## Witness Defends Spying in Campaign

By DAVID E. ROSENBAUM
Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, July 27-John D. Ehrlichman sternly defended today the Nixon cam-paign's practice of spying on "You can go over here in opposition political candidates, saying that politicians had an "affirmative obligation" to incondition of at least partial incondition," said Mr. Ehrlichman, ebriation," said Mr. Ehrlichman, opposition political candidates, ing habits and personal morals President Nixon's former chief to the subject of drinking, withof other candidates.

Senator Lowell P. Weicker was at first astonished, then for the American people to

this committee," he asked, out is through his opponent in "that you consider private in- a political campaign, then I vestigators going into sexual think that opponent has an afhabits, drinking habits, domes-tic problems and personal so-that forward." cial activities as a proper subpaign?"

Ehrlichman, across yards of table-tops at the Senate Watergate commit-the political system of the tee hearings, the glaring tele- United States, of our camvision lights above Senator Weicker's head shining into his

the gallery and watch a memdomestic adviser.

"I think that it is important one point he declared:
or the American people to "Someone with a serious know," he continued. "And if "Do you mean to tell me and the only way it can be brought

Senator Weicker leaned forject for investigation during ward in his seat, his hulking, the course of a political cam- 6-foot-6 frame resting on his elbows, using both hands for looking emphasis.

paigns, down to the level of what you are talking about right now?" The Senator asked.

Mr. Ehrlichman did not answer the question directly.

Time and again during the 15-minute exchange, Mr. Ehrlichman, a teetotaler, returned out mentioning any names. At

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fitness for the kind of heavy duty that you bear, for in-stance, or that any Senator bears in the Senate of the United States. That is certainly bows, using both hands for a material question that has to be raised in a political campaign, at least so it seems to me."

United States. That is certainly a material question that has to be raised in a political campaign, at least so it seems to me."

'Very Basic Issue'

The newspapers have an unwritten rule against exposing the shady side of politicians' personal lives, Mr. Ehrlichman asserted, and so it was left to the politicians' opponents to the pol

tions, are perfectly capable of passing decent judgments, fair judgments, hard judgments on political figures, public officials without covert operations."

Senator Weicker, a Connecticut Republican, said that he had run in eight campaigns—two primaries and six races against Democrats. Never, he said, did he spy on his opponents' private lives, and, so far as he knew, his opponents did not spy on his.

Mr. Ehrlichman, a bit testily, declared, "Well, I conceive of it this way, Senator. I know that, in your situation, your life-style is undoubtedly impeccable, and there wouldn't be anything of issue like that."

"I am not an angel," the Senator remarked.

ator remarked.

"I thought you were," Mr.

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drinking habit is of doubtful fitness for the kind of heavy duty that you bear, for ingreater here." worry now before you

## Question on Policeman

keep their constituencies informed.

"Obviously, you and I are at
loggerheads on a very basic
issue here," Mr. Weicker responded. "I am quite satisfied
that our systems, our institutheir drinking habits and sexual practices.

The only specific politician
he mentioned was Senator Edward M. Kennedy, Democrat of
Massachusetts, whom he said
the trailed after the Senator's
accident on Chappaquiddick Island in 1969. At one point, Mr.
Kennedy was followed on a trip
to Hawaii, but the spies could to Hawaii, but the spies could turn up no degnogatory information.

mation.

Political experts said that they knew of no case in the 1972 campaign when the Nixon forces publicized seamy activities of Democrats.

Mr. Fhrlichman kent return-

Mr. Ehrlichman kept returning to the point that incumbent candidates had an advantage and that politicians running against them had to expore the

against them had to expore the incumbents' foibles.

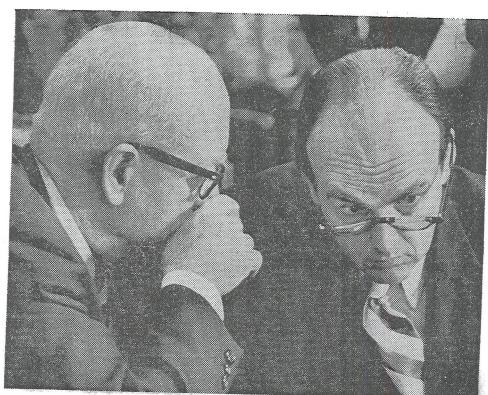
"May I point out that according to your theory the President was an incumbent?" Senator Weicker said.

"I think an incumbent Presi-

dent has an enormous advan-tage," Mr. Ehrlichman re-plied.

"He not only had an enormous advantage," Mr. Weicker remarked, "apparently he went around and had this

he went around and had this type of information handed to him which added to the advantage he had. I would say that made him rather unbeatable." "We have two different concepts of politics in this country meeting head-on," Mr. Weicker told the former Nixon aide. Mr. Ehrlichman's concept, the Senator said, was that elections should be settled on the basis of the candidates' private lives. And then Mr. the basis of the candidates' private lives. And then Mr. Weicker added, "You stick to your version, and I'll stick to mine."



John D. Ehrlichman being counseled by attorney, John J. Wilson, at Watergate hearing