$2.2 billion due from all member states for its administrative budget. Peacekeeping operations collected 97 per cent of the $6.4 billion assessed during 1994–95. The UN's cash holdings at the end of 1995 totaled $780 million. Similar high rates of collection and comfortably large cash balances were recorded in previous years.

Although the UN has experienced periodic cash-flow problems, the impact of U.S. arrears has been negligible. High salaries and lavish benefits are paid promptly; marginal programs continue to receive funding; major world conferences convene almost annually, supplementing hundreds of regular UN committee sessions; newly constructed state-of-the-art conference facilities in Addis Ababa and Bangkok are in operation; and nearly two dozen peacekeeping operations have been established. The UN's bureaucracy today is bigger and worse managed than ten years ago.

3) *U.S. repayments will benefit primarily wealthy allies and Third World governments.* Should Congress agree to pay $819 million in arrears, how will these funds be used? To feed starving children? To repatriate refugees? To find a cure for a disease that threatens millions? No, U.S. payments will flow to wealthy U.S. allies, such as Britain, France, Sweden, Spain, and Italy, to reimburse them for troops provided to UN peacekeeping forces.

Governments of developing countries such as Ghana (Annan's native land), Nepal, Bangladesh, Pakistan, and Fiji will reap windfall profits for services of their troops, each of whom might be paid the local equivalent of $100 per month, but are provided to the UN at a rate of $1,000 per month. What remains of the U.S. payment might replenish the UN's cash reserves to provide a cushion against future U.S. withholding, or be used for redecorating UN facilities, which have been neglected in recent years to convince member states of the organization's penury.

4) *And these calculations cheat the U.S.* The troop costs which the UN considers an obligation of the organization do not include expenditures borne directly by the United States for participation in UN-authorized operations from Korea to the Persian Gulf, or the estimated $6.6 billion spent by American taxpayers during fiscal years 1992–95 in support of UN operations in Bosnia, Somalia, Haiti, and elsewhere.

Given the historic opposition to linkages between U.S. payments and reform, it is unlikely that key elements of the Albright–Helms plan will be approved by the UN. Privately, many UN officials and diplomats have dismissed its provisions as nothing more than "financial blackmail." In the absence of the political will of UN members to enact fundamental change, Congress will be wasting its time, and taxpayer money, if it takes seriously any commitment by the Clinton Administration to deliver on its part of the bargain.

Congress should refuse to pay. To do otherwise would not only constitute acceptance of a double standard, but set the unfortunate precedent of public financing of campaigns waged by individuals seeking high government office. □

AnniversaryGate

Twenty-five years later, the Watergate scandal continues to unfold.

JAMES S. ROSEN

TWENTY-FIVE years after the Watergate break-in, it is easy to forget how much of what Americans believe about that event depends on John Dean's self-proclaimed "astounding memory for detail."

The one-time White House Counsel admittedly "managed" the cover-up of the break-in for a time, then turned state's evidence. By testifying before the televised Senate Watergate Committee proceedings, the House impeachment inquiry, and the jury in *U.S.* v. *Mitchell* (1974), the landmark political trial that convicted President Richard Nixon's top aides, Dean gained acclaim as a once-misguided but ultimately courageous White House whistleblower.

Dean began his testimony before the Senate in June 1973 with a 243-page opening statement, delivered in a monotone voice and studded with specific dates of meetings and conversations. Less than a month later, the Senate uncovered Nixon's secret taping system. The focus of the Watergate inquiries then shifted to the infamous tapes, which, it was thought, would corroborate either Dean's or Nixon's conflicting assertions of culpability.

The single most damning of the tapes —the "smoking gun" tape—was recorded on June 23, 1972, just six days after the original break-in arrests. On that tape, Nixon can be heard, in a discussion with Chief of Staff H. R. Haldeman, acquiescing in a plan to have the CIA block the FBI's burgeoning Watergate investigation.

> HALDEMAN: Mitchell came up with yesterday, and John Dean analyzed very carefully last night and concludes, concurs now with Mitchell's recommendation that the only way to solve this . . . is for us to have [CIA Deputy Director Vernon] Walters call [FBI Director Pat] Gray and just say, "Stay the hell out of this—this is business here we just don't want you to go any further on it." . . .
>
> NIXON: . . . they should call in the FBI and say, "Don't go any further into this case period!"

Nixon resigned three days after this tape surfaced.

Subsequently playing portions of the tapes in court, and using Dean (in Walter Cronkite's words) as "an all-purpose Watergate witness," special prosecutors secured convictions of Nixon's top aides—Haldeman, domestic advisor John Ehrlichman, and former Attorney General John Mitchell, the highest-ranking U.S. government officer ever to serve a prison term. Clearly, the judgment at the time was—and remains today—that the White House tapes corroborated John Dean.

The principal dissenters from that view were the lawyers on the Watergate Special Prosecution Force (WSPF). Newly declassified WSPF memoranda,

Mr. Rosen's work has appeared in NATIONAL REVIEW, Harpers, *and other publications.*

obtained through the Freedom of Information Act and quoted here for the first time, show that the Watergate prosecutors entertained serious doubts about Dean's "astounding memory."

