

'Hush Money' Story

Nixon Aide Blasts the Post

Washington

Richard Nixon's chief aide yesterday accused the Washington Post of "stonewalling and covering up the incompetence of its reporters" by not retracting reports that Nixon discussed hush money for Watergate burglars the week they went on trial.

Colonel Jack Brennan, Nixon's chief of staff, said the Post used an uncorrected transcript of a White House tape in quoting Nixon's meeting on Jan. 8, 1973, with his special counsel, Charles Colson.

Brennan said the final transcript, prepared by Watergate pros-

ecutors, had no reference to hush money and showed the conversation was unrelated to Watergate and centered on Senator Birch Bayh, (Dem-Ind.).

Nixon's Washington lawyer released a 15-page transcript of the Nixon-Colson meeting which he said was the official version given him by Watergate prosecutors.

In that transcript, Nixon does not use the term "hush money," and the parts that most nearly parallel the quotes in the Post story do concern Birch Bayh — although large sections are unintelligible.

When Nixon's lawyers protested the story on Monday, executive

editor Benjamin C. Bradlee said: "The Post stands by its story."

Yesterday, Brennan said:

"The Washington Post is stonewalling and covering up the journalistic incompetence of its reporters. The Washington Post is wrong and it knows it."

Nixon has consistently maintained that the first time he learned of hush money payments to the burglars was from John Dean on March 21, 1973.

The Post said the new transcripts show Nixon knew in January — at the time the burglars were going on trial.

United Press