

Nixon's AP ME's convention speech, impressions 3 hrs later 11/17/73

He has been trained to ease off but not eliminate the nasty, pointless cracks but he intense nervousness shows more than at any appearance except the beginning of the San Clemente press conference.

This man is terribly afraid, terribly.

He babbled much, rambled all over the place, but it is not possible to say it was all rambling because it is apparent that some, probably much, was what he had rehearsed. It is no trick to answer a question not asked or to ask one wanted but not asked. I've done these things often on talk shows.

It is my impression that he almost memorized some of the things he said, as in his references to the court decision. He used exactly the same unusual language. Unless he has a photographic memory- and this speech is proof he does not - he could not have remembered these details without effort. He knew he would be questioned about the tapes. It was the second question and his answer was 1/6 of the entire thing.

Except for San Clemente, where it was a different kind, I have never seen him so nervous. He didn't even force a sick smile as he has so often in the past. If not more nervousness, more training.

I think that if he makes a few points in these rambling, they are good because he makes mistakes, too. This time he let several things slip. His account of the mechanics of the taping simply can't be right. It has to be a new cover. Even I would know not to leave a loose mike on a solid object like the bottom of a drawer. The Secret Service has to know better. So, I think the tapes were doctored by having these noises superimposed on the tender moments. Sound over sound is nothing if they did not dare dub the originals while playing the interference to the dubs. He blew the "national security" cover on tapping his brother. He gave a different date for learning about the ~~Ed~~ Ellsberg break-in, more than a month earlier as I recall.

He gave both false and more details on his income. The net he gave as his total assets when he left the Cummings house is less than the addition of his down payment and his profit. And he did not use his accumulated wealth to buy his new properties. Moreover, he made no reference to his profit on the Beverley Hills deal.

His misspoke himself perhaps more than ever. He was entirely unaware of the odd compulsion that impelled him to say Haldeman and Ehrlichman were guilty. In fact he backed off a little on their chastity.

Listening to his accounting of his learning two tapes were missing and his false emphasis on saying he had all the committee asked for makes me wonder if this is the real reason for Weights silent and I believe unannounced return to teaching.

The questioning was very easy under the circumstances.

He must have been primed to believe his answer on the dairy deal was dynamite for it was unseemly to insist on answering a question he had to ask himself and by pre-empting net TV time. What he said makes no difference and more, outs him entirely out of character. He has insisted on daring the Congress to override his veto and on this he would have been sustained by metropolitan-area legislators.

I think he provided the leads for proving other financial crookedness.

His story on his tax deductions doesn't wash and doesn't explain his delay in doing it until the law precluded it. LBJ is not around to dispute him of course. Nor can he take the papers back if the deduction is disallowed, which is separate from not being able to sell them for the valuation. They ate not all that historic. His impressions of Ike's sicknesses?

He still persists in pretending that the only crime is the break-in and his sole denial is of advance knowledge of it. He cheated in misusing what Petersen told the committee, for Petersen also had a very restrictive view of the crimes to be investigated. By now he has to know what little he might not have at the outset. Or, another sign of guilt.

My impression of his exaggerated manner, his nervousness, his intensity, his uncertainty is more than he knows he is guilty as uncharged. He expects it to erupt out. I think this is what he fears... He may have telegraphed an obscure clue on the "lumpers... It is significant that "missing" 4/15 also is part of Kleindienst and all of Petersen. Maybe more significant than the Dean stuff for that is the day Silbert told them about Ellsberg job.

Until I see the text, and if the Post does not carry it you won't either because you do not get the Sunday Times - I can't be sure. But I think that Nixon dated his claim to have learned about the Fielding breakin at March 13. The official story is that he learned from Kleindienst and Petersen the day they learned, Sunday, April 15. On this there should also be some phone tapes. This coincides with an oddity in Ehrlichman's testimony, that they knew earlier because Dean had been told and reported it... One of the possibilities I advanced earlier is that they cut the unwanted part of that tape off and rewound it on a smaller reel. It is possible that the stuff other than Dean may be more important and involve other criminality over hiding the Ellsberg job... The papers should note discrepancies other than I think I did because they would ordinarily assign people to look for them. Radio and TV too. Be interested in any you spot. If Lesar gets times and they have anything, I'll get copies for both of us... HR has been too busy, but he may also have taken the time. If he does, he'll send... Odd no Debe questions. He was not asked about property. He volunteered it. He picked his audience well. I hope it makes him careless. HW 11/17/73

Why nervous - forgetful - lost - uncertain.

? Is Dean 4/15/73 tape "missing" the most important of those missing for that day? (Phone tape a in person with High on seeing Dean) (2) Balena Klein doesn't (3) Peterson 10 minutes to discuss second?, on tapes

Put in w/ J (separate) and (all) New is

Learned of Fielding return on 3/17/73)

Hasn't gotten bill for audit yet!!

Comprehension in talking - mis-speaks often

"You walked into one there" as opening of responses  
? on energy, How would questioner "back into one" by asking a reasonable question. Rambles & mumbles

"Don't write an editorial on this" - (his business?)

As an example of non-response answer on what will be do after he leaves office.

Seems to be asked about the null case & asks it himself. Says "It's a crazy maneuvering" and when the time is up said "I could give enough extra time."