

NYTimes JUL 26 1974
**White House Aides Upset
And Concerned by Events**

By JOHN HERBERS
Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, July 25—The events of this week in the Watergate case have left members of the White House staff deeply shaken and concerned, more so than at any time in the past.

This feeling was expressed today by several Nixon officials, and it was apparent in the actions and appearances of White House staff members here and in San Clemente, Calif., where President Nixon has been for almost two weeks.

The unexpected defection of Representative Lawrence J. Hogan, a Maryland Republican, from the President's defense, the unanimous Supreme Court decision for release of the tape recordings of 64 conversations, and the television spectacular of the House Judiciary Committee's impeachment inquiry have created a feeling that for the first time the situation had gotten out of hand, the officials said.

Adverse Publicity

The defensive position of the White House was further illustrated today as Leon Jaworski, the special Watergate prosecutor, turned again to the courts in seeking a 10-day deadline for the White House to comply with yesterday's Supreme Court ruling that it surrender recordings of conversations. [Page 15.]

During the last year and a half, Mr. Nixon has suffered many reverses. But each time there was strong opinion within the White House that the President, backed by the strength of his office, was in charge of events and eventually would prevail.

It was that confidence, the officials said, that seemed to

be shaken. One aspect of this, they said, was that the President as never before was having trouble getting his point of view across to the people because of the avalanche of adverse publicity from Congress and the courts.

Yet the basic strategy of the White House continues unchanged, according to White House sources. That strategy includes the following elements:

¶For some member of the staff to answer as quickly and strongly as possible every charge made against the President.

¶For the White House to show that the economy and other matters influencing peo-

Continued on Page 15, Column 1

Continued From Page 1, Col. 7

ple's lives are more important than Watergate and that Mr. Nixon is actively struggling with these issues.

¶For staff members to work with Republicans and others in Congress to stop defections from the President's camp.

¶For the legal staff and others to continue to try to influence the impeachment debate as prescribed by the chief White House lawyer, James D. St. Clair—that only an overt commission of a serious crime is an impeachable offense.

As the events of the last few days unfolded, staff members appeared stunned. Dean Burch, counselor to the President in charge of political affairs, seemed deeply shaken when he held a news conference to reply to Mr. Hogan's decision to vote for impeachment and to brand his decision as politically motivated because he is a candidate for Governor of Maryland. Work in some offices ground to a stop as employees huddled at the closest television set.

A Mood of Shock

In San Clemente, the mood was one of shock and disappointment today. There, Presidential assistants have issued a barrage of statements over the last few days in an effort to counter the charges and events in Washington.

The decision of several Republicans on the House Judiciary Committee to support impeachment was reported to have come as a bitter disappointment to the White House. Just a few days ago, the hope had been to limit the vote for impeachment largely to Democrats. Then, once impeachment was voted by the committee, the plan was for Administration spokesmen to go to the floor of the House and charge that the effort was a highly partisan one, confirming the President's view that he was the victim of a vendetta by his political enemies. Now, that plan will be more difficult to carry out.

Ken W. Clawson, director of communications for the White House, said in a telephone interview from San Clemente that the events in Washington had left the President in an "unusual situation." On the one hand, he said, the Watergate developments were "so pervasive" that attention was being deflected from the issue most people consider paramount, the troubled economy, and, consequently, from the President's efforts to deal with it.

On the other hand, he said, the opening of the impeachment debate by the committee before a national television audience had reduced the President's opportunities to get his point of view across on the Watergate charges. Mr. Nixon's voice, he said, had been reduced to "one out of 38." He referred to the number of members on the committee, "all of whom are talking."

His implication was that the Presidency, a coequal branch of government, was being given no more voice than each member of the committee that at the current stage is representing the Congressional branch.

White House staff members did find one silver lining in yesterday's Supreme Court ruling that for the first time the high court has recognized the legitimacy of executive privilege, the right of the President to keep conversations with his aides confidential. The Court held that the privilege was valid unless it ran counter to legitimate needs of the courts for criminal evidence. In the past, executive privilege has been used largely to keep confidential negotiations from Congress and the public, independent of legal proceedings.

This, they said, gave legitimacy to the principle Mr. Nixon advocated, the right of future Presidents to keep their conversations with aides confidential, although it does not help him in his current Watergate troubles.