

What Nixon Said About Rehnquist

Washington

Three months before President Nixon appointed William H. Rehnquist to the Supreme Court, Mr. Nixon referred to "that group of clowns we had around there. Renschburg and that group."

"What's his name?" Mr. Nixon asked John D. Ehrlichman, his top domestic affairs adviser.

"Renchquist," Ehrlichman replied.

"Yeah, Rehnquist," Mr. Nixon said, finally getting it right.

At the time, Rehnquist was legal counsel in the Justice Department.

The conversation took place among Mr. Nixon, Ehrlichman and Egil Krogh Jr. on July 24, 1971. They spoke of the use of lie detector tests to determine which officials may have leaked reports on the Strategic Arms Limitation Talks.

The transcript of the conversation was included in the latest documents of impeachment evidence released by the House Judiciary Committee.

"Nobody follows up a God damn thing," Mr. Nixon said. "We've got to follow up on this thing; however, we, uh, we had that meeting. You remember that meeting we had when I told that group of clowns we had around here. Renschburg and that group."

Less than three months later, Mr. Nixon appointed Rehnquist to the high court with the comment that Rehnquist "has been outstanding in every intellectual endeavor he has undertaken . . . He rates at the



JUSTICE REHNQUIST
'What's his name?'

very top as a constitutional lawyer and as a legal scholar."

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