

# WASHINGTON JOURNAL

REPORTING WATERGATE AND  
RICHARD NIXON'S DOWNFALL



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OVERLOOK BUCKWORTH

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NEW YORK • LONDON

*To Itzy*

This edition first published in the United States and the United Kingdom in 2014 by  
Overlook Duckworth, Peter Mayer Publishers, Inc.

NEW YORK  
141 Wooster Street  
New York, NY 10012  
[www.overlookpress.com](http://www.overlookpress.com)

For bulk and special orders, please contact [sales@overlookny.com](mailto:sales@overlookny.com),  
or write us at the above address.

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30 Calvin Street  
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[www.ducknet.co.uk](http://www.ducknet.co.uk)

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Most of the material in this book appeared originally in *The New Yorker*, in slightly different form.

Library of Congress Cataloging in Publication Data  
Drew, Elizabeth.  
Washington journal.

“Most of the material ... appeared originally in the *New Yorker*.”

1. Watergate Affair, 1972-      2. Nixon, Richard  
Milhous, 1913-      —Impeachment. 3. Nixon, Richard  
Milhous, 1913-      —Resignation. I. Title.  
E860.D73      973.924      75-9803

2 4 6 8 10 9 7 5 3 1

ISBN US: 978-1-4683-0918-8

ISBN UK: 978-0-7156-4916-9

Manufactured in the United States of America

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## INTRODUCTION

On the day after Labor Day in 1973, I was in the office of William Shawn, the justly legendary editor of the *New Yorker*, for which I had begun to write a few months earlier. In his whisper of a voice he asked me what I was thinking about writing. (He never imposed a subject.) I told him that I had an intuition that within a year this country would change vice president and president. At the time, this was a seemingly outlandish thought, but I go a lot on instinct, and I just sensed it. I began with the vice president because the nearly—or not so nearly—forgotten Spiro Agnew, formerly governor of Maryland, was under criminal investigation on suspicion that he'd been accepting post-facto bribes right in his vice-presidential office.

The Watergate scandal hadn't yet caught up with Nixon, but there was already plenty of evidence that serious wrongdoing had taken place in the White House and that Nixon had surrounded himself with rudderless aides willing to carry out most anything against the President's various real and imagined "enemies."

We knew that there had been an "enemies list," which we joked about but wasn't really funny: the President was willing to use the levers of government at his command, or retain outside goons to spy on, "get the goods on," and "destroy"—Nixon's terms—those who he saw as "out to get him." Nixon confused political opponents with enemies, but his suspicions swept a much wider field. And so tailing, break-ins, wiretaps, and IRS audits, among other things, proceeded against political opponents, journalists, university presidents—all manner of people.

Shawn, whose interest level was perpetually high, was fascinated and, as usual, he landed on a point I hadn't thought of: even if the trouble stopped with Agnew, this country had no idea how to remove and install a new vice president. We could start with that and see what followed. The word impeachment was totally foreign to us then—we were vaguely aware of some sort of unsuccessful and ill-regarded act after the Civil War. It was an alarming word that awed us. (The term hadn't yet been cheapened by the partisan and fundamentally unserious impeachment of Bill Clinton.) Shawn and I came to the conclusion—symbiotically, as I cannot honestly say if it was his idea or mine—that I should write a journal of the period we were entering into that Fall. Not a diary, but a journal of reporting and insight into the events of that time. We couldn't be sure what would unfold when; we would just start and then see. Back in Washington, when I told my mentor John Gardner about this assignment, he said to me, "no one will be able to go back and recapture this. Write it so that forty years from now people can say, 'So that's what it was like.'" (He actually said forty.) Thus I was writing for both a current and a future audience. As time went on, and Nixon's problems deepened, Shawn called me one Saturday and said, "Don't you think you'd better keep going?" "Yes," I replied, "I'd better keep going." We still could have no idea how it would end, but we knew that great drama was afoot. And so I kept going—until Nixon

climbed aboard the helicopter to take him to the plane that would carry him to San Clemente and retirement.

The reader may be struck early with a sense that these events took place in a somewhat archaic atmosphere. In fact, the rhythms of our daily working lives were quite different then: no cable television, no Internet, no Twitter. We lived in information vacuums between the morning papers and the evening news broadcast and the evening papers that existed then, and the occasional radio bulletin. News and rumor in equal measure buzzed around Washington through telephone calls and chance encounters. “*Did you hear...?*” In retrospect, this was somewhat liberating: we went about our business while we awaited the next bombshell or confirmation of the latest wild rumors—which all too often turned out to be true. As I recount in the first chapter, “it’s harder than ever to know where reality stops and fantasy begins.” Facts outran our imagination.