In a draft memorandum dated July 22, 1974, WSPF lawyer George T. Frampton outlined the "significant discrepancies between Dean's anticipated trial testimony, [and] that of other Government witnesses or evidence." Frampton's analysis showed that one key hush-money meeting Dean testified to "apparently didn't take place. We probably would do well simply to omit Dean's testimony about this. . . ."

Another memo, sent on February 6, 1974, by WSPF lawyer Peter F. Rient to *U.S.* v. *Mitchell* trial lawyer Richard Ben-Veniste (recently the minority counsel to the Senate Whitewater committee), bore the title: "Material Discrepancies between the Senate Select Committee Testimony of John Dean and the Tapes of Dean's Meetings with the President."

Still other prosecution memoranda described the "omissions" in Dean's statements to them, and the manner in which Dean, seeking immunity from prosecution, "gradually escalat[ed]" his disclosures of Watergate culpability, culminating in Mitchell and Nixon.

The prosecutors' case against John Mitchell relied on testimony which, the memoranda now make clear, they *knew* to be problematic.

One of the "overt acts" of obstruction of justice—on which the nation's former top law-enforcement officer was convicted and sent to prison—was Mitchell's "suggestion to Dean . . . on or about June 24, 1972, . . . that the CIA be requested to provide covert funds for the assistance of the persons involved in the Watergate break-in."

The prosecutors' case against John Mitchell relied on testimony which they knew *to be problematic.*

On October 16, 1974, Dean testified at Mitchell's trial that Mitchell, on June 24, 1972, had "suggested it be explored" that "the CIA would have the covert procedures to pay [the burglars]. . . . [Mitchell] told me I should take this up with Mr. Haldeman and Mr. Ehrlichman. I said to Mr. Ehrlichman that Mr. Mitchell had [also] suggested that Nixon's powerhouse fundraiser [Herb] Kalmbach might be used to raise funds." For the ears of the jury in *U.S.* v. *Mitchell*, then, the special prosecutors elicited Dean's testimony that John Mitchell had given Dean two hush-money ideas: get it from the CIA, and get Kalmbach to raise it.

Although they were willing to raise the matter in court, the prosecutors' internal memos show they worried about it privately:

> Dean's Senate and Grand Jury testimony [Frampton noted] leaves the impression (which is explicit in the Senate) that his approach to Mitchell about using Kalmbach came only after it became clear the CIA would not cooperate. However, Mitchell's logs and schedule suggest that the two possibilities—*use of Kalmbach and use of the CIA—were probably discussed at the same time, and that Dean exercised somewhat more discretion himself to forge ahead with getting Kalmbach into the picture than he has admitted.* . . .
>
> In the Senate, Dean testified that [Mitchell gave him the Kalmbach idea on] June 28. However, Mitchell was in New York from the morning of Monday, June 26, until about 5 P.M. on June 28. Mitchell's logs show him returning to "Washington" at 5:30 P.M. on June 28. . . . *Moreover, by the time of Mitchell's return, Dean had already phoned Kalmbach.* . . .
>
> However, since Dean is firm on his recollection of Mitchell asking him to involve Kalmbach prior to the 29th, our case will probably have to be based on the *theory* that Mitchell asked Dean on Saturday, June 24, to explore both the CIA and Kalmbach possibilities; or that Mitchell's logs are incomplete . . . [Emphasis added.]

Nor was Dean's confusion limited to the Kalmbach scenario. In the infamous "smoking gun" dialogue on the morning of June 23, 1972, Haldeman reported to President Nixon that Dean had "*last night* . . . analyzed very carefully" and "concurred with Mitchell's recommendation" that the CIA be used to block the FBI. Thus, the "smoking gun" tape places Mitchell's suggestion to Dean about the CIA on June 22; yet in his Senate testimony—given a month before Dean (and the rest of the country) learned about the tapes' existence—Dean had claimed that Mitchell suggested the CIA's intervention on June 23 or 24.

This "material discrepancy" raised by

the release of the "smoking gun" tape posed a serious problem for the prosecution's case against Mitchell. Accordingly, in his testimony at *U.S.* v. *Mitchell*, Dean changed his story: Mitchell had made the CIA pitch in a "telephone call" on June 22. All the time, the prosecutors knew that Mitchell's logs showed no contact with Dean, telephonic or otherwise, until seven hours *after* the "smoking gun" discussion. As Haldeman reflected in a 1989 interview: "I don't know how [Dean] can deny that he fabricated the Mitchell involvement in his conversation with me on the morning of the 23rd." We shall never know how Nixon would have acted had the CIA plan been pitched to him without Mitchell's imprimatur.

For his part, John Dean no longer seems very certain about his testimony and writings of the 1970s. In September 1995 and January 1996, he went back under oath for eight days of videotaped depositions, conducted in connection with a libel lawsuit he and his wife lodged against the authors and publishers of a decidedly revisionist Watergate book called *Silent Coup: The Removal of a President* (1991).

