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Supreme Court Indicates Action Soon in Tapes Case

By a WALL STREET JOURNAL Staff Reporter

WASHINGTON—The Supreme Court indicated it will decide quickly whether to step into the latest legal dispute over White House Watergate tapes.

In a brief statement, the high court told President Nixon's lawyer, James St. Clair, to file an "expedited" response to Special Prosecutor Leon Jaworski's request for an immediate Supreme Court ruling on the dispute.

Mr. St. Clair said he will file his response tomorrow and suggested he will argue that a decision should be issued first by the U.S. Court of Appeals. At issue is Mr. Nixon's refusal to surrender 64 taped conversations that Mr. Jaworski says he needs to try seven of Mr. Nixon's former aides indicted for obstructing justice after the Watergate break-in.

Federal District Judge John Sirica has ordered the President to hand over the tapes, and the next step normally would be for the court of appeals to review that decision. But Mr. Jaworski asked the Supreme Court to take immediate jurisdiction of the dispute, saying the normal appellate course could put off the cover-up trial until spring of 1975.