The journal ran in the *New Yorker* as sets of three parts each. Later, Joe Fox, an editor at Random House, came to see me in Washington and said that he wanted to publish the series as a book. I turned the series into a book, adding some material at the beginning, to give a backdrop as to how we had reached the situation we—and Nixon—were in by that Labor Day, and the book was first published in 1975. But it fell out of print and hardback copies became almost nonexistent. It was distressful that as we were heading into what happened to be the fortieth anniversary of Nixon’s resignation this book was essentially unobtainable. It seemed worth keeping alive, not simply as a commemoration of Nixon’s resignation but as a way of looking at this extraordinary period, at what led to its dramatic climax, to remind those who lived through it and to inform those who were too young at the time what it was really like. What may appear inevitable in hindsight seemed at the time anything but. We laughed at some of the ridiculous characters and at the absurdities—but by and large we were alarmed. It was a frightening time, and the stakes were enormous. Thus, the purpose of this book is to show what it was really like during the turbulent months that led to Nixon’s resignation.

To my delight, Peter Mayer of Overlook Press, with whom I had worked happily before, strongly agreed that *Washington Journal* should be kept alive and be offered to those who were there—but couldn’t see it for all the debris, or for whom memories have faded—and those who weren’t. Even when I reread it I’m astonished at what went on then. It looks quite different now than it did when we were in the middle of it, but no less dramatic, alarming, and even amusing in parts. And as it happens, Nixon has never really left us. He would be most surprised that he’s become a cult figure, the subject of endless fascination.

I have added an Afterword about what happened to Nixon after he left office—a period that very few know much if anything about. I think it’s about as fascinating as any other time in his life. The man didn’t change. I won’t spoil it here, but just say that this was the Nixon who never gave up. He just couldn’t. The Afterword also provides new insights I’ve had into what Watergate was actually about, some of which came as

a bit of a surprise and can still shock me. This new section also provides a more comprehensive view of Nixon: what shaped him and (without delving into psychobabble) might explain his behavior that got him in such terrible trouble—making him the first president forced to leave office. I have included some important and sometimes bizarre, sometimes alarming, things we learned about Nixon in the Watergate period and after he resigned, and also—and this was new to me when I later learned it—how Nixon very methodically climbed his way back into respectability sufficient enough that he was given a hero's burial. The story of how he did this also shed new light about this most extraordinary figure.

I hope that those who go through this for the first time and those who re-live it will realize what an amazing period this was, and how we almost lost our democratic system.

—E. D.

## FIGURES IN THE EVENTS OF 1973–1974

Robert Abplanalp: New York businessman and friend of President Nixon.  
Spiro T. Agnew: Vice-President of the United States  
Howard Baker (Republican of Tennessee): vice-chairman of the Senate Select Committee on Presidential Campaign Activities  
Bernard L. Barker: participant in the break-ins at the Watergate and the office of Daniel Ellsberg's psychiatrist  
Richard Ben-Veniste: Assistant Special Prosecutor  
Robert H. Bork: U.S. Solicitor General, and later Acting Attorney General of the United States  
Jack Brooks (Democrat of Texas): member of the House Judiciary Committee  
Patrick J. Buchanan: special assistant to the President (speechwriter)  
Stephen B. Bull: White House staff assistant  
Dean Burch: counsellor to the President  
Warren E. Burger: Chief Justice of the United States  
M. Caldwell Butler (Republican of Virginia): member of the House Judiciary Committee  
Alexander P. Butterfield: deputy assistant to the President, and later administrator, Federal Aviation Administration  
J. Fred Buzhardt, Jr.: special counsel to the President  
John J. Caulfield: private investigator retained by the White House  
Dwight L. Chapin: deputy assistant to the President  
Ken W. Clawson: deputy director, and later director of White House Office of Communications  
William S. Cohen (Republican of Maine): member of the House Judiciary Committee  
Charles W. Colson: special counsel to the President  
John B. Connally: former Democratic governor of Texas, chairman of Democrats for Nixon, Secretary of the Treasury and then special adviser to the President  
John Conyers, Jr. (Democrat of Michigan): member of the House Judiciary Committee  
Archibald Cox: Special Prosecutor  
George E. Danielson (Democrat of California): member of the House Judiciary Committee  
John W. Dean, III: counsel to the President  
David W. Dennis (Republican of Indiana): member of the House Judiciary Committee  
Felipe de Diego: participant in the break-in of Daniel Ellsberg's psychiatrist's office  
John M. Doar: special counsel, House Judiciary Committee impeachment inquiry  
Harold D. Donohue (Democrat of Massachusetts): member of the House Judiciary

