

'Troublesome' Transcript

Washington

White House counselor Dean Burch yesterday described as "troublesome" the March 21, 1973, presidential conversations in which Mr. Nixon discussed payment of money to convicted Watergate's burglar Howard Hunt.

But Burch insisted that the edited Watergate transcripts released by the White House will ultimately lead the House to defeat the impeachment resolution.

He described his own forecast as "a close call" and conceded there may be Republican members of the Judiciary Committee who would vote in favor of impeachment.

In an hour-long breakfast meeting with reporters, Burch vigorously defended White House responses to the House Judiciary Committee on impeachment issues. However, he demonstrated a consistent reluctance to endorse the presi-

dential conduct reflected in the transcripts released last week by the White House.

"The (March) 21st tape is the most troublesome of all," Burch said in discussing the impact of the presidential conversations. Asked what he found troublesome, Burch replied:

"The thing that I find troublesome obviously is the discussion of a payment to Mr. Hunt."

Burch also said that the tone of the presidential conversations was "not heroic." And when asked whether he thought the conversations had "sullied" or "besmirched" the presidency, he answered.

"I don't think the President is impeachable, let me say that."

Burch said the situation reflected in the Watergate tapes was not similar to a "normal presidential decision."

"... This was a situation

in which the President realized for the first time that not only was he faced with a hell of a political problem, he was faced with a situation where some of his best and closest assistants and indeed friends were in a hell of a lot of trouble," Burch said. "I tend to temper my analysis a bit by trying to imagine the human problems that were involved."

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