

2d Nixon Subpoena Hinted By House Panel Members

NYTimes

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Special to The New York Times

MAY 7 1974

WASHINGTON, May 6 —

Members of the House Judiciary Committee warned today that they would be forced to serve a second subpoena on President Nixon if he refused to comply with an April 19 request for tape recordings of 141 more White House conversations sought for the impeachment inquiry.

The determination of both Republicans and Democrats on the Judiciary Committee to pursue the April 19 request appeared to be directly related to their study of the 1,254 pages of edited transcripts issued by the White House last week in reply to an earlier subpoena of 42 Watergate-related conversations.

Senators and Representatives, some of whom said they had read all or most of the White House narrative over the weekend, generally described its contents as harmful to the President's prospects of avoiding impeachment—or withheld any judgment on the transcripts.

But members of the House Judiciary Committee began talking, in bipartisan terms, during interviews today about insisting that the President make a satisfactory reply to the committee's second, and substantially larger, request for impeachment evidence.

Representative Charles E. Wiggins, a California Republican, whose vote was one of three against the April 11 subpoena of the 42 Watergate-related conversations, said today that the panel would "have to vote soon on what to do to compel production" of the additional White House material.

He said that two of the matters covered by the request

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amounted to charges of bribery against the President and that we have an obligation to determine if those charges are correct."

The April 19 request was for a number of White House documents plus tapes of 75 conversations bearing on the alleged Watergate cover-up, 46 discussions related to Mr. Nixon's 1971 decision to increase Federal milk price supports, and 20 conversations pertaining to the 1971 settlement of Government antitrust action against the International Telephone and Telegraph Company.

A Judiciary Committee staff study, sent to the panel members last week, justified the request for the milk case material by citing evidence that purported to draw a circumstantial link between Mr. Nixon's decision to raise the price support levels and a pledge from dairy cooperative groups, to contribute \$2-million to the President's re-election campaign.

The White House has not formally replied to the April 19 request, although Presidential spokesmen have said for a week, and reiterated today, that Mr. Nixon had supplied all the material the Judiciary Committee needed to complete its impeachment inquiry.

James D. St. Clair, the President's special counsel, disclosed this afternoon that lawyers for the committee had again asked him for a definite response to the April 19 request. Mr. St. Clair said he would attempt to arrange a meeting with John M. Doar, the panel's special counsel, and Albert E. Jenner Jr., the chief Republican counsel, to determine "whether we can educate each other" on the relevance of the additional material.

White House Seeks Limit

The White House has sought to limit the scope of the inquiry to the Watergate burglary and its aftermath. But Republicans and Democrats on the committee said today that was only one part of their investigation into the President's official conduct.

Representative Tom Railsback, Republican of Illinois, said that, if the committee lawyers recommended pursuing the April 19 materials, "I don't see how we can let that drop. We would really be shirking our duty."

Another Republican, Repre-

sentative Hamilton Fish Jr. of upstate New York, said that the "whole volume" of transcripts released by the President last week "bears on a limited number of the allegations before us." He said the White House was "inviting a contempt citation" by disregarding the April 19 request.

Representative Robert W. Kastenmeier, Democrat of Wisconsin, agreed with Mr. Fish's view that the committee had little hope of being able to compel the President to honor the request. Mr. Kastenmeier said that, at the least, "to dramatize it, it probably will be necessary for us to issue a subpoena."

Action Urged Next Week

The Wisconsin Democrat said the panel should wait "not later than next week" for a White House response before issuing a new subpoena.

Representative William L. Hungate, Democrat of Missouri, told interviewers that the additional material was relevant and necessary for the committee inquiry.

"You don't want to get tunnel vision" by focusing solely on the edited White House transcripts of Watergate discussions, Mr. Hungate said.

Like most colleagues on the Judiciary Committee, Mr. Hungate expressed reluctance about making any judgments on the edited transcripts. But he said the White House "atmosphere" represented by the narrative was "very discouraging" and that the transcripts contained "a number of discussions that weren't helpful" to Mr. Nixon.

One of the most loyal Republicans on the committee, Representative Delbert L. Latta of Ohio, told newsmen that the edited transcripts appeared to establish that the President "definitely didn't know anything about the Watergate [cover-up] initially."

But Mr. Latta added that, based on his reading of the material, "there is some question if he knew before March 21," the date in 1973 that Mr. Nixon has said he first learned of potential White House involvement in the scandal.

Mr. Latta said the committee might "have to take a look" at some of the original tape recordings to determine when the President first became aware of the scope of the cover-up attempt.

Mr. Railsback, who joined

other Republicans in voting last week against a Democratic proposal to send Mr. Nixon a letter informing him that he had "failed to comply" with the April 11 subpoena, said today that he too was hopeful the committee would arrange to gain access to at least some of the actual tapes.

Screening by Committee

He said he would be willing to have "edited" tapes, with irrelevant material deleted, but that the committee and its lawyers would have to be able to screen the tapes to be sure pertinent evidence had not been excised.

Mr. Railsback's only comment on the contents of the transcripts was to note that Mr. Nixon had said they might prove to be embarrassing. "I sure agree," Mr. Railsback added.

Representative Wiggins, whose California Congressional district is roughly the same as the district in which Mr. Nixon began his political career in 1946, said he found the transcripts "interesting" and "useful."

Asked if he had found anything in the long narrative that might cause him to change his opinion of the President, Mr. Wiggins replied:

"No. I never believed he, or probably any of us, were saints."

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