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**INQUIRY FOCUSES
ON NIXON IN DAYS
AFTER WATERGATE**

**House Judiciary Unit Plans
Subpoena Today for Tapes
Bearing on the Cover-Up**

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WASHINGTON, May 14—The House Judiciary Committee in its second closed impeachment hearing, focused today on the period immediately after the Watergate burglary in an effort to determine whether President Nixon played any role in the genesis of the attempt to cover up the break-in.

Committee members made plans to subpoena tomorrow 11 more tape recordings of White House conversations. Lawyers for the panel reportedly said that, without this evidence, it would not be possible to clarify Mr. Nixon's early attitude toward the burglary of the Democratic headquarters in the Watergate complex on June 17, 1972.

Albert E. Jenner Jr., the committee's chief Republican counsel, told newsmen at a break in the five-and-one-half-hour meeting that the inquiry into the possible impeachment of the President had moved to "the heart of the cover-up."

Representative Hamilton Fish Jr., Republican of upstate New York, said that the issues raised by the evidence presented to the panel today could be "very critical" to the outcome of the Watergate phase of the inquiry.

First Recording Heard

The committee, which has obtained recordings of 19 White House conversations but has been unsuccessful in trying to gain access to 172 other tapes, heard its first White House recording this afternoon.

Several members of the committee said that John M. Doar, the panel's special counsel on impeachment, had played for them a 30-second portion of a Dictabelt on which Mr. Nixon recorded his recollections of a telephone conversation with former Attorney General John N. Mitchell three days after the Watergate break-in. The White House has said that the phone conversation itself was never recorded. At the time, Mr.

Mitchell was head of Mr. Nixon's re-election campaign.

According to committee members, only about four or five sentences were recorded on the Dictabelt portion played for the panel and there was nothing in them to establish definitively whether or not the President, immediately after the burglary, was aware of any attempts to impede Watergate

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investigators.

The apparent solidarity among Democrats and Republicans on the committee in their expected demand tomorrow for more White House recordings could provoke what James D. St. Clair, the President's chief defense attorney, warned last week would be a constitutional confrontation.

The committee chairman, Representative Peter W. Rodino Jr., Democrat of New Jersey, disclosed after the hearing today that Mr. St. Clair had been rebuffed by the panel in an attempt to submit a memorandum arguing against an attempt to subpoena a particular tape.

The memorandum was not made public, but Congressional sources said that Mr. St. Clair had asserted that the edited White House transcripts of Watergate conversations made public by Mr. Nixon two weeks ago clearly established that Mr. Nixon had no knowledge of the cover-up before MRS 21, 1973.

The material presented to the committee in closed session today was contained in two thick binders. Within the binders were detailed statements of evidence presenting the chronology of the alleged cover-up from June 17, 1972, the date of the burglary, to June 28, 1972.

The evidence followed the presentation last Thursday, also in a closed hearing, of material bearing on the development of the political intelligence-fathering scheme that led up to the burglary.

Mr. St. Clair reportedly argued that the evidence presented to the committee Thursday and today did not warrant any speculation about the President's potential involvement in the early stages of the cover-up attempt.

St. Clair's Argument

As one Democrat on the committee summarized the argument, Mr. St. Clair said that the committee already had all the evidence it needed to clear the President.

The Democratic member said, however, that the evidence "carries a lot of impact" when it is all presented in chronological fashion. Another Democrat was quoted as saying privately that he could "feel the noose tightening" around the White House.

Much of the private discus-

sion this afternoon was said to have dealt with alleged White House attempts in the first days after the break-in to involve the Central Intelligence Agency in blocking the Federal Bureau of Investigation from pursuing its inquiry.

Mr. Rodino declined to specify the conversations to be covered by the subpoena to be considered tomorrow morning. But he said that each of the items would relate to the period already covered by the hearings.

President Nixon, who was at his home in Key Biscayne, Fla., on the date of the Watergate break-in, returned to the White House three days later, on June 20, 1972, and presumably made inquiries then about the burglary and wiretapping of the Democratic party's offices.

