

Nixon: 'I Think They Are

Second of a Series

Following is a transcript of a 1 hour, 18 minute meeting on March 13, 1973, between President Nixon, his chief of staff, H. R. Haldeman, and his counsel, John W. Dean III.

The conversation was recorded in the Oval Office. The transcript has been edited by White House officials to remove obscenities, personal characterizations and irrelevancies.

Haldeman: Say, did you raise the question with the President on Colson as a consultant?

Dean: No, I didn't.

Haldeman: Was that somebody else?

Dean: The thought was as a consultant, without doing any consulting, he wants it for continued protection on —

Haldeman: Solely for the purpose of executive privilege protection, I take it.

Dean: It is one of those things that is kept down in the personnel office, and nothing is done on it.

President: What happens to (presidential aide Dwight) Chapin?

Dean: Well, Chapin doesn't have quite the same problem in appearing as Colson will.

Haldeman: Yeah—you have the same problems of Chapin appearing as Colson.

President: Well, can't—that would such an obvious fraud to have both of them as consultants, that that won't work. I think he is right. You would have to leave Chapin.

Haldeman: Well, you can't make Chapin a consultant, because we have already said he is not.

Dean: Yeah.

Haldeman: Because we wanted the separation. The question is, are you then, as of now, the way they have interpreted executive privilege, is that you are not going to let Chapin testify.

President: Anybody.

Haldeman: Because it applies to executive privilege by the former people in relation to matters while they were here.

Dean: And the problem area is . . .

Haldeman: And that same thing would apply to Colson.

Dean: Well, yes, if Chuck were truly going to be doing nothing from this day on.

Haldeman: That's alright. He is concerned with what he is doing. Colson is concerned with what he is doing from now on, and he would apply the consulting tactic if he were called with regard to actions taken now . . .

Dean: That's right.

Haldeman: That relate to the Watergate action.

Dean: The problem is, I think, he will be out stirring up counter-news attacks and things of this nature.

President: (expletive deleted) Is he supposed to do that and be consulting with the President on it?

Dean: No, no. But he is consulting. It is a wide open consultantship. It doesn't mean he would be consulting with you.

Haldeman: Yeah. Your idea was just to put this in the drawer, in case.

Dean: Put it in the drawer, and then decide it.

Haldeman: It would be a consultant without pay.

Dean: I wouldn't even tell Chuck this. Just tell Chuck there is something in the drawer.

Haldeman: There is no reason to tell Chuck is there? Why . . .

President: I would tell Chuck. Tell him he is not to say anything, frankly.

Haldeman: The point would be to date it back on Saturday, so it is that day.

Dean: Continuous.

President: His consultant fee stopped for the present time, but he is still available for purposes of consulting on various problems and the like.

Dean: Right.

President: Unpaid consultants?

Dean: Yes.

Haldeman: We have some of those.

Dean: Good ones.

President: Well, what are the latest developments Bob should get something on?

Dean: Yeah.

President: Before we get into that I was wondering about that jackassery about some kid who (unintelligible)—which of course is perfectly proper course of action if it works. I would expect we were heavily infiltrated that way too.

Dean: The only problem there Mr. President is that . . .

President: Did he get paid?

Dean: He was paid.

President: By check?

Dean: He was paid by personal check of another person over there who, in turn, was taking it out of expense money—and this is ticklish—is that it is pre-April 7th money, and there could be some potential embarrassment for (campaign aide) Ken Reitz along the way.

President: Oh!

Dean: So he is. But I think it is a

confined situation. Obviously it is something that will come up in the Ervin Committee, but it is not another new Liddy-Hunt operation.

President: It is just a (adjective deleted) thing.

Dean: Oh, it is.

President: What happened to the kid? Did he just decide to be a hero?

Dean: That's right. He probably chatted about it around school, and the word got out, and he got confronted with it and he knew he chatted about it, so there he was. It's absurd, it really is. He didn't do anything illegal.

President: Illegal? Of course not! Apparently you haven't been able to do anything on my project of getting on the offensive?

Dean: But I have sir, to the contrary!

President: Based on Sullivan, have you kicked a few butts around?

Dean: I have all of the information that we have collected. There is some there, and I have turned it over to Baroody. Baroody is having a speech drafted for Barry Goldwater. And there is enough material there to make a rather sensational speech just by: Why in the hell isn't somebody looking into what happened to President Nixon during his campaign? Look at these events! How do you explain these? Where are the answers to these questions? But, there is nothing but threads. I pulled all the information.

President: Also, the Senator should then present it to the Ervin Committee and demand that that be included. He is a Senator, a Senator . . .

Dean: What I am working on there for Barry is a letter to Senator Ervin that this has come to my attention, and why shouldn't this be a part of the inquiry? And he can spring out 1964 and quickly to '72. We've got a pretty good speech there, if we can get out our materials.

Really After Haldeman,

President: Good!

Dean: So it's in the mill.

Haldeman: We have finally started something.

President: (expletive deleted) Why haven't we had anyone involved in it before? Just didn't have enough stuff? For example, investigations were supposed to have been taken for the 34 (unintelligible contributed to McGovern. And they say (expletive deleted) it is all hanky-panky, and their records are just too bad to find out. Is that the problem?

Haldeman: Won't that be an issue?

Dean: That will be an issue. There is a crew working that, also.

President: Do you need any IRS stuff?

Dean: There is no need at this hour for anything from IRS, and we have a couple of sources over there that I can go to. I don't have to go around with (then IRS Commissioner) Johnnie Walters or anybody, but we can get right in and get what we need. I have been preparing the answers for the briefing book and I just raised this with Ron; in my estimation, for what it is worth, that probably this week will draw more Watergate questions than any other week we are likely to see, given the Gray hearings, the new revelations — they are not new, but they are now substantiated — about Kalmbach and Chapin that have been in the press.

President: To the effect of what phase?

Dean: That Chapin directed Kalmbach to pay Segretti, the alleged saboteur, somewhere between \$35,- and \$40,000. There is an awful lot of that hot in the press now. There is also the question of Dean appearing, not appearing — Dean's role. There are more stories in the Post this morning that are absolutely inaccurate about my turning information over to the Re-Election Committee for some woman over there. Mrs. (Judy) Hoback signed an affidavit and gave it to (Sen.) Birch Bayh, and said that "I was brought into Bob Mardian's office within 48 hours after a private interview I had with the jury and confronted with it." How did they know that? It came from internal sources over there. That's how they knew it!

President: From what?

Dean: Internal sources—this girl had told others that she was doing this, and they just told. They just quickly sent it to the top that she was out on her own.

President: Did she quit?

Dean: She did. There have been two or three of those.

Haldeman: Why did she do that? Was she mad?

Dean: She is a registered Democrat.

Haldeman: Why did we take her in?

Dean: To this day, I do not know what she was doing.

President: Who was she working for?

Dean: She worked in (Maurice) Stans' operation.

President: Why did he have her working for him?

Dean: It wasn't a good move. In fact that was one of our problems—the

little pocket of women who worked for Maury Stans. There is no doubt that things would have sailed a lot smoother without that pack. Not that they have or had anything that was devastating.

President: Well, now, with regard to the question, etc., it would be my opinion not to dodge it just because there are going to be questions.

Dean: Well, you are probably going to get more questions this week. And the tough questions. And some of them don't have easy answers. For example, did Haldeman know that there was a Don Segretti out there? That question is likely.



Sketches by Bill Oakes for The Washington Post

Former Attorney General John N. Mitchell

President: Did he? I don't know.

Dean: Yes, he had knowledge that there was somebody in the field doing prankster-type activities.

President: Well, I don't know anything about that. What about my taking, basically, just trying to fight this thing one at a time. I am only going to have to fight it later, and it is not going to get any better. I think the thing to say is, "this is a matter being considered by the Committee and I am not going to comment on it". I don't want to get into the business of taking each charge that comes up in the Committee and commenting on it: "It is being considered by the Committee. It is being investigated and I am not going to comment on it."

