

Dean's Documents

Watergate Papers

Hidden At a Bank

Judge Has
Keys to
Safety Box

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John W. Dean III said yesterday that before his dismissal as counsel to President Nixon he removed documents dealing with the Watergate scandal from his White House office to prevent their "illegitimate destruction."

Dean, in papers filed with the U.S. District Court here, reported that he had placed the documents in a safe deposit box at a bank in nearby Alexandria, Va.

Chief Judge John J. Sirica, who is in charge of the Watergate grand jury, was asked to take custody of two keys to the safe deposit box pending a judgment whether the papers could be examined by others. Dean said they bore "a security classification."

The dismissed White House lawyer said the safe deposit box held a 43-page document and eight related documents bound in a blue plastic cover. The contents were not detailed.

DEVELOPMENT

Meanwhile, it was reliably learned that Dean outlined major new developments in the Watergate case to Senator Lowell P. Weicker (Rep.-Conn.) during a two-

hour, 45-minute meeting Thursday. *3 MAY 1973*

Weicker set up the meeting with Dean and his lawyer, Charles Shaffer, and later reported the interview to the ranking members and staff of the Senate committee investigating the Watergate affair.

No details were available, however, on what Dean said. One Senate source said that

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Dean's testimony pointed to a "major development — not something we can go off half-cocked with."

Dean was the official assigned by Mr. Nixon to conduct an initial White House investigation into the break-in and bugging of the offices of the Democratic National Committee last June 17 at the Watergate complex.

Mr. Nixon said in August that the report had vindicated his staff. But Dean, now implicated in an alleged White House coverup of the affair, has asserted that his report had been tampered with or kept from the President altogether.

Other Watergate developments:

• H. R. Haldeman and John D. Ehrlichman, two ranking White House aides who resigned on Monday, spent the day in preliminary testimony before the staff of the Senate Select Watergate Committee. The panel is scheduled to begin public hearings in about two weeks.

• It was disclosed that officials of President Nixon's political fund-raising unit secretly collected between \$1 million and \$2 million in cash and then destroyed re-

ords in which the donors were identified.

• Egil (Bud) Krogh Jr., a former White House aide involved in a presidential investigation of the Pentagon Papers case, conferred with federal prosecutors handling the Watergate investigation.

BEARING

In his court papers, Dean said he "has reason to believe that some, if not all," of the documents he removed from his office "may have a bearing on the subject under investigation" by the Senate Watergate panel.

Dean said he had taken the documents from his office because he was "anticipating the reasonable likelihood of either a covert break-in to his office before his termination by persons unknown or the sealing of his files after his termination by government agents," thereby running "the risk of illegitimate destruction of the documents involved."

The former White House counsel, who has warned that he will not be a "scapegoat" in the burgeoning scandal, is known to have supplied Justice Department officials with potentially incriminating information.

AIDES

The appearance by Haldeman and Ehrlichman before the Senate committee followed the pattern set Thursday when they testified before a federal grand jury.

Ehrlichman met with the committee staff first and answered questions for about five hours. Haldeman was then interrogated for more than three hours. Both men said afterward that they had cooperated with the investigators.

Neither man, however, would give details of the questioning.

On Thursday the White House issued new guidelines

on the use of executive privilege, but neither Haldeman nor Ehrlichman would say whether it had been used to avoid answering questions.

Asked whether the guidelines would prevent investigators from finding out whether the President had knowledge of the bugging before it took place, an informed White House source said that executive privilege covered only "official acts" and not "the commission of crimes or conversations about those crimes."

In the event of a conflict between a witness and either the Senate or the grand jury, the source said, the issue would finally have to be decided by the courts.