

## Dean 'Tried To Spy' on Protesters

### Washington

John W. Dean III, former White House counsel, attempted to set up an undercover espionage and intelligence ring to infiltrate anti-war protest groups before the Democratic and Republican national conventions last year, government sources said yesterday.

The sources said that Dean summoned an official of the Interior Department to his office in May, 1972, two months before the Democratic convention in Miami Beach, and offered him a large sum of cash either to participate in or to direct an undercover network.

The official, Kernith Tapman, who handled negotiations for the Interior Department before the massive anti-war demonstrations in Washington in 1969 and 1970, acknowledged in a brief telephone interview that Dean had made the offer.

Other sources familiar with the incident said, however, that Tapman was distressed at Dean's offer and rejected it out of hand. Investigators have not yet determined whether the infiltration program ever did get set up before the convention, the sources said.

The report of Dean's recruiting attempt was the first to link him to any direct involvement in any Republican spying operations that, by May of last year, had been set up elsewhere in the White House and in the Committee for the Re-Election of the President.

Dean had previously acknowledged participating — under orders, he maintains — in the coverup of the break-in at the Watergate offices of the Democrats on June 17, 1972.

Dean and Tapman began their association at the time of the anti-war demonstrations in Washington in 1969, the sources said. Dean was serving then as a Justice Department official charged with coordinating the government's response to demonstrations. Tapman was assigned by his Interior Department superiors to help arrange permits and other necessities for the demonstrators on government property. *N.Y. Times Service*