

Good Old Country Boys Enliven the Scene

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WASHINGTON, June 29— Sometimes, when cracker-barrel time comes around at the Senate Watergate hearings, it's kind of hard on anyone who's not just a good old country boy.

It was today, for sure, for Senator Daniel K. Inouye, Democrat from Hawaii.

There he was, all serious looking and set to take a turn at questioning John W. Dean 3d, the former counsel to the President who was winding up his week on the witness stand.

Then a long discussion among the committee members, all of whom are lawyers, and their counsel about the admissibility of hearsay evidence got Senators Sam J. Ervin Jr. of North Carolina and Howard H. Baker Jr. of Tennessee started again.

It's always happening—and the first thing anyone knew, there they were, spinning out down-home lawyer stories.

Senator Ervin, the portly Democratic committee chairman, got in the first licks.

"I am from Watauga County in North Carolina; the county where Rufus Edmiston [the deputy counsel] comes from," drawled Mr. Ervin, his eyes atwinkle just enough behind his horn-rimmed glasses to alert the national television cameras and the audience in the crowded caucus room in the Old Senate Office Building.

What Went on in Boone

"This man had been in court over in Boone, the county seat," he went on. "He came back that night and was in the country store and he mentioned the fact that he had been over to the court in Boone, and somebody asked him what was going on there."

As the spectators began to chuckle in anticipation, Senator Ervin, his grandfatherly face beaming under his white hair, delivered the snapper.

"He said, 'well,' there was a judge sitting up there, there was a jury sitting over in the jury box, and there were the lawyers," the 76-year-old Senator continued. "He said, 'some of the lawyers weer objecting and the others were excenting and the costs weer piling up.'"

So much for lawyers and their long-winded arguments.

You could almost hear the knee-slapping, and before the laughter had settled down in the marble-pillared room,

Senator Baker was leaning toward his microphone at the long committee table, a sly grin flickering.

As usual, the 47-year-old Mr. Baker deferred politely to his older colleague before indulging in a bit of friendly one-upmanship.

Tennessee Story

"You know, Mr. chairman, if this is story-telling time, my distinguished chairman is going to have to suffer for having set the example for me," said the distinguished vice chairman in his best East Tennessee accent. "But in the course of all of our testimony, to the extent that we have conflicts in it, I am reminded by an old lawyer in Scott County, Tennessee, named Haywood Pemberton who was employed to defend a man."

As Mr. Dean, who has been at the witness table for so long that he almost seems like a permanent part of the set, leaned back, forgotten for the moment, Senator Baker went on.

"He said, 'I have just shot a man, Haywood, will you defend me?'" the Senator recounted. "He said, 'Of course, I will defend you. Did you kill him?'"

"He said, 'No, I have just wounded him.'"

"He said, 'That is all right, but just remember, he will be an awful hard witness against you.'"

Again, laughter rattled around the room, adding to

the air of relaxation and relief that seemed to permeate the hearing today as Mr. Dean neared the end of his long stint under cross-examination.

First the Witness

Senator Inouye? Whatever happened to Senator Inouye?

"I believe the witness wants to make some observations," Senator Ervin said. "Then we will go to Senator Inouye."

There were those in the room who thought that maybe Mr. Dean, who hasn't smiled much during the proceedings, was going to try to break into the country-boy

But no, he was his usual solemn self as he came back on mike, not even delivering a good straight line for the long-waiting Senator Inouye.

"I just wanted to say, Mr. Chairman, that as you know, I am here under compulsion of the committee," he said, "and I have tried to withhold nothing from the committee at any time and I did not want these conversations to reflect that there has been any hesitancy on this witness to answer any question put to him and I answer it fully and honestly."

That's a mouthful. And does anyone do with it—especially if he's not a country boy.

"Senator Inouye?" Senator Ervin said—finally.

Senator Inouye may have swallowed hard. Most people would have.

"Mr. Chairman," he said sadly, his deep voice filling the room, "I regret I have no Hawaiian stories to tell."

And some of the loudest applause of the day burst from the predominantly young, standing-room-only audience.

Perhaps the only louder hand-clapping came as Senator Edward J. Gurney, the Florida Republican, continued his obvious efforts of earlier in the week to discredit Mr. Dean as a witness.

He spent more than three hours trying to shake Mr. Dean on Wednesday and today he came prepared to try again.

This time he had some evidence that seemed to contradict at least one part of Mr. Dean's long account of the Watergate cover-up.

The former White House counsel had testified that a year ago today he met Herbert B. Kalmbach, President Nixon's former personal lawyer, in the coffee shop of the Mayflower Hotel and then had gone up to Mr. Kalmbach's room to arrange the payment of "silence" money to the Watergate defendants.

Today, Senator Gurney produced a letter from the Mayflower management that had no record of Mr. Kalmbach's having stayed there between June 1 and July 1, 1972. He also had a copy of records of the Statler-Hilton, showing that Mr. Kalmbach was registered there on June 29 and 30 of last year.