Dean: That is exactly the way I have drafted these. I have checked them generally.

President: I will just cut them off. I think, John, if I start breaking down, you see like I have done the court thing on the Watergate stuff, I am going to comment on it. I know all of these questions. I am not going to comment on it. That is a matter for the Committee to determine. Then, I will repeat the fact that as far as the Watergate matter is concerned, I am not going to comment on it, or anything else. Let the Committee find out. What would you say? You don't agree with that?

Dean: Well, the bottom line, on a draft that (unintelligible). But if you have nothing to hide, Mr. President, here at the White House, why aren't you willing to spread on the record everything you know about it? Why

doesn't the Dean Report be made public? Why doesn't everything come out? Why does Ziegler stand up there and bob and weave, and no comment? That's the bottom line.

President: Alright. What do you say to that?

Dean: Well, . . .

President: We are furnishing information. We will . . .

Dean: We have cooperated with the FBI in the investigation of the Water-

gate. We will cooperate with the investigation of, the proper investigation by the Senate.

President: We will make statements.

Dean: And indeed we have nothing to hide.

President: All this information, we have nothing to hide. We have to handle it. You see, I can't be in the position of basically hunkering down because you have a lot of tough questions on Watergate, and not go out and talk on their issues because it is not going to get better. It is going to get worse.

Dean: I would agree. I think its cycled somewhat. I think after the Gray thing takes one course or the other, there will be a dead period of news on Watergate until the Ervin Hearings start again. This has obviously sparked the news again.

President: Well, let me just run over the questions again. If it is asked, what about Mr. Haldeman, Mr. Segretti, etc., etc. that is a matter being considered by the Senate Committee and I am not going to comment on it.

Dean: That is correct. That is specifically in their resolution.

President: I am not going to comment on something being investigated by the committee. As I have already indicated, I am just not going to comment. Do you approve such tactics? Another question—?

Dean: Did Mr. Chapin's departure have something to do with his involvement with Mr. Segretti?

President: (inaudible) What about Mr. Dean? My position is the same. We have cooperated with the Justice Department, the FBI—completely tried to furnish information under our control in this matter. We will cooperate with the Committee under the rules I have laid down in my statement on Executive Privilege. Now what else?

Dean: Well, then you will get a barrage of questions probably, on will you supply—will Mr. Haldeman and Mr. Ehrlichman and Mr. Dean go up to the Committee and testify?

President: No, absolutely not.

Dean: Mr. Colson?

President: No. Absolutely not. It isn't a question of not — Ziegler or somebody had said that we in our executive privilege statement it was interpreted as meaning that we would not furnish information and all that. We said we will furnish information, but we are not going to be called to testify. That is the position. Dean and all the rest will grant you information. Won't you?

Dean: Yes. Indeed I will!

President: My feeling, John, is that I better hit it now rather than just let it build up where we are afraid of

these questions and everybody, etc., and let Ziegler go out there and bob and weave around. I know the easy thing is to bug out, but it is not . . .

Dean: You're right. I was afraid. For the sake of debate, but I was having reservations. It is a bullet biter and you just have to do it. These questions are just not going to go away. Now the other thing that we talked about in the past, and I still have the same problem, is to have a "here it all is" approach. If we do that . . .

President: And let it all hang out.

Dean: And let it all hang out. Let's with a Segretti—etc.

President: We have passed that point.

Dean: Plus the fact, they are not going to believe the truth! That is the incredible thing!

President: They won't believe the truth, and they have committed seven people!

Dean: That's right! They will continually try to say that there is (unintelligible),

President: They hope one will say one day, "Haldeman did it." and one day, one will say I did it. When we get to that question—they might question his political savvy, but not mine! Not on a matter like that!

Dean: I have a thing on Sullivan I would like to ask you. Sullivan, as I told you, had been talking with me and I said Bill I would like for my own use to have a list of some of the horrors that you are aware of. He hasn't responded back to me, but he sent me a note yesterday saying John I am willing at any time to testify to what I know if you want me to. What he has, as we already know, he has something that has a certain degree of a dynamite situation already—the '68 Presidency, surveillance of Goldwater.

President: I thought he said he saw that the '68 bugging was ordered, but he doesn't know whether it was carried out.

Dean: That's right.

President: But at least he would say (inaudible).

Dean: Well, I have never talked with Bill about it. I have never gone into details because he has always been very close about it, but he is now getting to the point if we wanted him to do this, someone—and I don't think the White House should do it—should sit down with him and really take down some notes of what he does know, how strong it is, what he can substantiate.

President: Who the hell could do it if you don't?

Dean: Well, probably there is no one.

President: That is the problem.

Dean: Now the other thing, if we were going to use a package like this: Let's say in the Gray hearings—where everything is cast that we are the political people and they are not—that Hoover was above reproach, which is just not accurate, total (expletive omitted). The person who would destroy Hoover's image is going to be this man Bill Sullivan. Also it is going to tarnish quite severely . . .

President: Some of the FBI.

Dean: . . . some of the FBI. And a former President. He is going to lay it out, and just all hell is going to break loose once he does it. It is going to change the atmosphere of the Gray hearings and it is going to change the atmosphere of the whole Watergate hearings. Now the risk . . .

President: How will it change?

Dean: Because it will put them in context of where government institutes were used in the past for the most flagrant political purposes.

President: How can that help us?

Dean: How does it help us?

President: I am being the devil's advocate . . .

Dean: I appreciate what you are doing. It is a red herring. It is what the public already believes. I think the people would react: (expletive deleted), more of that stuff! They are all bad down there! Because it is a one way street right now . . .

President: Do you think the press would use it? They may not play it.

Dean: It would be difficult not to. Ah, it would be difficult not to.

President: Why is Sullivan willing to do this?

Dean: I think the quid pro quo with Sullivan is that he wants someday back in the Bureau very badly.

President: That's easy.

Dean: That's right.

President: Do you think after he did this, the Bureau would want him back? Would they want him back?

Dean: I think probably not. What Bill Sullivan's desire in life is, is to set up a domestic national security intelligence system, a White House program. He says we are deficient. He says we have never been efficient, because Hoover lost his guts several years ago. If you recall he and Tom

Huston worked on it. Tom Huston had your instructions to go out and do it and the whole thing just crumbled.

President: (inaudible)

Dean: That's all Sullivan really wants. Even if we could put him out studying it for a couple of years, if you could put him out in the CIA or someplace where he felt — put him there . . .

President: We will do it.

Dean: I think that is a simple answer. Let me just simply raise it with him.

President: There is no problem with Sullivan. He is a valuable man. Now would the FBI turn on him (characterization deleted)?

Dean: There would be some effort at that. That's right they would say he was disgruntled. He was canned by Hoover. He is angry, he is coming back. But I would think a lot of that would be lost in the shuffle of what he is laying out. I don't know if he has given me his best yet, I don't know whether he's got more ammunition than he has already told me. I will never forget a couple off-the-cuff remarks.

President: Why do you think he is now telling you this? Why is he doing this now?

Dean: Well, the way it came out when TIME Magazine broke on the fact that it charged the White House had directed that newsmen and White House staff people be subjected to some sort of surveillance for national security reasons. I called, in tracking down what happened, I called Sullivan and I said, "don't you think you ought to come over and talk to me about it and tell me what you know." I was calling to really determine whether he was a leak. I was curious to know where this might have come from because he was the operative man at the Bureau at the time. He is the one who did it. He came over and he was shocked and distraught and (unintelligible). Then, after going through with his own explanation of all what had happened, he started volunteering the only thing I can think of during this other thing. He said John this is this administration that has any taint of political use but it doesn't really bother me because it was for national security purposes. These people worked with sensitive material on Vietnam that was getting out to reporters.

