

SF Examiner JUN 1 1973

Watergate Bugs Nixon Top Aide in San Jose

Special to The Examiner

SAN JOSE — President Nixon's chief surrogate, Herb Klein, spent an hour yesterday trying to shift local leaders attention from the Watergate scandal.

But questions from Santa Clara University's Kenna Club audience dwelled three-to-one on the subject Klein insisted should be "put aside so that we may move ahead in vital and important matters."

"I can only assure you that the President had no involvement or had any prior knowledge or played any part in it," Klein said of the illegal activities at Watergate.

International affairs, de-

fense budgeting, social services, negotiations with Russia, China, Hanoi and France were involved as being more important than "criticism, carping, nitpicking and excessive attention" being paid Watergate, according to Klein.

Klein, White House communications director, asserted that "the President's strong leadership" had rallied morale of the White House staff.

Speaking of a 26 year friendship with President Nixon, Klein emphasized that there would be no resignation from the presidency, adding that "he is strongest during a crisis."