

MAY 13 1973  
(COVER)

# Search for a Special Prosecutor

LIKE Diogenes with his lantern, Attorney General designate Elliot Richardson last week promised to search for an honest, impartial investigator-prosecutor who would, once and for all, discover the truth about Watergate and bring to justice anyone criminally involved.

But it was a gauge of how far the Watergate affair had eroded trust in the executive branch that Senator Edward Brooke (R-Mass.) and GOP Senate leader Hugh Scott of Pennsylvania still pushed through — as the first order of business last Monday — a resolution calling for Richardson to name a "special assistant" from outside government and make his acceptance subject to Senate approval.

The problem was that Watergate no longer meant merely a low-comedy bugging operation June 17, 1972 at the Watergate headquarters of the Democratic National Committee in which five men were arrested (and convicted in January 1973).

Senator Edward Kennedy (D-Mass.) observed that Watergate, because of alleged subsequent "cover-up" attempts, had become a "traumatic national tragedy."

## The Polls

Pollsters labored feverishly to check the public pulse. George Gallup's latest, following President Nixon's April 30 speech, found:

Nine persons out of 10 were now aware of Watergate. Eight of 10 saw, heard or had read about the President's speech. Of these, 40 per cent didn't think he told the whole truth; 30 per cent believed him.

Did the President know in advance of the bugging? Yes, 40 per cent; No, 47 per cent. Did the President participate in a "cover-up"? Yes, 50 per cent; No, 35 per cent. Has it reduced your confidence in government? A great deal, 21 per cent; somewhat, 37; not at all, 37.

But 58 per cent thought the Nixon Administration was very little more corrupt than previous administrations of the last 25 years.

## The Nation



AP Wirephoto

GEN. HAIG

Federal grand jury in Washington continued its examination of witnesses; and the Senate Select Committee under Senator Sam Ervin (D-N.C.) prepared to begin its televised hearings next Thursday.

The latest developments:

- President Nixon picked four-star General Alexander Haig Jr. to take over most of E. R. (Bob) Haldeman's duties as chief guardian of the Oval Office. To complaints that the assistant Army Chief-of-Staff should resign that post first, Haig told the press he only expected to keep the job for a few months.

- Haldeman and John Ehrlichman testified at great length before the grand jury. Haldeman emerged to say: "I have answered all the questions they asked. I'm cooperating to the fullest . . . I'm confident that any questions of failing to meet the standards that I have set for myself and the President has set for the White House will be cleared up."

lest . . . I'm confident that any questions of failing to meet the standards that I have set for myself and the President has set for the White House will be cleared up."

- The President sent new guidelines to the grand jury and Senate Select Committee on "executive privilege" in relation to Watergate. Both Ehrlichman and Haldeman denied they invoked executive privilege during their questioning, but it was not clear when and how the new rules could be used. Mr. Nixon had advised his former aides to put it to "minimum" use.

## Documents Hidden

- John Dean III, the President's recently fired counsel, disclosed he had put a 43-page document and eight related documents bound in a blue plastic cover in a safe deposit box in an Alexandria, Va., bank to prevent "illegitimate destruction."

He asked Chief District Judge John J. Sirica, in charge of the Watergate grand jury, to take the two keys to the box and decide whether the papers (which had "a security classification") could be examined by others.

- Newsweek magazine subsequently reported Dean was prepared to testify that President Nixon knew of the attempt to cover up Watergate as early as last September. But Dean was reluctant to testify without immunity, the Newsweek story said, because he was afraid that if he went to jail, with his boyish looks he might be molested by homosexuals.

- Leonard Garment, the new counsel to the President replacing Dean, at midweek requested in the name of the

### New Developments

A few days later, the Louis Harris pollsters found that 77 per cent of Americans did not think President Nixon ought to resign but 54 per cent thought he had "lost so much credibility that it will be hard for him to be an effective President again."

Meanwhile, the press continued its revelations; the

White House that the Justice Department take "appropriate action" to recover the nine documents put in a safe deposit box by Dean. If anyone is concerned "that we're going to do anything sneaky," said Garment, "let the court hang onto a copy."

#### 'Grossly Unfair'

• Senator Ervin's committee agreed to investigate the conduct and handling of the Watergate prosecution by the Justice Department

that led to seven convictions.

• President Nixon was defended by a longtime bitter critic, Senator William Proxmire (D-Wis.). The news media, said Proxmire, was being "grossly unfair" to the President. "When former White House counsel John Dean is reported throughout this country to have privately told grand jury investigators that the President was directly involved in a Watergate cover-up, President Nixon is being tried, sentenced and executed by rumor and allegation . . . I find this kind of persecution and condemnation without trial McCarthysim at its worst . . ."

• The President issued a fresh denial of involvement in the Watergate cover-up. Deputy White House press secretary Gerald Warren read: "The White House says . . . any suggestion that the President was aware of the Watergate operation is untrue. Any suggestion that the President participated in any cover-up activity or activities is untrue. Any suggestion that the President ever authorized the offering of clemency to anyone in the case is also false."