

Nixon, Top Aides Work On Two-Track Defense

by Lou Cannon

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Within a week or so after the President makes his Watergate defense, the White House is also expected to issue a statement explaining the unresolved questions about the methods used to finance Mr. Nixon's acquisition of his six-acre San Clemente estate.

Industrialist Robert Abplanalp said in an interview with the Washington Star News published Sunday [12 Aug] that no investment company was involved in the purchase. This appeared to contradict a White House statement of three months ago that an investment company had made the purchase.

However, deputy press secretary Gerald L. Warren - who has become the chief White House press spokesman in the continuing absence of Ziegler from daily briefings - insisted that it was only a "semantical problem" and that no contradiction was involved. Warren said it "perhaps" would have been more accurate of him to use the term "joint venture" in describing what he had called an "investment company."

Warren said he knew the identity of the other person involved with Abplanalp in the joint venture but wouldn't reveal it because the White House wants to avoid "piecemeal stories." The White House statement, when it is issued, will "clear up once and for all" questions about the transactions, Warren said.

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