

The Inouyes

On 'Perjury'

And Tension

By Vera Glaser and
Malvina Stephenson



SENATOR DANIEL INOUE
He tries "to keep a cool head"

Washington

SENATOR Daniel Inouye brands as "pure perjury" some of the Watergate testimony he has heard.

The falsehoods have damaged the White House image, but he doubts the recently completed first phase of the probe will produce much in the way of legislative recommendations.

In their first joint interview since the Hawaii Democrat became a television celebrity, he and his wife, Maggie, summed up their reactions to the hearings and made a few predictions.

Inouye also revealed his secret for escaping the fierce tensions he bears as a committee member: He retreats to his basement, switches on the stereo, and

busies himself with seven tanks of tropical fish.

Inouye predicts the committee's legislative recommendations will stem from the next phase of the hearings, on political financing, due to open in September.

Up to this point he thinks the committee has developed evidence of criminal irregularities which fall into the province of the courts, but do not necessarily form a basis for new laws.

The Inouyes hinted that frustrations over evasions and contradictions in the testimony may have caused him to mutter "liar!" at witness John Ehrlichman through a not-yet-dead mike.

In return, the senator was tagged "that little Jap" by Ehrlichman's attorney, in an episode highlighting the

frayed tempers as the probe reached a climax.

Although Mrs. Inouye described her husband as "fun-loving, patient, considerate and outspoken," Watergate witnesses tend to find his stoic expression and probing questions disconcerting.

He said he had tried "to keep a cool head and not show my feelings. But when Ehrlichman said he saw nothing wrong with offering a job to the presiding judge in the Ellsberg trial, suddenly I was saddened."

The senator's name, which even committee chairman Sam Ervin bungles, is pronounced "in-no-way," accenting the second syllable.

The Inouyes are both short, good-looking, friendly and low-key. They are home-

bodies who shun the party circuit and dote on their nine-year-old son, Kenny, who arrived after 15 years of childlessness.

Inouye, 48, is of Japanese extraction but makes no special effort to identify with that ethnic group, regarding himself as an American.

He lost his right arm in World War II, is now serving his third Senate term, and has been mentioned for the Democrats' 1976 ticket.

He is no rubber-stamp party man. Early this year, when he interrogated former presidential counsel John Dean III from a list of questions prepared by the White House, Inouye's mail brought charges that he was "a lackey for the President" and "a stooge for crooks."



JOHN EHRLICHMAN
"Nothing wrong"



JOHN W. DEAN III
White House questions

His position is that Nixon is entitled to his day in court, and "if the committee wanted to be fair and objective, the memo and questions had to be used."

Inouye was born in Honolulu. His hopes to become a surgeon were dashed when he lost his arm, so he turned to law and politics.

He credits fellow officers at a hospital in Battle Creek, Mich., for adopting him as their "Eliza Doolittle," the cockney flower girl who was transformed into a lady in the musical.

They helped Inouye work on his pidgin English, introduced him to good books, how to handle silverware, choose wines and play bridge.

Most of it took but "I'll have to admit bridge never gave me the gut-tightening excitement of a good crap game," Inouye wrote in his autobiography.