

Nixon's Remarks at Tanaka Dinner Indicate

He Talks of Obsession With 'Petty' Occurrences

By R. W. APPLE JR.

Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, Aug. 1 — President Nixon appears to have decided upon an unyielding stance toward his Watergate critics.

The latest example of his unremittably hard line came last night in an unlikely setting—a glittering, black-tie state dinner for the Japanese Premier, Kakuei Tanaka.

In the midst of an encomium to friendly Japanese-American cooperation, the President suddenly said: "Let others spend their time dealing with the murky, small, unimportant, vicious little things. We have spent our time and will spend our time building a better world."

Moments later, the President again interrupted the main thrust of his toast to urge that the nation "not let ourselves be remembered only for the petty, little, indecent things that seem to obsess us at a time when the world is going by."

Watergate Allusion Indicated

Mr. Nixon never used the word Watergate, and Gerald L. Warren, the deputy White House press secretary, revused this morning to say what the President had been talking about. But other White House sources said that it was Watergate, noting that it was inconceivable that Mr. Nixon could have been alluding to "petty, little, indecent things" obsessing those involved in Japanese-American relations.

At least one of these at the dinner had no trouble fathoming the President's meaning. Asked whether he was talking about Watergate, Mrs. Edward T. Cox, who is his elder daughter, Tricia, replied: "Of course that's what he was talking about."

Mr. Nixon's jibe at his critics—presumably embracing Senate investigators, the special prosecutor's office and the media—paralleled what he said after leaving Bethesda Naval Hospital last month following his bout with viral pneumonia. On that occasion he told his staff:

"Let the others wallow in Watergate. We are going to do our job."

It also fit with his decision last week to deny the tape recordings of his Watergate conversations not only to the Senate Watergate committee but also the prosecutor, Archibald Cox.

Victory for Haig Seen

That action was widely interpreted as a victory for Alexander M. Haig Jr., Mr. Nixon's chief of staff, and for Ronald L. Ziegler, his press secretary. Other staff members reportedly had urged the President to conciliate his adversaries.

In an interview with The Washington Post, published this morning, Mr. Haig denounced as "nonsense" reports that the Administration was planning a

counterattack against Mr. Nixon's enemies in Congress. He said that such action would hinder Mr. Nixon's attempts to build bipartisan Congressional support.

But the reports continue. Middle-level White House sources told The New York Times today of discussions about attempting to relieve Watergate pressures by demonstrating that the Democrats have done similar things—and possibly by trying to discredit investigating Senators, including Senator Sam J. Ervin Jr., Democrat of North Carolina, the committee's chairman.

One source described the affidavits purportedly linking Carmine Belin (ut chieffom) mittee investigator, to a 1969 wiretapping as "just a first step in showing that that Efvn bunch is not so holier-than-thou." The affidavits were released by George Push, Republican National chairman.

Evidence on Wiretapping

As they have in the past, White House aides are again discussing the possibility of producing evidence that political espionage and wiretapping were used in the Johnson and Kennedy Administrations. So far, they have released no such evidence.*

Another topic under discussion, the sources said, is the 1964 Senate investigation of a former senate aide, Robert G. Baker. Administration officials reportedly feel that they can show that many of the Senators now on the Watergate committee did everything possible to insure that links between Baker and former President Johnson would not come to the fore.*

If any large-scale counterattack does take place, it will come after Mr. Nixon's long-promised statement on the Watergate and Allied scandals.

That statement is now expected in the week of Aug. 13, presuming that the current phase of the Senate hearings are concluded by Aug. 10. Mr. Warren said that it would be made in Washington, not in California, which suggests that Mr. Nixon's departure—tentatively scheduled for Aug. 10—may be delayed.

White House Adds Lawyers

WASHINGTON, Aug. 1 (AP) —The White House has brought in four Government lawyers to assist President Nixon's special Watergate legal staff.

They are Paul S. Tribble Jr., 26 years old, and Kenneth Gregory Haynes, 27, Assistant United States Attorneys, both based in Alexandria, Va.; Richard Alan Hauser, 30, from the Office of Criminal Justice in the Justice Department, and George P. Williams, 29, recently transferred to the Antitrust Division of the Justice Department after serving in the fraud section of the department's Civil Division.

Tough Stand on His Watergate Critics

DAY, AUGUST 2, 1973

19