

## But St. Clair Indicates There May Be Delay in Yielding Data

By PHILIP SHABECOFF

Special to The New York Times

LAGUNA BEACH, Calif., July 24—President Nixon, abandoning his challenge to the Supreme Court's jurisdiction over him, said today that he would comply with this morning's Court decision on subpoenaed data "in all respects."

In a statement read for him over nationwide television by his attorney, James D. St. Clair,

Statement by White House  
appears on Page 20.

the President said that he was disappointed with the ruling but would nevertheless obey the high court.

"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," the President's statement said.

His acquiescence in the decision apparently ended his contention that a President has an absolute executive privilege immune from review by the nation's highest judicial body.

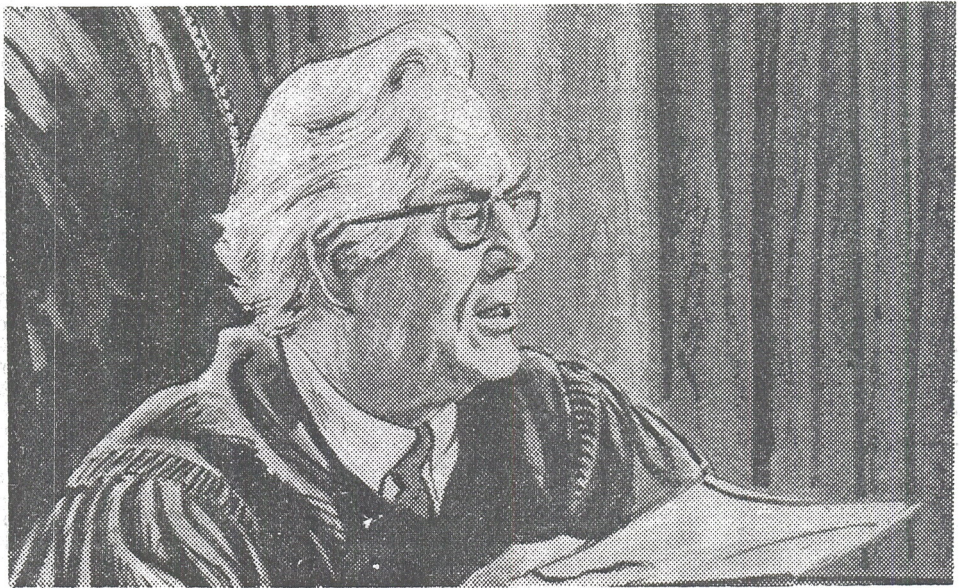
### 'Time-Consuming Process'

However, Mr. St. Clair indicated that the White House would not respond immediately to the Court's order that the President surrender to the Watergate special prosecutor tape recordings and other data concerning 64 White House conversations.

Mr. St. Clair said that in compliance with the President's instructions, the reviewing of the tapes subject to the subpoena and the preparation of an index and of an analysis of the tapes would begin "forthwith." However, he characterized this as a "time-consuming process."

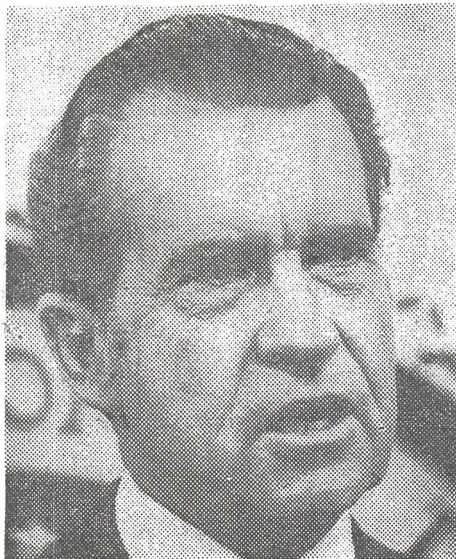
The President's lawyer declined to answer any questions

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NBC News/Betty Wells

Chief Justice Warren E. Burger  
Delivering the Court's opinion, which he wrote



Henry Grossman

President Nixon  
Ordered to give up tapes



United Press International

Leon Jaworski  
Had subpoenaed the tapes

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after reading the statement. But his comment on the difficulties of preparing the tapes may mean that the White House expects a delay in turning them over to the special prosecutor. Mr. St. Clair told one reported recently that it might take a month to prepare the tapes.

