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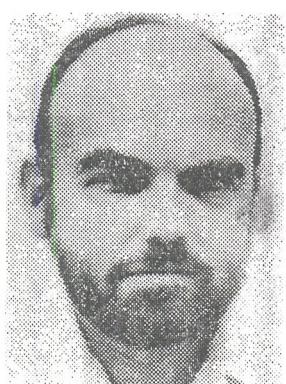
**NIXON**  
Not paranoid



**DEAN**  
The moralizer



**HALDEMAN**  
The 'no' man



**EHRlichMAN**  
The realist

# Psychological study of tapes: Nixon not insane

By Joann Rodgers  
Special to the Examiner

A unique study of the Watergate tapes by a University of Maryland psychiatrist upsets the popular opinion that former President Nixon was paranoid, his personality marked by delusions of persecution, jealousy and grandeur.

It also concludes that his behavior may be similar to that of depressed and impulsive people.

And it reveals new and occasionally puzzling insights into the characters of the other principal tape participants, John Dean, John Ehrlichman and H.R. "Bob" Haldeman.

Dr. Walter Weintraub, professor of psychiatry at Maryland, developed his analysis technique while conducting research on LSD in the late 1950s.

"We studied a large group of GIs to develop a "normal" base line of verbal behavior that could be used to determine what was happening psychiatrically under the influence of LSD."

Several years later, an expert in psycholinguistics asked Weintraub to analyze transcripts of tapes he had taken. The results led him to believe he could come up with meaningful insights. Some examples:

- Of the four, Nixon stands out as the most "different" in his behavior. He is best able to express his feelings, but tends to deny unpleasant realities.

- Nixon frequently proclaimed his desire to make things "perfectly clear," but in fact rarely did. He was much more likely to be dogmatic and impulsive, blurting things out, then taking them back.

- All four were relatively decisive, rarely qualifying their ideas or actions.

- Ehrlichman and Haldeman appear distant, cold and calculating, able to depersonalize any problem and to deal coolly with topics of high emotional impact, such as former Atty. Gen. John Mitchell's prosecution and the possible impeachment of their boss.

- Ehrlichman exhibited little impulsive behavior of the kind found in Nixon and, to some extent, Haldeman. And better than any of the others he has the best grasp of reality and practical implications of a situation.

- Haldeman had a reputation as Nixon's "no" man, and deserved the label. He was extraordinarily negative.

- Nixon "agonized" the most about his decisions, while Haldeman was more "wishy-washy" than his image as a strong man indicated.

- Dean was "obsessional," an abstract thinker who intellectualized more than the others and did a lot of moralizing.

The tape study used a computer and a complicated "verbal behavior analysis" system to investigate not what the four men said, but how they said it.

Classic psychoanalytic theory and techniques recognize that repetitive speech patterns, styles of speech and speech peculiarities (verbal behavior) often accurately reflect patterns of psychological defense mechanisms. These defenses are in turn clues to the way people react to stress and to their underlying character.

Psychiatrists, for example, can sometimes pick out persons with certain personality disorders just by listening to them talk.

Early in life, Weintraub says, people develop ways of reducing anxiety, or what they consider threats to their way of thinking and behaving. These defense mechanisms operate unconsciously and are as individual as fingerprints.