

TRANSCRIPT RELEASE STALLS IMPEACHMENT "YOU CAN'T IMPEACH SOMEONE FOR BEING A BUFFOON..."

May 17 (IPS) — Nixon's release of two major Watergate documents during the first week in May has hamstrung significantly the attempt to drive the President from office and has stalled temporarily Rockefeller's attempt to add the U.S. government to his list of toppled administrations. Rockefeller forces are now afraid to push on the only impeachable issue yielded by the existing evidence, and the press is already preparing for the next contingency. Columnists Joseph Alsop and Hobart Rowan, writing May 14 and May 15, respectively, in the *Washington Post*, indicate that if Nixon can't be driven out on Watergate, Rockefeller will blame the rapidly approaching economic collapse on him.

Both the White House publication of the Watergate tape transcripts and the affidavit filed by former Presidential aide Charles Colson carefully draw the line for the House Judiciary Committee and other investigators. The President has in effect told his investigators that if they want to impeach him, they have to investigate the question of national security and the activities of the CIA, the FBI, and the National Security Council in that context.

Hunt's CIA Blackmail

The transcripts offer only one instance of possible criminal culpability on the Presidents's part — that is, the consideration of CIA plumber E. Howard Hunt's blackmail demand around the break-in at the office of Daniel Ellsberg's psychiatrist. And both the transcripts and the Colson affidavit threaten that any investigation into this area will blow open the issue of "national security," around the CIA's role in the release of the Pentagon Papers, in the Ellsberg break-in, and in the entire Watergate affair.

The hysterical reaction of the press in the days following the release of the transcripts indicates the success of Nixon's tactic. After briefly and gingerly pointing to the Hunt blackmail issue, the thrust of the press coverage suddenly shifted to the tone of a fundamentalist morality play and to the "issue" of Nixon's profanity, immorality and general sleaziness.

Congress Hesitant

Although the media tried to present the impression of a general stampede toward resignation, the actual reaction in Congress was much more hesitant. An influential source, circulating in moderate-to-liberal democratic layers, reported that although Nixon was reduced significantly in stature, **"You can't impeach someone for being a buffoon or an embarrassment. A lot of people thought Harry Truman was a peasant, too, but that's not grounds for impeachment."** Republicans on the Judiciary Committee indicated that they were holding their ground and that they had not seen impeachable evidence yet.

The current and continuing subpoena of tapes indicates that except for the Hunt blackmail issue — which is too dangerous to pursue — the Judiciary Committee has in its possession **no evidence** for a Watergate impeachment.

The Counter-Government Question

It is no coincidence that Charles "Chuck" Colson released his affidavit simultaneous with the publication of the Watergate transcripts. His quotation of a 1971 Nixon statement concerning the Pentagon Papers leak is an open warning to the Rockefeller-CIA force behind the entire Pentagon Paper/Watergate affair.

"The President went on, 'I want to know how and why the "counter-government" is at work. If we do not stop them, if we do not find out who is involved and why, we will endanger everything that this government is trying to do in the most sensitive foreign policy and national security areas.'"

This theme of national security is highlighted throughout the transcripts. In the famous March 21, 1973 discussion, when Dean suggests that the Hunt thing could be put on national security grounds, Haldeman replies that "it absolutely was." Nixon adds that neither the CIA nor the FBI could be trusted in the investigation. In subsequent conversation that day and April 17, 19, and 27, 1973, Nixon continues to stress the national security problem involved in the Hunt blackmail attempt.

Plumbers Checking National Security

Those references are exemplary of a repeated theme throughout the transcript. In effect, Nixon, Haldeman and Erlichman state that the plumbers operation was chiefly directed to checking important breaches of national security by the National Security Council, the CIA and the FBI, and that Hunt's potential disclosures and blackmail pertain to that area.

The implied threat of other unpleasant disclosures is evident from the inclusion in the transcripts of certain peripheral discussions about Senator Kennedy's Chappaquidick problems and of the FBI (pages 111 through 156). More significant is the single reference to Henry Kissinger and Nelson Rockefeller in a March 17 conversation. Dean reports to Nixon about a series of discussions around the bugging of newsmen:

"He said that Hoover had told Patrick Coyne about the fact that this was done. Coyne had told Rockefeller — now Rockefeller had told Kissinger..."

Nixon responds,

"...So Hoover told Coyne, who told Rockefeller, that newsmen were being bugged.... Why do you suppose they did it?"

The Evidence Against the CIA

Questions of the national security issues raised by Nixon in this case lead right to the exposure of the CIA's role in leaking the Pentagon Papers. As retired Air Force Col. L. Fletcher Prouty has already documented in his book *The Secret Team*, the Pentagon Papers were a carefully orchestrated CIA hoax, released by a laundered ex-agent, Daniel Ellsberg. The purpose was twofold. The CIA was able to whitewash its own murderous role in Vietnam, while it pinned the blame for Vietnam on the old-line military.

