

Rose Mary 'Awfully Upset' At White House Lawyers

Washington.....

Rose Mary Woods is "awfully upset," her lawyer said last night, about the way that the White House lawyers have been handling the case of the 18-minute gap in a Watergate tape — and the way that they have been portraying her role in creating that gap.

The lawyer, Charles S. Rhyne, made it clear that he is upset as well, and that he feels that the White House lawyers have behaved improperly in their dealings with Miss Woods.

And, he said, he has been getting telephone calls from lawyers across the country, and those lawyers are "absolutely incensed at the lawyers" in the White House.

Last Monday, Miss Woods, President Nixon's personal secretary, testified that she

had inadvertently pressed the wrong button on her tape recorder while reviewing the tape on October 1. When she realized her mistake, she re-played the tape, she said, and found that for a few minutes, all she could hear was a "shrill" buzzing.

Miss Woods testified that she did not think her "terrible mistake," as she had phrased it, could have obliterated the entire 18-minute segment. But in a written document presented to the court last Monday in the President's behalf, one of his lawyers, J. Fred Buzhardt Jr., said that the entire gap was believed to be caused by that error.

Newsweek magazine quotes Rhyne, in its edition to be released today, as telling a friend that the White House lawyers were "throwing" Miss Woods "to the wolves," and that they sent

her to court "like a lamb to the slaughter."

In a telephone interview last night, Rhyne said that he did not "know where Newsweek got those quotes," for he had not spoken to anyone from the magazine or indeed, he said, discussed the case with any of his friends.

But he readily conceded — as he indicated at times in court last week — that he was unhappy with the manner in which the President's legal staff has been dealing with Miss Woods.

Rhyne's complaints go back to Miss Woods' first appearance in the case on November 8. At that point, testifying in U.S. district court here before Judge John J. Sirica, Miss Woods told of using "every possible precaution" in transcribing the tape recordings.

"Everyone said to me: 'Be terribly careful.'" she said then. "I don't think I'm so stupid that they had to go over and over it."

As Rhyne, who came into the case ten days ago sees it, the White House lawyers present in court that day were, in effect, Miss Woods' lawyers. And as her lawyers, he said last night, they had a duty to correct the record and remove any "ambiguity."

"One of the things you're supposed to do isn't let the record look bad for your client," he said.

When Sirica asked Miss Woods last week why she had not told him on November 8 about the gap, she said that no one had asked her and that she had believed then that the tape recording in question — of President Nixon's conversation on June 20, 1972, with H.R. Haldeman — was not subpoenaed.

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