

AN ABC OF P

A is for *abuses* that *appalled* the President. The combination appeared three times in P's public farewell to Ehrlichman and Haldeman, but not at all in private conversation.

B is for *begin* (3 times). He uses *end* 20 times.

C is for *cut* (17), especially in "cutting losses" (8), which sometimes means *not* cutting losses and instead continuing the cover-up: "If we continue to cut our losses . . . it is all going to come out anyway."

D is for *dumb* (7). Segretti (1), Pat Gray—"Damned dumb Gray" (3), and Edward Nixon (1) are dumb. But as for P: "I am not dumb."

E is for *easy* (8), half of them about paying Hunt off: "That would be easy."

F is for *foundation* (3), the tax-exempt means of support for Haldeman and Ehrlichman if they are indicted: "Well, I have a foundation . . ."

G is for *gear* (3), all in Ehrlichman's gearing up a hidden device to record a conversation with John Mitchell: "Why don't you just gear it up?"

H is for an *hors d'oeuvre* (1) of boiled scapegoat: "Give 'em an hors d'oeuvre and maybe they won't come back for the main course. Well, out, John Dean."

I is for *immunity* (77), about which P is really worried: "The immunity thing scares me to death."

J is for *jury* (184). The public flap may have been all about the Senate Committee, but all committees (CREEP, Cuban, Banking) show up only 140 times. P knows where the action is.

K is for *knight* (2), both times with Judge Sirica as a "White Knight."

L is for *leash* (1), by which P controls things: "I've got Petersen on a short leash."

M is for *mea culpa* (1) but only theoretically. "It's sort of an admitting *mea culpa*. . . I don't want to."

N is for *nibble* (3), all with

the connotation of being nibbled "to death."

O is for *options* (10), which P always wants to have. Which is why payoffs are necessary: "We have to keep the cap on the bottle that much, or we don't have any options."

P is for *perfectly* (14), as in "perfectly clear." It may be P's most famous verbal tic, but he uses *perjury* 24 times.

Q is for *quash* (3), all in suggestions that evidence be suppressed, and for *quiet* (5), always in phrases like "money to keep the defendants quiet."

R is for *ruthless* (1). In the context of his abandoning his closest friends, P uses it only once—and that once of Robert Kennedy: "Bobby was a ruthless (characterization deleted)."

S is for *she* (9). *He* is used on 1,662 occasions; P's is a man's world.

T is for *the* (4,653), the one word which P just barely manages to use more than *I* (4,390). In normal American usage the ratio is almost 14:1.

U is for "(unintelligible)" (1,197, together with "(inaudible)," for a rate of once every 12.2 sentences.) In the conversation in which Dean felt P was setting him up, the rate is once every 114 sentences. Hmm.

V is for *verse* (3), once as a verb and twice in "chapter and verse," where it means detailed—even Biblical—truth. Thus in the famous Dean Report: "I don't want too much chapter and verse."

W is for *Bob Woodward* of the *Washington Post* (9), who wins the prize as most-mentioned reporter. Seymour Hersh of the *New York Times* is runner-up, with 8.

X, alas, is not for anything, though the computer helpfully offered one each of *xample*, *xe*, and *xig*.

Y is for tough *yeah* (429) and folksy *yep* (18). And for standard *yes* (88).

Z is for *zealots* (2), a term that, for P, is interchangeable with *prosecutors*.

HAARPEAS 10/74