

# RICHARDSON SAYS TAPES ARE CRUCIAL

Asserts Recordings 'Could  
Very Well Tip' the Case  
Against the President

By RICHARD L. MADDEN  
Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, April 28 —  
Former Attorney General Elliot  
L. Richardson said today that  
the White House tape record-  
ings being sought by the  
House Judiciary Committee  
impeachment inquiry "could  
very well tip" the case "one  
way or the other."

Mr. Richardson said that a  
failure of President Nixon to  
comply fully with the commit-  
tee's subpoena for the tapes  
would lead to "adverse infer-  
ences" about Mr. Nixon's in-  
volvement in the Watergate-  
related matters.

Asked in an interview on the  
National Broadcasting Com-  
pany's "Meet the Press" tele-  
vision program if he thought



Associated Press  
Elliot L. Richardson  
shielding eyes from TV  
lights before taping inter-  
view Saturday.

sufficient evidence had been  
made public yet on whether  
Mr. Nixon was guilty of an in-  
dictable offense, Mr. Richard-  
son replied:

"I don't think that the evi-  
dence that we know about as  
newspaper readers or tele-  
vision listeners is quite enough.  
I think the case is close and  
this, of course, is why the  
tapes are as important as they  
are.

"They could very well tip it  
one way or the other, and this  
is why, also, a failure to pro-  
duce tapes would, I think, legiti-  
mately give rise to adverse in-  
ferences as to any ambiguities  
that otherwise exist."

Senator Jacob K. Javits, Re-  
publican of New York, who was  
interviewed on the CBS Inc.  
"Face the Nation" program,  
said that Mr. Nixon should give  
the Judiciary Committee "every-

thing."

A committee subpoena de-  
manding the tapes of some 42  
conversations of Watergate-re-  
lated conversations is return-  
able by 10 A.M. Tuesday.

Mr. Nixon, who spent the  
weekend at the Presidential re-  
treat at Camp David, Md., met  
with Ronald L. Ziegler, the  
White House press secretary,  
and Gen. Alexander M. Haig Jr.,  
the President's chief of staff,  
presumably to discuss his re-  
sponse to the subpoena.

Dean Burch, counselor to the  
President, told the Republican  
National Committee Friday that  
Mr. Nixon would turn over to  
the House Committee "massive  
body of evidence" that, he said,  
would be "substantial, relevant,  
compelling and persuasive."

White House officials have  
suggested, however, that it was  
likely that Mr. Nixon would  
turn over transcripts with  
"irrelevant" sections and coarse  
language deleted, rather than  
the tape recordings themselves.

The officials have also said  
that the President was con-  
sidering a public appeal, possi-  
bly in a nationwide television  
address tomorrow night, to  
urge acceptance of his position  
and to reassert his innocence  
of any wrongdoing.

Representative Peter W.  
Rodino Jr., Democrat of New  
Jersey who is chairman of the  
Judiciary Committee, has re-  
peatedly said that he and the  
committee would reject trans-  
cripts submitted instead of the  
tape recordings.

Mr. Richardson said in his  
television appearance that the  
supplying of edited transcripts  
would be an insufficient re-  
sponse to the subpoena.

"I think," he said, "the Ju-  
diciary Committee has a right  
to know what has been omitted,  
in effect, and to exercise some  
independent judgment as to  
what is relevant to its purposes,  
and I don't think that for the  
President unilaterally to furnish  
what he thinks is relevant and  
say 'That is all you get' is a suf-  
ficient response to the sub-  
poenas."

Mr. Richardson, who resigned  
last Oct. 20 rather than comply  
with Mr. Nixon's order to dis-  
miss Archibald Cox, then the  
Watergate special prosecutor,  
said that "the pattern" would  
bother him if he were a House  
member weighing impeachment.

He added:

"The direct answer is I don't  
think that the evidence is suf-  
ficient in any given situation  
—milk, I.T.T., cover-up of Wa-  
tergate—to, as we know it  
now, directly to implicate the  
President, but the cumulative  
pattern of these things sur-  
rounding the President in each  
case involving somebody next  
to him in responsibility cre-  
ates a really troublesome ques-  
tion as to the degree to which  
one can infer his responsibility,  
and that is why I say a failure  
on his part now fully to meet  
the requests for tapes justifies  
an adverse inference on this  
every question."