Mr. St. Clair did not mention subpoenas issued by the House Judiciary Committee to obtain similar evidence from the White House. He gave no hint as to whether the White House intended to turn over the material sought by the House committee for its impeachment proceedings now that the Supreme Court had ruled in favor of the special prosecutor.

Even while announcing his intention to obey the Supreme Court, President Nixon reaffirmed his belief in the principle of executive privilege.

"For the future," he said in the statement, "it will be essential that the special circumstances of this case not be permitted to cloud the rights 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."



Associated Press

Gerald L. Warren, deputy White House press secretary, during meeting yesterday morning with newsmen in Laguna Beach, Calif. At that time, he refused to comment on Supreme Court's decision on Presidential tapes.



"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 President that destroyed the principle, but the action that preserved it."

President Nixon through his lawyers had argued before the Supreme Court in this case that the President's executive privilege was absolute — that the President could withhold information and evidence from the courts even in a criminal case if he deemed that the action was necessary to preserve the strength of the Presidency.

Today's ruling rejected that assertion. But Mr. Nixon did not refer to the rejection in his statement. He did say, "My challenge in the courts to the subpoena of the special prosecutor was based on the belief that it was unconstitutionally issued, and on my strong desire to protect the principles of Presidential confidentiality in a system of separation of powers."

By accepting the Court's ruling that the privilege of the President is limited, Mr. Nixon is setting a precedent that is bound to carry considerable weight with future Presidents.

Until his statement tonight, he had left the nation in doubt as to whether he would accept a ruling by the high court limiting his executive privilege. Since Leon Jaworski, the special prosecutor, filed his appeal with the Supreme Court on May 24, the President's spokesmen have been refusing to say if the President would obey the court.

Now that question has been answered.

"As we all know," Mr. St. Clair said after reading the President's statement to reporters gathered at the Surf and Sand Hotel here, "the President has always been a firm believer in the rule of law. He intends his decision to comply fully with the Court's ruling as an action in furtherance of that belief."

#### Haig Informed Nixon

President Nixon was informed of the Supreme Court's decision at 8:45 A.M. Pacific Coast time, about 45 minutes after the decision was announced in Washington. His chief of staff, Gen. Alexander M. Haig Jr., informed the President, who was in the study of his San Clemente residence, ac-

ording to his press secretary, Ronald L. Ziegler.

The President met with Mr. St. Clair in the morning and afternoon to review the ruling.

At the Presidential office complex outside the walls of Mr. Nixon's estate, there were both gloom and frenetic activity. Shortly after the details of the Court's decision were learned, the President canceled a meeting with the Secretary of Housing and Urban Development, James T. Lynn. Mr. Lynn then canceled a news conference called to discuss housing legislation.

Other high-ranking members of the White House staff, including General Haig and Mr. Ziegler, canceled appointments and interviews with reporters. Staff members who did go through with interviews appeared preoccupied.

Two members of Mr. St. Clair's staff, Jerome J. Murphy and Michael A. Sterlacci, were at the Supreme Court this morning and relayed the decision to San Clemente by Telecopier.

On July 26, 1973, the deputy White House Press secretary, Gerald L. Warren, said that President Nixon would abide by a "definitive decision of the highest court."

That statement was made in a similar case, a refusal by the President to obey a subpoena for White House tapes from the former Watergate special prosecutor, Archibald Cox.

Mr. Nixon, at a news conference last Aug. 22, said that he endorsed Mr. Warren's statement about how he would react to a Supreme Court order.

That case never reached the Supreme Court. The United States Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit ruled against the President, who turned over the tapes but dismissed Mr. Cox first.

The issue of whether Mr. Nixon would obey a Supreme Court decision arose after Leon Jaworski, Mr. Cox's successor, appealed to the high court on May 24 this year for access to the records of 64 White House conversations. Mr. Jaworski appealed to the Court after the President refused to comply with a subpoena for the data. Mr. Nixon contended that he could withhold such materials in the name of executive privilege.

The following day, Mr. Ziegler was asked by reporters if the President still intended to obey a definitive ruling by the court. Mr. Ziegler said that he would not "speculate" on the President's actions and also declined to reaffirm the earlier statements by Mr. Warren and the President.

After that, the White House consistently refused to say whether Mr. Nixon would submit to the nation's highest court. Last Monday, Mr. St. Clair refused to answer this question, saying that it would be "inappropriate" for him to comment on a case still before the court.

With today's ruling, the case is no longer before the Court.