

President Urged to Free Files

Sen. Inouye Sees Nixon 'In Trouble'

President Nixon should quickly volunteer to make himself and key White House documents available to Senate Watergate investigators because he "is in trouble" with the public, Sen. Daniel K. Inouye (D-Hawaii) said yesterday.

Inouye, a member of the Senate select Watergate committee, said that because of the testimony of former presidential counsel John W. Dean III, "the President's word is not taken as it was a few months ago."

Dean, who was fired by the President on April 30, has testified that Mr. Nixon knew about the cover-up of the June 17, 1972, break-in and bugging of Democratic headquarters at the Watergate.

The Senate committee has asked the White House to turn over to it a number of documents, including the records of Dean, former domestic affairs adviser John D. Ehrlichman, and former White House chief of staff H. R. (Bob) Haldeman. The White House has refused to let the committee have the papers, saying that to do so would violate the constitutional doctrine of separation of powers.

"It is not our business to decide who is guilty or not guilty or whether one is telling the truth or not," Inouye said on the CBS television program Face the Nation. "But it's an issue that most of the people of the United States are now concerned with: who is telling the truth or not?"

"And I think it would be in the best interest of the President of the United States to come forward voluntarily with his papers and himself because he is the man who can clear himself. Right now, with the evidence presented by Mr. Dean, I would say that the President is in trouble."

Asked whether he thought the testimony of former Attorney General John N. Mitchell

and special presidential counsel Richard A. Moore had helped the President, Inouye replied, "I don't think so . . . if anything it just confused the people . . ."

In their testimony before the committee last week, Mitchell and Moore disputed portions of Dean's testimony. Both men testified, however, that Mr. Nixon did not know of the cover-up until he was told of it by Dean in mid-March of this year.

A majority of the seven-member Watergate panel, including Inouye and the committee chairman, Sen. Sam

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Ervin (D-N.C.), is on record as supporting a subpoena for the presidential papers if that proves necessary. But Inouye said yesterday that he agreed with Ervin that if Mr. Nixon ignored a subpoena, it was useless to get involved in a court battle that might take years to resolve.

Another member of the Watergate committee, Sen. Lowell Weicker (R-Conn.), said on WCBS-TV in New York yesterday that he would vote against subpoenaing either the President or the documents because such action would violate the separation of powers between the executive and legislative branches of government.

However, Keicker said he believed that the committee would be willing to meet Mr. Nixon in private at the White House if that would make it easier to respond to allegations that he knew of the Watergate cover-up.

Mr. Nixon has promised to meet privately with Ervin to discuss the documents issue, but a White House spokesman said this meeting will not take place while the President is confined at Bethesda Naval Hospital, where he is being treated for viral pneumonia.

Another senator, James Buckley (Cons.-N.Y.), suggested yesterday that Mr. Nixon would be aided by cooperating with the Watergate panel. "The White House ought to be leaning over backwards in the provision of those documents helpful to the investigation (that) do not trespass on internal communications," Buckley said on NBC-TV's Meet The Press.

Asked if Mr. Nixon should testify before the Senate committee, Buckley said he regretted that the President had

"painted himself into a corner" by so strongly rebuffing the panel's efforts to get his side of the case.

"He ought to wait until (after) the full testimony . . . from the principal characters in this investigation," Buckley said, and then judge the "most effective way" to state his case.

Meanwhile, Newsweek quoted unnamed "Senate sources and federal investigators" as saying that former White House aide Gordon Strachan is ready to testify that Haldeman ordered him to shred "incriminating docu-

ments from Haldeman's office safe after the June 17, 1972, Watergate break-in. Newsweek said Strachan has a list of the documents.

Two other potential Senate committee witnesses, former Attorney General Richard Kleindienst and White House staff member Lawrence Higby, Newsweek said, would implicate Haldeman and Ehrlichman in the Watergate operation or its cover-up.

As the senators discussed, in various ways, the impact of the Watergate affair on Mr. Nixon's public image, Rep. John Anderson (R-Ill.), chairman of the House Republican Conference, suggested that White House efforts for major consolidation of domestic programs into six "special revenue-sharing" plans had suffered heavy "political damage" from Watergate on Capitol Hill.

"There's less push behind it," he said.

But, he said, Watergate may help his own proposal to establish an independent election commission and a \$2,500 limit on campaign contributions in presidential races and \$1,000 in congressional races. Rep. Wayne Hays (D-Ohio), powerful chairman of the House Administration Committee, opposes Anderson's bill, but Anderson said he hoped other Democrats could change Hays' thinking.