

White House Film Deal by Hoffa Figure

Washington

The White House disclosed yesterday that William Taub, the mysterious figure who acted as "legal counsel" for James R. Hoffa in his recent attempt to visit North Vietnam, arranged and attended a White House showing of a film on China shortly before President Nixon's China trip last February.

Herbert G. Klein, director of communications for Mr. Nixon, said that he set up the White House screening of the film provided by Taub, "Mao's China," for staff members who wished to come up on China.

He said that Mr. Nixon was not present, and that Taub was told that the House showing should not be taken as an endorsement of the film.

However, court papers in a New York lawsuit over the rights to the Yugoslav-made documentary film allege that Taub was a "clever confidence man" who claimed friendship with the President and used Mr. Nixon's name in efforts to pressure the major television networks to buy the film.

The suit, plus investigative records obtained by the New York Times, pictured a bizarre series of incidents in which Taub allegedly invoked the names of numerous famous men without permission — starting with New York Mayor James J. Walker in 1932 and including Presidents Truman, Eisenhower and Nixon.

His activities had passed virtually unnoticed until last week, when it was disclosed that he had managed to hold meetings in recent weeks with Henry A. Kissinger, Mr. Nixon's foreign policy adviser, Deputy Attorney General Ralph Erickson, and other high officials who thought he was a lawyer trying to arrange for Hoffa to negotiate with the North Vietnamese for the release of American prisoners of war.

That effort collapsed when Secretary of State William P. Rogers opposed it as private interference with international negotiations. There was also criticism over the disclosure that Taub's purpose was to persuade the government to drop its probation restrictions which bar Hoffa from returning to his post as president of the Teamsters International Union.

N.Y. Times Service