

An Ex-Auditor Says I.R.S. Official Hid Nixon Tax Returns

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PHILADELPHIA, April 21 (UPI)—Officials of the Internal Revenue Service hid the tax returns of President Nixon when evidence was disclosed in late 1973 that he had underpaid his taxes, according to a former auditor for the revenue agency.

The auditor, Ralph F. Lacross, said in a copyrighted article in The Philadelphia Sunday Bulletin that officials of the tax service had ordered Mr. Nixon's name removed from agency indexes.

Francis I. Geibel, retired chief of Internal Security for the I.R.S., said he has ordered Mr. Nixon's name eradicated from the indexes because of leaks to the press in October, 1973, that Mr. Nixon had paid less than \$1,000 in income taxes in 1970 and 1971. He declined to say who had instructed him to issue the order.

Mr. Lacross said he had participated in a process of "burn-

ing off" Mr. Nixon's name from microfilmed indexes, making it impossible for anyone within the I.R.S. to locate the former President's tax returns.

He said the order from Washington to "burn off" Mr. Nixon's name from the indexes was unprecedented, but the command was followed in the agency's Mid-Atlantic regional headquarters in Philadelphia without hesitation.

The Bulletin quoted Mr. Lacross, who retired last June on a medical disability, and "other I.R.S. sources" as saying that Mr. Nixon's name was also removed from indexes in Martinsburg, W. Va., where the tax agency's national computer center is based.