

White House calls for exorcist

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WASHINGTON — A White House official, complaining about a columnist's report of a "hidden stash" of White House recordings, said yesterday that the Washington press corps is possessed by a Watergate syndrome "and an exorcist is direly needed."

Ken Clawson, President Nixon's communications director, took sharp exception to a report by columnist Jack Anderson that presidential secretary Rose Mary

Woods made the disclosure to Senate Watergate committee lawyers in secret testimony Feb. 20.

Clawson said Nixon in a statement Nov. 12 re-

ported a practice of occasionally dictating recollections onto a recording belt which "are sealed under specific instructions that they not be transcribed."

Asked what he meant by "the Watergate syndrome," Clawson replied, "a propensity to believe without thorough research and checking almost anything."

"God knows that the people who engage in that kind of crap need an exorcist," Clawson said.

He criticized the news services for "picking up the column and presenting it to the American people without checking the facts in the column."