

# Nixon 'Trade off' -- Cox for the Tapes

By Clifton Daniel  
New York Times \*

## Washington

President Nixon's capitulation to the courts yesterday strengthened the suspicions of those who felt that his purpose in initially refusing to give the Watergate tapes to federal Judge John J. Sirica was not so much to preserve the confidentiality of presidential communications as to get rid of special prosecutor Archibald Cox.

Once rid of Cox, whom he dismissed on Saturday, the President agreed yesterday to Sirica's demand that he turn over tape recordings of nine conversations in his offices about the break-in at Democratic National Committee headquarters on July 17, 1972.

Previously, the President had proposed to give the judge only a summary of the conversations, verified by Senator John C. Stennis (Dem-Miss.), a friend of the President.

Cox was dismissed ostensibly because he refused to accept this arrangement and because he refused to suspend his efforts to obtain

## A Denial on Nixon Fund

### Washington

The White House denied yesterday that President Nixon had a \$1 million investment portfolio.

ABC News reported Monday night that an unidentified witness from Miami had alleged to Watergate special prosecutor Archibald Cox's staff that Mr. Nixon had a "private investment fund" administered through a bank owned by the President's friend, Charles G. (Bebe) Rebozo.

Associated Press

these and other White House communications through judicial proceedings.

### CONTRIVED

According to the President's opponents, and some of his supporters as well, the confrontation over the tapes was either contrived or happened to give the President and his legal advisers a reason to discharge Cox.

"Here was this guy," said one of the President's friends, "with 80 lawyers swarming all over the government, and trying to nail Richard Nixon. They were

not out to discover the truth, but to prove a case. The President could not stand for that."

As long ago as August it was being rumored among Washington lawyers that Mr. Nixon was uneasy about the special prosecutor.

Cox, the lawyers observed, appeared to be making deals with the lesser defendants in the Watergate conspiracy and was presumably lining them up as witnesses against the bigger fish.

Aside from the Watergate case, it was rumored that the special prosecutor was looking into reports that political campaign contributions had been diverted into an investment company organized by Mr. Nixon's friends with himself as the ultimate beneficiary.

Among the funds mentioned in this context was a contribution of \$100,000 from the billionaire industrialist Howard Hughes. This money was contributed after the 1968 campaign, and was allegedly held in a safe deposit box for three years by Charles C. (Bebe) Rebozo, one of the President's closest friends, before being returned to Hughes.

One of the mysteries in this speculative account of events is why a shrewd businessman such as Rebozo would keep \$100,000 idle for

three years, instead of putting it to work in politics or the marketplace.

### friends

Because of Cox's probing into such questions, Mr. Nixon — the theory goes — had become the hostage of his friends: If they were going to protect him from the taint of affairs in which they had been involved he had to protect them from special prosecutor Cox.

All arguments against surrendering the tapes to Sirica were abandoned by the President's lawyer in Sirica's court yesterday.

That action suggested that Mr. Nixon really was not concerned about what the tapes might disclose. It left some questions: What is Mr. Nixon concerned about? Why would he put the courts and the country through all these contortions only to surrender tamely at the end?

\*NYT version is longer.