

Disputed Nixon Tape With Hum Examined Here in Uptown Loft

By MICHAEL T. KAUFMAN

The tape of the conversation between President Nixon and H. R. Haldeman that has been partly obliterated by an 18-minute hum is being studied in a nondescript loft on West 131st Street, well within earshot of the elevated Broadway local subway trains.

As Federal marshals stand by guarding the tape that was made at the White House three days after the Watergate break-in, Mark R. Weiss, a member of a court-appointed panel of acoustical experts, is examining the tapes.

Precisely what he is doing he is not saying not even to his superiors Henry J. Bickel, the president of the Federal Scientific Corporation, whose laboratories and manufacturing facilities are in the red-brick building at 615 West 131st Street.

Expert in Electronics

"I see Mr. Weiss every day and I say 'How are things going?' and he says, 'O.K.,' and that's all I know about the tapes," said Mr. Bickel.

He explained that Mr. Weiss was regarded as an expert in speech, acoustics and electronics, and as vice president of the company, Mr. Weiss has been working on research in speech-activated computers and instruments.

Mr. Weiss was one of six experts appointed by Judge John J. Sirica "to study the authenticity and integrity of the tapes the White House has furnished."

Mr. Bickel emphasized that it was Mr. Weiss and not the work for the court. "But we company that was doing the have the facilities here for the work," he said.

The tape arrived here Fri-

day along with the tape recorder, foot pedal, earphones and high-intensity lamp that Rose Mary Woods, President Nixon's secretary, testified were involved in creating at least part of the 18-minute gap.

Enhancing the Signals

Other tape experts consulted by The New York Times had said that they felt certain one of the first efforts of the panel would be to attempt to filter out the humming noise and then enhance the residual signals left on the tape.

Federal Scientific, a company organized in 1957 by a group of electrical engineers from Columbia University, specializes in the manufacture of spectographs, which depict the images of noises and vibrations on cathode ray tube.

The instruments, which sell for as much as \$80,000, are used in industry to monitor complex operations in roughly the same way that an automobile mechanic diagnoses engine trouble by listening to a motor's whirr.

Such devices can project "signatures" of words that can be read by experts. However, the likelihood of using such a technique on the White House tapes is remote, for as Mr. Bickel explained, "if there isn't enough of an impulse to hear, there probably isn't enough of one to see."

Trees Planted for Drivers

SAN FRANCISCO (UPI)—In the past year, California planted 1,245 acres of trees and shrubs along the 15,000 miles of state highways. The plantings will continue to help "take the squint, din and danger out of driving," a highway commission spokesman said.