President: Of course, the stuff was involved with the (expletive deleted) Vietnam war.

Dean: That's right. Then he told me about going to (location and name deleted) and all that, and he said, "John that doesn't bother me, but what does bother me is that you all have been portrayed as politically using"—

President: And we never did.

Dean: And we never have! And he said the Eisenhower Administration didn't either.

President: Never.

Dean: He said the only times that he can recall that there has been a real political use has been during

Democratic tenure. I said for example, Bill, what are you talking about? Then he told me of the Walter Jenkins affair, when DeLoach and Fortas, etc.—

President: The Kennedys, let me say, used it politically in that steel thing. That was not national security was it?

Dean: I asked somebody about that and they told me what happened. They were being defensive of Kennedy, and so he was saying that Kennedy had given Hoover orders and Hoover, being typical in his response, tried to get it yesterday as far as the answer for the President. And that is why sending people out in a plane in the middle of the night really fell on Hoover. This might be rumor over there, who knows?

President: It is still wrong!

Dean: Sure.

President: (expletive deleted) Can you imagine if a steel company or an automobile company had raised hell about something (then environmental chief William) Ruckelshaus does, and we send FBI agents out to arrest? (expletive deleted) Does he know about bugging in '68?

Dean: Yep! I think he would tell everything. He knows!

President: You do?

Dean: Uh huh. That's what I am saying he is a bomb!

President: You think we could get him to do this?

Dean: That is the real problem. How it could be done, how it could be structured. He sent me this note and I called up and said, "Bill, I appreciate getting that note very much. It takes a lot of guts to send a note like that to me." He said, "it has been a pleasure to see a man standing up blowing up a little smoke up him and the like." He said, "well, I mean

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it! I am perfectly willing to do anything you want. If you want me to go up and testify, I will." I said, "well how much, you have just given me some tidbits in our conversation and I would really like to again repeat: can you put together what you do know; just for your own use, put it together on a pad—just your own recollections; and also tell me how you can substantiate them;—what kind of cross-examination you might be subject to on it if you did testify." So he is doing that. The question I have had is, how in the world can we program something like this? I just have a feeling that it would be bad for one Bill Sullivan to quietly appear on some Senator's doorstep, and say, "I have the information you ought to have." Well, "where did you get it?" "Why are you up here?" "Well the White House sent me." That would be bad! The other thing is, maybe this information could be brought to the attention of the White House, and the White House could say to (Sen. James) Eastland, "I think you ought to call an executive session and hear his testimony. This is quite troublesome, the information that has been presented to us. It is so troublesome, we can't hold it here and hope to be less comfortable."

President: Why couldn't we have him just present it to Eastland? Why an executive session? That doesn't serve—

Dean: Well, the first approach would be enough of the story, not to tarnish the names, but it would leak out of there quite obviously. If it doesn't we could make sure it did.

Dean: If Sullivan went up to Eastland cold, say, or (Sen. Roman) Hruska, I think they would say, "go on down back to the Department of Justice where you work, and let's not start all this."

President: Suppose, another thing, Pat Gray knows anyone, or Hruska on the committee, who is a tiger on our side on the committee—

Dean: Gurney has been good. He was good on the ITT Committee. He will study, he will get prepared.

President: Could we go after the Bureau? I don't know whether we could or not.

Dean: Not quite after the Bureau. What they are doing is taking the testimony of somebody who is going after the Bureau.

President: I know that. I am just thinking. They will look down the road and see what the result of what they are doing is, won't they? I would think so. Would they go after Johnson? Let's look at the future. How bad would it hurt the country, John, to have the FBI so terribly damaged?

Dean: Do you mind if I take this back and kick it around with Dick Moore? These other questions, I think it would be damaging to the FBI, but maybe it is time to shake the FBI and rebuild it. I am not so sure the FBI is everything it is cracked up to be. I am convinced the FBI isn't everything the public think it is.

President: No.

Dean: I know quite well it isn't.

President: If we can get (D.C. Police Chief) Jerry Wilson in there—What is your feeling at the moment about Gray? Can he hang in there? Should he?

Dean: They have an executive session this afternoon to invite me to testify.

President: Sure.

Dean: There is no question, they are going to invite me to testify. I would say, based on how I handle: (1) the formal letter that comes out of the committee asking for information, and I programmed that if they do get specific as to what in the hell they do want to know, that I've got to lay it out in a letter sent down here so I can be responsive, fully responsive.

President: Respond to the letter in full!

Dean: I feel I can respond to the letter in full. I feel I have nothing to hide, as far as this issue Gray raised.

President: Would you respond under oath?

Dean: I think I would be willing to, yes, give it under oath.

President: That is what I would say: this is, what I would prepare in the press thing. He will respond under oath in a letter. He will not appear in a formal session. They might then say, "would he be willing to be questioned under oath?"

Dean: That is not what the question is. Yes! I would be willing to be questioned under oath, but we are not going up.

President: No, no! Here?

Dean: No. I think that would be a hell of a bad precedent.

President: Just so we don't cross that bridge. I agree, but you would respond in writing. That's it. OK.

Dean: After that, if we have been responsive, their argument for holding up Gray's confirmation based on me should be gone. Sure, it can raise more questions than answers, but it should work. The effect of the letter we have taken the central points that they want answers to, given them the responses, given them something in Eastland's hand. And he can say, "alright, it is time to vote. And Eastland says he has the votes to get Gray through. Now, what happens on the Senate Floor is something else, because (Sen. Robert) Byrd is posing very perceptive, and controlling that Southern bloc.

President: Uh, uh! October! Byrd is running for leader of the whole Senate.

Dean: But (Sen. Mike) Mansfield, on the other hand, has come out and said he would support Gray's confirmation.

President: My feeling is that they would like to have an excuse not to. And maybe they will use not you. But about these hearings—

Dean: Well if they say they have to hold up Gray's confirmation until the Watergate Hearings are completed—

President: That's great!

Dean: That's the vehicle.

President: That's a vote really for us, because Gray, in my opinion, should not be the head of the FBI. After going through the hell of the hearings; he will not be a good director, as far as we are concerned.

Dean: I think that is true. I think he will be a very suspect Director. Not that I don't think Pat won't do what we want—I do look at him a little differently than Dick in that regard. Like

he is still keeping in close touch with me. He is calling me. He has given me his hot line. We talk at night, how do you want me to handle this, et cetera? So he still stays in touch, and is still being involved, but he can't do it because he is going to be under such surveillance by his own people—every move he is making—that it would be a difficult thing for Pat. Not that Pat wouldn't want to play ball, but he may not be able to.

President: I agree. That's what I meant.

Dean: Pat has already gotten himself in a situation where he has this Mark Felt as his number two man. These other people have surrounded him. He could have gotten a Wilson in there you know. Like this: saying, "Gentlemen, I am putting my own team in, and I am going to put in a team I have met around the country who are good office directors; Sacks out of Chicago," or whatever, and just put his own team together for the Headquarter's Office.

President: That's the way it should be done.

Dean: Gray should have walked in and made these major personnel decisions. I wouldn't be surprised if death of his nomination occurs if they say they cannot go forward with Gray's hearings because of the Watergate.

President: Where would that be done, John, at what point?

Dean: It would simply be voted first in the Judiciary Committee. The question is, then, whether it will be put on the calendar by the leadership.

President: The leadership might determine that we will not put it on the calendar until after the Watergate Hearings. Then Gray would, in turn, say that he will not wait that long.

Dean: "Gentlemen, this is damaging to the leadership of the FBI, and I will have to withdraw based on this." What would be nice for all is to get Gray voted out of the Committee, with a positive vote, enough to get him out of the Committee, and then lock him in limbo there.

President: What is (White House aide Richard) Moore's judgment about Sullivan? What does he think?

