

It had been my intention when the LATimes story was first reported on radio news to list the possibilities, none of which included basic inaccuracy in the story. I was and remain confident that Ehrlichman himself was responsible for the story.

In form the story is one of his idiosyncrasy and of understanding more than has been attributed to him (example, the 18 minutes not of Rose Mary).

My initial impression is that for some reason not immediately apparent to me Ehrlichman was tossing a few threats around, but the reason did not immediately occur to me. It did in reading today's AP report of his yesterday's statement, which was on TV last night.

If Ehrlichman had planted each element of the LATimes story for a purpose he could not better have served purposes that can be attributed to each. An example of this is the possibilities of Nixon's continued greatness in domestic affairs. Not even Ehrlichman can believe this, but he now appears as Nixon's continuing loyalist, even champion.

A more important example is the 18 minutes. In the original form there is reference to no more than an explanation. In the denial Ehrlichman evades denying and in fact does not deny what was attributed to him. He uses the key word "knowledge" and denies only "Knowledge."

He knows why. And in explaining why he does not have to have knowledge of who did it.

There is, in fact, no meaningful direct denial of the original story's many parts.

In itself this is significant.

He denies other things.

This will not be missed by those he intended reaching.

Dean is now out of danger of further retribution. So, there remains of those who can be badly hurt if Ehrlichman cops a plea Nixon, Haldeman and Colson, among others.

This leaking followed immediately upon what I have not been able to make notes about, although I have the stories clipped together for that purpose. It is the subpoenaing by Jaworski of the new tapes, etc., and the commentary accompanying this. They can be interpreted as a change in what Jaworski has been doing and as an indication of what he will now do. Simply put, I mean a vigorous prosecution instead of further covering up. If this is not a certainty, his new statements can be interpreted this way.

Nixon's entire method has been to stall and then to cannibalize. In fact, I have a chapter, "Republicans are Cannibals," in what I have written.

Between Nixon and Haldeman on one side and Ehrlichman on the other, there is no doubt if faced with the choice what Nixon's would be.

From the beginning, as my earlier notes indicate, Ehrlichman was prepared to be disbarred. He started a new business which did not depend upon his being a member of the bar.

There is no doubt that there was plea-bargaining for him. He denies no more than having done it personally, which was never alleged. Wilson, who from the first had this obvious conflict of interest, also represents Haldeman.

Ehrlichman got himself a new lawyer a month or so ago. His present counsel is not complicated by the requirement that he protect Haldeman's interest.

If Ehrlichman cops a plea, he slits the throats of all the others or does not perform on his deal and is in real trouble. So, there is this inherent threat to the others: will Ehrlichman run further risks to defend them in his deal?

This recent business is as clear and direct a threat as Ehrlichman can make. He is threatening Nixon in person, Haldeman in person, both directly. And he can testify to what would be utterly ruinous to all of them.

His problem is that without a deal for himself he can't do this because he is as involved and as guilty plus bearing guilt for at least hiding other crimes that can't be as easily attributed to the others but of which they have knowledge (which makes them guilty of obstruction by their silence).

Again simplified, this can be Ehrlichman's warning that he will not go into the pot in silence. He will not be cannibalized for Nixon et al.