

Ties Haldeman, Ehrlichman to Cover-Up

# Dean Says He Briefed Aides

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Former White House counsel John W. Dean III has told the Senate Watergate committee in executive session that within two weeks after the Watergate break-in last June, he told presidential aides H. R. (Bob) Haldeman and John D. Ehrlichman all he knew then about the Watergate affair.

By that time, according to a written summary of Dean's sworn testimony, he had learned that former Attorney General John N. Mitchell, then the director of the Nixon re-election committee, had sanctioned the break-in and bugging and that Jeb Stuart Magruder, deputy director of the re-election committee, was also deeply implicated.

From then on, Dean's testimony alleges, Haldeman and Ehrlichman were involved in efforts to cover up the full facts of the Watergate incident.

Haldeman and Ehrlichman have contended in sworn depositions that they did not learn of Mitchell's and Magruder's roles in planning the bugging until late March, 1973 — nine months after the break-in — and both have denied any part in the cover-up.

In the closed-door testimony given last Saturday, Dean quotes Haldeman as saying at some unspecified time that he knew nothing about "this thing"—the Watergate. Magruder, however, has testified that he assumed Haldeman was aware in advance that the bugging was to be undertaken, because all the plans had been transmitted to Haldeman's aide, Gordon Strachan.

The seven-page, single-spaced type-written summary is of testimony given by Dean to the staff of the Senate select investigating committee. The summary was prepared by members of the committee staff and the quotations are from the summary and not necessarily Dean's own words.

Dean was harshly criticized yesterday by Sen. Hugh Scott (R-Penn.), the minority leader of the Senate, who called the former White House counsel a "turncoat" and "embezzler." Scott was commenting on leaks of Dean's testimony.

One leak was that Dean told the committee staff he had taken—and later returned—\$4,850 from campaign funds to pay for his wedding and honeymoon. Without mentioning Dean by name, Scott told reporters, "I am suggesting that a man who is an embezzler can easily tell lies. It is a very short step down."

Another leak quoted Dean as telling the committee he has "documents

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where President Nixon requested that tax audits be turned off on friends of his." Questioned about this, Scott replied, "There is nothing so incredible that this turncoat will not be willing to testify to in return for a reward."

Sen. Howard Baker (R-Tenn.), vice chairman of the Watergate committee, did not comment on the substance of the leaks, but said it may be necessary to put future witnesses before the committee in public without holding secret, advance sessions to lay the groundwork for his testimony. "There is no practical way to provide security for the interviews," Baker said.

Dean had been scheduled to testify publicly this week, but the committee postponed its hearings until Monday because of the visit of Soviet Communist Party General Secretary Leonid I. Brezhnev. On Tuesday, The Washington Post obtained two pages of the summary. Yesterday, the full summary was made available.

Notably lacking in the testimony is the account Dean had been expected to give of his meetings this year with President Nixon, in which Dean's associates have said the Watergate cover-up was extensively discussed.

The reason for the missing accounts is apparently that Sen. Baker, who was present for part of Saturday's closed-door session, ruled that "any issue of attorney-client privilege or national security" should be determined in a second executive session then scheduled for Monday. That meeting was called off.

As the President's counsel, Dean's meetings with him could be interpreted as part of the "attorney-client" relationship, and thus could be excluded from testimony if Mr. Nixon decides to invoke the privilege.

The "national security" reference is to White House documents in Dean's possession, some of which have been printed in the press, that describe 1970 plans for stepped-up domestic intelligence operations including increased use of electronic surveillance and break-ins.

The only meeting described in detail occurred after the Watergate indict-

ments were handed down in September. The summary states: "Haldeman was there. Nixon said that Haldeman had reported what a good job Dean had done. Nixon said that (J. Edgar) Hoover (the late director of the FBI) had told him that Nixon had been bugged in the 1968 campaign and Nixon said that some time in the future they would have to use it to their advantage."

"Nixon said (William) Timmons, (the White House liaison man with Congress) should get on the Patman hearings and make sure it didn't get out of hand."

Last fall, Rep. Wright Patman (D-Tex.) attempted to have his House Banking and Currency Committee investigate the Watergate break-in and its ties to Republican campaign financing, but the committee voted against the hearings. Evidence of White House pressure to block the hearings was reported at the time.

