

Tapes Investigation Unsought

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White House press secretary Ronald L. Ziegler said yesterday that the White House has not asked the Justice Department to study a news leak about possible re-recording of presidential tapes and "probably" will not do so.

Ziegler thus reversed the position the White House took over the weekend following publication in Sunday's Washington Post of a story reporting that the Watergate prosecutor's office had been told two of the subpoenaed tapes are suspected of being re-recorded versions of presidential conversations rather than original recordings.

James D. St. Clair, the president's counsel, said Sunday that he would ask for a Justice Department investigation to determine the source of the leak.

St. Clair called "utterly false" what he said was an insinuation in the story that tapes turned over to the court had been re-recorded or otherwise altered.

Asked why the White House had changed its position regarding a formal investigation, Ziegler said St. Clair and others "feel the situation is such now that there is no need to proceed in that investigation. But I can't rule it out."

Following publication of the

story, U.S. District Judge John J. Sirica summoned Special Prosecutor Leon Jaworski, St. Clair and other attorneys involved in the case and asked them to refrain from further public comment on the tapes controversy.

"Our concern went to the fact that information was pro-

vided and printed which gave an impression contrary to what the real core of the matter is," Ziegler said.

He said he assumed that Jaworski would conduct his own investigation to determine whether any leaks originated with his staff.