

And he had learned Nixonian dirty-wroks as he first practised and then supervised them.

The desperate gamble of releasing selected parts of selected ~~tap~~ transcripts of selected tapes, considerably fewer than had already been subpoenaed and it was known still more would be, came on the first anniversary of the day Nixon had fired ~~Wear~~ and accepted with regret the resignations of Haldeman and Ehrlichman. This was then the direct opposite of what the Department of Justice asked of Nixon ^{his own}.

Although the probability of a conflict of interest was apparent, Haldeman and Ehrlichman were both represented by a crusty septagenarian lawyer of lifelong reactionary belief, John A. Wilson. Before the Senate Watergate committee Wilson denied there was any conflict in interest and steadfastly maintained the apparently false, that the interests of both his clients coincided.

By the end of the year, there were rumors that Ehrlichman was beginning to look out for himself. He had already established a new business in his native Seattle, one in which he could still engage if he was disbarred and could not practise law. Then there was this note in ~~the~~ Newsweek dated January 21, 1974: "...reports that...^{John} Ehrlichman was plea bargaining ~~it~~ the Special Prosecutor. Even when all sides denied it, the report only underlined the kind of pressure being applied to the remaining loyalists."

The next news along this line came the next month, when the Washington Post reported that Ehrlichman had "retained Miami lawyer William S. Frates as his defense counsel in the forthcoming Watergate ~~Wate~~ coverup trials," (ExPost 2/11/74).

Frates ~~was~~ had represented Charles G. (Boo) Rebozo, Nixon's closest friend.

Again everyone denied conflict of interest, but the story went around and was published that Ehrlichman, who had more charges laid against him than Haldeman had had attractive offers made, lighter treatment in return for turning state's evidence, and that Wilson, in the interest of his other client, Haldeman, and his suspected client, Nixon, had opposed the deal.

This was followed with an exclusive Los Angeles Times story from Seattle, dated

16 and syndicated widely. Attributed to a number of "Close friends of former White House aide John D. Ehrlichman," Kenneth Reich wrote # that Ehrlichman has privately expressed disenchantment with President Nixon and has told them he is considering reaching a settlement on the Watergate-related charges pending against him."

In between these two stories, on March 1 and 7, Ehrlichman had had two new series of indictments charged to him and a variety of other Nixonians. Earlier charges had been placed against him in Los Angeles. The first of the new indictments were called the "cover-up indictments" because they centered on the obstructing of justice. The second related to that about which Ehrlichman and others had been charged in Los Angeles, the break-in of the office of Daniel Ellsberg's psychiatrist. So, Ehrlichman had had a heavier load of criminal charges laid on him than anyone else.

The thrust of the Reich story, which gave details attributed to these friends, was that "Ehrlichman will settle with the office of Watergate Special Prosecutor Leon Jaworski on a reduced charge" and would testify as part of the deal.

Reich also reported "something of a falling out with his lifelong friend and colleague, former White House Chief of Staff H.B. (Bob) Haldean."

One key paragraph quotes Ehrlichman as having told these unnamed friends that "he was shocked and surprised by the revelation of the existence of the tape recordings of White House conversations" Nixon had made with Haldean's knowledge but without Ehrlichman's.

Immediately there was what seemed like a denial and was headlined as one. The Washington Post's printing of the Associated Press' story dated in Seattle, April 17 is, "Ehrlichman Denies Plea Bargaining."

The papers all played it straight. No reporter did what any intelligence analyst would have done automatically, compared the two contradictory stories closely. When this is done it becomes apparent that while Ehrlichman appears to have denied the original report, which had come from the most probative source, in actuality he denied other than what the original report attributed to him. But it takes a careful comparison, of the kind Ehrlichman could be sure the White House would make, to show this.

An illuminating example is the case of an earlier scandal. One of the tapes that