

lecture 5 continued...

**THE WATERGATE SCANDAL
PRESIDENT NIXON
(prep for field trip)**

The Critical Current

Summer Enrichment 2016

The Watergate Scandal



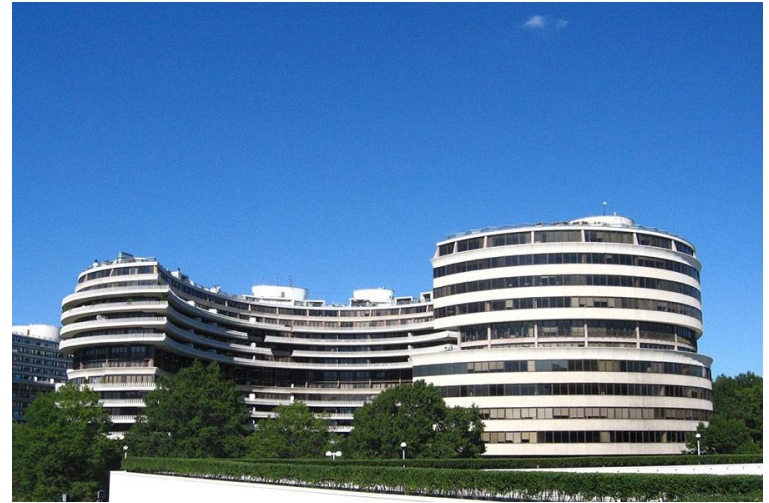
1972

Essential Question (EQ):

Should journalists leak classified government information to the public? Why or why not?

June 17th 1972

- **In the early morning of June 17th, 1972, several burglars were arrested for breaking into the Watergate building in Washington D.C.**
- **The burglars were attempting to wiretap phones and still important secret documents from the office of the Democratic National Committee (DNC).**
- **It was soon found out that these were no ordinary burglars**



June 17th 1972

- **The burglars were found to be connected to President Richard Nixon's reelection campaign.**
- **They were former FBI and CIA agents who hoped to help President Nixon get re-elected to the presidency.**
- **President Nixon claimed that he knew nothing of the incident and was NOT responsible for the actions of these men.**



Was Nixon Involved?

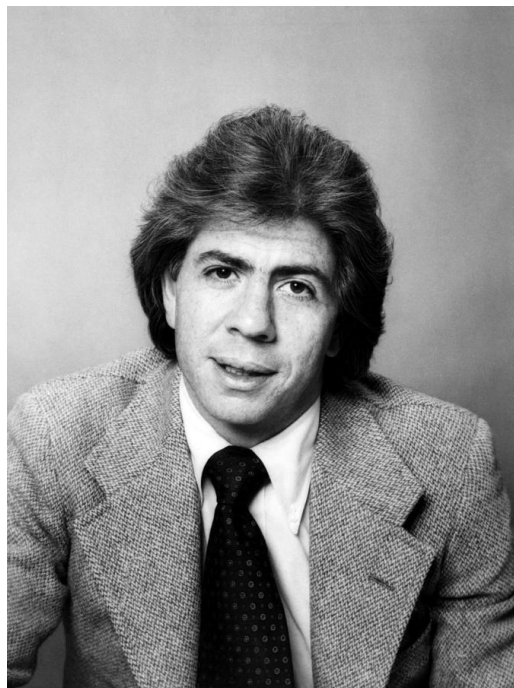
- We don't know for sure if Nixon knew about the Watergate Spying operation before it happened, but many believe he tried to cover it up.
- He tried to raise “hush” money for burglars
- Trying to keep the FBI from investigating the crime.
- He had evidence destroyed
- He fired uncooperative staff
- The public and members of Congress became outraged at his actions which caused Nixon to resign, or step down from the office of the President. Gerald Ford took office and ended up pardoning, or forgiving Nixon for the crimes he “might” have committed.

Nixon's Resignation



The Whistleblowers of the Scandal

Carl Bernstein



Bob Woodward



Bernstein and Woodward



- Bernstein and Woodward, young reporters for the Washington Post, covered the story for over two years, seeking to find more about the role of Nixon in the break-in and spying.
- With the help of an informant (“Deep Throat”), they uncovered many legal violations which involved many members of Nixon’s administration, or team.
- Later, it was found that what they uncovered was VERY similar to what the FBI uncovered. Later, it would be discovered that their informant was a member of the FBI.