At the same time, this and other security leaks (such as the U.S. back-up position in the SALT I talks) led to an atmosphere of deep concern in the White House about national security. As the just-released Colson affidavit reports, Rockefeller inside man Henry Kissinger fanned the crisis atmosphere in the executive branch.

This situation opened the door for the CIA establishment and orchestration of the plumbers group. Since **New Solidarity** aired this operation five months ago, much supporting evidence has come to the surface.

Senator Howard Baker's investigation of the CIA role in Watergate has produced very firm evidence that E. Howard Hunt was in the employ of the CIA during both the psychiatrist's office break-in and the Watergate break-in. Rather than leaving the CIA as he claimed, Hunt transferred to a CIA civilian cover operation, Mullen and Co. Robert Bennet, the head of the company, has admitted that Mullen did not sever ties with the CIA until June 1973!

Baker's investigation contains other damaging evidence which explains the CIA's current attempts to prevent declassification of the report.

With Hunt's identity firmly established, one need only read the March 8, 1974 *Washington Post* account of the actual creation of the plumbers unit during the period following the leak of the Pentagon Papers. As the *Washington Post* documents, the original break-in suggestion came from E. Howard Hunt in a July 28, 1971

memo to Charles Colson. Hunt's proposal is given strong backing on several occasions during the next month by Rockefeller inside man David Young (a Kissinger aide on the National Security Council). Hunt and Young alone escaped indictment in the Ellsberg case.

Additional motivation for the break-in of Ellsberg's psychiatrist's office came directly from the CIA. John Ehrlichman reports in Senate Watergate committee testimony that the CIA requested "more factual information" on Ellsberg's psychiatric background so that they could do a profile (*Washington Post*, March 8).

Interested journalists should contact IPS for further leads and information on Watergate. Full documentation of the CIA's role in setting up Nixon is available. The exclusive story was first published in *New Solidarity* in January 1974.

WHAT IS WRONG WITH INDIA? MERCY WON'T LAST LONG

May 11 (IPS) — The *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* May 11 painted a pessimistic evaluation of the Gandhi government in a front page editorial, "What is Wrong with India?" Holding the Indian government squarely responsible for the recent disorder and impending collapse, the editorial admonishes: "Mrs. Gandhi and the Congress Party have apparently not understood that. They paint 'right reactionaries' and 'left adventurists' in the opposition parties, or even the American secret service, as the provokers of the latest unrest. The ability for self-criticism is, for the majority of the politicians in Congress, almost non-existent.... It may be that the Congress Party, especially Mrs. Gandhi, will receive a period of mercy, due to the absence of any other prominent leadership personalities. However, this period won't last long."

Mrs. Gandhi sold out to the Rockefeller forces in a recent trip to Iran. Paying glowing tributes to the CIA-controlled Shah, Gandhi accepted Iran's bail money for India. Gandhi's right turn was marked by stepped-up militarization. [See IPS, No. 2.]

DETROIT RESIDENTS TO COLLECT TRASH IN THE NAME OF PRIDE

May 17 (IPS) — Detroit's "Operation Pride" has succeeded, for a week at least, in pitting an army of unemployed against the city's regular sanitation force by institutionalizing volunteer garbage collection. It is not yet known how many sanitationmen will be laid off during "Pride Week," which begins within the next few days, or whether they will receive their regular salaries. One hundred National Guard trucks will be on hand, and an as yet unreported number of Guardsmen. The *Detroit Free Press* reports that 650 block associations will participate as one citywide unit, funneling an anticipated 100,000 volunteers. Preliminary reports indicate that the Department of Public Works will assign Work Incentives (WIN) welfare recipients to supplement the proud unpaid garbage detail. IPS will publish further information on the background and activities of the Operation Pride organization in a future issue.

JAPANESE ECONOMIC STATISTICS SHOW DOWNTURN

May 17 (IPS) — The effects of the Japanese government's credit tightening are beginning to show. Bankruptcies in April were topped only by March's record level. According to the Japanese government, the decline in bankruptcies was due only to seasonal factors.

The number of April bankruptcies was 974 with liabilities of \$400 million. Although down from the March level by 10 per cent, the bankruptcy rate is 184 per cent above that of a year ago.

FIDEL LAUDS A FELLOW PRAGMATIST

May 17 (IPS) — According to Dr. Emilio Rabasa, Mexico's foreign minister, Fidel Castro spoke flatteringly of Secretary of State Kissinger as "a very pragmatic man who looks to the future and wants changes."