He also acknowledged spending two weeks as a virtual double-agent inside the White House in early April, continuing to attend staff meetings without telling his superiors that he was already cooperating with federal prosecutors.

The President

Dean described President Nixon as having had at least some knowledge of the Watergate coverup. He said that Mr. Nixon permitted the coverup to continue throughout late March and early April even after Dean had told him some of the data of the coverup. Dean added that the President had personally discussed with him the possibility of providing executive clemency to some of the Watergate conspirators as well as the continued payments of coverup funds to them.

Haldeman, Ehrlichman

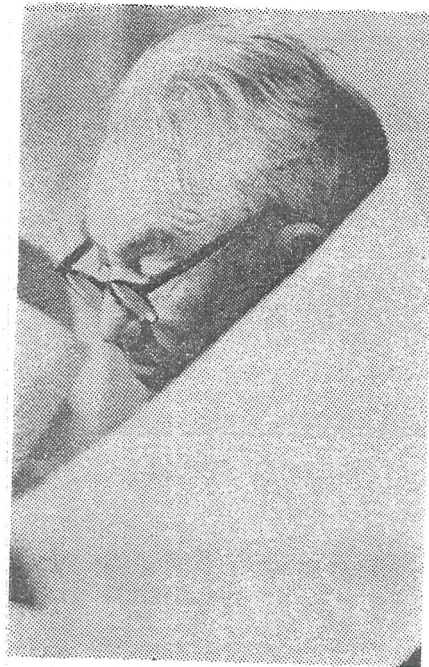
Dean depicted the two former high-level White House aides in prominent roles in the White House coverup efforts. He said he took few steps without consulting one or the other. It was his belief that they were attempting to "eat him up," Dean said, that made him decide to begin cooperating with the prosecutors. Dean cited evidence indicating that Haldeman had received information from the wiretap in the Democratic national headquarters before the arrests last June.

Mitchell

Dean described the former attorney general as having had a far more important role than previously disclosed in White House decision-making early this year in connection with the coverup. Many of the coverup payments were channeled and his advice on crucial questions as the coverup began to unravel was repeatedly sought by Haldeman and Ehrlichman.

Political Espionage

Dean gave numerous examples of what he termed the "excessive concern" inside the White House for information about anti-war demonstrators as well as political information. It was this concern, he suggested, which, when coupled "with a do-it-yourself White House staff, regardless of the law," created the climate for Watergate. In tracing the attitude directly to President Nixon, Dean told of Mr. Nixon's displeasure late in 1971 upon seeing a lone



Surrounded by documents, Sam Erwin read along with John Dean

demonstrator with a large anti-war sign in the small park in front of the White House. One aide, told of the displeasure, planned to hire some "thugs" to drive the man away. Dean said, but was dissuaded.

Henry Petersen

Dean depicted Petersen, the assistant attorney general who was placed in charge of the Watergate inquiry, as always being willing "to do what he can" to aid the White House in keeping the lid on the initial FBI inquiry. Dean said Petersen had repeatedly taken steps to insure that the normal rule of inquiry and investigation were not applied to members of the White House staff.

Pressure on a Judge

Dean told of learning late last summer that the White House attempted to directly pressure the judge who was hearing the Democratic party's civil suit filed in connection with Watergate to delay the case until after the election. Some meetings between White House representatives and Judge Charles R. Richey were held as late as March of this year, Dean said.

Segretti

Dean told of the White House coverup in connection with the political surveillance and espionage activities of Segretti, who operated a field of agent provocateurs during the Democratic primary elections in 1972. Dean said he briefed Segretti before his grand jury appearance last August and also tried to arrange — through Petersen — that no embarrassing questions would be asked in the grand jury room. After he interviewed Dean about his activities, Dean said, that information was apparently relayed to Mr. Nixon. The President subsequently decided to discharge Dwight C. Chapin, his appointments secretary who had served as the chief White House link to Segretti. Chapin's resignation was later said to have been non-Watergate related.

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