Dean: He said it speaks dynamite. And we both feel that it is the way it would be done, that would be the secret. How it is done? Whether it is the sort of thing that you leak out and do? It would have to be very carefully thought through. We would have to decide, should the White House not be involved or should we be involved? If we are going to play with it, we are probably going to say that we are involved and structure it in a way that there is nothing improper with our involvement.

President: The difficulty with the White House being involved is that if we are involved in this (expletive deleted), that is why it ought to be that he just...

Dean: I suppose the answer is to say to him, "you have intimated a few things to me, the proper place to take that information is to the Senate Judiciary Committee or to the Attorney General, possibly." And then have him take it to the Committee. Or is that too close to the President, still?

President: Well, he works for the Attorney General, doesn't he?

Dean: It he takes it to Kleindienst, Kleindienst is going to say, "Bill just don't do it because you are going to take DeLoach's name down with it, and DeLoach is a friend of ours."

President: (Expletive deleted).

Dean: Something I have always thought.

President: Nobody is a friend of ours. Let's face it! Don't worry about that sort of thing.

Dean: Something I can kick around with Dick Moore. But first of all, it will have to be thought through every inch of the way. Either late yesterday afternoon — it wasn't when I talked with Bob—he was quite excited about it. Ehrlichman said, gave a very good, "uh huh." I said I am not going to rush anything on this. We have a little bomb here that we might want to drop at one time down the road. Maybe the forum to do it in is something totally out of context between the Gray hearings and the Watergate hearings. Maybe we need to go to the US News, sir. Who knows what it would be, but we ought to consider every option, now that we've got it.

President: Rather than going to a hearing, do "Meet the Press," and that will force the hearing to call him. That is quite the way to do it. Have him give an interview to US News, "Wires in the Sky" or something. A respected reporter—why not give it to Molenhoff?

Dean: Well that is interesting. Molenhoff is close, but our guy gets near Molenhoff. Molenhoff may not do any thing.

President: No, and we are in a position with Molenhoff that he has been fighting us some. Maybe Molenhoff would be a pretty good prospect for this thing. It is the kind of a story he loves, but he digs on something. You couldn't call him, however, inaudible) —The (characterization deleted) loves to talk too much, although he is a hell of a guy.

Dean: Ok. Can e call Clark and say "listen Clark, a guy has brought me a piece of dynamite that I don't even want in the White House?"

President: He will write that, won't he?

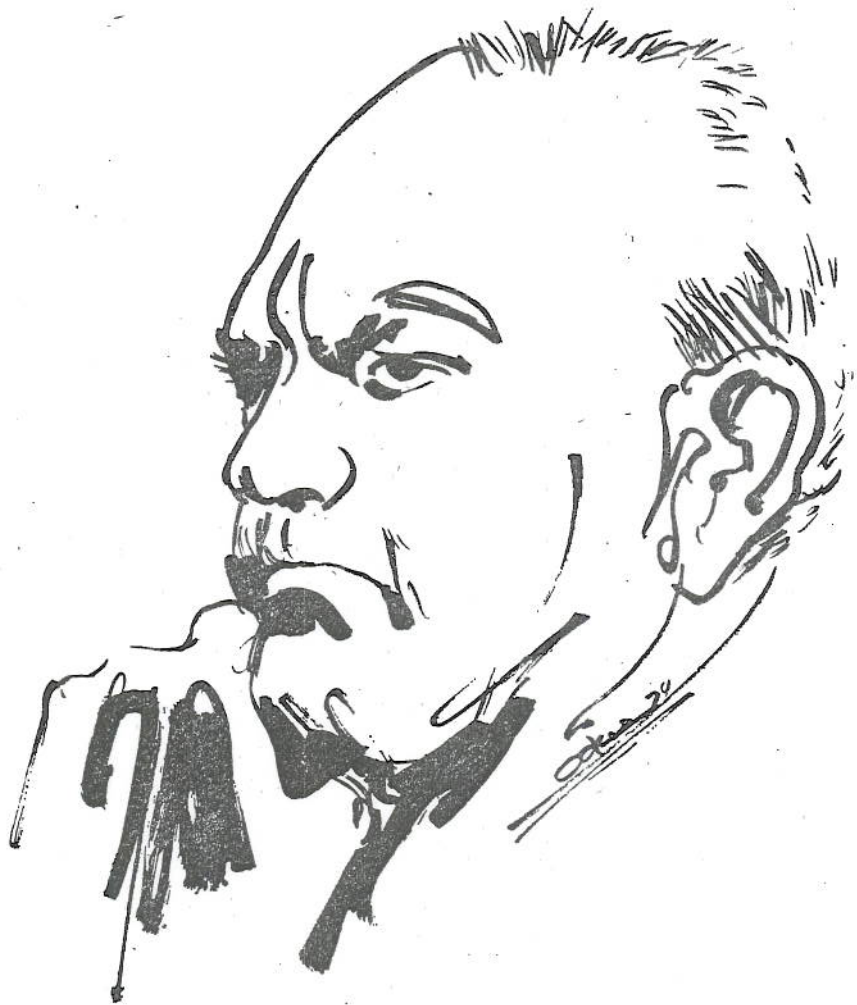
Dean: Yeah. Because that doesn't look like a set up deal. Well Clark Molenhoff is the first guy to uncover a shield of anything, and he will say no way—

President: But he would do it. That is very important piece. (unintelligible) Getting back, don't you feel that is the need here to broaden the scope?

Dean: The focus is right on us. That's the problem.

President: Nothing on the Democrats. Nothing on what the previous three administrations did?

Dean: Nothing. If Hunt is still a walking story we'll pull out of this thing. You can't find anybody who even knows what is happening. Although it has increased in the network coverage. That NBC thing last night, which is just a travesty as far as we're talking about shabby journalism, they took the worst edited clips out of context, with Strachan saying he



Former acting FBI Director L. Patrick Gray III

was leaving. And then had a little of clip of Ron saying, "I deny that." And he was denying something other than what they were talking about in their charge. It was incredible. Someone is going through and putting that altogether right now and Ron ought to be able to (unintelligible) to that one on NBC. It was a very, very dishonest television reporting of sequence of events, but out of sequence.

President: You see, John, when that Ervin gets up there—and a lot of Republicans even think he is a great Constitutional lawyer—it just makes us wonder about our even sending Gray up. Who knows?

Dean: Who knows? That is right. If you didn't send him up, why didn't you send him up. Because he was—

President: I know, but that is one thing: You send somebody else up to take them on, not a big clown. You know what I mean?

President: I won't even announce any appointments. I think the problem of the Senate was with all this stuff hanging out there in the Ervin Committee.

Dean: Well one thing, the saturation level of the American people on this story is cracking. The saturation level in this city is getting pretty high now, and they can't take too much more of this stuff.

President: Think not?

Dean: There is nothing really new coming out.

President: I talked with some kid and he said I don't think that anybody incidentally would care about anybody infiltrating the peace movement that was demonstrating against the President, particularly on the War in Vietnam. Do you think so?

Dean: No!

President: Anyway, I don't care about that. What happened to this Texas guy that gets his money back? Was he—

Dean: All hell broke loose for him that week. This was Allan

President: No, no. Allan—

Dean: Allan, not Duncan nor (unintelligible). All hell broke loose for Allan for this reason: He—the money apparently originally came out of a subsidiary of one of Allan's corporations down in Mexico. It went to a lawyer in Mexico who put it down as a fee billed to the subsidiary, and then the lawyer sent it back into the States and it came back up here. But the weakness of it is that the Mexican lawyer: (1) didn't have a legitimate fee; (2) it could be corporate contribution. So Allan had personally put a note up with the corporation to cover it. Allan, meanwhile, is having problems with his wife, and a divorce is pending. And tax problems—

President: (inaudible) Watergate—

Dean: I don't know why that went in the letter. It wasn't used for the Watergate. That is the interesting thing.

President: It wasn't?

