St. Clair Still Working But Not for Nixon

By William Claiborne
Washington Post Staff Writer

James D. St. Clair yesterday returned to his home near Boston for the weekend, his role as Richard M. Nixon's impeachment defense lawyer ended although he remains technically a White House special counsel.

White House sources said St. Clair has not submitted a letter of resignation, saying only that he will return to Washington on Monday.

St. Clair reportedly told his White House associates that he no longer is associated with Mr. Nixon's defense, simply by virtue of the fact that his client resigned his office.

St. Clair said the same thing to reporters after Mr. Nixon's farewell speech to his staff.

He did not comment on his plans for the future, and there was no indication from White House sources that the former President had asked St. Clair for assistance in any possible legal difficulties.

Later, at his home in Wellesley, Mas., Clair said he expected to remain on the White House payroll about two weeks, working on "filing and indexing an analysis" of the latest Watergate tapes. He also said he does not believe Congress has the power to grant Mr. Nixon immunity from prosecution.

The 53-year-old Boston attorney, whose White House salary is $42,500 a year, reportedly was distressed when he learned last week that Mr. Nixon had withheld evidence from him for several months.

White House sources have said St. Clair threatened to resign if Mr. Nixon did not publicly acknowledge he had kept from his lawyer the substance of a tape-recorded June 23, 1972, conversation with former Chief of Staff H. R. (Bob) Haldeman

St. Clair, head of a staff of 13 attorneys who worked exclusively on the impeachment defense, was a senior partner of the prestigious Boston law firm, Hale & Door, when he accepted the White House appointment last Jan. 2. He then resigned from the firm.

James D. St. Clair, former Nixon defense attorney, is greeted by his dog at his Wellesley, Mass. home.