

Nixon Lawyers Listened Pre-Watergate Tapes

Washington

President Nixon's lawyers recently reviewed tapes of White House conversations that took place shortly before the Watergate break-in, court records showed yesterday.

Logs of the tapes showed that J. Fred Buzhardt, special presidential counsel on Watergate, removed from a White House vault the recordings of May 25, 1972, and June 12, 1972 — both dates prior to the break-in at Democratic headquarters on June 17, 1972.

The White House has re-

peatedly denied that any presidential aides helped plan — or even knew in advance — about the burglary. There was nothing in the documents to indicate the purpose of Buzhardt's review.

Meanwhile, it was learned that Watergate special prosecutor Leon Jaworski has written the White House at least six letters seeking tapes and other evidence in the coverup and related investigations.

The related investigations are concerned with allegations that the Administration favored dairy interests in re-

turn for contributions totaling \$427,500 toward Mr. Nixon's reelection campaign and charges that senior government officials sought to misuse the Internal Revenue Service for political and personal objectives.

In a November 15 letter, Jaworski, asking Buzhardt for three tapes, said he was hopeful the potential evidence would be turned over by November 25.

A spokesman for Jaworski, acknowledging that the material has not been obtained, said yesterday the deadline was not "hard-and-fast." He said Jaworski is pressing his demands, but declined to elaborate.

Court hearings that had been scheduled to continue yesterday into the erasure of 18 minutes on a June 20, 1972, White House recording were postponed until Tuesday. At that time testimony will be heard from White House chief of staff Alexander M. Haig Jr. and John C. Bennett, a deputy to Haig who maintains logs of the tapes.

Presidential counsel Leonard Garment said Haig was not available to testify yesterday because he was busy

with other White House matters, including the energy crisis.

Los Angeles Times