

SENATE PANEL ASKS SURRENDER OF TAPES

WASHINGTON, Feb. 25 (UPI)—Pressing its effort to get Presidential tapes, the Senate Watergate committee argued today that the recordings "would prove of immense, perhaps decisive, value in determining the extent of malfeasance in the executive branch."

The committee presented its case in a 40-page brief it submitted to the United States Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia in support of its appeal of District Judge Gerhard A. Gesell's refusal to order President Nixon to surrender the tapes.

Judge Gesell ruled on Jan. 25 that the committee's needs must be subordinated to criminal proceedings now under way. Indictments are expected from the Watergate grand jury this week, and at least two trials have been set.

The Senate committee is seeking five tapes of conversations between Mr. Nixon and his former White House counsel, John W. Dean 3d. Mr. Dean said that the conversations dealt with the Watergate cover-up, a contention that the White House has denied.

The committee has received conflicting evidence as to the extent of the wrongdoing at the pinnacle of government, much of it through testimony authorized by the President himself, the brief said. "As our statement demonstrates, there has been seriously potentially credible evidence presented to the committee tending to show that the Chief Executive himself was engaged in wrongdoing."