Dean: No it was not. What happened is that these Mexican checks came in. They were given to Gordon Liddy, and said, "why don't you get these cashed?" Gordy Liddy, in turn, put them down to this fellow Barker in Florida, who, said he could cash these Mexican checks and put them with your Barker's bank account back in here. They could have been just as easily cashed at the Riggs Bank. There was nothing wrong with the checks. Why all that rigamorole? It is just like a lot of other things that happened over there. God knows what it was all done. It was totally unnecessary, and it was money that was not directly involved in the Watergate. It wasn't a wash operation to get money back to Liddy and the like.

President: Who is going to be the first witness up there?

Dean: (Former campaign treasurer Hugh) Sloan.

President: Unfortunate.

Dean: No doubt about it—

President: He's scared?

Dean: He's scared, he's weak. He has a compulsion to cleanse his soul by confession. We are giving him a lot of stroking. Funny thing is this fellow goes down to the Court House here before Sirica, testifies as honestly as he can testify, and Sirica looks around and called him a liar. He just said—Sloan just can't win! So Kalmbach has been dealing with Sloan. Sloan is like a child. Kalmbach has done a lot of that. The person who will have a greater problem as a result of Sloan's testimony is Kalmbach and Stans. So they are working closely

with him to make sure that he settles down.

President: Kalmbach will be a good witness, knowing what Kalmbach has been through.

Dean: Kalmbach has borne up very well. In fact, I decided he may be—

President: Kalmbach is somewhat embarrassed, as he is, they say lawyer for the President. Well, hell I don't need a lawyer. He and Frank DeMarco, his other partner, handle our pay out there.

Dean: He is sensitive on that point. He saw a transcript of a briefing where Ron was saying, "well he is really not, right nomenclature, 'personal attorney.'" Herb said, "well, gee whiz. I don't know whether Ron knows what all I do." And I said, "well, don't worry about it."

President: What I meant is—I don't care about it, but I mean—it is just the fact that it is played that way, that he is talking to me all the time. I don't ask him anything. I don't talk to him about anything. I don't know, I see Herb once a year when we see and sign the income tax returns.

Dean: That's right.

President: Now, true, he handles our San Clemente property and all the rest, but he isn't a lawyer in the sense that most people have a lawyer.

Dean: No, no. Although when you had an estate claim, he has some dovetailing on it.

President: Anyway we don't want to back off of him.

Dean: No, he is solid.

President: He will—how does he tell his story? He has a pretty hard row to hoe—he and Stans have.

Dean: He will be good. Herb is the kind of guy who will check, not once nor twice, on his story—not three times—but probably fifty to a hundred times. He will go over it. He will know it. There won't be a hole in it. Probably he will do his own Q & A. He will have people cross-examine him from ten ways. He will be ready as John Mitchell will be ready, as Maury Stans will be ready.

President: Mitchell is now studying, is he?

Dean: He is studying. Sloan will be the worst witness. I think Magruder will be a good witness. This fellow, (campaign aide) Bart Porter, will be a good witness. They have already been through Grand Jury. They have been through trial. They did well. And then, of course, people around here.

President: None will be witnesses.

Dean: They won't be witnesses?

President: Hell, no. They will make statements. That will be the line which I think we have to get across to Ziegler in all his briefings where he is constantly saying we will provide information. That is not the question. It is how it is to be furnished. We will not furnish it in a formal session. That would be a break down of the privilege. Do you agree with that?

Dean: I agree. I agree. I have always thought that's the bottom line, and I think that is the good thing that is happening in the Gray hearings right now. If they send a letter down with specific questions, I send back written interrogatories sworn. He knows, the lawyer, that you can handle written interrogatories, there cross examination is another ball game.

President: That's right!

Dean: You can make a person look like they're inaccurate even if they are trying to tell the truth.

President: Well now, really, you can't mean that! All the face-making and all that. Written interrogatories you can handle?

Dean: Can be artfully, accurately answered and give the full information.

President: (unintelligible) Well, what about the sentencing: When the hell is he going to sentence?

Dean: We thought he was going to sentence last Friday.

President: I know he should have.

Dean: No one knows what in the world Sirica is doing. It is getting to be a long time now. It frankly is, and no one really has a good estimation of how he will sentence. There is some feeling that he will sentence Liddy the heaviest. Liddy is already in jail, he is in Danbury. He wants to start serving so he can get good time going. Hunt, he will probably be very fair with.

President: Why?

Dean: He likes Hunt — he thought Hunt was being open with him and being candid, and Hunt gave a statement in open court that he didn't know of any higher ups involved and Hunt didn't put him through the rigors of

trial. Hunt was a beaten man who had lost his wife, was ill, and still they tried to move to have him severed from the trial. And Hunt did not try to cause a lot of problems. Bittman was cooperative, whereas Liddy played the heavy in the trial. His lawyer raised all the objections and the like, and embarrassed the Judge for some in-chambers thing he had said.

President: But Liddy is going to appeal the sentence?

Dean: Liddy is going to appeal the decision, the trial. He will appeal that.

President: He will appeal the trial? He was convicted!

Dean: There is an outside chance that this man, this Judge, has gone so far in his zeal to be a special prosecutor —

President: Well some of those statements from the Bench —

Dean: Incredible statements!

President: To me, incredible!

Dean: Commenting on witnesses testimony before the Jury, was just incredible. Incredible! So there may be a mistrial. Or maybe reversible error.

President: What about the Cubans?

Dean: The Cubans will probably be thought of as hired hands, and receive nowhere near the sentence of Liddy, I would think. Not all of them. (Bernard) Barker, the lead Cuban, may get more than the others. It is hard to say. I just don't have any idea. Sirica is a strange man. He is known as a hanging judge.

President: (unintelligible)

Dean: That's right. He's tough. He is tough. The other thing, Sirica, there was some indication that Sirica might be putting together a panel. There is a system down there now, based on informal agreement, where a sentencing judge convenes a panel of his own to take advice from. If Sirica were being shrewd, he just might get himself a panel and take their recommendations.

President: When will the Ervin thing be hitting the fan most any day, thinking from the standpoint of time?

Dean: Well, I would say the best indications we have now is that public hearings will probably start about the first of May. Now, there will probably be a big bang of interest, initially. We have no idea how they will proceed yet. We do have sources to find that out, other than Baker. Incidentally, Kleindienst had called Ervin again, returned the call. Ervin is going to see him this week with Baker.

President: Public hearings the first of May. Well it must be a big show. Public hearings. I wouldn't think though. I know from experience, my guess is that I think they could get through about three weeks of those and then I think it would begin to peter out somewhat. Don't you agree?

Dean: No, I —

President: ITT went longer, but that was a different thing, and it seemed more important.

Dean: When I told Bob, oh, several months ago, I hope they don't think (unintelligible). He said the way they could have those hearings and do a masterful job on it, would be to hold one hearing a week on Thursdays, Thursday mornings, they cover it live. That way, you get live coverage that day; you get the networks that night; the national magazines that week; get the weekend wrap-ups. You can stretch this thing out by, really.

President: Our members of the committee at least should say, let's get it over with, and go through five day sessions, etc.

Dean: Well you see, I don't think they are that perceptive. They just think they are.

President: Well, so be it. I noticed in the news summary Buchanan was viewing with alarm the grave crisis in the confidencery of the Presidency, etc.

Dean: Well the best way—

President: How much:

Dean: Pardon?

President: How much of a crisis? It will be — I am thinking in terms of — the point is, everything is a crisis. (expletive deleted) it is a terrible lousy thing — it will remain a crisis among the upper intellectual types, the soft heads, our own, too — Republicans — and the Democrats and the rest. Average people won't think it is much of a crisis unless it affects them. (unintelligible)

Dean: I think it will pass. I think after the Ervin hearings, they are going find so much — there will be some new revelations. I don't think that the thing will get out of hand. I have no reason to believe it will.

President: Oh, yes — there would be new revelations.

