

# Privilege Use Seen Relaxing

The White House may relax part of a claim of executive privilege and produce papers relating to whether the Internal Revenue Service has been used to grant or deny tax exemptions for political reasons, the Justice Department has indicated.

In a letter to U.S. District Court Judge Charles R. Richey, Deputy Assistant Attorney General Richard M. Roberts said the White House will search the "impounded" files of several former presidential aides "in an effort to locate documents" relative to the lawsuit brought by Ralph Nader's Center on Corporate Responsibility.

Roberts told the court July 19 that the White House would not comply with Richey's July 6 order to produce papers, mentioned by former White House counsel John W. Dean III in testimony before the Senate Watergate committee, saying the President had "impounded" them.

Richey asked Roberts to make another try to get their release voluntarily,

saying that he might expand his order, at the request of the center's attorney, Thomas A. Troyer, to include all White House materials relating to tax-exempt organizations. The July 6 order sought only papers relating to or mentioning the center.

The new movement by the White House, Roberts said, came from Fred J. Buzhardt, special counsel to the President. Roberts said that Buzhardt's office will search impounded files of Charles W. Colson, John D. Ehrlichman, H. R. Haldeman, John N. Mitchell, Maurice H. Stans, John J. Caulfield and Dean.

"This search will be in an effort to locate any documents relative to the plaintiff. They will also attempt to locate any documents relative to White House interests in left-wing activists organizations or tax-exempt organizations as a whole," Roberts wrote.

Roberts added that the White House "will not release any of the tapes and, specifically, the tape asked by plaintiffs of the conversation between the President and Messrs. Ehrlichman and Dean relative to Internal Revenue Service action on 'enemies.'"

The center, a non-profit research group also known as Campaign GM, tried for 2½ years to be ruled tax-exempt before filing a suit last May 2 to force IRS to qualify it. The center said the extreme delay had shut off contributions and all but killed it.