No testimony has been presented to date to suggest that immediately after the burglary Mr. Nixon had any knowledge of the extent to which the crime may have involved senior officials of either the White House or the Committee for the Re-election of the President.

Tape Recordings Sought

But the Judiciary Committee asked the President last month, on April 19, to turn over tape recordings of some 75 conversations that might bear on the Watergate case. Among the 75 were six discussions on June 20, 1972, between Mr. Nixon and two key aides — H. R. Haldeman, then the White House Chief of Staff, and Charles W. Colson, then a White House special counsel.

Committee sources said that the subpoena expected tomorrow would cover the tapes of three conversations between the President and Mr. Haldeman on June 23, 1972. The conversations took place at the time that discussions were allegedly going on in the White House about ways that the C.I.A. might be used to block the Watergate investigation.

In addition, the sources said that the subpoena would involve two conversations at the White House on April 4, 1972. The first was a meeting among Mr. Nixon, Mr. Haldeman and Mr. Mitchell about plans for the 1972 campaign. The second was a meeting later that day between the President and Mr. Haldeman, apparently related to the same subject.

The meetings took place five days after the March 30 date on which, according to sworn testimony at the Senate Watergate hearings last summer, Mr. Mitchell authorized a "sophisticated" political intelligence-gathering operation that ultimately involved the Watergate burglary and wiretapping.

Mr. St. Clair said last week that Mr. Nixon had decided not to make available, either to the impeachment inquiry or to the special Watergate prosecutor, any more tapes, transcripts or documents related to the Watergate matter.

Republicans appeared to be

as firm today as Democrats, however, in expressing their intention to issue a subpoena for selected items that the committee staff appeared to consider essential to completing the Watergate phase of the inquiry.

Representative Trent Lott of Mississippi, one of three Republicans who opposed the

committee's earlier attempt to subpoena the recordings of 42 Watergate-related conversations, said in an interview that he would still prefer to obtain White House evidence without resorting to a subpoena.

Mr. Lott added, however, that if the committee lawyers made a compelling argument for obtaining selected conversations he would support a new subpoena.

Members of the committee said that much of the evidence presented to them in secret today dealt with the activities of senior White House and re-election campaign officials and of the Watergate conspirators.

"It was like a movie where they show where every character was at a given moment," said one Democrat on the panel.

Another Democrat, Representative William L. Hungate of Missouri, declined to characterize the substance of the evidence but said that the committee's beginning to delve into the cover-up attempt was "just like piano lessons—we're learning the keyboard."

There were other indications that the presentation to the committee today might ultimately take on significance in the group's deliberations about what role, if any, President Nixon played in the unsuccessful attempt to block discovery of the extent of the Watergate scandal.

"This is a very important day," Representative Tom Railsback, Republican of Illinois, said of the second day of the impeachment hearings.

Committee officials also dis-

closed that the panel's chief counsel, Mr. Doar, was up most of the night piecing together the known facts about the early stage of the alleged cover-up and relating them to the "missing ingredients" — the conversations being withheld by the President.

Representative Fish told newsmen that Mr. Doar had made a case, in effect, for the committee's insistence on obtaining access to the relevant tapes of the June, 1972, conversations.

Mr. St. Clair declined, as he did last Thursday, to discuss the closed deliberations of the committee. He said that he would "take seriously the instructions of the chairman" that he was not permitted to discuss the confidential proceedings.

The President's attorney said that he had reported to Mr. Nixon on the closed hearing last Thursday and that he had asked for permission for members of his legal staff to analyze the committee materials.

As Mr. St. Clair was outside

the Rayburn House Office Building, where the hearings are being conducted, waiting for a White House limousine at the luncheon recess, he chatted briefly with a group of sight-seeing High School students from Portsmouth, Va.

One student, Edward Bond,

handed Mr. St. Clair what the youth described as a "gospel card" and asked that it be delivered to the President. Mr. St. Clair thanked the student and placed the religious article in his pocket.