

# ZIEGLER TERMED IGNORANT OF FACTS

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## Dean Says Press Secretary Didn't Know the Truth in Denying a Cover-Up NYTimes

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WASHINGTON, June 26 — John W. Dean 3d told the Senate Watergate investigating committee today that Ronald L. Ziegler, the White House press secretary, did not know "the truth" when he repeatedly denied any White House involvement in the burgeoning scandal and the attempted cover-up.

But Mr. Dean, the dismissed White House counsel, did not thereby absolve Mr. Ziegler of any role in the cover-up as President Nixon did on April

### Transcript of "practice session" with Ziegler, Page 49.

30 when he announced the dismissal of Mr. Dean and the resignations of his two top assistants, John D. Ehrlichman and H. R. Haldeman. At that time Mr. Nixon said that "the comments made by my press secretary in my behalf were based on the information provided to us at the time."

#### Always Turned Down

Mr. Dean said today that "on countless occasions" Mr. Ziegler had come to him and asked to be briefed on "the facts" of various unfolding situations that he knew the reporters would question him on. But he testified that he always told Mr. Ziegler he could not be given the facts because he was under "very specific instructions" from Mr. Ehrlichman "not to brief Ziegler."

Thereupon, Mr. Dean said, Mr. Ziegler would follow the guidance given him by himself,

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Mr. Haldeman or Mr. Ehrlichman, "take an offensive approach" in his news conference and "hedge and bob and weave" but "without actually going out and lying on a given matter."

Thus, Mr. Dean suggested, Mr. Ziegler, while ignorant of the facts most of the time and "quite annoyed" because he was denied them, nevertheless acquiesced in his assigned role in the cover-up.

As an example of how Mr. Ziegler was coached to play this role, Mr. Dean submitted to the committee the text of a "practice session" last October in which several White House aides assumed the parts of reporters and questioned Mr. Ziegler aggressively on articles that said that Dwight L. Chapin, the White House appointments secretary, had hired Donald Segretti to engage in political sabotage and was his Washington contact.

Mr. Ziegler, in reply, repeatedly stood on Mr. Chapin's statement that the article was "fundamentally inaccurate," adding, "at no time has anyone in the White House or this Administration condoned such activities as spying on individuals . . . or sabotaging campaigns in an illegal way."

The following day Mr. Ziegler would not comment directly on charges that Mr. Chapin had hired Mr. Segretti, but he denied that Mr. Segretti had ever worked for the White House. He said Mr. Nixon was worried about the dispatches "based on hearsay, innuendo, guilt by association."

"It goes without saying," Mr. Ziegler said, "that this Administration does not condone sabotage or espionage or the surveillance of individuals."

Mr. Dean also said, under questioning by Fred D. Thompson, the chief minority counsel of the committee, that he knew of "no impropriety" on the part of Henry E. Petersen, As Assistant Attorney General for the Criminal Division, Mr. Petersen was in charge of the Justice Department's investigation of the Watergate case until the appointment of Archibald Cox as special prosecutor.

#### Grand Jury Testimony

The basis for Mr. Thompson's question about any impropriety in Mr. Petersen's conduct of the investigation was Mr. Dean's testimony yesterday that Mr. Petersen had passed on to the White House information from grand jury testimony.

Furthermore, he said yesterday that Mr. Petersen had arranged for five White House aides to be questioned by Federal prosecutors in an office outside the presence of the grand jury.

After being interviewed by the Government lawyers in the presence of their own attorney — lawyers are not permitted to attend their clients in the grand jury room — these White House officials, Mr. Dean said, were permitted to swear to statements that were later given to the grand jury in lieu of direct testimony. Thus, the 23 grand jury members were prevented from asking their own questions of the five witnesses.

The five officials accorded this special treatment were Charles W. Colson, at that time a special White House counsel; Mr. Chapin, the appointments secretary; Gordon C. Strachan, then an aide to Mr. Haldeman, and Egil Krogh Jr. and David Young, both former members of a White House unit investigating leaks to the press.

Although Mr. Dean did not include in his list Maurice H. Stans, former Secretary of Commerce who was chairman of the Finance Committee to Reelect the president, he did say that Mr. Ehrlichman had called Mr. Petersen to protest against Mr. Stans's having to go before the grand jury. Mr. Ehrlichman, Mr. Dean testified, told Mr. Petersen that Mr. Stans should not be treated in this fashion.

Although he said today that he knew of "no impropriety" upon Mr. Petersen's part, Mr. Dean added a caveat that Mr. Petersen was trying "to be very fair with the White House" because he was sensitive to the fact that the appearance of White House staff members in a court house could be embarrassing to the White House "in a political year."

Mr. Dean said yesterday that, at a meeting with Mr. Petersen in the office of Attorney General Richard G. Kleindienst, a couple of days after the break-in on June 17, 1972, at the Democratic national headquarters, he had raised the implications of a wide-open investigation in an election year. Today, he was asked whether Mr. Petersen had indicated "in any way that he would carry out anything less than a wide-open investigation in this matter."

#### Impression of Fairness

Mr. Dean replied that he did not recall Mr. Petersen "saying anything specific." He added: "I left the meeting with an impression that Mr. Petersen would be fair in an investigation of the White House and that interpretation of fairness would mean that we wouldn't have an investigation of everything that occurred in the White House for four years."

Last fall, replying to charges by Senator George McGovern that the Justice Department in-

vestigation was not thorough, Mr. Petersen said it was "the most exhaustive and far-reaching that I have seen."

Today, Mr. Petersen, a career civil servant, refused to comment on Mr. Dean's testimony except to say, "I haven't done anything in 27 years to be ashamed of."

Three weeks ago, Attorney General Elliot L. Richardson, commenting on a New York Times article that Mr. Petersen's conduct of the investigation would be reviewed by the special prosecutor, said: