

Nixon Depicted in
Transcripts as Having
Searched for Ways to
Hide Details of
Watergate

MAY 1 1974

DEMOCRATS MEET

Weigh a Citation for
'Noncompliance'—
G.O.P. Is Balking

NYTimes

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Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, April 30—
Democrats on the House Judiciary
Committee are weighing a
formal move to cite President
Nixon for "noncompliance"
with the committee's April 11
subpoena of White House tape
recordings.

But most Republicans on the
38-member panel are balking at
the legal challenge to the
President, and a number of
them voiced qualified acceptance
today of the White House
substitution of 1,308 pages of
edited transcripts for the
subpoenaed recordings.

The possibility of a "non-
compliance" citation—a first,
restrained step toward either
citing Mr. Nixon for contempt
of Congress or including his re-
fusal to yield the tapes among
any eventual articles of im-
peachment—emerged within
hours of the arrival on Capitol
Hill of a black station wagon
bearing 38 sets of the White
House transcripts.

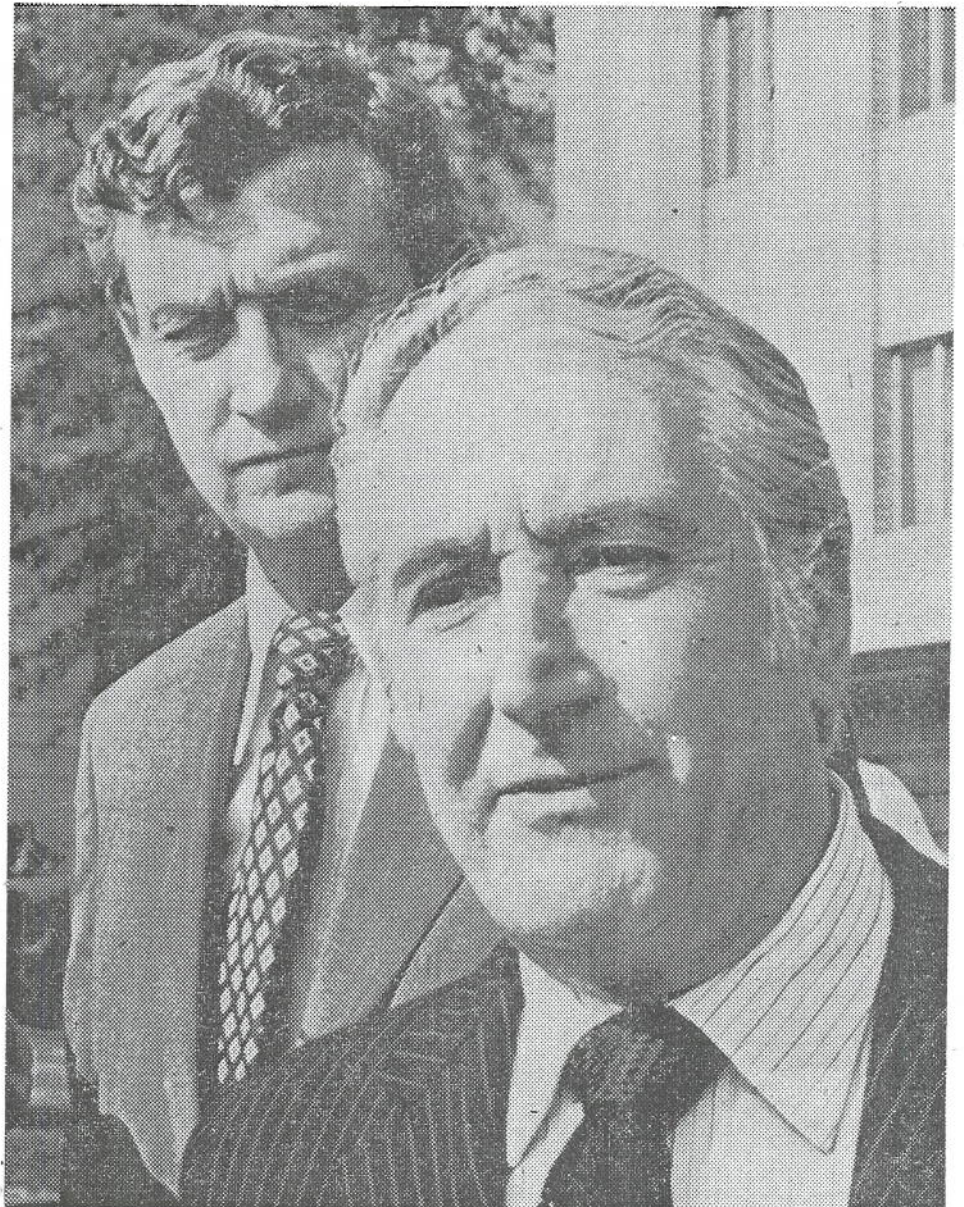
Voters Send Telegrams

Offices of the committee
members were deluged, at the
same time, with telegrams from
voters urging the panel to in-
sist on obtaining copies of the
relevant White House tapes.

The committee chairman,
Representative Peter W. Rodino
Jr., Democrat of New Jersey,
scheduled a meeting for tomor-
row night to consider the
panel's next move in the im-
peachment inquiry.

Democrats, who met private-
ly late today to discuss the
"noncompliance" motion, said
they would attempt to win Re-
publican support for it before
the 7 P.M. meeting. One par-
ticipant in the closed Demo-
cratic caucus said that Mr. Ro-
dino had spoken of "the
dilemma of not wanting to split
open the committee but not
wanting to appear weak" in the
transcripts today expressed

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The New York Times/George Tames

Peter W. Rodino Jr., chairman of the House Judiciary Committee, and John M. Doar, chief counsel, left, leaving the Congressional Hotel, where the committee has its headquarters. They had spent the day there reading edited transcripts from White House.

