

President Ponders A Way Out

WASHINGTON—(AP)

— President Nixon was alone in the seclusion of his Blue Ridge mountain-top retreat today, apparently to chart a course through the grave problems the Watergate revelations are bringing his administration.

He made the flight on short notice to Camp David, Md., late last evening, a few hours after naming a temporary successor to L. Patrick Gray III, who resigned under fire as head of the FBI.

His embattled aides, domestic adviser John Ehrlichman and chief of staff H. R. Haldeman — frequent companions on such problem-solving trips — remained behind amidst reports they are fighting for their jobs.

Ellsberg Trial

In a freakish turn, the Watergate case threatened to disrupt the Pentagon Papers' trial of Daniel Ellsberg and Anthony Russo in Los Angeles, with official disclosure that two Watergate defendants burglarized the office of Ellsberg's psychiatrist for his records.

The appointment of William J. Ruckelshaus, to serve as acting head of the FBI until a permanent successor can be found, climaxed an eventful day in the tangled Watergate aftermath that saw these developments:

- Gray, the acting FBI director who had already withdrawn his nomination for permanent chief, quit "to preserve in both image and fact the reputation, the integrity and the effectiveness of the FBI." The resignation followed disclosure that he destroyed documents from the safe of convicted Watergate conspirator E. Howard Hunt.

- Ehrlichman admitted being present when the doc-

uments were handed to Gray, but denied he ordered their destruction.

- Ehrlichman also acknowledged he met with representatives of financier Robert L. Vesco who contributed \$200,000 to the Nixon re-election campaign. But he said he took steps to keep Vesco associates from claiming White House support for a Lebanese bank deal.

- The Secretary of Commerce accepted "with regrets" the sudden resignation of Jeb Stuart Magruder, former deputy director of the Nixon campaign, who has become a central character in the Watergate probe.

Haldeman and Ehrlichman were along on the President's publicized trip yesterday with Sen. John C.

Stennis over the flood area in west Mississippi. Reporters asked to meet with them; they refused.

For the weekend, however, the President was alone in the Catoctin Mountains, a favorite retreat in times of crisis. He canceled a scheduled meeting today with his economic advisers.

Dean Statement

The New York Times reported today that White House counsel John Dean III told federal prosecutors he will not testify on alleged wrongdoing by Haldeman and Ehrlichman without being granted immunity from further prosecution.

The prosecutors and Dean could not be reached for comment.

The Times, quoting associates, also said Ehrlichman and Haldeman's battle to retain their positions delayed the President's decision on what steps to take.

In a broadcast interview in Topeka, Kan., Sen. Robert E. Dole said the two aides should resign because of the embarrassment for the President and his Administration. The former Republican National Committee chairman was one of many GOP congressmen clamoring for a quick resolution of the widening scandal.

Resignation

In announcing his resignation Gray called attention to "serious allegations concerning certain acts of my

own during the ongoing Watergate investigation that are now a matter of public record." Earlier his homestate senator and friend Sen. Lowell P. Weicker (R-Conn.) said Gray told him he destroyed two files given him by Dean and Ehrlichman without knowing their contents.

Weicker said Gray was told by the men the files "should never see the light of day."

Ehrlichman confirmed the materials were from the White House safe of Hunt, opened after he became implicated in the burglary of Democratic Party headquarters in Watergate last June 17. But he denied asking they be destroyed.

'Fabrications'

They reportedly are documents fabricated by Hunt one falsely linking top officials in the John F. Kennedy administration to the assassination of South Vietnamese President Ngo Dinh Diem in 1963, the other dealing with Sen. Edward M. Kennedy and the Chappaquiddick tragedy.

Hunt a CIA agent for 21 years was given an office in the White House when he was hired as a consultant on among other things the leak of the Pentagon Papers. G. Gordon Liddy also convicted in the Watergate conspiracy worked with him on some projects.

Their names surfaced in the Ellsberg-Russo trial out of the jury's hearing when U.S. District Court Judge Matt Byrne read a memorandum from Watergate prosecutor Earl J. Silbert saying he had "received information that at a date unspecified Gordon Liddy and Howard Hunt burglarized the office of a psychiatrist of Daniel Ellsberg to obtain psychiatrist's files relating to Ellsberg."