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**WHITE HOUSE BARS
WITHDRAWAL NOW
OF NIXON RECORDS**

**Ford Orders Them Retained
Until Watergate Legal
Issues Are Settled**

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Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, Aug. 16 — President Ford, acting through his new legal counsel, ordered today that all of Richard M. Nixon's tape recordings and other documents be held in White House custody until legal issues involving the Watergate affair were resolved.

The move to block removal of the former President's tapes and other documents, at least temporarily, came just two days after Mr. Nixon's former Watergate lawyers held that Administration was tainted by personal property and would be returned to his control.

In announcing the lawyers' ruling on Wednesday, a White House spokesman said that President Ford had not taken part in the decision but that, after it had been made, he had concurred in it.

Ford Reported Upset

Some of those close to Mr. Ford said today that he was upset when he learned subsequently that the decision had been made by James D. St. Clair and J. Fred Buzhardt Jr., the two Nixon lawyers, without full consultation with the office of Leon Jaworski, the special Watergate prosecutor.

J. F. terHorst, the President's press secretary, told reporters at a breakfast gathering this morning, "We don't want to get caught in the backwash of Watergate."

Apparently fearful that his Administration was tainted by the Watergate tape issues, Mr. Ford abruptly appointed Philip W. Buchen yesterday as his own White House counsel, in charge of all legal matters.

Mr. St. Clair left the White House legal staff on Wednesday. The White house announced that Mr. Buzhardt, too, had resigned but would remain on "during the transition period."

Within hours after his appointment, Mr. Buchen met yesterday with representatives

of Mr. Jaworski's office. Mr. Buzhardt also attended the meeting.

After the meeting, the special
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prosecutor's office announced that it had been agreed "that none of the files would be moved pending further discussions and the special prosecutor's office is satisfied with these arrangements."

The White House role in blocking immediate removal of the tapes and documents was disclosed today by J. F. terHorst, the President's press secretary. Speaking on behalf of Mr. Buchen, he said:

"In the interests of allowing timely consideration of possible legal issues raised by the special prosecutor or others, movement of the tapes and documents is being deferred."

Mr. terHorst said that Mr. Buchen had informed him that this development "in no way constitutes a denial that the materials are the personal property of the former President."

Instead, he said, Mr. Buchen felt the action would allow "for orderly and more studied efforts to resolve questions of when and under what conditions possession and sole control of the property should be transferred."

No Nixon Request Reported

Mr. terHorst said that no time had been set, before the latest development, for removal of the tapes and other materials. He also said he knew of no request by Mr. Nixon for prompt return of the materials.

He said it was his understanding that the temporary hold involved all of Mr. Nixon's personal papers, tapes and documents now in "the physical possession of the White House," and not just those that might have a bearing on the Watergate affair.

Among the tapes still in White House custody are 150 recorded conversations between Mr. Nixon and his aides that were subpoenaed by the House judiciary committee during its inquiry into possible impeachment. The subpoena was never complied with.

The informal, unwritten opinion issued Wednesday by Mr. St. Clair and Mr. Buzhardt was based on what the White House termed historical precedents, dating to George Washington, that former Presidents were entitled to take with them records of their Administration.

The custom in recent years had been for former Presidents, or their heirs, to place such documents in Presidential libraries. Technically, such materials, purchased with Government funds, are Government property.

In announcing the ruling on

Wednesday of the two watergate lawyers, the White House said that the decision had been made after consultation with the Watergate prosecutor's office.

Later, however, a White House spokesman amended this by saying that the prosecutor's office had been informed, but not consulted, before the decision was announced.