

# Ehrlichman Denies Quotes on Nixon

## Seattle

John D. Ehrlichman labeled as false yesterday reports saying he believes President Nixon has lost effectiveness and that an 18-minute White House tape gap was intentional.

Ehrlichman also rejected reports quoting friends as saying he had engaged in plea bargaining with Watergate prosecutors and that he carried a resentment against former White House chief of staff H.R. Halde- man.

In a prepared statement, Ehrlichman, the former chief domestic affairs adviser to Mr. Nixon, said a Los Angeles Times story quoting his friends was "false in tone and content."

(Kenneth Reich, the Los Angeles Times reporter who wrote the dispatch, said his newspaper is standing by it. "We had good reason to print this story," he said. "John Ehrlichman was given an opportunity to respond to it before it appeared, and he declined to do so.")

The Times story quoted unnamed friends as saying Ehrlichman had privately expressed disappointment with Mr. Nixon and that he thought Mr. Nixon's effectiveness had ended.

A friend of Ehrlichman's interviewed by the Associated Press said Ehrlichman

had discussed with prosecutors the terms under which he would plead guilty to a reduced Watergate related charge, but that no agreement was reached.

Ehrlichman said in his statement he would not allow any questions from newsmen "because I am under court order not to discuss the subject of current proceedings in any way."

The account of possible plea bargaining is false, he said, "because I am not guilty of any of the charges leveled against me and I intend to prove my innocence."

He said he thought Mr. Nixon's "domestic record has been as excellent as in foreign affairs. What he can accomplish in the future will depend on how he weathers the current attacks.

"I remain optimistic that he will come out of all of this with a regained effectiveness . . ."

"Concerning the tapes, I have no way of knowing what caused any gaps," he said in the statement. "At no time have I entertained the belief that someone intentionally altered the tapes."

Ehrlichman said his expressed criticism of "some of the tactical responses by the White House to press stories, etc., in the past year



AP Wirephoto

JOHN D. EHRLICHMAN  
'I am not guilty'

were nothing more than a citizen engaging in the great national pastime of kicking the White House staff."

Ehrlichman, who has been indicted by two of the grand juries investigating aspects of Watergate, said his financial affairs had never been discussed with friends and never would be.

Ehrlichman said in his statement he had been named as a defendant in 14 civil suits in the past year, and so far "six of these cases have been dismissed." He said: "All of these cases were occasions for headline stories in the Eastern press when the suits were filed. The stories of their dismissal appear back with the buggy whip ads on page 48, if at all."

Associated Press