Dean's narrative of the Watergate affair, the events leading to the June 17 break-in and the cover-up that followed apparently does not differ in any significant respect from the version offered last week by Magruder. Dean, however, offers additional details of what was taking place in the White House during that period.

Magruder did not say in his testimony and Dean does not suggest in his, that Dean had prior knowledge of the bugging, although Dean did attend two meetings at then-Attorney General Mitchell's office on Jan. 27 and Feb. 4 in which intelligence operations were discussed.

The summary says that after the second meeting at Mitchell's office—at which bugging Watergate headquarters of the Democrats was allegedly discussed but not approved—"Dean told Liddy he didn't ever want to discuss this again. Dean told Haldeman what had been going on, and Haldeman agreed that Dean should stay out of it."

Magruder said that the decision to go ahead was made at a third meeting in Key Biscayne, Fla., on March 30 at which Dean was not present. After the arrests at the Watergate on June 17, however, Dean became immediately and deeply involved in the

White House cover-up effort, according to his own testimony—the first time he has testified under oath before the Senate committee.

Dean, according to the summary, was in Manila, the Philippines on June 17 and learned of the break-in when he returned to the United States on June 18. On June 19, Dean states he "had a call from Magruder who said it was (G. Gordon)

Liddy's fault." Liddy, general counsel to the Nixon campaign finance committee, was the leader of the seven convicted Watergate conspirators.

"Dean," the summary continues, "called Liddy and told him to come over. Liddy said it had been his men who were caught. Liddy said Magruder had forced him to do it. Liddy said they had gone in to replace a bug placed in there previously and to photograph documents."

There was a meeting in Mitchell's apartment that night, the summary of Dean's testimony relates, at which Magruder and Robert C. Mardian, a top campaign official was present, and perhaps Fred LaRue, another high-ranking campaign official. Magruder has testified that the cover-up was discussed at that session. Dean says the meeting was "regarding how to handle the publicity."

The summary continues:

"During the last week of June, Dean told Ehrlichman and Haldeman what happened as far as Dean knew. Dean told Mitchell that Dean gathered this thing was (signed off on) and Mitchell said that was pretty close to what happened but they thought it was going to be three or four times removed from CRP (the Committee for the Re-election of the President.)"

Apparently after that time (the summary does not follow in clear chronological order), Dean says; "Strachan told Dean that had received instructions from Haldeman to destroy documents — these related to wiretap information."

At another point, the summary related: "Mardian suggested that the CIA might be of assistance. Ehrlichman told Dean that Ehrlichman and Haldeman

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had a discussion with (Lt. Gen. Vernon) Walters—that Dean should deal with Walters (deputy CIA director) not (Richard) Helms, (director of the CIA) because Walters owed his allegiance to the White House.”

The purpose of the meeting, according to testimony elsewhere about the session, was to have Walters intervene with then acting FBI Director L. Patrick Gray, tell him that the CIA may have been involved in the case, and get him to limit his investigation for that reason.

“On June 26,” according to the summary, “Dean called Walters to see if Walters could be of any assistance and Walters said it would be a bad idea and Dean agreed. Ehrlichman was dissatisfied. On June 27, Ehrlichman said to lean on Walters.

“Ehrlichman told Dean to throw material from (Watergate conspirator E. Howard) Hunt’s safe in river (briefcase containing antenna, wires, instructions involving walkie talkies).

“Dean told (Attorney General Richard) Kliendienst that there was quite a potential that the involvement would lead to the President because there is very little that Haldeman does that the President does not know about.”

The summary says that Dean knew that Magruder was preparing to commit perjury at the Watergate trial in January. “Haldeman and Ehrlichman wanted Dean to help Magruder get through the grand jury,” according to the summary of Dean’s testimony. “Magruder wanted Dean to corroborate his testimony and Dean wouldn’t.”

Magruder has testified that he committed perjury at the trial and before the Watergate grand jury.

Dean asserts, according to the summary, that his celebrated remark in late April that he would not be a “scapegoat” in the Watergate affair, “had to do with meetings he had with the President and some information Dean heard that President allegedly made (sic) to (Assistant Attorney General Henry) Petersen.” Petersen was then heading the Justice Department investigation of the Watergate. The summary does not explain what information Dean was referring to.