

Buzhardt in Hospital With Pains in Chest; Condition 'Serious'



Associated Press
**J. Fred Buzhardt Jr. in
Washington Wednesday.**

By PHILIP SHABECOFF
Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, June 13 —

J. Fred Buzhardt Jr., one of President Nixon's two key Watergate defense lawyers, suffered an apparent heart attack early today and was rushed to a hospital.

A spokesman at the Fairfax Hospital in nearby Falls Church, Va., said that Mr. Buzhardt's condition was "serious" but that it had "stabilized."

The illness of Mr. Buzhardt, the 50-year-old counsel to the President, could create difficulties in the legal defense of Mr. Nixon, White House staff members said.

Although he was succeeded earlier this year by James D.

Continued on Page 11, Column 3

Continued From Page 1, Col. 7

St. Clair as Mr. Nixon's chief lawyer before the House impeachment inquiry and in Watergate-related court cases, Mr. Buzhardt is still in charge of the over-all defense of the President, according to some informed accounts.

Mr. Buzhardt also acted as custodian of all tapes and documents related to Watergate and reportedly is far more familiar with these materials than anyone else in the White House.

Asked what the impact of Mr. Buzhardt's illness would be, Mr. St. Clair said: "We've made arrangements to regroup. I am confident we will be able to carry out our responsibilities to any court."

Mr. Buzhardt had been scheduled to appear in United States District Court today in the "plumbers" case involving the break-in of the office of Daniel Ellsberg's former psychiatrist. His place was taken by two other lawyers on the White House legal staff, Jack Chester and Jean A. Staudt.

President Nixon, who is in the Middle East, was informed of Mr. Buzhardt's apparent heart attack.

Mr. Buzhardt, a slow-speaking, seemingly easygoing South Carolinian, had been working long hours. One White House official attached to the legal staff said that Mr. Buzhardt "was the last person I saw when I went home last night."

Under Heavy Pressure

He had reportedly been under heavy pressure preparing for the plumbers' case, particularly in presenting the White House contention that President Nixon's former chief adviser on domestic affairs John D. Ehrlichman, should not be allowed to examine White House materials. Mr. Buzhardt was reported by one official

to have worked all night Tuesday going through the documents in question.

He had also been in charge of putting out the edited transcript of White House tape recordings on April 30, a Herculean task performed on short notice from the President.

Acquaintances said Mr. Buzhardt had looked unusually haggard recently.