Dean: They would be quick (inaudible) They would want to find out who knew —

President: Is there a higher up?

Dean: Is there a higher up?

President: Let's face it, I think they are really after Haldeman.

Dean: Haldeman and Mitchell.

President: Colson is not big enough name for them. He really isn't. He is, you know, he is on the government side, but Colson's name doesn't bother them so much. They are after Haldeman and after Mitchell. Don't you think so?

Dean: Sure. They are going to take a look and try to drag them, but they're going to be able to drag them into the election—

President: In any event, Haldeman's problem is Chapin isn't it?

Dean: Bob's problem is circumstantial.

President: Why is that? Let's look at the circumstantial. I don't know, Bob didn't know any of those people like the Hunts and all that bunch. Colson did, but Bob didn't. OK?

Dean: That's right.

President: Now where the hell, or how much Chapin knew I will be (expletive deleted) if I know.

Dean: Chapin didn't know anything about the Watergate.

President: Don't you think so?

Dean: Absolutely not.

President: Strachan?

Dean: Yes.

President: He knew?

Dean: Yes.

President: About the Watergate?

Dean: Yes.

President: Well, then, he probably told Bob. He may not have.

Dean: He was judicious in what he relayed, but Strachan is as tough as nails. He can go in and stonewall, and say, "I don't know anything about what you are talking about." He has al-

ready done it twice you know, in interviews.

President: I guess he should, shouldn't he? I suppose we can't call that justice, can we?

Dean: Well, it is a personal loyalty to him. He doesn't want it any other way. He didn't have to be told. He didn't have to be asked. It just is something that he found was the way he wanted to handle the situation.

President: But he knew? He knew about Watergate? Strachan did?

Dean: Yes.

President: I will be damned! Well that is the problem in Bob's case. Not Chapin then, but Strachan. Strachan worked for him, didn't he?

Dean: Yes. They would have one hell of a time proving that Strachan had knowledge of it, though.

President: Who knew better? Magruder?

Dean: Magruder and Liddy.

President: Oh, I see. The other weak link for Bob is (Jeb Stuart) Magruder. He hired him et cetera.

Dean: That applies to Mitchell, too.

President: Mitchell — Magruder. Where do you see Colson coming into it? Do you think he knew quite a bit and yet, he could know quite a great deal about a lot of other things and not know a lot about this. I don't know.

Dean: Well I have never—

President: He sure as hell knows Hunt. That we know. Was very close to him.

Dean: Chuck has told me that he had no knowledge, specific knowledge, of the Watergate before it occurred. There have been tidbits that I have raised with Chuck. I have not played any games with him. I said, "Chuck, I have indications—" 30
col.
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Dean: That's right. I said, "Chuck, people have said that you were involved in this, involved in that, involved in all of this. He said, "that is not true, etc." I think that Chuck had knowledge that something was going on over there, but he didn't have any knowledge of the details of the specifics of the whole thing.

President: There must have been an indication of the fact that we had poor pickings. Because naturally anybody, either Chuck or Bob, were always reporting to me about what was going on. If they ever got any information they would certainly have told me that we got some information, but they never had a thing to report. What was the matter? Did they never get anything out of the damn thing?

Dean: I don't think they ever got everything, sir.

President: A dry hole?

Dean: That's right.

President: (Expletive deleted)

Dean: Well, they were just really getting started.

President: Yeah. Bob one time said something to me about something, this or that or something, but I think it was something about the Convention, I think it was about the convention problems they were planning something. I assume that must have been MacGregor—not MacGregor, but Segretti.

Dean: No, Segretti wasn't involved in the intelligence gathering piece of it at all.

President: Oh, he wasn't? Who the hell was gathering intelligence?

Dean: That was Liddy and his outfit.

President: Apart from Watergate?

Dean: That's right. Well you see Watergate was part of intelligence gathering, and this was their first thing. What happened is—

President: That was such a stupid thing!

Dean: It was incredible—that's right. That was Hunt.

President: To think of Mitchell and Bob would have allowed—would have allowed—this kind of operation to be in the campaign committee!

Dean: I don't think he knew it was there.

President: I don't think that Mitchell knew about this sort of thing.

Dean: Oh, no, no! Don't misunderstand me. I don't think that he knew the people. I think he knew that Liddy was out intelligence gathering. I don't think he knew that Liddy would use a fellow like McCord, (expletive removed), who worked for the Committee. I can't believe that.

President: Hunt?

Dean: I don't think Mitchell knew about Hunt either.

President: Well Mitchell thought, well, gee, and I hired this fellow and I told him to gather intelligence. Maybe Magruder says the same thing.

Dean: Magruder says—as he did in the trial—well, of course, my name has been dragged in as the guy who sent Liddy over there, which is an interesting thing. Well what happened they said is that Magruder asked—he wanted to hire my deputy over there as Deputy Counsel and I said, "No way. I can't give him up."

President: Was Liddy your deputy?

Dean: No, Liddy never worked for me. He wanted this fellow Fred Fielding who works for me. Look, he said, Magruder said to me, "will you find me a lawyer?" I said, "I will be happy to look around." I checked around the White House, Krogh said, "Liddy might be the man to do it—he would be a hell of a writer. He has written some wonderful legal opinions over here for me, and I think he is a good lawyer." So I relayed that to Magruder.

President: How the hell does Liddy stand up so well?

Dean: He's a strange man, Mr. President.

President: Strange or strong?

Dean: Strange and strong. His loyalty is—I think it is just beyond the pale. Nothing—

President: He hates the other side too, doesn't he?

Dean: Oh, absolutely! He is strong. He really is.

President: Is it too late to go the hang-out road?

Dean: Yes, I think it is. The hang-out road—

President: The hang-out road (inaudible).

Dean: It was kicked around Bob and I and—

President: Ehrlichman always felt it should be hang-out.

See TEXT, A20, Col. 1

TEXT, From A19

D. Well, I think I convinced him why he would not want to hang-out either. There is a certain domino situation here. If some things start going, a lot of other things are going to start going, and there can be a lot of problems if everything starts falling. So there are dangers, Mr. President. I would be less than candid if I didn't tell you there are. There is a reason for not everyone going up and testifying.

P. I see. Oh no, no, no! I didn't mean to have everyone go up and testify.

D. Well I mean they're just starting to hang out and say here's our story.

P. I mean put the story out. PR people, here is the story, the true story about Watergate.

D. They would never believe it. The two things they are working on are Watergate—

P. Who is "they?"

D. The press, (inaudible), the intellectuals.—

P. The Packwoods?

D. Right— They would never buy it as far as one White House involvement in Watergate which I think there is just none for that incident which occurred at the Democratic National Headquarters. People hear we just did not know that was going to be done. I think there are some people who saw the fruits of it, but that is another story. I am talking about the criminal conspiracy to go in there. The other thing is that the Segretti thing. You hang that out, and they wouldn't believe that. They wouldn't believe that Chapin acted on his own to put his old friend Segretti to be a Dick Tuck on somebody else's campaign. They would have to paint it into something more sinister, more involved, part of a general plan.

P. Shows you what a master Dick Tuck is. Segretti's hasn't been a bit similar.

D. They are quite humorous as a matter of fact.

P. As a matter of fact, it is just a bunch of (characterization deleted). We don't object to such damn things anyway. On, and on and on. No, I tell you this it is the last gasp of our hardest opponents. They've just got to have something to squeal about it.

D. It is the thing they have to squeal—

P. (Unintelligible) They are going to lie around the squeal. They are having a hard time now. They got the hell kicked out of them in the election. There is not a Watergate around in this town, not so much our opponents, even the media, but the basic thing is the establishment. The establishment is dying, and so they've got to show that despite the successes we have had in foreign policy and in the election, they've got to show that it is just wrong just because of this. They are trying to use this as the whole thing.

