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Transcript row: deletions cited, Dean assailed

New York News

WASHINGTON — The White House, continuing an assault on the credibility of John Dean, charged yesterday that Dean's Senate testimony contains "a number of important contradictions" when compared with the edited White House transcripts.

The white paper, prepared by Ken W. Clawson, the White House communications director, asserts that the ousted White House counsel's comments about his crucial March 21, 1973, meeting with the President "involve misstatements as to dates and therefore bear directly . . . on the central issue of the Senate hearings: 'what did the President know and when did he know it.'"

Nixon has repeatedly argued that he first learned of the Watergate coverup March 21. Dean has contended he told the President six months earlier on Sept. 15, 1972.

Clawson said that the tapes establish that Dean did not discuss the coverup in the Sept. 15 meeting or in meetings on Feb. 28 and March 13, 1973.

The White House said some of Dean's most damaging statements were not made when he said they were because they are not revealed in the partial transcripts released by the President.

For example, Clawson cited the following:

- The Sept. 15 tape does not mention Dean's charge that he told Nixon he could not guarantee the coverup might not unravel.

- There is no record in the Feb. 28 tape that Dean revealed his own criminal liability in the coverup, as he testified before the Senate Watergate Committee.

- Dean's remarks that

Examiner News Service

WASHINGTON — Substantive information damaging to President Nixon was deleted from the White House transcripts of his Watergate conversations under the guise of the removal of expletives and characterizations, sources within the House Judiciary Committee claim.

The sources said the committee's own transcripts, prepared from the half dozen tapes previously turned over to it, indicate that the White House removed key words along with the obscenity, profanity and vulgarisms to which the deletions were supposed to have been restricted.

The sources refused to give details, saying they would emerge as the committee begins to hear evidence from its staff next week. But as one source put it:

"There's an awful lot of difference between lifting out a cussword and deleting a whole phrase which shows the President's or someone else's full response or reaction in any given situation. That's what our own transcripts show."

At the same time, the sources tended to confirm suspicions attributed to former White House counsel John Dean that the White House transcript omits a key passage of the conversation between Dean and the President, Sept. 15, 1972.

The passage which sources close to Dean say he claims has been omitted, deals with their discussion of using the Internal Revenue Service to attack foes of the administration and a report of the IRS investigation of then Democratic National Committee chairman Lawrence O'Brien.

Dean himself is under court order not to speak publicly about the Watergate scandal.

The White House tran-

"money demands," including the possibility of raising \$1 million to keep the Watergate conspirators quiet, did not come up on March 13 as Dean testified. However, Dean later said that he meant March 21, not March 13.

- The March 22 tape "contradicts Dean's repeated assertion that the President never directed him to go to Camp David to write a report" about his involvement in the coverup.

"Indeed, in 16 separate areas, on dozens of occasions," Clawson said, "Dean made substantive statements concerning the President that do not accord with the tapes; indeed they appear in direct contravention of what the tapes contain."

- An independent look at Dean's testimony. Page 15.

script for the Sept. 18, 1972, meeting makes no mention of the IRS or its possible use against Nixon's political foes.

Early in the conversation, however, the edited transcript indicates Nixon's willingness to employ the FBI and the Justice Department in political matters.

"I want the most comprehensive notes on all those who tried to do us in," Nixon told Dean. "If we had had a very close election and they were playing the other side I

Transcript deletions cited

—From Page 1

would understand this. No — they were doing this quite deliberately and they are asking for it and they are going to get it."

"We have not used the power in this first four years, as you know, we have never used it. We have not used the bureau (FBI) and we have not used the Justice Department, but things are going to change now."

The White House transcript of that conversation ends with the notation that "further conversation following (is) unrelated to Watergate."

However, in his testimony before the Senate Watergate Committee, Dean said that "the conversation then turned to the use of the Internal Revenue Service to attack our enemies."

Dean told the Watergate panel last June 25: "I recall

telling the President that we had not made much use of this because the White House did not have the clout to have it done, that the Internal Revenue Service was a rather Democratical-ly-oriented bureaucracy and it would be very dangerous to try any such activities."

"The President seemed somewhat annoyed and said that the Democratic administrations had used this tool well, and after the election

he would get people in these agencies who would be responsive to White House requirements."