

'I Respect and Accept' It

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Nixon Statement on High Court Decision

Following is the White House statement on the Supreme Court decision read by the President's special counsel James D. St. Clair:

I have reviewed the decision of the Supreme Court with the President. He's given me this statement, which he's asked me to read to you. And this is the President's statement as he gave it to me:

"My challenge in the courts to the subpoena of the special prosecutor was based on the belief that it was unconstitutionally is-

sued, and on my strong desire to protect the principle of presidential confidentiality in a system of separation of powers.

"While I am, of course, disappointed in the result, I respect and accept the court's decision, and I have instructed Mr. St. Clair to take whatever measures are necessary to comply with that decision in all respects. For the future it will be essential that the special circumstances of this case not be permitted to cloud the right of Presidents to maintain the basic confidentiality

without which this office cannot function. I was gratified, therefore, to note that the court reaffirmed both the validity and the importance of the principle of executive privilege, the principle I had sought to maintain. By complying fully with the court's ruling in this case, I hope and trust that I will contribute to strengthening rather than weakening this principle for the future, so that this will prove to be not the precedent that destroyed the principle but the action that preserved it."

That concludes the President's statement. As we all know, the President has always been a firm believer in the rule of law, and he intends his decision to comply fully with the court's ruling as an action in furtherance of that belief. Therefore, in accordance with his instructions, the time-consuming process of reviewing the tapes subject to the subpoena, and the preparation of the index and analysis required by Judge Sirica's order, will begin forthwith.

Thank you all very much.