

Committee asks Haig about Watergate role

WASHINGTON (AP) — Alexander M. Haig called the Watergate scandal "illegal and stupid" Tuesday and denied he was involved in any way as a trusted aide to President Richard M. Nixon.

Haig, who is President-elect Ronald Reagan's nominee to be secretary of state, portrayed himself instead as a White House chief of staff who fought to keep Nixon from becoming enmeshed in criminal acts in the final months of his presidency.

On the fourth day of his confirmation hearings before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, the retired four-star general and former NATO commander exploded in anger under persistent questioning from Sen. Paul S. Sarbanes, D-Md., who sought Haig's judgments about the rights and wrongs of Watergate.

"After a break in his testimony, Haig returned to the witness table and delivered a statement describing his position on the turbulent months he spent in the White House while the Nixon presidency crumbled.

"Were there abuses? Of course there were," he said. "They were improper, illegal and immoral, an affront to the fundamental values we all cherish and I share.

"But I cannot bring myself to render judgment on

Richard Nixon or Henry Kissinger," Haig said. "It's not in me to render moral judgment on them," he said. "I must leave that to others, to history, to God."

Testifying under oath at his own request, Haig responded to Sarbanes's questions by saying, "I never went along with or supported anything I believed to be illegal.

"Suggestions came up from time to time," Haig said, "and on every occasion I fought it, rejected it or prevented it.

"What is it you want me to say? What is it you're after?" he asked.

"Nobody has a monopoly on virtue, not even you, Senator," Haig told Sarbanes.

"I have not ever indulged in something that is wrong or illegal. ... Others did. That's clear. The record is clear. We saw the volumes of it. ... Do you expect me to endorse what was done? No way ..."

Haig acknowledged that mistakes were made, but said he wasn't at the White House when the break-in at the Democratic National Committee took place in June 1972 or when senior White House officials tried to cover up evidence.

"Mistakes were made," he said. "No one is discounting the fact that they were made. I didn't make them. I wasn't there when they were made. I happened to inherit the situation and the consequences of those mistakes. ... I had to do my best to keep the country on an even keel to the degree that my authority and responsibility provided."

Later in the day, Sen. Barry Goldwater, R-Ariz., urged the committee to approve Haig for Senate confirmation and Sen. Lowell Weicker, R-Conn., asked rejection of Haig's nomination.

Goldwater said the country owes Haig a debt of gratitude. "If Nixon had stood for impeachment, I doubt if this country would have lived through the eight months that would have taken," Goldwater said.

"Haig saw his duty and tried to get Nixon to quit before he ruined the country. I take my hat off to this man."

Weicker said that "in the absence of their superior's adherence to the law, honorable men either speak up or get out."

He said Haig did not do that, "and I therefore assume him to have either lacked integrity, disdained the Constitution or unquestioningly followed orders."

News In Brief

Power failure leaves county cold

A freak power-line break between Hillsborough and Durham left northwest Chapel Hill and northern Orange County without electricity for almost 10 hours Monday night, Duke Power district manager John Kincaid said.

Nearly 2,700 Duke Power customers lost their electricity from 6:50 p.m. Monday until 4:30 a.m. Tuesday. Another 200 customers did not get their power back until 9 a.m. Tuesday. The outage occurred along N.C. 86 north of Estes Drive and on portions of Weaver Dairy Road.

The power lines apparently broke when a conductor on a transmission line fell on some wires and short-circuited the lines that feed the Orange County substations. No injuries or major equipment damage due to the outage were reported.

Hostage negotiations inconclusive

WASHINGTON (AP) — The State Department claimed some progress Tuesday in the negotiations on release of the 52 American hostages held in Iran but said "fundamental differences remain to be resolved" with the Tehran regime.

Deputy Secretary of State Warren M. Christopher, who is in Algeria, based his report to officials here of progress on the questions Iran has raised about the U.S. plan for a negotiated settlement of the long hostage issues.

Officials here said the questions being asked by the Algerians on behalf of the Iranians indicated Iran's growing understanding of the terms offered by the United States and approval of some of the U.S. replies to those questions. But the officials cautioned there was no basis for predicting a breakthrough in the long crisis before the Carter administration leaves office next Tuesday.

Cold snap sets energy use record

The record-shattering cold that plunged most of North Carolina into single-digit temperatures Tuesday pushed electric and gas usage to new highs.

Customers of Carolina Power & Light Co. set an all-time record demand for electricity, shattering the record set only Monday, according to C.M. Clark, manager of system operations.

Usage peaked at 6,402 megawatts between 7 and 8 a.m. That peak is 206 megawatts higher than the previous all-time peak of 6,196 megawatts set Monday. And, Clark said, it's more than 10 percent above last winter's peak of 5,809 megawatts, set Feb. 5.

During the peak, CP&L sold about 800 megawatts of power to Duke Power Co., Virginia Electric and Power Co. and the South Carolina Public Service Authority.

Hunt asks for elimination of non-critical state jobs

RALEIGH (AP) — In a move to cut state spending, Gov. Jim Hunt said Tuesday he would recommend that the 1981 General Assembly eliminate 1,002 non-critical state jobs from the next budget.

In a memo to the heads of state departments and the Board of Governors of The University of North Carolina system, Hunt asked each department head to submit a list of non-critical positions they would have eliminated by Feb. 16. The state budget office has released a list designating the number of positions to be deleted from each department.

The approximate savings from the proposed cutback, which amounts to a 1.8 percent reduction in state jobs, totals more than \$13.02 million, according to the budget office.

Hunt said the cuts were necessary because the state was in the midst of an economic slowdown and "... state and national economists are not forecasting a strong or immediate upturn in our economy."

Brent Hackney, Hunt's deputy press secretary, said it was uncertain whether any employees would actually be fired as a result.

A state hiring freeze has been in effect since fall 1979. Since its inception more than 1,000 state jobs have become vacant, Hackney said. He added that there were about 3,000 vacant positions in all.

In his memo Hunt noted that the number of vacant and frozen positions in each department exceeded the number of deletions requested.

Hackney said he assumed the cuts would be made in those vacant positions but added Hunt had left that up to the department heads.

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All other students' checks will be available on this schedule:

Last names beginning A through E — Wednesday, January 14th

Last names beginning F through L — Thursday, January 15th

Last names beginning M through R — Friday, January 16th

Office is closed Saturday and Sunday

Last names beginning S through Z — Monday, January 19th

(Those students who do not meet this schedule must get their checks on Tuesday, January 20th.)

Undergraduate students who are eligible for Basic Educational Opportunity Grant Funds (BEOG) can receive no checks until all copies of their Basic Grant Student Eligibility Report (SER) have been received and processed by the Student Aid Office.

College Foundation, Inc. loan checks are also available in accordance with the above schedule.

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Information and forms for applying for funds for summer 1981 and for the 1981-82 academic year are now available at the Student Aid Office.

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