

4 of Tapes Cleared for Grand Jury

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U.S. District Court Chief Judge John J. Sirica said yesterday that four of President Nixon's subpoenaed Watergate tapes could be turned over to the grand jury immediately.

Sirica granted a request by Watergate Special Prosecutor Leon Jaworski that there be no delay in the grand jury's hearing the tapes. The judge said it was up to Jaworski when the tapes would be heard by the grand jury, but the prosecutor's office declined to say when that would be.

All four tapes are of meetings between Mr. Nixon and his former counsel, John W. Dean III. In sworn testimony, Dean has said those were among the meetings at which he gave Mr. Nixon full details of the Watergate cover-up.

Sirica said he would start Monday his review of the five other tapes turned over by the White House earlier this week. The White House contends the five tapes should be withheld because they do not relate to Watergate and therefore are protected by executive privilege.

Sirica said he would review them and make the final decision on whether they should go to the grand jury.

The judge's announcement came after a closed hearing on the White House claim that five of the tapes should be kept confidential under the doctrine of executive privilege. He indicated the White House did not oppose giving the four tapes to the grand jury at once.