

Washington Report

by Arlie Schardt

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Another major piece of legislation -again having considerable ACLU involvement - became law at the end of the year. [Signed by Ford 19 Dec 74.] S.4016, sponsored by Senators Sam Ervin and Gaylord Nelson, will negate the deal in which President Ford gave control of the White House tapes and documents of the White House tapes and documents to Richard Nixon. The bill should help bring about full disclosure of the facts in the Watergate scandal.

House amendments to S. 4016 provide for public access to the tapes and documents 180 days after enactment of the bill, and will place them in the custody of the National Archives rather than under the specified control of its parent, the General Services Administration (GSA). The ACLU had urged removal of the material from overall GSA control because of the partisan political nature of the GSA's entry into the original Ford-Nixon tapes deal.

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*Arlie Schardt is associate director of the ACLU's Washington Office. His Washington Report is a regular feature in Civil Liberties. Its purpose is to provide information on congressional actions you can influence through communication with your congresspersons, the press and other groups.*