Committee

Robert F. Drinan (Democrat of Massachusetts): member of the House Judiciary Committee

Don Edwards (Democrat of California): member of the House Judiciary Committee

John D. Ehrlichman: assistant to the President for domestic affairs

Joshua Eilberg (Democrat of Pennsylvania): member of the House Judiciary Committee

Sam J. Ervin, Jr. (Democrat of North Carolina): chairman, Senate Select Committee on Presidential Campaign Activities

Hamilton Fish, Jr. (Republican of New York): member of the House Judiciary Committee

Walter Flowers (Democrat of Alabama): member of the House Judiciary Committee

Gerald R. Ford (Republican of Michigan): House Minority Leader, and later Vice-President of the United States

Harold V. Froehlich (Republican of Wisconsin): member of the House Judiciary Committee

Leonard Garment: special consultant to the President, and later assistant to the President

Gerhard A. Gesell: judge, U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia

L. Patrick Gray, III: acting F.B.I. director

General Alexander M. Haig, Jr.: White House chief of staff

H. R. (Bob)aldeman: White House chief of staff

Bryce N. Harlow: counsellor to the President

Richard Helms: C.I.A. director, and later ambassador to Iran

Lawrence J. Hogan (Republican of Maryland): member of the House Judiciary Committee

Elizabeth Holtzman (Democrat of New York): member of the House Judiciary Committee

William L. Hungate (Democrat of Missouri): member of the House Judiciary Committee

E. Howard Hunt, Jr.: consultant to the White House, and participant in the break-ins at the Watergate and the office of Daniel Ellsberg's psychiatrist

Tom Charles Huston: associate counsel to the President

Edward Hutchinson (Republican of Michigan): member of the House Judiciary Committee

Leon Jaworski: Special Prosecutor

Albert E. Jenner, Jr.: minority counsel, House Judiciary Committee impeachment inquiry

Barbara C. Jordan (Democrat of Texas): member of the House Judiciary Committee

Herbert W. Kalmbach: the President's personal attorney and associate chairman of the Finance Committee to Re-Elect the President

Robert W. Kastenmeier (Democrat of Wisconsin): member of the House Judiciary Committee

Henry A. Kissinger: Secretary of State and National Security Adviser to the President

Richard G. Kleindienst: Attorney General of the United States

Rabbi Baruch Korff: chairman, National Citizens Committee for Fairness to the Presidency

Egil Krogh, Jr.: deputy assistant to the President for domestic affairs, and co-director of the Social Investigations Unit (the “Plumbers”)

Philip Lacovara: counsel to the Special Prosecutor

Melvin R. Laird: Secretary of Defense, and later counsellor to the President for domestic affairs

Frederick C. LaRue: special counsel to the President, and later special assistant to the Committee for the Re-Election of the President

Delbert L. Latta (Republican of Ohio): member of the House Judiciary Committee

G. Gordon Liddy: White House staff assistant and later counsel to the Finance Committee for the Re-Election of the President, and participant in the break-ins at the Watergate and the office of Daniel Ellsberg’s psychiatrist.

Trent Lott (Republican of Mississippi): member of the House Judiciary Committee

Jeb Stuart Magruder: deputy director, Committee for the Re-Election of the President

James R. Mann (Democrat of South Carolina): member of the House Judiciary Committee

Joseph J. Maraziti (Republican of New Jersey): member of the House Judiciary Committee

Robert C. Mardian: Assistant Attorney General in charge of the Internal Security Division of the Justice Department, and later political coordinator for the Committee for the Re-Election of the President

Eugenio R. Martinez: participant in the break-ins at the Watergate and the office of Daniel Ellsberg’s psychiatrist

Wiley Mayne (Republican of Iowa): member of the House Judiciary Committee

Robert McClory (Republican of Illinois): member of the House Judiciary Committee

James W. McCord, Jr.: security coördinator for the Committee for the Re-Election of the President, and participant in the break-ins at the Watergate and the office of Daniel Ellsberg’s psychiatrist

George Meany: President, A.F.L.-C.I.O.