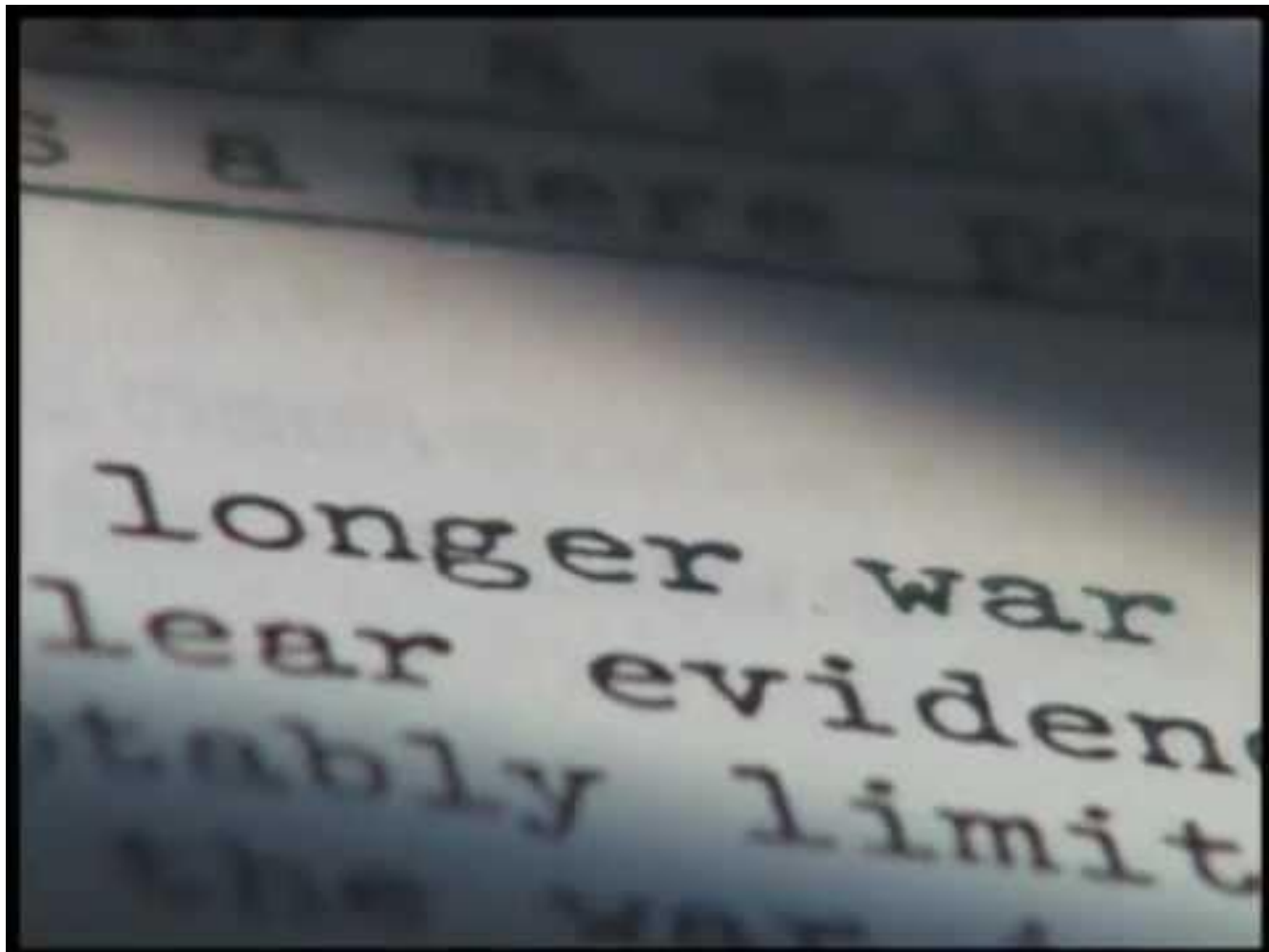
The Results

The work of these reporters was one of the many keys to forcing Nixon to resign. They will always be remembered for their role in the Watergate Scandal.

The Pentagon Papers

- The *Pentagon Papers*, officially titled ***United States – Vietnam Relations, 1945–1967: A Study Prepared by the Department of Defense***, is a United States Department of Defense history of the United States' political-military involvement in **Vietnam from 1945 to 1967**. The papers were discovered and released by Daniel Ellsberg, and first brought to the attention of the public on the front page of ***The New York Times*** in 1971. A 1996 article in *The New York Times* said that the *Pentagon Papers* had demonstrated, among other things, that the Johnson Administration "*systematically lied, not only to the public but also to Congress.*"
- The papers revealed that the U.S. had secretly enlarged the scale of the Vietnam War with the bombings of nearby Cambodia and Laos, coastal raids on North Vietnam, and Marine Corps attacks, none of which were reported in the mainstream media.
- For his disclosure of the *Pentagon Papers*, Ellsberg was initially charged with **conspiracy, espionage, and theft of government property**, but the charges were later dropped after prosecutors investigating the **Watergate Scandal** soon discovered that the staff members in the Nixon White House had ordered the so-called White House Plumbers to engage in unlawful efforts to discredit Ellsberg.
- In June 2011, the entirety of the *Pentagon Papers* was **declassified and publicly released**.

**Let's Take
a Look...**



Blog Prompt (Choose ONE)

Should journalists leak classified government information to the public? Which perspectives exist? Which side would you take?

OR

Imagine that you are a journalist for the New York Times and you have uncovered some top secret information about the government. Sharing the information might endanger the lives of a small group of people. On the other hand, the public should be informed. Would you share the information? Why or why not?