

# Defense Lawyer Blames Dean

Washington

H. R. Haldeman's chief defense lawyer told the jury at the Watergate coverup trial yesterday that the prosecution's chief witness, John W. Dean, III, was a "mastermind of chicanery" and a "perjurer."

The lawyer, John J. Wilson, told the jurors not to believe the testimony that Dean, once President Nixon's White House counsel, had given against Haldeman, who was Mr. Nixon's chief of staff.

He told the jurors that Dean was the one who could have cut the Watergate affair off, but that instead, Dean "stirred up this whole thing," and was "the one who sowed the seeds and helped it grow."

Wilson made his remarks yesterday afternoon in his final argument to the jury, an argument that challenged the government's case in a number of other areas too, including its interpretation of White House tape recordings.

Earlier in the day, the chief prosecutor in the case, James F. Neal, completed his summation to the jurors, telling them that the government has "fulfilled its pledge" to prove each of the charges against the five defendants in the case.

Neal told the jury that each of the five defendants "blamed John Dean" — and that trying to discredit Dean was in fact part of the coverup.

Neal said that Haldeman in particular, when he was testifying before the Senate Watergate committee in 1973, had "the job" of trying to discredit Dean.

Neal said that Haldeman and others wanted to discredit Dean because Dean was telling the truth. He said Haldeman and the others had considered Dean "good John Dean" for most of the months of the coverup, because he was "doing

their dirty work" in containing the scandal.

But Dean began to cooperate with the prosecutors in April, 1973. "Suddenly," Neal said, "good John Dean becomes mean John Dean."

The Haldeman summation, to be continued Monday morning by Wilson's co-counsel, Frank Strickler, conflicted with the account Neal gave yesterday morning and Thursday.

Both Wilson and Neal gave the jury a chronological account of the Watergate affair, and each drew, as Wilson told the jury, his own "inferences."

Each also gave his own assessment of the value of the government's evidence,

including the White House tape recordings that had been played at the trial.

Neal reminded the jurors that they had heard the voices of three of the defendants, Haldeman, John D. Ehrlichman, Mr. Nixon's chief domestic affairs adviser, and former Attorney General John N. Mitchell, on the tapes.

"You've heard them talk as the coverup begins to crumble," he said. "You've heard them scramble for position and develop lines and scenarios."

"Members of the jury," he said, "tragically these conspiratorial conversations have happened in the hallowed halls of the White

House of the United States, where once strode such giants as Jefferson, Jackson, Lincoln, the two Roosevelts, Eisenhower, Kennedy."

Wilson, on the other hand, contended that the government, in presenting the tapes, had taken "sections out of context" and presented them to the jury "with the aura that they have a conspiratorial status."

The lawyer told the jurors that they should consider the tapes, instead, in view of their own personal experiences of dealing with a family problem by sitting around the dining table and discussing it.

"We have a brother, we

have a sister, a husband who's in trouble," said Wilson. "The family gathers around the dining room and discusses the possibilities — are we going to get a lawyer? What are the defenses?"

Wilson paused and looked at the jurors, seated in the jury box about ten feet from his lectern. "I'm not talking foolishness," he told them. "This is just human nature."

Sometimes, he said, people making remarks in such conversations that they don't really mean. He chuckled, and said that he himself might have remarked in a moment of anger that he'd like to shoot someone. And

of course, he added, he had not really intended to shoot the person.

And then Wilson got to his point: that many of the conversations recorded on the White House taping system, particularly Mr. Nixon's conversations with Dean and Haldeman on March 21, 1973, about payments to the Watergate burglars, were simply attempts "in a semi-family way" to discuss problems and explore possible answers.

*New York Times*

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