



AP Wirephoto

WILSON  
questioned Dean

## Dean Admits Destroying Evidence

Washington

John W. Dean III, the Watergate prosecution's star witness, admitted yesterday that he knew about the 1971 Ellsberg break-in eight months after it happened and that he destroyed one of the burglars' notebooks after the original Watergate trial in January, 1973.

"You were covering up the California burglary?" asked John J. Wilson, attorney for H.R. Haldeman, former White House chief of staff and now a defendant in the Watergate coverup trial.

"Yes, sir, I was," Dean acknowledged.

"And you did this consciously?" Wilson asked.

"I did."

"Why?"

"That was the easiest solution for me at the moment. I just put it in a shredder and hoped the problem would go away," Dean said.

The cross-examination of

Dean began after former President Nixon's ex-counsel had been under direct questioning for five days as the prosecution's first witness.

Just before chief trial prosecutor James F. Neal finished his direct questioning, he played the seventh presidential tape to be introduced into evidence.

In the tape, made of a conversation April 16, 1973, Mr. Nixon told Dean that Haldeman and John D. Ehrlichman, his top two aides, were "in on the obstruction."

Members of the White House "plumbers" special investigative unit committed both the 1971 break-in at the office of Pentagon papers defendant Daniel Ellsberg's psychiatrist in Beverly Hills and the 1972 break-in at the Democratic National Committee in the Watergate complex.

Ehrlichman was found guilty of conspiring to violate the psychiatrist's civil liberties. Mr. Nixon said in written interrogatories at the trial in July that he learned of the break-in on March 17, 1973.

A notebook belonging to E. Howard Hunt Jr., a mastermind of both break-ins, was removed from his White House safe after the first break-in. Dean acknowledged that he found the notebook in January, 1973, the same month that Hunt and others were convicted in the original Watergate trial.

Dean also testified that the principal document he relied upon in preparing testimony of more than 200 pages for the Senate Watergate committee was a file of newspaper clippings about Watergate prepared by the Committee to re-elect the President.

Dean acknowledged that he got some dates wrong, specifying the conversation with Mr. Nixon about a million-dollar payoff to the original Watergate defendants that actually took place on March 21, 1973, instead of March 13 as Dean had said.

United Press