

Warped

By Scott McCullar

Nixon tries to prevent release of secret tapes



United Press International
WASHINGTON — Former President Richard Nixon refuses to give up his court fight to keep the public from listening to 6,000 hours of his secret Oval Office tape recordings.

Undaunted by two rejections in federal courts, Nixon has asked the full U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in Washington to reconsider a February ruling by a three-judge appellate panel.

If the 11 judges on the full appeals court refuse to hear the case again, Nixon could appeal directly to the Supreme Court.

A three-judge appellate panel unanimously concluded that letting the public listen to the tapes does not violate Nixon's privacy rights as an individual or a former president.

Almost eight years after he resigned from office in the Watergate scandal, Nixon is contesting a plan by the General Services Administration to release the tapes at 11 regional listening centers across the country.

Nixon said the ruling by the

appeals panel sets a dangerous precedent.

"If the panel is correct that the mere 'assumption of a public role' is sufficient to undercut the reasonableness of a person's expectation of privacy," he said, "then neither President Reagan nor any member of Congress can preclude — based on privacy

grounds — the press or any member of the public from prying behind their closed office doors."

The dispute stems from a law passed by Congress four months after Nixon resigned in August 1974. The law ordered the seizure of 800 Nixon tape recordings and 42 million White House papers.

Say lava lessens blast chance

Scientists examine dome

United Press International
VANCOUVER, Wash. — Scientists flying into the steaming crater of Mt. St. Helens say the rapid lava dome growth from the volcano's first explosive eruption in 17 months may lessen the chance of another blast.

Scientists flew by helicopter into the crater Sunday for their first look at the new addition to the 600-foot high dome of hardened lava that exploded to life in twin blasts of volcanic ash Friday night and early Saturday.

The 1,800-foot wide dome now sits steaming, flanked by two tongues of mud and a 50-foot trench where the twin blasts ripped apart the southern tip of the dome. Pilots say the dome glows when observed at night.

"There is a new lobe being added to the southeast side of

the lava dome in the crater of Mount St. Helens," the U.S. Geological Survey announced.

Scientists believe that if the dome continues to grow, fed by thick, pasty lava from deep underground, the chance of another explosive eruption will lessen because gas will not build up as much of a punch under one dome.

"The dome growth looks good," A.B. Adams of the University of Washington Geophysics Department said. "We can't rule out further eruptions, but it looks less likely. We're a little happier today. (But) things aren't completely safe."

Around midnight Saturday night scientists recorded a pair of earthquakes measuring 2.0 on the Richter scale, the largest tremors since the twin volcanic

eruption. A plume of steam rose to 10,000 feet at about 4:15 a.m. Sunday.

By Sunday afternoon, the mountain had returned to a level of seismic activity normally associated with domebuilding.

Seismologists monitoring the mountain in Seattle said the low-level readings they're receiving are coming from rocks and slabs of earth falling from the new lobe.

Although scientists flew into the crater within hours of the second eruption Saturday, dense steam and poor weather made it impossible to determine if a new dome had indeed formed.

Sunday, the weather cleared and test crews were able to see the fresh lobe on the dome.

After two years of extensive study, scientists admit St. Helens still holds some surprises for them. Until a few hours before the blast on March 19, they were predicting an eruption of the mild, domebuilding type.

Senators consider budget alternatives

United Press International
WASHINGTON — Senate Republican leaders say they are ready to listen to options on the budget, and are considering a proposal to limit Social Security cost-of-living increases to one-third the inflation rate after the White House publicly denounced a plan to "freeze" the increases.

The senators first sent the White House an outline of a possible alternative to President Reagan's \$757 billion 1983 budget that would "freeze" the inflation adjustment for Social Security — and other benefit programs — for two years.

The GOP leaders wanted to judge the administration's reaction to the trial balloon, which would substantially reduce Reagan's controversial pro-

jected \$96.4 billion federal deficit.

But instead of a private response, a White House spokesman publicly shot down the idea, embarrassing and angering some Senate Republicans.

The cost-of-living aspect of the entitlement programs is one major focus of ideas for cutting the deficit — a key ingredient to getting the budget process off dead center.

Assistant Sen. Rep. leader Ted Stevens of Alaska said Sunday the GOP is prepared to consider a whole range of tax options to shrink the deficit, including measures that would boost gasoline prices.

"An oil import tax is being considered," he told Cable News network. "An increase in the federal gasoline tax is being con-

sidered. A marine fuel tax is considered."

Stevens also predicted the GOP will reduce the president's defense budget by \$5 billion to \$6 billion.

Last week, Senate Republicans said they were considering another option to limit cost-of-living adjustments for Social Security and other benefit programs, now indexed at 100 percent of the inflation rate, to one-third of the inflation rate.

The Congressional Budget Office said each 1 percentage point reduction in the 1982 inflation adjustments — called COLAs — for Social Security, Supplemental Security Income, veterans' pensions, railroad retirement and federal employee retirement and disability programs would cut spending by about \$1.8 billion.

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