D. Well, that is why I keep coming back to this fellow Sullivan. It could change the picture.

P. How could it change though? Saying here is another—

D. Saying here is another and it happens to be Democrats. You know, I know I just—

P. If he would get Kennedy into it, too, I would be a little bit more pleased.

D. Let me tell you something that lurks at the bottom of this whole thing. If, in going after Segretti, they go after Kalmbach's bank records, you will recall sometime back — perhaps you did not know about this — I apologize. That right after Chappaquidick somebody was put up there to start observing and within six hours he was there for every second of Chappaquidick for a year, and for almost two years he worked for Jack Caulfield.

P. Oh, I have heard of Caulfield.

D. He worked for Caulfield when Caulfield worked for John, and then when I came over here I inherited Caulfield and this guy was still on this same thing. If they get to those bank records between the start of July of 1969 through June of 1971, they say what are these about? Who is this fellow up in New York that you paid? There comes Chappaquidick with a vengeance. This guy is a twenty year detective on the New York City Police Department.

P. In other words we—

D. He is ready to disprove and show



Former White House counsel John W. Dean III.

that —

P. (unintelligible)

D. If they get to it — that is going to come out and this whole thing can turn around on that. If Kennedy knew the bear trap he was walking into —

P. How do we know — why don't we get it out anyway?

D. Well, we have sort of saved it.

P. Does he have any records? Are they any good?

D. He is probably the most knowledgeable man in the country. I think he ran up against walls and they closed the records down. There are things he can't get, but he can ask all of the questions and get many of the answers as a 20 year detective, but we don't want to surface him right now. But if he is ever surfaced, this is what they will get.

P. How will Kalmbach explained that he hired this guy to do the job on Chappaquidick? Out of what type of funds?

D. He had money left over from the pre-convention —

P. Are they going to investigate those funds too?

D. They are funds that are quite legal. There is nothing illegal about those funds. Regardless of what may happen, what may occur, they may stumble into this in going back to, say 1971, in Kalmbach's bank records. They have already asked for a lot of his bank records in connection with Segretti, as to how he paid Segretti.

P. Are they going to go back as far as Chappaquidick?

D. Well this fellow worked in 1971 on this. He was up there. He has talked to everybody in that town. He is the one who has caused a lot of embarrassment for Kennedy already by saying he went up there as a newspaperman, by saying; "Why aren't you checking this? Why aren't you looking there?" Calling the press people's attention to things. Gosh, the guy did a masterful job. I have never had the full report.

P. Coming back to the Sullivan thing, you will now talk to Moore and then what?

D. I will see if we have something that is viable. And if it's —

P. You plan to talk with him again.

D. Yes he asked me last night to give him a day or so to get all his recollections together, and that was yesterday. So I thought I would call him this evening and say, "Bill, I would just like to know —"

P. You see, right after you talk to him it will become known. So maybe the best thing to say is that he is to turn this over and be maligned. But anyway, the committee is going to say the White House turned over information on the FBI. I don't know how the (expletive deleted) we get it down there?

D. I think I can kick it around with Dick Moore. He and I do very well just bouncing these things back and forth and coming up with something. We would never be embarrassed about it.

P. To give it to a newsmen, it would be

a hell of a break for a newspaper, a hell of a story! The Star just run a whole story on a real bomb on the FBI. Then the committee member, the man you would use, for example, in this case would be to call Gurney, and to say, "Look! We are on to something very hot here. I can't tell you any more. Go after it, you'll get your other end this fall." Then he goes. It seems to be that's a very effective way to get it out.

President: Who is going to be the first witness up there?

Dean: Sloan.

President: Unfortunate.

Dean: No doubt about it

President: He's scared?

Dean: He's scared. He's weak...

D. Uh huh. It seems to me that I don't think Sullivan would give up the White House. Sullivan — if I have one liability in Sullivan here, it is his knowledge of the earlier (unintelligible) that occurred here.

P. That we did?

D. That we did.

P. Well, why don't you just tell him — he could say, "I did no political work at all. My work in the Nixon Administration was solely in the national security." And that is thoroughly true!

D. That's true.

P. Well, good luck.

D. Thank you, sir.

P. It is never dull is it?

D. Never.

Appendix 4. Meeting between the President and Dean in the Oval Office, on March 17, 1973, from 1:25 p.m. to 2:10 p.m.

(Material relating to breakin at Dr. Fielding's office in California)

P. Now on the Segretti thing, I think you've just got to — Chapin, all of them have just got to take the heat. Look, you've got to admit the facts, John, and —

D. That's right.

P. And that's our — and that's that. And Kalmbach paid him. And (unintelligible) a lot of people. I just think on Segretti, no matter how bad it is. It isn't nearly as bad as people think it was. Espionage, sabotage?

D. The intent, when Segretti was hired, was nothing evil, nothing vicious, nothing bad, nothing. Not espionage, not sabotage. It was pranksterism that got out of hand and we know that. And I think we can lay our story out there. I have no problem with the Segretti thing. It's just not that serious. The other potential problem is Ehrlichman's and this is

P. In connection with Hunt?

D. In connection with Hunt and Liddy both.

P. They worked for him?

D. They — these fellows had to be some idiots as we've learned after the fact. They went out and went into Dr. Ellsberg's doctor's office and they had, they were geared up with all this CIA equipment — cameras and the like. Well they turned the stuff back into the CIA some point in time and left film in the camera. CIA has not put this together, and they don't know what it all means right now. But it wouldn't take a very sharp investigator very long because you've got pictures in the CIA files that they had to turn over to (unintelligible).

P. What in the world — what in the name of God was Ehrlichman having something (unintelligible) in the Ellsberg (unintelligible)?

D. They were trying to — this was a part of an operation that — in connection with the Pentagon papers. They were — the whole thing — they wanted to get Ellsberg's psychiatric records for some reason. I don't know.

P. This is the first I ever heard of this. I (unintelligible) care about Ellsberg was not our problem.

D. That's right.

P. (Expletive deleted)

D. Well, anyway, (unintelligible) it was under an Ehrlichman structure, maybe John didn't ever know. I've never asked him if he knew. I didn't want to know.

P. I can't see that getting into, into this hearing.

D. Well, look. No. Here's the way it can come up.

P. Yeah.

D. In the CIA's files which they — which the committee is asking for — the material they turned over to the Department of Justice.

P. Yeah.

D. There are all the materials relating to Hunt. In there are these pictures which the CIA developed and they've got Gordon Liddy standing proud as punch outside this doctor's office with his name on it. And (unintelligible) this material it's not going to take very long for an investigator to go back and say, well, why would this — somebody be at the doctor's office and they'd find out that there was a breakin at the doctor's office and then you'd find Liddy on the staff and then you'd start working it back. I don't think they'll ever reach that point.

P. (Unintelligible?)

D. This was way, this was —

P. It's irrelevant.

D. It's irrelevant. Right.

P. That's the point. That's where — that's where — where Ervin's rules of relevancy (unintelligible).

Congressman Misidentified

In printing transcripts of presidential conversations in yesterday's Washington Post, the subject of a dialogue between President Nixon and John Dean was incorrectly identified as Rep. Ken Hechler (D-W.Va.). The House member actually referred to was Rep. Margaret Heckler (R-Mass.).

In the Sept. 15, 1972, conversation, the President said of the House Banking Committee, which was considering a Watergate investigation, "They have some weak men and women on that committee, unfortunately. Heckler is alright." Dean replied: "Heckler is great."

Ken Hechler, in a floor speech yesterday correcting the error, said, "I do not believe there has ever been an occasion when either President Nixon or Mr. Dean would have said that I was either 'alright' or 'great.'" Mrs. Heckler, for her part, said, "I guess it's better than being called 'weak,' but it certainly doesn't help me."

P. Now what the hell has this got to do with it?

D. It has nothing as a lot of these things that they should stumble along into is irrelevant.

Appendix 50. Telephone conversation, between the President and Dean on March 20, 1973, from 7:29 p.m. to 7:43 p.m.

