

Watergate Report

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Dean Disputed

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The White House yesterday reasserted President Nixon's claim that he told former presidential counsel John W. Dean III that it would be wrong to pay hush money to Watergate defendants.

The White House statement appeared to be directly contrary to a Watergate grand jury's claim that former presidential aide H. R. (Bob) Haldeman lied when he said Mr. Nixon used the words "it would be wrong."

Deputy press secretary Gerald L. Warren said he stood firmly by the President's statement at a press conference last Aug. 22.

At that press conference, the President said Haldeman's account of a March 1973 meeting with Mr. Nixon and Dean was "accurate."

The President said that after Dean mentioned the problem of raising hush money, he told Dean, "We can't give clemency."

The President told his news conference that "I con-

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cluded, as Mr. Haldeman recalls perhaps, and did testify very effectively, one, when I said, John, it is wrong, it won't work. We can't give clemency, and we have got to get this story out. And therefore, I direct you, and I direct Haldeman, and I direct (John D.) Ehrlichman, and I direct (John N.) Mitchell to get together tomorrow and then meet with me as to how we get this story out."

Dean had testified before the Senate Watergate committee that he told the President it might be necessary to raise as much as \$1 million and that the President said that would be no problem. Haldeman asserted that the President added that it would be wrong to do so.

On Capitol Hill, Senate minority Leader Hugh Scott (R-Pa.) told a group of State Department officers that he had asked for reassurances from the White House that Mr. Nixon used the words "it would be wrong." Scott indicated he had received a reply that satisfied him.

Scott earlier had seen summaries and partial transcripts of White House tapes and had told associates he recalled seeing the words "it would be wrong."

After Haldeman's indictment, Scott said he called to recheck whether his recollection was correct. Scott refused to say who had given him the assurances he sought.

Scott has not heard any of the tapes directly. He told the State Department officers he was relying on the White House not to misinform him, and repeated public warnings that he would be furious and would make his wrath felt if he found he had been misled.

Dean said the meeting

with the President on raising money for the Watergate defendants took place March 13, 1973, but Haldeman said the conversation took place during a March 21 meeting.

When Dean mentioned the \$1 million figure, the President "told me that was no problem, and he also looked over at Haldeman and repeated the same statement," Dean told the Senate Watergate committees.

Under questioning at the White House, Warren said there was "no present intention" to try to prevent U.S. District Court Judge John J. Sirica from transmitting secret material handed him by the grand jury to the House Judiciary Committee.

Later, however, after White House counsel James D. St. Clair conferred with Sirica, Warren declined to repeat his statement. But he said the White House counsel "will attend the hearing" to be held in Sirica's court Wednesday.

Warren said the White House did not know what was in the secret report and that it would be inappropriate for him to comment on it.

"It is clear that the President has not been charged with anything," Warren said. He emphasized that the indictments returned against former Nixon aides "are only allegations. It is now up to the courts."

House Judiciary Committee Chairman Peter W. Rodino (D-N.J.) said there had been no response by St. Clair as of late yesterday to the committee's request of last Monday for White House files for the impeachment inquiry.

Rodino said he believed the White House has had a "reasonable time" to comply with the request for information which the commit-

tee's special counsel, John Doar, said could be assembled in a day or two.

The subject will be discussed at a briefing session by the staff for the committee today. At the White House, Warren said the committee request "is under review and a response will be made in due course."

Materials requested reportedly include documents the White House voluntarily had turned over to Watergate Special Prosecutor Leon Jaworski.

Rep. Edward Hutchinson (Mich.), senior Republican on the committee, said he had read the letter sent to St. Clair and considered the request "reasonable." Later, he said he had not seen the final draft of the letter, but Rodino said no substantive change had been made.