Now subjected to less friendly "theories" of Watergate than those on which the special prosecutors based their prosecution of John Mitchell, Dean derided the 1995-96 depositions as "boring," "absurd," "senseless," "grinding," "exhaustive," "harassing," and "abusive." "I know that the defendants want to retry Watergate in all of these details," he correctly observed. Contrast the whistleblower of yesteryear with the wily witness of today:

> Q: You will acknowledge you did have discussions with . . . [Watergate burglar G. Gordon] Liddy about money for men in jail—
>
> A: I will not acknowledge them as necessarily discussions, as you're using it.
>
> Q: How do you characterize your encounter with Mr. Liddy? Was it not a discussion?
>
> A: It was not a discussion. As I recall . . . he put a feeler out and I said "I can't help you."
>
> Q: That's not a discussion?
>
> A: I don't think so. I think a discussion is when you kick something around. To me—I haven't looked up the synonyms in a long time of "discussion," but I suspect one of them might be "debate."

And so on.

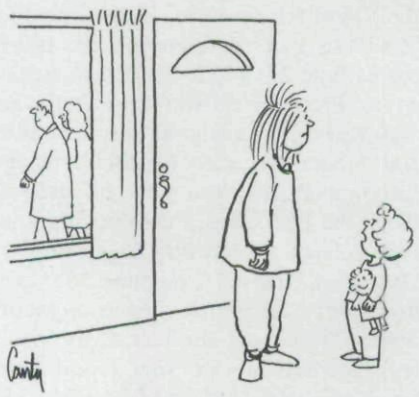
But every twenty pages or so—and Dean's deposition runs to roughly two thousand—defense counsel corner Dean into an admission of some value for historians.

Chief among them is Dean's disavowal of his 1976 memoir, *Blind Ambition*, upon which Watergate scholars have relied for a generation, and which Dean now admits he never read "cover to cover." Whenever Dean's testimony in one of several forums might differ from his book (e.g., *Blind Ambition* never even mentions the momentous discussion Dean and Mitchell allegedly had about the CIA's blocking the FBI), Dean attributed the fault to his acknowledged ghost-writer, Taylor Branch. "Absolutely make it up out of whole cloth," Dean testified about the eventual Pulitzer-winner in one key instance.

> Q: As I recall your testimony, Mr. Dean, when asked about particular passages in *Blind Ambition*, you have explained them in various ways, as either "pure Taylor Branch," "out of whole cloth," "conjecture," "speculation," "writer's language," "reconstruction for the purpose of speculation," "brush strokes beyond testimony."
>
> A: Right. . . . I thought this was a good popular and commercial explanation of the events, a good portrait and dramatization of it, but . . . it's not absolutely accurate . . . for researchers, I've always referred them to my testimony.

Branch denies making anything up out of whole cloth.

In the "Author's Note" for *Blind Ambition*, Dean explained that he reconstructed events by "review[ing] an enormous number of documents as well as my own testimony." However, Dean twice told *Silent Coup*'s author in their January 5, 1989, interview (and reaffirmed in his deposition): "I'm going to be very honest with you. I didn't even reread my testimony when I wrote my book."



"You'd better be nice to me, or someday I might be 'the younger woman.'"

As for the testimony Dean either did or didn't reread in putting his name on *Blind Ambition*, it, too, emerges badly shaken from the present litigation. "My memory happens to work not date-oriented," he deadpans now.

"I assume," Dean was asked at the outset of the deposition, "you will stand on all your testimony. Is that right?"

"I certainly hope so," Dean replied.

But as the deposition unfolded, Dean grudgingly acknowledged that at times his testimony before the Senate, House of Representatives, and various criminal proceedings included "misstatements," "overstatement," "self-serving" statements, "verbal slips," at least two instances of "total forgetfulness," one case where he was "maybe imposing hindsight on events," and another, during cross-examination in the Mitchell trial, where he "wasn't listening careful [*sic*] . . . and [went] along with a leading question, and I'm not sure why." One of his written interrogatory responses in the present proceeding Dean defended as "virtually correct." He did "not particularly prepar[e] for" his testimony before the House impeachment inquiry, and expresses "surprise" that "there aren't more minor inconsistencies" in his Senate testimony.

> In some instances, yes, I was off on some dates, some events that were very close together, had slid them together and we [Dean and the special prosecutors] sorted through all those . . . cleaned [them] up before *U.S.* v. *Mitchell*.

Since George Frampton helped "clean up" Dean's testimony for John Mitchell's prosecution, it is perhaps fitting that he today serves as President Clinton's Assistant Secretary of Fish, Wildlife, and Parks at the Department of Interior.

Aside from reports in the *Washington Times* and the *Tampa Tribune*, Dean's under-oath metamorphosis has received scant media attention. Imagine the furor if other sensational political witnesses of the twentieth century—Whittaker Chambers, say, or Clarence Thomas—had, in revisiting their appointments with destiny, expressed similar misgivings, under oath no less.

Perhaps the silence owes to the media's celebrated laziness. As Richard Nixon noted, "Perjury is an awful hard rap to prove." □