William H. Merrill: Associate Special Prosecutor

Edward Mezvinsky (Democrat of Iowa): member of the House Judiciary Committee

John N. Mitchell: Attorney General of the United States, and later chairman of the Committee for the Re-Election of the President

Rev. Sun Myung Moon: Korean evangelist and supporter of President Nixon

Carlos J. Moorhead (Republican of California): member of the House Judiciary Committee

Richard M. Nixon: President of the United States

Wayne Owens (Democrat of Utah): member of the House Judiciary Committee

Kenneth W. Parkinson: attorney for the Committee for the Re-Election of the President

Henry E. Petersen: Assistant Attorney General in charge of the Criminal Division of the Justice Department

Herbert L. Porter: White House staff assistant, and later scheduling director, Committee for the Re-Election of the President

Tom Railsback (Republican of Illinois): member of the House Judiciary Committee

Charles B. Rangel (Democrat of New York): member of the House Judiciary Committee

Charles G. (Bebe) Rebozo: Miami banker and friend of President Nixon

Elliot L. Richardson: Attorney General of the United States

Peter W. Rodino, Jr. (Democrat of New Jersey): chairman of the House Judiciary Committee

William D. Ruckelshaus: Deputy Attorney General

James D. St. Clair: special counsel to the President

Charles W. Sandman, Jr. (Republican of New Jersey): member of the House Judiciary Committee

Paul S. Sarbanes (Democrat of Maryland): member of the House Judiciary Committee

William B. Saxbe: Attorney General of the United States

James R. Schlesinger: Secretary of Defense

Donald H. Segretti: attorney employed by the President's aides to engage in political tricks

John F. Seiberling (Democrat of Ohio): member of the House Judiciary Committee

John J. Sirica: judge, U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia

Henry P. Smith, III (Republican of New York): member of the House Judiciary Committee

Maurice H. Stans: Secretary of Commerce, and later chairman of the Finance Committee for the Re-Election of the President

Gordon C. Strachan: White House staff assistant (aide to H. R. Haldeman)

Ray Thornton (Democrat of Arkansas): member of the House Judiciary Committee

Anthony Ulasewicz: private investigator retained by the White House

Robert L. Vesco: financier

Jill Wine Volner: Assistant Special Prosecutor

Jerome R. Waldie (Democrat of California): member of the House Judiciary Committee

Lieutenant-General Vernon A. Walters: C.I.A. deputy director

Gerald L. Warren: deputy press secretary to the President

Charles E. Wiggins (Republican of California): member of the House Judiciary Committee

Rose Mary Woods: the President's personal secretary

Charles Alan Wright: professor, University of Texas Law School, and special consultant to the counsel to the President

David R. Young, Jr.: aide to Henry Kissinger on the National Security Council,  
and later co-director of the Special Investigations Unit (the “Plumbers”)  
Ronald L. Ziegler: press secretary to the President

# AUTUMN

# 1

WASHINGTON, D.C.,  
SEPTEMBER 4, 1973

**T**HE DAY AFTER Labor Day. Tomorrow, the Congress will reconvene, the President will hold a press conference, and the clashing between President and Congress—or at least the noise—will resume. The President will undoubtedly use his press conference to urge the Congress, via the people, at whom the press conference is really aimed, to put “Watergate” behind it and get on with “the nation’s business.” All year, the Congress has bobbed and weaved, and has taken only an occasional jab at the President. The Ervin committee has shown signs of losing its nerve, and direction. The Congress has as yet done nothing concrete to change the conditions that made possible that spreading cluster of events which have been coming to light, or to prevent these things from happening again.

It is unusually hot here today. It gets so hot here in the summer that the British foreign service used to consider this a hardship post. In recent years, the Congress has adjourned during August. The month is set aside for the congressmen to be with their families, take vacations and junkets, so that, at least theoretically, they can be here for the rest of the year. As a consequence, Washington, like Paris, empties out in August. August is a good time to stay in Washington. The restaurants are less crowded, the tennis courts are more available, friends are less busy. Fewer press releases and newsletters and statements by the politicians come across one’s desk, and it takes less time to read the newspapers. But it is crucial to get out of Washington from time to time—to change the scenery and the perspective, to clear the mind, to be with people who think about things other than those that people here spend most of their time thinking about. So I took the Labor Day weekend off, and flew back this afternoon. It is good to have had a breather. This is going to be no ordinary autumn.

