

SFChronicle
First Batch

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20 Subpoenaed Nixon Tapes Given to Judge

Washington

Lawyers for President Nixon surrendered to U.S. District Judge John J. Sirica yesterday the first 20 subpoenaed tapes that the Supreme Court ordered be turned over to the Watergate prosecution.

James D. St. Clair, Mr. Nixon's chief Watergate attorney, told Sirica a "significant portion" of the remaining subpoenaed tapes and materials covering 64 presidential conversations will be available by Friday.

St. Clair said to his knowledge there are no conversations missing from the tapes.

A White House spokesman had said earlier that a few of the tapes should be withheld from special prosecutor Leon Jaworski on the grounds they contain national security information or are subject to executive privilege, but that subject was not raised in court.

The Supreme Court, in its historic ruling last Wednesday, said Sirica should listen

to the tapes, and judge them for relevancy in the Watergate coverup trial of six former White House or Nixon campaign officials scheduled to begin in September.

St. Clair arrived at the court 15 minutes before the 4 p.m. deadline for turning over the first batch of tapes, accompanied by his assistants and a Secret Service agent carrying a large gray aluminum briefcase containing the tapes.

St. Clair promised to have an index and analysis of the first 20 tapes ready for Sirica and the prosecutors this morning and said he would soon be able to provide documents relating to the conversations for their inspection.

The first 20 tapes covered the conversations in March and April, 1973, which were included in the transcripts released by the White House April 30.

"Are any segments of any conversations missing?" assistant special prosecutor Richard Ben Veniste asked St. Clair.

"Not to my knowledge," he replied. "These were copied mechanically and I have had no reports of any abnormalities."

But he did say that the tape of an April 14, 1973, meeting involving Mr. Nixon and his aides H. R. Halde- man and John D. Ehrlich- man had broken while it was being copied. He said that "rather than gluing it back together, we simply wound it on a new reel." *

He did not indicate if any of the conversation was lost in the break.

St. Clair said the White House Staff had "worked all weekend" searching for the subpoenaed conversations and the notes of those who participated in them. He promised that "If there are presidential notes" as well as those of Mr. Nixon's aides, they also will be sur- rendered.



UPI Telephoto

Nixon attorney James St. Clair (left) and a Secret Service agent delivered tapes to U.S. court.

In all, St. Clair delivered 11 seven-inch reels of original tapes containing the subpoenaed conversations. He also furnished copies of each conversation, one to a reel, so Sirica could find them more easily.

Deputy White House Press Secretary Gerald Warren said Mr. Nixon reviewed

alone in the Lincoln sitting room the tapes being handed over to Sirica.

Warren said that in handing over the tapes, Mr. Nixon planned to make "a few" claims that material be withheld from use in the coverup trial due to start in September.

He would not say how

many claims would be involved, but under the Supreme Court ruling a week ago, which ordered Mr. Nixon to yield the tapes, Sirica will act as the final arbiter of these claims.

Most of the remaining tapes have never been revealed in any form.

United Press

*NYT gives the date of this tape as 19 Apr 73, and says it had been spliced when St. Clair delivered it to the court 7 Aug 74.

NYT 8 Aug 74, John Herbers