



2 Sources Say Nixon-Dean Tape Is 'Explosive'

Washington

The tape of President Nixon's conversation with John W. Dean III about hush money to buy the silence of Watergate defendants is "explosive" and "unambiguous," according to two government sources familiar with the tape.

The tape of the March 21, 1973, conversation is believed to be the most crucial piece of evidence to be evaluated so far by the House Judiciary committee in its impeachment inquiry.

It was a major piece of evidence in a federal grand jury investigation that resulted in Watergate cover up indictments earlier this month against seven persons, including former presidential assistant H. R. Haldeman.

James S. Doyle, a spokesman for Watergate special prosecutor Leon Jaworski, was informed of the Los Angeles Times report last night and said: "We have absolutely no comment."

White House Deputy Press Secretary Gerald L. Warren said:

"We expected this type of story about the March 21 tape to be planted. We knew it would come sooner or later. The fact is the tape may be read different ways by different people with different motives as we have pointed out. But it was clearly understood by the parties what was intended. We are not going to comment further on this totally expected story planted by someone with apparent political motives, however false it is."

Mr. Nixon has acknowledged that during the taped conversation he discussed the raising of \$1 million for the Watergate defendants,

but said he told Dean it would be "wrong" to raise the money to buy the defendants' silence.

The President has said that while the tape substantiates his account of the conversation, it is open to dif-

Back Page Col. 8

From Page 1

ferent interpretations.

However, a source in Congress and another in the Executive branch told the Times that there could be only one logical interpretation and it was explosive for the President — that is, that the President did not disapprove the hush money payments.

"When you hear the tape, one source said, "you have a lot more respect for Dean's integrity and what he told the Senate Watergate committee. It is that explosive. It is not ambiguous."

Mr. Nixon has given his account of the conversation in several press conferences.

Haldeman, who was present for part of the conversation, was indicted by the federal grand jury on a perjury charge for testifying before the Senate Watergate Committee that the President told Dean it would be "wrong" to raise money to buy the defendants' silence.

The two sources who talked to the Times' reporters about the tape said that

in addition to corroborating the major thrust of Dean's Watergate committee testimony about the hush money, the tape contains other "surprises" that show the President did not order the cover-up halted.

One of the sources also said that a person familiar with the secret report of the Watergate coverup grand jury had described the report and briefcase of supporting material as "explosive."

The grand jury report will be transmitted to the House Judiciary Committee Monday unless Watergate defendants who opposed its release to the committee file an appeal with the Supreme Court by 5 p.m. Monday.

The U.S. court of appeals Thursday upheld a ruling by U.S. District Judge John J. Sirica that the report should be given to the committee as requested by the grand jury.

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