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face of the White House re-
fusal to comply fully with the
subpoena.

Committee members, includ-
ing some Republicans, who
read portions of the edited
mounting dissatisfaction with
the President's response to the
subpoena of 42 taped conver-
sations believed to bear on the
Watergate cover-up attempt.

Deficiencies Cited

The House members cited
what they called the following
major deficiencies in Mr. Nix-
on's reply:

¶Eleven of the 42 conversa-
tions listed in the committee
subpoena were not among the
discussions recounted in the
transcripts. The White House
said that nine were never re-
corded and two could not be
located.

Mr. Nixon made no reply,
publicly or privately through
his lawyers, to an April 19 re-
quest from the committee for
a number of additional tapes
and documents dealing with
the alleged Watergate cover-
up, the controversial antitrust
action against the Internation-
al Telephone and Telegraph
Corporation and large political
gifts from milk producers to
paign.

¶Although the President of-
fered to let the committee's
Democratic chairman, Repre-
sentative Peter W. Rodino Jr.,
of New Jersey, and ranking
Republican, Representative Ew-
ward Hutchinson of Michigan,
audit the tapes to verify the
accuracy of the transcripts, he
made no provision for the com-
mittee lawyers to join in the
process. Some Republicans, in-
cluding the House Republican
leader, John J. Rhodes of
Arizona, said they had object-
ed to the ban on committee
counsel in a screening process.

¶The White House, according

to Representative William S. Cohen, Republican of Maine, ruled out any technical tests on the withheld tape recordings to verify that they had not been tampered with.

¶The edited transcripts yielded by the President, and made public later today, contained numerous passages marked "unintelligible" or "expletive deleted." Representative Robert F. Drinan, Democrat of Massachusetts, said it was "almost impossible to piece them together."

G.O.P. Accord Reported

Republicans on the Committee, outnumbered 21 to 17 by the Democrats, met this afternoon behind closed doors with House Republican leaders. Mr. Rhodes said after the meeting that "the overwhelming majority" believed Mr. Nixon was in "substantial compliance" with the subpoena.

Well-placed sources close to the Democratic majority said that at least four of the Republicans were tentatively prepared to support a motion citing Mr. Nixon for "compliance." The sources refused to name the Republicans, but said that two of them were "shaky" and that a vote on the motion would probably be postponed until the Republicans could take time to study the transcripts and "detect the flaws" in Mr. Nixon's reply to the subpoena.

Mr. Nixon said in a nationally televised address last night that the transcripts should finally "get Watergate behind us." But some committee members noted pointedly today that the material yielded by the White House did not touch at all on other issues last week as "priority matters" in the investigation of the President's official conduct.

Among these matters were the President's Federal income tax payments from 1969 through 1972, the secret 1969

bombing of Cambodia and the \$100,000 cash campaign gift offered by Howard R. Hughes, the reclusive billionaire, to Mr. Nixon's close friend, Charles G. Rebozo.

Most Republican Representatives, such as Trent Lott of Mississippi and Lawrence J. Hogan of Maryland, expressed misgivings about Mr. Nixon's refusal to yield the actual tapes. But they said that the President's reply was, as Mr. Lott put it, "a situation I can accept."

But another Republican, Representative Tom Railsback of Illinois, said that Mr. Nixon should "go one step farther and supply edited tapes" to the impeachment inquiry. He also said the White House should permit the panel's special counsel, John W. Doar, and chief Republican counsel, Albert E. Jenner Jr., to sit in on any White House audits of the recordings.

Representative Cohen, a Republican, also said it was "inescapable" that the committee was entitled to "the benefit of every shred of evidence that would implicate or exonerate the President."

'Laughter' Notation

He said, for instance, that one of the transcripts contained the notation, in parentheses, that there was "laughter" during a Presidential discussion.

"Laughter means different things when you hear it," Mr. Cohen said. "It can carry different connotations" that only the listener to the recording might be able to detect.

Several Republicans also said they had been advised that the Judiciary Committee possessed better audio equipment than the White House and that, accordingly, the committee might be able to determine those parts of conversations excised in the transcripts as "unintelligible." The committee staff was said to include an unnamed blind woman who, according to Mr. Cohen and others, has an enhanced sense of hearing.

Representative Robert McClory of Illinois, the second-ranking Republican, endorsed Mr. Nixon's transcript offer. But his office reported that he had received telegrams bearing messages including the following:

"Don't buy it. The tapes, the whole tapes, nothing but the tapes."

"If the subpoena was worth issuing, it is worth enforcing."

Outpouring of Messages

Similar bundles of messages were stacked up in Chairman Rodino's office and other committee members said the volume was the largest on impeachment since the President's dismissal of the first special Watergate prosecutor, Archibald Cox, touched off a national storm—and prompted the impeachment inquiry—last October.

Democrats reacted promptly to the prodding of the constituents. Representative Jerome R. Waldie of California said the transcripts were unacceptable because "we don't know whether the transcripts are accurate, we don't know whether the tapes are accurate, we don't know whether they've been altered."

Another Democrat, Representative Charles B. Rangel of Manhattan, leafed through transcripts in his office and declared:

"These are no more than summaries. The dots come where they shouldn't come, the dashes come where they shouldn't be. These things serve no legal purpose in reply to our subpoena."