

NYTimes MAY 8 1974  
**GEN. HAIG WARNS  
WATERGATE 'CURE'  
MAY BE EXCESSIVE**

**Says in a TV Interview That  
Inquiry May Have Result  
'Worse Than the Illness'**

**CONCLUSION IS URGED**

**St. Clair Says Nixon's Aim  
In Transcript Release Was  
to Safeguard Presidency**

Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, May 5—Gen. Alexander M. Haig Jr., the White House chief of staff, suggested today that "excesses and distortions" in investigating Watergate scandals might lead to "the cure being worse than the illness."

"I think the time has come for all of us to ask ourselves a pretty fundamental question," the President's chief aide said on the American Broadcasting Companies' program, "Issues and Answers."

"At what point in the review of wrongdoing does the review itself involve injustice, excesses and distortions which, in effect, result in the cure being worse than the illness itself?"

**Time to Conclude 'Matter'**

He said that he was not condoning "what alleged wrongdoing may have occurred" in the Watergate affair but said that the time had come "to bring this matter to a conclusion."

Mr. Nixon's chief lawyer, James D. St. Clair, also appeared on a news interview program—"Meet the Press," carried by the National Broadcasting Company. The President spent the day at his Camp David retreat in the Maryland mountains.

The House Judiciary Committee, meanwhile, is scheduled to begin three days of private hearings on Wednesday or Thursday to review in detail the confidential findings of its staff in the panel's impeachment inquiry.

Mr. St. Clair indicated that in releasing more than 1,200 pages of the transcript of tapes

made in the Presidential offices and over White House telephones, Mr. Nixon had placed the guarding of the Presidency above the assuring of justice in the Watergate criminal trials.

**Effect of Publicity**

He was asked if prosecution of some Watergate defendants might have to be dropped because of the massive publicity that had been generated by releasing the tape transcripts.

"I would hope not," he replied and then repeated the argument of the Senate Watergate committee last summer, when it decided to go ahead with public hearings, that "even if some people do go free, the public's right to know was paramount."

He maintained that it would be "quite possible to empanel a fair jury."

Asked if the President had made a conscious decision to place the interests served by releasing the transcripts of the tapes above the interests of the

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trials, he replied in part:

"Clearly that was one of the important considerations and one of the reasons why, frankly, they had not been made public earlier than this, because of the possible effect it might have on third persons.

"But when it gets down to the fact that by not publishing these, people begin to believe that he is hiding criminal conduct on his own part, to the extent that it might even threaten the Presidency, then something has to give."

Both Mr. St. Clair and General Hig stressed that they hoped the general public, Congress and members of the House Judiciary Committee which is conducting an impeachment inquiry, would conclude that they complete account of Watergate had now been made public.

However, two members of the Judiciary Committee, representatives Thomas F. Railsback, Republican of Illinois, and Paul S. Sarbanes, Democrat of Maryland, indicated that the transcripts were not enough.

They appeared on the CBS program, "Face the Nation."

Both men stressed that the transcripts dealt only with the alleged White House cover-up of the Watergate affair.

"If the tapes are available, I think those should be provided to the committee," Mr. Sarbanes said.

"It's also important to note that the committee has also requested of the White House other material in other areas.

Mr. Railsback called the transcripts "a very constructive first step." He said that he felt the tapes themselves should be heard by the whole committee "so that we would be in a position to judge the tone of the conversation, voice inflections and so forth."

He called the transcripts only "partial compliance" with the committee's subpoena for Presidential tapes.

Mr. Sarbanes said he thought a careful reading of the transcripts would convince most people that the impeachment investigation was a very serious matter indeed and that further material was needed.

Mr. Railsback said "I think that he has laid bare his soul

and I'm inclined to think that perhaps it will ultimately help him, and it probably should have been done earlier."