

Nixon Aide Is Meeting Key GOP Congressmen

Washington

President Nixon's special Watergate counsel, James D. St. Clair, has been meeting privately on Capitol Hill with key Republicans, apparently in an effort to win support for President Nixon's refusal to give Watergate evidence to the House Judiciary Committee.

Senator Bill Brock (Rep-Tenn.), disclosed yesterday that St. Clair had met earlier in the day with a group of Congressmen to discuss the impasse over the evidence.

House Republican leader John J. Rhodes of Arizona confirmed in a telephone interview that St. Clair went to Rhodes' Capitol Hill office last Wednesday to brief vice President Gerald Ford and himself in the same matter.

Brock said the discussion he had taken part in revolved around concern about "cooperation with the committee," but he declined to say who else had been involved.

Meanwhile, sources said that special prosecutor Leon Jaworski is considering issuing a subpoena to force the

White House to deliver documents that have been withheld from the Watergate investigation.

According to sources familiar with the investigation, the decision to subpoena the evidence may already have been made, but public disclosure of such a move would come only if the White House refused to honor the subpoena.

Such a decision on Jaworski's part could lead to a serious confrontation and significantly affect the current impeachment inquiry. The evidence that has thus far been denied Jaworski's office includes some of the same information the White House has refused to deliver to the House Judiciary Committee's impeachment inquiry.

It may also include some of the same information requested by former special prosecutor Archibald Cox in October shortly before he was dismissed by the White House.

Common Cause, the citizens' lobby, said yesterday there are no constitutional

grounds or historical precedents to justify a president's withholding information from Congress in an impeachment inquiry.

"It is absurd . . . for the person whose conduct is in question to be able to dictate what should be produced or who should decide that question," Common Cause chairman John W. Gardner wrote Representative Peter Rodino (Dem-N.J.), who heads the House Judiciary Committee.

The letter was accompanied by a 34-page memorandum of law, prepared by Kenneth J. Guido Jr., lawyer for Common Cause.

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