

G.S.A. Offers Plan For Making Public The Nixon Tapes

WASHINGTON, March 19 (UPI)—The General Services Administration proposed today that groups of former president Richard M. Nixon's tapes be made public over a three-year period, but probably not before 1977.

The agency also proposed giving top priority to sorting and making public those Nixon Presidential materials relating to abuses of power. Release to the public, it said, also could not begin before about 1977.

The proposals were contained in a report to Congress, which last December gave the G.S.A. custody of the Nixon papers and instructed it to submit a plan by March 19 for processing them. The proposals become effective in 90 days unless Congress vetoes them.

In the report, Arthur F. Sampson, the G.S.A. administrator, said the agency would not begin processing the materials until final settlement of Mr. Nixon's suits challenging the constitutionality of the law and the Government's claim to ownership of the materials. The suits are expected to be appealed to the Supreme Court, and a final ruling might not

be forthcoming for 18 months.

"We estimate that soon after the start of the processing, some of the most sensitive and well known 'Watergate' materials can be made available to the public and that virtually all of the 'Watergate' materials can be made available to the public within three years from the start of processing," Mr. Sampson said.

Mr. Sampson said there were 42 million pages of Nixon papers, 880 tapes covering 5,000 hours of conversation, 435,000 photographs, 25,000 museum objects—35,000 cubic feet in all. He proposed that a staff of 100 persons do the processing over a three-year period at a cost of \$7-million.