

6 NIXON LAWYERS HELP ON DEFENSE

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Buzhardt Heads Operation at the White House, With Garment His Partner

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WASHINGTON, JULY 10—At least a half-dozen lawyers are working at the White House on President Nixon's defense in the Watergate case, either full time or nearly full time.

J. Fred Buzhardt Jr., a former counsel to the Department of Defense, heads the operation, with Leonard Garment, the acting White House counsel, working as his partner while also handling a large number of other matters for the President.

Charles Alan Wright, a professor at the University of Texas Law School, has been working as a \$150-a-day consultant with an office next to Mr. Garment's. Mr. Wright, a conservative constitutional lawyer who argued in the Supreme Court against the vote for 18-year-olds is temporarily in Europe, but he is expected to return to work at the White House next week.

Legal Underpinning

According to informed sources, Mr. Wright provided much of the legal underpinning for Mr. Nixon's refusal to appear before the Senate Watergate committee or to turn White House documents over to it.

Other members of the staff are Robert R. Andrews, borrowed from the Department of Defense; Douglas Parker, borrowed from the Department of Housing and Urban Development, and Thomas P. Marinis Jr., a 30-year-old associate in the Houston Law firm of John B. Connally, the sources reported.

Little has been made known about the Buzhardt group's operations by White House spokesmen, and Mr. Buzhardt

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did not respond to repeated requests for information. But other Presidential aides gave a fairly detailed account of the situation.

"They've tried hard to orchestrate the White House response to all the charges and countercharges," one official said of the lawyers, "but things keep getting away from them, and I don't think the public impression is a very favorable one."

Mr. Garment or Mr. Buzhardt or both regularly brief the White House press secretary, Ronald L. Ziegler, or his deputy, Gerald L. Warren, before they brief the press, telling them what questions they can answer and how far they can go.

But none of the lawyers knew, for example, that Mrs. David Eisenhower, the President's youngest daughter, was going to say last week that her father had considered resigning. Mr. Warren subsequently insisted that Mr. Nixon had never seriously entertained such a thought, and Mrs. Eisenhower insisted just as firmly that he had. Mr. Warren said today that he would say no more at that point.

Another Snag Cited

Another snag developed when the ad hoc lawyers' group—set up because the White House had been cut off from the Department of Justice by Attorney General Elliot L. Richardson—prepared a set of questions to be used in the interrogation of John W. Dean 3d.

The questions for the deposed White House counsel were supplied to Senator Daniel K. Inouye of Hawaii, a Democrat, "for his own use in formulating questions," one of the lawyers said. They had been only roughly formulated, he added, and they "were full of typos and blank page references and so on."

But Mr. Inouye read the questions verbatim, offering Mr. Dean a chance to answer them. The lawyers, watching on television, were stunned. One of them said that he had felt he had been "sandbagged."

The White House disavowed the memo in which the questions were conveyed, one source said, because it seemed to place the blame on former Attorney General John N. Mitchell, something the lawyers did not feel it appropriate to do publicly.

Mr. Garment and Mr. Buzhardt have conferred repeatedly with Samuel Dash, the Senate committee's chief counsel, both by telephone and in person. But there is no indication that they have talked with any members of the committee.

Neither man is believed to see Mr. Nixon very often. Mr. Warren conceded today, however, that Mr. Buzhardt had talked with the President at Sn Clemente, Calif., last Tuesday about the Presidential statement issued on Saturday.

At the time, the White House denied that Mr. Nixon had received any unannounced visitors. Mr. Warren said "there was no intention not to announce" the Buzhardt visit and attributed the failure to announce it to "staff inefficiency."

The sources said that Mr. Buzhardt and Mr. Garment were primarily responsible for the President's May 22 statement on Watergate, but that Mr. Parker, Mr. Ziegler, Gen. Alexander M. Haig Jr., the President's chief of staff, and Raymond Price and Patrick Buchanan, speech writers, had also worked on it.