

Nixon Ouster As Probable

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There is a spreading belief in world capitals that President Nixon will be removed from office either by resignation or impeachment according to reports received over the weekend from bureaus of The Washington Post Foreign Service.

These assessments are less a consequence of publication of the edited White House transcripts of tapes than they are of longer range assessments by foreign governments, the reports show.

The transcripts which shocked many Americans, have had limited impact overseas. They have not generally been reprinted in detail, and, Washington Post correspondents reported, even many English-speaking peoples are confused by them.

In addition to the "[expletive deleted]" and other blanks in the transcripts, printed excerpts "baffled even knowledgeable Britons because they contained unfamiliar colloquial language," Bernard D. Nossiter reported from London.

Translated into other languages, much of the dialogue from the tapes becomes wholly unintelligible.

Pro and anti-Nixon factions

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in Britain were reported greatly impressed by the defection from presidential-supporting ranks of Senate Minority leader Hugh Scott (R-Pa.), House Republican leader John J. Rhodes (R-Ariz.), the Chicago Tribune, the Los Angeles Times and other Republican elements.

A "decisive majority of opinion leaders" in Britain is now convinced that President Nixon "will be removed," Nossiter reported from London, "and the only question is when."

In South Vietnam, palace intimates of President Nguyen

Van Thieu "warned him as early as this January that Richard Nixon's presidency would probably end by June," reported Philip McCombs of The Post's Saigon bureau.

Concern intensified in high government circles in Saigon last week as the full import of the release of the Watergate transcripts began to filter through, McCombs reported.

South Vietnam's concern is direct and simple: How will President Nixon's fate affect the already-troubled supply of American aid that sustains the Saigon government's military forces in the continuing war and also the nation's economy?

Thieu ordered South Viet-

nam's ambassador in Washington, Tran Kim Phuong, back to Saigon a few days after release of the transcripts, to explain their impact on Saigon's aid prospects, McCombs reported. The Washington Post correspondent wrote:

"Phuong's report was bleak. There is a good chance the President will be impeached, he told a secret meeting of the senate foreign affairs committee in Saigon. This outlook, combined with the sordid impact of the whole Watergate affair, could cause further aid cuts in Congress."

There is a widely-shared view in Saigon, McCombs reported, that Watergate already has rendered President Nixon an impotent champion of Saigon's cause, as indicated by recent House and Senate actions in Washington.

The moralistic outcry in the United States over the Watergate scandals generally has puzzled most foreign audiences, much less surprised by corruption in government.

The persistent reaction by the official Soviet press, echoed in varying degree by the Communist press in many other European nations, has been to portray the entire Watergate affair as "a plot"

by American elements opposed to East-West detente.

In Western Europe, national governmental upheavals and crises closer at home inevitably have overshadowed Watergate or impeachment news in recent weeks as first Britain, then West Germany and France have changed leaderships.

From Paris, The Post's Jonathan C. Randal reported that after initially attributing the Watergate furor to American media sensationalism, the French establishment this winter concluded "that Nixon was finished." The "cliff-hanging nature of the Watergate disclosures," however, has made French sources cautious and puzzled about why the President was postponing resignation, Randal reported.

Correspondent David Greenway reported from Hong Kong that most Asian officials he encounters are less troubled about President Nixon's threatened ouster than they were nearly a year ago, because they now believe Secretary of State Henry A. Kissinger will continue in office and foreign policy will be basically unchanged.

In Tokyo, Washington Post correspondent Don Oberdorfer reported that senior offi-

cial of the foreign ministry met Friday morning to assess the significance of the latest Watergate developments. A few blocks away, Oberdorfer said, the U.S. Embassy "country team" was trying to assess the Japanese reaction.

"We can't quite figure out what is going on," said an official of the Prime Minister's staff. "Unless you follow it closely there are so many things—tax, tape, speech, press conference, people moving out and in, it just seems so hard to grasp."

The consequences of releasing the White House transcripts and the Republican defections which followed have not significantly registered yet in the Arab world, reported correspondent James Hoagland, who is based in Beirut. Kissinger's activities, not the President's dilemma, are the American issue in the Middle East.

In Argentina, in Chile, as in most of Latin America, reported Joseph Novitski, special correspondent of The Washington Post, the key question is not the Watergate complexities but: "Will Nixon fall or won't he?" The verb used, said Novitski, is always "fall," and all else is of limited interest.