

## Hand Operation Caused Buzz On Watergate Tape

WASHINGTON (AP) — Chairman Peter W. Rodino Jr., said a demonstration for the House Judiciary Committee Wednesday showed that the 18-minute buzz on a Watergate tape "can't possibly" have been caused by anything but hand operation.

The New Jersey Democrat said a staff aide made the demonstration on a Uher 5000 tape recorder. It was the same kind that produced the gap and buzz on the tape of a June 20, 1972, conversation between President Nixon and his former chief of staff, H. R. Haldeman.

"He showed us how you can't possibly except by manual operation produce this sound, this buzz," Rodino told newsmen.

A report by a panel of experts also concluded that the buzz could not have been produced by a faulty tape recorder rather than hand operation, but the President's lawyer, James D. St. Clair, said the conclusion could not be that absolute.

Special impeachment counsel John Doar said the committee does not have an FBI report on who might have erased the tape and said there is no assurance that report will be completed and delivered before the impeachment inquiry concludes.

After the morning session, two members said the panel has an affidavit with evidence that President Nixon decided to fire Special Prosecutor Archibald Cox about 10 days before he actually did.

A Democrat who declined to be named said the affidavit from former Atty. Gen. Elliot Richardson quoted Nixon saying that former Vice President Spiro T. Agnew had resigned — "now we can fire Cox."

A Republican committee member standing nearby confirmed that the committee had the affidavit.

The conversation came shortly after Agnew resigned Oct. 10, the member said; Cox was fired Oct. 20.

After evidence was presented

on Cox's firing, the impeachment inquiry turned to the Watergate tape containing an 18-minute buzz. A Uher 5000 recorder was set up for a demonstration but chairman Peter W. Rodino Jr., D-N.J., said there would be no re-enactment of how President Nixon's secretary, Rose Mary Woods, has said she might have accidentally erased some of the tape.

After the Cox presentation, most members indicated the facts did not make it clear whether the firing could be considered part of the cover-up.

Rep. George E. Danielson, D-Calif., said "I'm more convinced than ever that it was an aggravated continuation of the cover-up."

But most members who would comment said the staff gave them a summary of publicly known facts about the firing and said each congressman would have to make his own judgment.

Cox had subpoenaed nine Watergate tapes and Nixon said he fired him for refusing to accept the President's offer to turn over summaries instead.

The Cox firing led directly to filing of eight impeachment resolutions in the House the following week and to the Judiciary Committee's impeachment inquiry.

The firing was listed under the Watergate cover-up category among the inquiries original 55 allegations against the President to be investigated.

Members said the staff also presented facts on the two of the nine Watergate tapes that turned out to be missing but little beyond the facts already publicly known.

At the White House, presidential speech writer Patrick Buchanan charged that leaks from the committee were "taking on the character of a systematic campaign to tear down the reputation of the President, the secretary of state, the President's men and some individuals under indictment."

Buchanan said the news media should find and expose the "nameless, faceless character assassins."

President Nixon's lawyer, James D. St. Clair, said the fact that there have been no leaks of secret evidence supporting the President's innocence should show that information is selectively leaked to hurt the President.

St. Clair said he believes Chairman Rodino "is doing his best to stop it."

In other Watergate-related developments:

—Senate Democratic Leader

Mike Mansfield, D-Mont., said he is "disturbed and in a sense depressed, by the delay and procrastination" in the impeachment inquiry and leaks from the committee. He said leaks have led to rumors and innuendoes on matters that should be left to the courts and the committee.

—At a Senate committee hearing, Asst. Atty. Gen. Henry E. Petersen defended the original Watergate inquiry. He said that at the time there was not enough evidence to warrant indictments against any beyond the seven original break-in defendants.