

Aides Report Nixon Seeks Quick Watergate Windup

NYTimes By JOHN HERBERS APR 24 1973
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MIAMI, April 23—President Nixon's hopes for overcoming the damage that the Watergate scandals are inflicting on his Administration rest on a speedy disclosure of

those Government officials involved and avoidance of protracted hearings by the Senate select committee investigating the case, according to high White House aides who apparently still enjoy the confidence of the President.

The trouble for the President, these sources said today, is that two or three of those so involved are resisting a complete disclosure and are thus endangering the ability of the Presidency to function as it should during the remainder of Mr. Nixon's term.

Knowledge by Nixon Denied

A White House spokesman denied today that the President himself had any prior knowledge of the Watergate burglary last summer by members of the Committee for the Re-election of the President. Gerald L. Warren, deputy White House press secretary, said, "He did not know."

The aides would not say who the two or three officials or former officials are. But the belief among those close to the President that a quick identification of the guilty is essential was reinforced by the sudden reversal in the official White House attitude about the case.

Until last Tuesday, when President Nixon said new information had come to his attention about the case and that he had requested that no major officials or former officials be granted immunity from prosecution, the White House had issued denials on involvements and discouraged all inquiries by the press. Since then, some

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officials have encourage newspaper investigations.

The fear of some close to the President is that delay would mean drawn-out hearings before the Senate committee, headed by Senator Sam J. Ervin, Democrat of North Carolina, in which the Administration would be "dragged through the mud." Avoidance of this, according to these sources, would serve the best interests of the country.

The President's mood in the last few days, according to some of his associates, has been one of angry impatience to get the matter settled. At his Cabinet meeting in Washington Friday morning, he said during a discussion of the Watergate affair that there had been "incredible jackassery" in the whole thing and he was anxious to get to the bottom of it. He left the impression that he would to clear himself and expose the culprits.

According to reports from the meeting, the President said he was afraid that some of the information that had been emerging from the grand jury investigation of the matter would hurt innocent persons. He reportedly turned to Richard G. Kleindienst, the Attorney General, and said that it seemed some of the leaks were coming from the "prosecuting team" in the case and he hoped such leaks would stop.

Mr. Kleindienst, according to the reports, said he had thought copies of the grand jury transcript were being leaked by members of the jury. At that point, the President was reported to have turned to his Attorney General, looked at him angrily and said, "Now, Dick, you know as well as I do that members of the grand jury do not have access to copies of the transcript."

Meantime, there were increasing indications that a White House staff shake-up as a result of the Watergate case would be forthcoming.

President Nixon has been on an Easter holiday at his Key Biscayne home since Friday. He spent yesterday afternoon and last night at Grand Cay, the Bahamas, with businessmen friends, C. G. Rebozo and Robert Abplanalp, returning to Key Biscayne this morning.

There was evidence, however, that this has been anything but a relaxed holiday for the President. Gerald L. War-

ren, deputy White House press secretary, acknowledged in a tense briefing today that the President had been on the telephone both from his home and in the Bahamas to staff members and others. He did not disclose whom the President talked to, other than Henry A. Kissinger, his foreign affairs assistant.

Ronald L. Ziegler, the press secretary, has not made himself available to reporters since the President's arrival Friday evening. H. R. Haldeman, the White House chief of staff, who has been at the President's side on virtually every trip out of Washington, was reported to have spent the weekend at Camp David, Md., with John D. Ehrlichman, Mr. Nixon's chief assistant for domestic affairs.

Asked why Mr. Ziegler had been in seclusion. Mr. Warren said, "He is busy down here, and he is occupying himself with the duties of the press secretary in addition to other duties the President has given him down here."

Where those duties the ones ordinarily performed by Mr. Haldeman on weekends with the President?

"I have no way of knowing that," Mr. Warren replied. "I really don't."

In response to further questions about the staff, Mr. Warren said, "There are no changes in any status of any White House staff members."

Was the President planning announcements on the Watergate issue?

"There is no announcement I can predict for you," he said. "The President is continuing to spend time on this matter while he is in Florida and while he was on Grand Cay."