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MARCH 21 MEETING
FOCUSED ON FUNDS

Transcripts Compared With
Testimony of 3 Participants
Before Senate Panel

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When John W. Dean 3d, John D. Ehrlichman and H. R. Haldeman appeared before the Senate Select Committee on Presidential Campaign Activities, each of them recounted his version of a meeting with the President on March 21, 1973. The transcripts of tape recordings made of that meeting, released today by the White House, provide a basis for a comparison of those recollections.

Mr. Dean, for instance, told the committee that he had informed the President that Herbert W. Kalmbach "had been used to raise funds to pay these seven individuals [the original Watergate-burglary defendants] for their silence at the instructions of Ehrlichman, Haldeman and [John N.] Mitchell and I had been the conveyor of this instruction to Kalmbach."

The transcript records the following conversation between Mr. Dean and Mr. Nixon:

Mr. Dean: "Alright, then they started making demands: 'We have to have attorneys' fees. We don't have any money ourselves, and you are asking us to take this through the election.' Alright, so arrangements were made through Mitchell, initiating it. And I was present in discussions where these guys had to be taken care of. Their attorney's fees had to be done. Kalmbach was brought in. Kalmbach raised some cash."

The President: "They put that under the cover of a Cuban committee, I suppose."

'Keep That Cover'

Mr. Dean: "Well, they had a Cuban committee and they had — some of it was given to [E. Howard] Hunt's lawyer, who in turn passed it out. You know when Hunt's wife was flying to Chicago with \$10,000 she was actually, I understand after the fact now, was going to pass that money to one of the Cubans—to meet him in Chicago and pass it to somebody there."

The President: (Unintelligible) "but I would certainly keep that cover for whatever it is worth."

Mr. Dean: "That's the most troublesome post-thing because (1) Bob [Haldeman] is involved in that; (2) John [Ehrlichman] is involved in that; (3) I am involved in that; (4) Mitchell is involved in that. And that is an obstruction of justice."

The President: "In other words, the bad it does. You were taking care of witnesses."

Mr. Haldeman, after telling the Senators that he had listened to the tape of that meeting, testified that with regard to money, Mr. Dean had told the President that both he and Mr. Haldeman "were involved. There was a bad appearance which could be developed into a circumstantial chain of evidence regarding obstruction of justice."

Question of Clemency

Mr. Haldeman also testified before the committee that during that meeting "there was no discussion while I was in the room, nor do I recall any discussion on the tape on the question of clemency in the context of the President saying that he had discussed this with Ehrlichman and with [Charles] Colson."

"The only mention of clemency was Dean's report that Colson discussed clemency with Hunt and the President's statement that he could not offer clemency and Dean's agreement—plus a comment that Dean thought the others expected it."

The transcript shows this exchange between Mr. Nixon and Mr. Dean after Mr. Dean told the President that it might cost \$1-million to keep the Watergate burglars silent.

Mr. Dean: "Well, I have been a conduit for information on taking care of people out there who are guilty of crimes."

The President: "Oh, you mean like blackmailers?"

Mr. Dean: "The blackmailers. Right."

The President: "Well, I wonder if that part of it can't be—I wonder if that doesn't—let me put it frankly: I wonder if that doesn't have to be continued? Let me put it this way: let us suppose that you get the million bucks, and you get the proper way to handle it. You could hold that side?"

Mr. Dean: "Uh, huh."

The President: "It would seem to me to that would be worthwhile."

Mr. Dean: "Well, that's one problem."

The President: "I know you have a problem here. You have the problem with Hunt and his clemency."

'Politically, It's Impossible'

Mr. Dean: "That's right. And you are going to have a clemency problem with the others. They all are going to expect to be out and that may put you in a position that is just untenable at some point. You know, the Watergate hearings just over, Hunt now demanding clemency or he is going to blow. And politically, it's impossible for you to do it."

You know, after everybody—"

The President: "That's right!"

Mr. Dean: "I am not sure that you will ever be able to deliver on the clemency. It may be just too hot."

The President: "You can't do it politically until after the '74 elections, that's for sure. Your point is that even then you couldn't do it."

Mr. Dean: "That's right. It may further involve you in a way you should not be involved in this."

The President: "No—it is

wrong, that's for sure."

Mr. Ehrlichman, in his appearance before the Senate committee, said, when asked whether there had been any discussion of the "gory" details of Watergate in that meeting:

"There was none, there was none. When the four of us went to the President's office again, it was largely how to get the whole story out . . ."

The transcript records these comments on that day: