

Inside Report

# Gambling on H & E

President Nixon's unequivocal linkage to his own Watergate defense to his claim of total innocence for former aides H. R. Haldeman and John Ehrlichman, a linkage that stunned even presidential aides, represents a high stakes gamble for the future.

In the privacy of the White House, Mr. Nixon has long stressed his total confidence in his two departed lieutenants whose resignations he accepted under pressure April 30. What surprised presidential staffers now in San Clemente was that he proclaimed their innocence so loudly in last Wednesday's press conference.

Why the surprise? Because the President's top advisers have always expected Haldeman and Ehrlichman to be indicted, and nothing has changed their minds. They believe special prosecutor Archibald Cox seeks to indict the two even without testimony against them by the ousted White House counsel, John W. Dean III. Thus the trials of Haldeman and Ehrlichman would become a de facto trial of Richard M. Nixon — precisely what presidential advisers wanted to avoid.

The Haldeman-Ehrlichman problem is submerged in the San Clemente euphoria generated by the press conference. Mr. Nixon handled his press inquiries with hard authority and his aides now feel the worst is over. But they forget that the day Cox asks the grand jury for indictments lies ahead and that Mr. Nixon has now upped his own potential stake in those proceedings by tying himself so closely to his old aides.

**Bloopers**  
A foretaste of that linkage came in late June when White House counsel J. Fred Buzhardt's memorandum in response to Dean's charges before the Senate Watergate committee. But senior presidential aides let it be known that the Buzhardt memo's blanket defense of Ehrlichman and Haldeman was a bloop, not truly reflecting the President's desires.

Moreover, the consensus inside the White House then called for Mr. Nixon to separate himself from Ehrlichman and Haldeman. One senior aide close to the President privately blamed Ehrlichman personally for the extent of the Watergate crisis. Leaked White House stories forecast presidential disengagement from his two former lieutenants.

Sydney J. Harris

## Those food fads

Remember the old wheeze about the man who said he'd read so much about the bad effects of smoking that he finally gave up reading? Well, I'm getting that way about eating.

Lately I've been reading so much — and so much that is downright contradictory — about food that I'm about ready to give up reading. Not eating, mind you, just reading about it. I don't know what's good any more, and having two health-food nut teenagers around the house doesn't help much either. Everything you read about seems to be bad for you, one way or the other. I can't understand how the human race has survived so long in its gastronomic ignorance.

For instance, I love eggs; could eat them every meal. Now I'm told they're a no-no because of cholesterol content. I like raw fruits and vegetables; the doctor says "too much roughage." Lay off coffee, too, he tells me; it's the worst thing a sensitive stomach can have. Also, keep away from milk; it upsets a lot of adults.



Rowland Evans and Robert Novak



Evans

Novak

That such stories were mostly wishful thinking was revealed with disclosures that Mr. Nixon had given Haldeman a White House tapes to monitor after being wanted by the Justice Department of Haldeman's possible indictment. But not even his own staff was prepared for Wednesday's total commitment to the Haldeman-Ehrlichman cause.

Besides predicting their exoneration, Mr. Nixon did not bother to cloak his intimate association with their defense. In telling why he had given the tape of the Sept. 13, 1972, Oval Office meeting to private citizen Haldeman, Mr. Nixon did not bother with previous explanations by aides that the tape contained matters too sensitive for an outsider to hear. Rather, he said, "I wanted to be sure that we were absolutely correct in our response" to Dean's charges.

**Slight resemblance**  
The press conference, furthermore, puts Mr. Nixon in the position of embracing the Ehrlichman-Haldeman testimony in detail while disputing in some degree almost everybody else, including Assistant Atty. Gen. Henry Petersen. The President's press conference account of his April 18 conversation with Petersen about the Ellsberg psychiatrist's burglary bears slight resemblance to Petersen's version.

Even the President's faithful supporter and former aide Clark MacGregor is now disputing Mr. Nixon. Mr. Nixon told the press conference he "first of all" asked MacGregor to investigate the Watergate burglary. MacGregor, who did not take over as Mr. Nixon's campaign manager until two weeks after the burglary, has no such recollection. The dispute makes Mr. Nixon the sole buttress for Ehrlichman's astonishing claim that MacGregor showed no interest in uncovering the truth about Watergate.

**Ominous ties**  
Most remarkable in revealing

Mr. Nixon's mind-set is his interpretation of a June 1972 call from FBI director L. Patrick Gray that staffers might mortally wound him. Presumably, Gray meant Haldeman and Ehrlichman as well as Dean. But what did Mr. Nixon say? "I assume that the individuals he (Gray) was referring to involved this operation with the CIA," said the President.

All this, say Nixon staffers, reflects merely the President's unconditional loyalty to those unconditionally loyal to him. Mr. Nixon's critics contend, without proof, that it suggests far more: a plot involving Mr. Nixon and his ex-aides, possibly reflecting fear the aides might turn on him. Whatever the cause, it ties Mr. Nixon to the Watergate future in potentially ominous ways.

## Nag's Head Park Study Approved

ELIZABETH CITY (AP) — North Carolina's state Parks Committee approved a resolution Monday calling for a study of the Jockey's Ridge sand dunes at Nags Head as a possible site for a state park.

The action came after the committee received a petition signed by nearly 25,000 persons calling on the state to preserve the dunes. Some Nags Head and Dare County officials have expressed the belief the dunes are threatened by proposed construction of an apartment complex.

Gov. James H. Holshouser, in a speech to the state Conservation and Development Board Sunday night, said money was not available to purchase Jockey's Ridge. The Parks Committee, aware of the Holshouser statement, called for a study of the cost and other problems that could be anticipated if part or all of Jockey's Ridge was developed as a park.

The committee asked for a written report within four weeks.

Local and county officials told the committee Monday they were attempting to utilize land use planning but that protection of the dunes could not be accomplished locally until the state defined any area that might be insured in a park.

# Nixon Aides Brought Into Charlotte Suit

CHARLOTTE (AP) — U.S. District Judge James B. McMillan ruled Monday that White House aides H. R. Haldeman, William French Smith and Ronald H. Walker could be added as defendants in a lawsuit charging that persons were unlawfully excluded from Billy Graham Day ceremonies in 1971.

McMillan ruled on a motion by attorneys for the Charlotte police department and the city of Charlotte asking that the three White House aides be added to the suit. Charlotte police and the city were named as defendants with the U.S. Secret Service when the suit was filed.

George S. Daly, the attorney for the plaintiffs, had also sought to add Haldeman's name to the \$500,000 federal suit, which charges that 14 young

people were illegally excluded from Graham Day ceremonies. President Nixon attended the event at the Charlotte Coliseum Oct. 15, 1971.

McMillan also ruled Monday that the head of the Secret Service will not have to appear in Charlotte to testify in the case. In ruling against the request made by Daly, the judge allowed James Dwyer, the Secret Service chief, to testify in Washington, D.C. instead.

Asst. U.S. Dist. Atty. David B. Sentelle argued that the government could not do business if federal agency heads named in law suits as defendants had to testify where the suits were filed.

The Graham Day rally was in honor of Rev. Billy Graham,

Charlotte born evangelist. Nixon attended the rally to honor his friend.

A memo introduced this summer in the Senate Watergate hearings in Washington indicated that Haldeman, the advance man for the President's visit, had relayed information to 100 and 200 demonstrators would be at the rally.

**THE MEMO** was written to Haldeman by Walker, another Nixon aide.

The Secret Service was officially in charge of security at the Coliseum, but a security plan revealed during the Watergate hearings showed Veterans of Foreign Wars marshals were assigned to screen people entering the Coliseum.

Charlotte police were also on duty at the event, however the department claims it was not responsible for the exclusion of people from the Coliseum.

The police motion charged that "deceptive practices and conspiracy" were used to make the department look responsible for security measures at the rally. The motion called the plan which the Charlotte police actually had no role.

## 4 Permit Centers To Be Set Up

ELIZABETH CITY (AP) — services will be available in the State announced Monday that permits for dredge and fill projects can be processed in four coastal areas starting Oct. 1.

Dr. Thomas L. Linton, commissioner of commercial and sports fishing, said consultation

will be available in Morehead City, Wilmington, Southport and Manteo. All permits now must be applied for in Raleigh.

Linton announced the change at a meeting of the state Board of Conservation and Development.

## Insurance Firm Faces Revocation

RALEIGH (AP) — First General Insurance Co. of Atlanta, Ga., was ordered Monday to show cause why its license should not be revoked for failing to comply with North Carolina laws.

The order was issued by Chief Deputy Insurance Commissioner George Marion. He charged that the company failed to comply with a law enacted by the 1973 General Assembly.

Marion said the company had a 30-day advertising supplement in Sunday editions of several North Carolina newspapers.

The new law provides for immediate coverage of new born infants for sickness, disability and congenital defects and other ailments.

Marion said the law was enacted in the belief that any child born with a birth defect would have a substantially higher chance of becoming a normal child if treatment were received promptly.

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