

Federal Judge Orders Nixon To Surrender 64 Documents

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WASHINGTON (AP) — A federal judge ordered President Nixon on Thursday to surrender tapes and documents of 64 conversations to be used in the Watergate cover-up trial involving men who were once his top lieutenants.

The subpoena was served on the White House a few hours after it was ordered by U.S. District Judge John J. Sirica. The President has until May 2 to comply.

There was no immediate word whether the White House will comply with the latest legal effort to wrest Watergate information from the President. Deputy Press Secretary Gerald L. Warren said "the matter will be considered by the special counsel."

Sirica acted on a request by special Watergate prosecutor Leon Jaworski who said he needed the material for the conspiracy trial involving John N. Mitchell, H.R. Haldeman, John D. Ehrlichman, Charles W. Colson and three others. The trial is scheduled before Sirica on Sept. 9.

The subpoena was the third issued at the request of the special prosecutor's office. The White House fought the first, last summer, until it lost before the U.S. Court of Appeals. It complied with a second last month without a fight.

The 64 conversations span nearly a year's time — beginning with a meeting Nixon had with special counsel Colson on June 20, 1972, and ending with telephone conversations the President had with Haldeman on June 4, 1973.

Twenty-four of the conversations sought are included in a subpoena issued by the House

Judiciary Committee for its impeachment inquiry. That subpoena requires compliance by next Thursday.

The committee's chairman, Peter W. Rodino Jr., D-N.J., said in a television interview Thursday that any White House editing of the 42 conversations his committee subpoenaed "could be considered a possible ground of impeachment."

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