

Beware of too much ambition, says Watergate figure

By MICHAEL LENIHAN

"Why the Watergate break-in with all the risks involved?" Was one of the sentiments expressed by John Dean, former counsel to ex-President Nixon, as he addressed a large crowd at the SRC sponsored lecture in the Lady Beaverbrook Gym last Monday night.

"I recall little of Watergate," said Dean, "but to define it as best I can, when I think of Watergate I think of bad politics, the misuse of public funds and the general abuse of power by high government officials for political purposes."

Dean said that to talk about the break-in alone, would take several hours. He added that he is now working on a book which he thinks will best explain the actions and philosophies behind the White House during this period.

He stated that Nixon was never secure in the office of the President. He said that for Nixon, an election was more than an election, it was very serious business. His re-election Committee, of which Dean was president, was to do everything that could be done to secure Nixon's victory.

Dean added, "we did not realize the seriousness of Nixon's pre-election memo to his staff which stated, 'I want the best possible intelligence system I can have'." "Apparently Nixon felt the Democrats had done some spying work themselves in previous elections, he said. However when he tried, after investigating Nixon's claims to convince the President that there was no proof of foul political practices by the opposition in previous election, he could not do so, Dean said, adding "Nixon still held his view of; they did it to us so we can do it to them."

He reflected, "One must remember Nixon's White House was formed mostly of younger men. They were anxious to make the greatest of their opportunity to

work for the White House." Dean said that there was a psychological tendency to pass the buck when committing crimes for the President. Elaborating, "I don't think there was one man who, starting out working for the White House would have said, 'I will commit crimes for the President.' Several did not know the specifics, but most knew there was something going on, and there was several times when the President could have said we will stop here. "I've heard every tape," he said, "the one thing that comes across is a strong impulse to protect John Mitchell."

Up until June 16, 1972, Dean said he did not do anything illegal. He engaged in criminal activities after because he was very ambitious, adding that he liked the praise of higher officials, saying "Old Dean is doing such a great job." Some of the illegal and deceptive practices were, paying silence money, wire tapping, deceiving the press, sending out counter-law suits, and using executive privilege to undermine Executive Committees. He said he never felt right about it, but in his mind would put the blame on superiors. Nixon won the election on a large mandate, he said, and after that Bob Haldeman informed him of his intention to write a report that would settle Watergate for good. "When you are in the White House and setting your own press its very easy to disillusion yourself of the facts," Dean added, "I told Haldeman if we wrote report the grand jury would be reopened and we would all be indicted. Haldeman replied, 'I don't think it's a very good idea then.'"

He said that by the end of the year the thing was getting deeper and deeper, there was no easy way out. "I tried to tell the President, there is no easy way out, we will all go to jail" adding, "cancer is growing on the office of the

President."

"By Watergate I learned a lot about myself and the law." It is Dean's belief that if Watergate had not occurred when it did, it would have occurred later with greater consequences. He said it

ton, where the other inmates were mostly mafia members who had been working for the government. "Rehabilitation is bullshit" he stated, "their are only spending time in there." "Why don't I bad mouth some of

Question: "Do you think its just for people to make money through criminal actions."

Answer: "I am very sensitive about this, if people can learn from it fine, if they can't it should not be done."



Nixon was never secure in the office of president, former counsel John Dean said Monday.

was a long way from the White House to prison, which was an eye opener. Calling the experience unique, he said he was kept in a small institution outside Washing-

the people who tried to use me as a scapegoat I could see no reason in it," he said.

Dean then invited his audience to ask questions they wanted about Watergate or himself.

Question: "Is American campaigning advertising."

Answer: Yes, highly advertising. Public relations are important and contrived, for example, during Nixon's trip to China all the all the main events were scheduled to take place in prime time.

Question: How did a young man of 34 get to be President Council?"

Answer: I never really wanted that job, the first time I was asked I refused, I liked my job with Justice. Then the next time the President asked me, I replied 'Yes sir.'

Question: "What is the responsibility of Counsel?"

Answer: "He is the in-house immediate lawyer. It's his job to process several White House workers. It was also my job to look after demonstrations."

Question: "Are there any people in the White House who were sincerely motivated for working for the people?"

Answer: There were many who thought they were doing good for the people. A lot of the staff were doing everything just for the president.

Question: What are your plans for the future?"

Answer: I will probably keep on writing, after my Watergate Book I will write other things probably.

Question: What is your reaction about Nixon getting off scot free?"

Answer: "Several feel very cheated and distressed Nixon escaped prison, I can understand how he could let Nixon go, the thought of a president spending time in jail. The part I did not like was Ford did not ask him for an ounce of truth before he let him go. The slate is still covered."

Question: "Is their any people in the U.S. who still think Nixon is innocent?"

Answer: "Yes, the last survey I think it was 28 percent, who felt Nixon should still be president. Certainly, several believe Nixon is convinced of his own innocence."

Question: "How much misuse is going on in Ford's White House?"

Answer: "They would be too afraid, probably very little going on."

Question: "Was the press responsible or irresponsible in Watergate?"

Answer: "Both, several times the press printed inaccurate stories. The other side showed the power of the press during Watergate. Without the press digging a lot would not have been answered. It played a very important part."

Question: "How do you think History will present the Nixon administration?"

Answer: "They are still sorting out what had happened, it's hard to predict."

Question: "Does the justice system protect the wealthy?"

Answer: "Yes, no poor man can hire the string of lawyers or pay fines a rich man can, this should be changed."

Question: "Do you believe cover-ups take place in most governments?"

Answer: "I can only assume that they do in most, some get found out some don't."

John Dean closed his lecture telling the audience that he was driven through blind ambition, adding, "If I had one wish, I would wish that all you ambitious persons out there, and I know are ambitious persons out there, can keep their heads."



Dean described a psychological tendency to pass the buck when committing crimes for the president. He said he committed no crimes before June, 1972, but ambition pressured him into engaging in criminal activities.