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**PRESIDENT YIELDS
IN TAPES DISPUTE**

**Allows Bill to Become Law,
Letting Courts Decide**

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WASHINGTON, Dec. 17—The Senate Watergate committee won statutory authority today to seek help from the Federal courts in obtaining some of President Nixon's tape recordings and documents.

The President said tonight that although he strongly objected to a bill granting the United States District Court here jurisdiction over any suit on Watergate subpoenas, he was letting it become law at midnight without his signature.

Mr. Nixon had refused to supply the materials, and the district court had disclaimed jurisdiction to enforce the committee's subpoenas for them.

Like the Watergate special prosecution force, the Senate committee has been seeking tapes and documents since early last summer. Both subpoenaed the President on July 23 to produce certain documents and

Continued on Page 30, Column 3

Continued From Page 1, Col. 7
records.

The special prosecution force eventually won its case, though the special prosecutor, Archibald Cox, was dismissed over the controversy, Attorney General Elliot L. Richards resigned, and his deputy, William D. Ruckelshaus, was also ousted.

The Senate, however, lost its separate case. Chief Judge John J. Sirica ruled that the Federal courts had no jurisdiction to enforce a Congressional committee's subpoena of White House material.

To overcome the judge's objection, the Senate, on Nov. 9, and the House, on Dec. 3, passed by voice votes a bill specifically granting the district court here jurisdiction over any suit on Watergate subpoenas.

The bill wiped out—for the

Watergate investigation only—the \$10,000 minimum restriction on the worth of issues that is required before a suit is brought in the Federal courts.

The bill also provided a specific act of Congress on which to base subpoenas.

The President had 10 working days to consider what action to take, meaning a midnight deadline.

Under the Constitution, a President can veto any bill, allow it to become law without his signature or sign it into law. A two-thirds' majority of both houses of Congress is needed to override a veto.

The White House in recent weeks has been pledging openness and has released a number of tapes and documents sought by the Watergate special prosecutor, Leon Jaworski.

The Court as Umpire

Senator Roman L. Hruska, Republican of Nebraska, has stated, however, that this particular bill places the courts in the position of being "umpire or referee between Congress and the Executive in disputes over the production of documents and information."

Senator Sam J. Ervin Jr. of North Carolina, Chairman of the Watergate committee, had originally sought a broader bill giving the courts jurisdiction over any such cases of Congressional and executive confrontation. He narrowed that version down to the Watergate investigations by an amendment approved by the committee.

It was clear as the President considered the bill that any veto could be overridden in the Senate. Its chances in the House were considered much closer. Senator Ervin had indicated he would be ready for immediate action on pressing

the subpoenas or on overriding a veto.

The committee is seeking more than a dozen White House tapes and documents. Many are related to pledges, some stretching back three years, of several million dollars in campaign contributions from Associated Milk Producers, Inc.