

Weicker Says a Cover-Up On Watergate Continues

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WASHINGTON, July 14— Senator Lowell P. Weicker Jr., a member of the now-defunct Senate Watergate committee, charged today that a high-level cover-up of White House involvement in the Watergate affair was still continuing.

The Connecticut Republican said that White House tactics "haven't changed one iota" since early 1973, when, he said, President Nixon and the White House Counsel, John W. Dean

3d, decided to "cooperate publicly but fot-drag . . . privately."

"At no point in the past year and a half has the White House led the quest for the truth," Senator Weicker said in an appearance on the CBS Inc television program "Face the Nation." "It sure is a kick in the teeth as far as democracy is concerned."

He was asked specifically about the President's role in editing the White House transcripts to delete, as a newsman put it, "material with respect to discussing Watergate in front of your committee in which he requests people to stonewall and take the Fifth Amendment."

Stresses Belief

"Do you think that is still part of the cover-up?" the Senator was asked. "Do you think the cover-up is still continuing?"

Mr. Weicker responded: "There is no question in my mind on that score, absolutely none."

He added, in response to a question, that he did not think a single person was directing the cover-up. "Obviously they [the White House staff] must sit around and discuss which directions they're going," he said. "I don't think [just] any one individual is involved."

Senator Weicker also confirmed that the Senate Water-

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gate committee had turned over to the special Watergate prosecutor evidence of possible perjury by witnesses who testified before the committee last summer. The Senator said that he thought the perjury investigation was vital.

"Otherwise," he added, "from now on anybody who comes to testify before a Congressional committee, whether it's the Senate or House, says, Well, look, we can say anything we want to say and no consequence will follow."

Since the televised Watergate hearings began more than a year ago, Senator Weicker has earned a reputation as one of the President's most outspoken critics among Senate Republicans. Five months ago, he publicly submitted 11 written questions to the President, one of which strongly hinted that the Senator thought the President had committed a criminal offense in connection with the Watergate cover-up. President Nixon never publicly responded.

'Absolutely' Vote to Convict

Asked today how he would react if the President refused to obey a direct Supreme Court order to surrender White House tapes to the special Watergate prosecutor, Mr. Weicker said he would "absolutely" vote to convict the President of an impeachable offense.

"When the Supreme Court rules, that's it," he added. "He's [the President] not obeying the Supreme Court, or disobeying the Supreme Court. He is disobeying or obeying the law, because at the time that the judgment is rendered by the Supreme Court, that becomes the law of the land."

Senator Weicker denied that the Watergate committee's final report, made public vester-

day, had been watered down to achieve unanimity among the seven committee members.

"I don't think it in any way was tailored so as to eliminate key facts, key opinions, in order to achieve a unanimous result," he said.

Mr. Weicker acknowledged that committee members had differed over particular recommendations, but said that on the "broad points" there had been no disagreement.

Proposals in Report

The Watergate committee's 2,217-page report included several proposals for a comprehensive overhaul of campaign statutes and procedures, including the creation of an independent "public attorney" to investigate alleged campaign violations, and the establishment of a nonpartisan Federal Elections Commission.

Senator Weicker said today that he planned to introduce legislation "within the next two weeks" to provide for popular election of the United States Attorney General.

"There should be an independence of our Justice Department from the executive branch of government—more particularly any administration, Democrat or Republican," Mr. Weicker declared.

Asked whether he or President Nixon more accurately represented the Republican party today, Senator Weicker answered, "Well, I think I do."

He also asserted that Republicans would not have supported Mr. Nixon's bid for a second term as President in 1972 "if they had known he was going to conduct his campaign the way that we know now."