

Hits Slur Reports

Sees Campaign Of Poison Against Nixon

By Tim O'Brien
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President Nixon's special counsel charged yesterday that a "concerted campaign" has been launched to "poison the public mind against the President" by suggesting that ethnic slurs were deleted from the recently released Watergate transcripts.

J. Fred Buzhardt said he personally listened to many of the tapes and that he heard nothing he could interpret as an ethnic slur.

"For a number of days now," Buzhardt said, "we have been literally besieged by rumors that there were ethnic slurs in the tapes. Some language which I wouldn't think of repeating here or in private has been suggested as being on the tapes, and I find it just totally unbelievable.

"There have been fabrications. There have been attempts to portray remarks that are on the tapes as racial slurs, and they are not.

"And I wonder, you know. It's clear that a concerted campaign has been made to cause these to be publicized. And that is one of the problems. It bothers many of us.

"Obviously this type of material is not relevant to the question of whether the President has committed treason, bribery or high crimes or misdemeanors. I can only characterize this as malicious and vicious attempts to poison the public mind against the President by any means."

Citing sources with direct knowledge of the President's remarks, The New York Times reported yesterday that Mr. Nixon once called U.S. District Court Judge John J. Sirica a "wop." The newspaper also said the President referred to "those Jew boys" in the Securities and Exchange Commission, and that he talked about three Watergate prosecuting attorneys as "those Jews down there."

Citing highly reliable sources, The Times said that in a Feb. 28, 1973, conversation with former White House counsel John W. Dean III, the President talked about a network of Jews in the government who kept one another informed.

Saying he listened to close to 40 tapes, Buzhardt said, "I don't remember the word Jew. I do remember the word Jewish being used . . . Somebody

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may have said somebody was Polish." In no case, Buzhardt argued, were ethnic references intended as slurs.

Sources familiar with the presidential tapes have told The Washington Post that the recordings contain several statements by the President that could be considered anti-Semitic.

In his appearance on "Face the Nation" (CBS, WTOP), Buzhardt also reaffirmed that the President does not now contemplate turning over further tapes or documents to the House Judiciary Committee or Watergate special prosecutor.

The President's counsel said he believes that all White House information regarding milk industry contributions to the 1972 Nixon re-election campaign has been turned over to the House committee.

But Rep. Barbara Jordan (D-Tex.), a member of the panel considering impeachment, said, "We have no evidence on milk at all." Both Buzhardt and Jordan said negotiations are continuing with respect to the release of more materials involving the so-called milk fund.

Last week the committee began formal impeachment hearings. The hearings are expected to continue for about six weeks before the panel sends its recommendations to the full House.

Today, White House counsel James D. St. Clair and Watergate Special Prosecutor Leon Jaworski will appear in court to argue about the release of an additional 64 tapes the prosecution has subpoenaed for the September trial of seven former high-level presidential aides and campaign officials.

Meanwhile, retiring Sen. Norris Cotton (R-N.H.), who considers himself a friend of the President, said he hopes the House "will hurry up and bring impeachment."

Cotton said the President should not resign, partly because that would leave an "unresolved blotch on the history of the country." He criticized fellow senators who have called for Mr. Nixon's resignation, "because a juror is not supposed to make a judgment unless he has seen the sworn testimony." The Senate would try the President in the event the House approved a bill of impeachment.

Cotton said he has seen no evidence to implicate the President in any criminal activity.

Editorial support for the President continued to erode yesterday, as five newspapers called on him to resign and two others urged a speedy impeachment process.

The Rockford (Ill.) Register-Star and the Providence (R.I.) Sunday Journal, both previous supporters of Mr. Nixon, urged that he resign. The Utica (N.Y.) Observer-Dispatch and Sacramento (Calif.) Bee also called for resignation, and the Charlotte (N.C.) Observer said the President's resignation would be "the best outcome for the country."

The Des Moines (Iowa) Register and Nevada State Journal, opposing resignation on the grounds that it would deprive Americans of a final resolution of the Watergate affair, preferred the impeachment route.

But Teamster union president Frank E. Fitzsimmons, who stands almost alone among big-time labor leaders in supporting the President, said recent developments have not changed his mind.

Appearing on "Meet the Press" (NBC, WRC), Fitzsimmons said he has not read the controversial White House edited transcripts, but that, from what he knows of their contents, "it's easy to take any sentence out of context from a one-, two-, three- or four-hour conversation and make a point of it."

"I think that Mr. Nixon is no different than any other individual," he declared. "He should have his day in court, if it is necessary to have one, and at this moment I still support him."

He said the Teamster membership, while divided, wants Mr. Nixon to "have a fair shake and his side of the story to be told to maintain the well-being of this country."

Fitzsimmons said former Teamster boss James R. Hoffa, who was granted clemency by Mr. Nixon after serving five years of a 13-year jail sentence for jury tampering and mail fraud, should not return to the labor movement. Hoffa was released on the condition that he not participate in any way in the conduct or management of union affairs.

Fitzsimmons again denied he had prior knowledge of the conditions for Hoffa's release.