

The Nixon Ethic And How It Works

by Joseph Kraft

..... What emerges from all this [Watergate affair, bombing of North Vietnamese dikes, etc.] is the Nixon ethic. In every instance, the President and his men obscure moral issues. They reply forthrightly to charges not made. When it happens to them to tell the truth, the truth they tell is not the whole truth.

Exactly why this is so baffles me. The President's sense that people are out to get him - they kick him around, as he once put it - probably plays a part. So does the will to win and the emphasis on being first. But even allowing for all these things, I really don't understand the constant disposition to hedge the truth, to con people.