P. John Dean, please.

Opr. Yes, Mr. President.

P. Hello.

D. Yes, sir.

P. You are having rather long days these days, aren't you? I guess we all have.

D. I think they will continue to be longer.

(Material unrelated to Presidential action deleted)

D. The other witness they have now subpoenaed — there are two other witnesses — there is a Hoback girl from the Re-Election committee — she was interrogated by committee staff and counsel as a result of her confidential interviews with the FBI.

P. Humph.

D. Alleging that that had been leaked by me to them and then, of course, that was not true.

P. That's not true.

D. And the other fellow they are calling is a fellow by the name of Thomas Lombard who is trying to establish a link between Dean on that one. Lombard did volunteer work for me in my office and did volunteer work for Liddy and at one time he saw Liddy in my office. Big deal. It was purely campaign, you know.

P. Well, is that what Lombard will testify to, or will he testify to —

D. Well he has written a very lengthy letter to the committee declining to testify originally and saying this is all I would have to say and it is probably not relevant. I know nothing of Dean and Liddy's connection.

P. Right.

D. Other than the fact that they —

P. That's not bad then — maybe he will make a pretty good witness.

D. He might. He might.

P. What about the Hoback girl?

D. The Hoback girl should be broken down. She should come out in tears as a result of the fact that she is virtually lying about one thing and our people will be on the —

P. You mean — do our people know what to ask her?

D. Yes they do. Yes they do.

P. Uh, huh. Why is she doing it? Do we know?

D. She — ah —

D. Disgruntled. She has been fairly disgruntled all along. She is a Democrat that worked over there in Finance Committee. She professes a personal loyalty to Maury Stans but that is about the extent of it, any, of her loyalty.

P. Yeah.

D. I never have figured out how she got in there.

(Material unrelated to Presidential action deleted)

P. They didn't bite the bullet with regard to subpoenaing you?

D. No. I don't think there is any chance they are going to do that.

P. That's rather interesting isn't it? Something ought to be made of that.

D. Unless they get — they are taking more evidence on me. Obviously with these other two witnesses, not that I think anything will come out of this. It will just be more — I had a conversation with John Ehrlichman this afternoon before he came down to visit you. I think that one thing that we have to continue to do, and particularly right now, is to examine the broadest, broadest implications of this whole thing, and, you know, maybe about 30 minutes of just my recitation to you of facts so that you operate

from the same facts that everybody else has.

P. Right.

D. I don't think — We have never really done that. It has been sort of bits and pieces. Just paint the whole picture for you, the soft spots, the potential problem areas.

President: He knew about Watergate? Strachan did?

Dean: Yes.

President: I will be damned. Well, that is the problem in Bob's case... Strachan worked for him, didn't he?

Dean: Yes...

President: Who knew better? Magruder?

Dean: Magruder and Liddy.

President: Oh, I see. The other weak link for Bob is Magruder.

P—Uh, huh.

D—And the like so that when you make judgments you will have all that information.

P—Would you like to do that—when?

D—I would think, if its not inconvenient for you, sir, I would like to sort of draw all my thoughts together and have a —just make some notes to myself so I didn't—

P—Could you do it tomorrow?

D—Yes, Sir. Yes, Sir.

P—Uh, huh. Well, then we could probably do it, say, around 10 o'clock.

D—That would be fine, sir.

P—Do you just want to do it alone? Want anybody else there?

D—I think just—

P—It is better with nobody else there, isn't it?

D—Absolutely.

P—Anybody else they are all partisan interest virtually.

D—That's right.

P—Right. Fine. The other thing I was going to say just is this—just for your own thinking—I still want to see, tho I guess you and Dick are still working on your letter and all that sort of thing?

C—We are and we are coming to—the more we work on it the more questions we see—

P—That you don't want to answer, huh?

D—That bring problems by answering.

P—And so you are coming up, then, with the idea of just a stonewall then? Is that—

D. That's right.

P. Is that what you come down with?

D. Stonewall, with lots of noises that we are always willing to cooperate, but no one is asking us for anything.

P. And they never will, huh? There is no way that you could make even a general statement that I could put out? You understand what I—

D. I think we could.

P. See, for example, I was even thinking if you could even talk to cabinet, the leaders, you know, just orally and say, "I have looked into this, and this is that," so that people get sort of a feeling that—your own people have got to be reassured.

D. Uh, huh.

P. Could you do that?

D. Well, I think I can but I don't think you would want to make that decision until we have about a —

P. No I want to know. I want to know where all the bodies are first.

D. And then, once you decide after that, we can program it anyway you want to do it.

P. Yeah. Because I think, for example, you could do it orally, even if you don't want to make the written statement. You could do it orally before the Cabinet, the leaders and the rest. Lay it all out. You see, I would not be present. You just lay it all out and I just — See what I mean?

D. Uh, huh.

P. Now that is one thing. The other thing is that I do think there is something to be said for not maybe this complete answer to this fellow, but maybe just a statement to me. My versions are these: bing, bing, bing. That is a possibility.

D. Uh, huh.

P. What I mean is we need something to answer somebody, answer things, you know they say, "What are you basing this on," I can say, "Well, my counsel has advised me that"—Is that possible or not or are—

D. Well, you know there is that — and there is always the FBI report which we have probably not relied upon enough. There is not one scintilla of evidence.

P. I know. But I mean, can't you say that? Or do you want to put it out?

D. Ah, it could be said, and it is something we haven't really emphasized. Pat Gray is the only person who has said it and it has really never gotten picked up.

P. How would you do it then? What I meant, isn't that, something that you could say? Do you want to publish the FBI report?

D. Oh, no, because at our own strictures we are trying to place an up-right—

P. But you could say, "I have this and this is that." Fine. See what I am getting at is that, if apart from a statement to the committee or anything else, if you could just make a statement to me that we can use. You know, for internal purposes and to answer questions, etc.

D. As we did when you, back in August, made the statement that — *

P. That's right.

D. And all the things —

P. You've got to have something where it doesn't appear that I am doing this in, you know, just in a — saying to hell with the Congress and to hell with the people, we are not going to tell you anything because of executive privilege. That they don't understand. But if you

say, "No, we are willing to cooperate," and you've made a complete statement, but make it very incomplete. See, that is what I mean. I don't want a, too much in chapter and verse as you did in your letter, I just want just a general —

D. An all around statement.

P. That's right. Try just something general. Like "I have checked into this matter; I can categorically, based on my investigation, the following: Haldeman is not involved in this, that and the other thing. Mr. Colson did not do this; Mr. so and so did not do this. Mr. Blank did not do this." Right down the line, taking the most glaring things. If there are any further questions, please let me know. See?

Dean: . . . Sirica is a strange man. He's known as a hanging judge.

**President:
(Unintelligible)**

Dean: That's right. He's tough . . .

D. Uh, huh. I think we can do that.

P. That is one possibility, and then you could say that such things — and then use the FBI report to the cabinet and to the leaders. It might just be very salutary. You see our own people have got to have confidence or they are not going to step up and defend us. You see our problem there, don't you?"

D. And I think at the same time it would be good to brief these people on what executive privilege means, so they can go out and speak about it. Some of them are floundering.

P. And why it is necessary.

D. I thought about having someone prepare some material that can be put out by the congressional people so they can understand, people can understand. It is tremendous to have a piece of paper that they know they can talk from.

P. Pointing out that you are defending the Constitution; responsibility of the separation of powers; and we have to do it. Distinguishing the Adam's case; ignoring Flanigan, which is one we should never have agreed to, but nevertheless — Anyway let's think a little about that, but we'll see you at ten o'clock tomorrow.

D. Yes, Sir.

P. Fine.

D. All right, sir. Good night.

P. Take the evening off.

D. All right.

To Be Continued Saturday