Historic events are coming at us now with a swiftness and in a profusion never before experienced in our national life. The close view we get of these events—in our newspapers, on our television screens, in our gossip—may seem to reduce their magnitude, but they remain the stuff of history. Our Constitutional system is being tested. Decisions are being made that may determine the future of our two-hundred-year democratic experiment. We keep learning new things about our government, and the uses of power. In following events here in Washington, one tries to see them on various levels, tries to understand the implications and hidden meanings of what people say and do. People here deal in power, and implications. They proceed out of a

combination of ambition, concern, rivalry, patriotism, fear, and responsibility which is often hard to parse. Now the stakes are high. We watch as fallible human beings struggle over the office that has the ultimate power in this country, and over the ultimate compact in our political life—over the Presidency and the Constitution. This is a deadly struggle. Speeches, stories in the press, tactics, the musings of men as they decide how to proceed must be seen accordingly.

SEPTEMBER 5

President Nixon returned from a vacation in San Clemente a few days ago. It can't have been much of a vacation. On August 22nd, the President held an outdoor press conference at the "Western White House"—the first press conference since the Watergate story broke wide open last spring. The week before that, he gave a televised address on the subject. At the press conference, as he stood on the lawn, in the bright California sunshine, he answered questions on break-ins, on wiretaps, on investigations of his Administration. He appeared to be under great strain, and gave a number of answers that left him open to further questions, but his aides thought he had done so well that he should have another press conference soon.

Today the East Room of the White House was jammed for the President's press conference. It was at once a social and a political event. Many of the reporters had not seen each other in some time. Today, Nixon was on the attack. (He explained in *Six Crises*, his political autobiography, that when he was under attack, his reflex was to counterattack.) And he was trying, as he has tried since last spring, to change the subject. His subject today was the failure of the Congress to enact his legislative program. He began with substantive issues: inflation, defense, energy, domestic programs, taxes. Many of the questions followed the agenda that the President had set, but the uninvited guests, the other questions, were also there. Last week, Judge John J. Sirica ruled that the President must turn over to him nine tapes subpoenaed by Special Prosecutor Archibald Cox. The Judge said that he would review the tapes to determine whether they were protected by executive privilege or should be given to the Special Prosecutor. The President is planning to appeal the ruling to the Court of Appeals and then, presumably, to the Supreme Court. The President's strategy, *Newsweek* reports this week, is to postpone a Supreme Court ruling until he has rebuilt his popular support. *Newsweek* also says that if the President decides to defy the courts, he might "purge both Attorney General Elliot Richardson and Special Prosecutor Archibald Cox" if they oppose him. The President has said only that he would obey a "definitive" decision of the Supreme Court. Today, as before, he refused to define "definitive."

Dan Rather, of CBS, asked Mr. Nixon why he felt that he was different from Abraham Lincoln, who had said, "No man is above the law." President Nixon responded that during the Civil War President Lincoln had suspended the writ of

habeas corpus.

Asked about the fact that he had said last month that he had ordered a new investigation after March 21st—first by John Dean, his thirty-four-year-old former White House counsel, and then, when Dean was unable to write the report, by John Ehrlichman, formerly one of the President’s two top assistants—whereas others had testified that they did not know of any such investigation, the President replied that this was because he “had ordered the investigation from within the White House itself.” (In his August 15th statement, the President changed his story and said some surprising things, and, in a pattern that is becoming familiar, some things that raised new questions. He said that on March 21st he was told “for the first time that the planning of the Watergate break-in went beyond those who had been tried and convicted,” that he had “learned of some of the activities upon which charges of cover-up are now based,” and was told that “funds had been raised for payments to the defendants, with the knowledge and approval of persons both on the White House staff and at the Re-Election Committee,” but that he was “only told that the money had been used for attorneys’ fees and family support, not that it had been paid to procure silence.” He also said: “I was told that a member of my staff had talked to one of the defendants about clemency, but not that offers of clemency had been made.” He said he learned then that one of the defendants was “attempting to blackmail the White House by demanding \$120,000 as the price of not talking about other activities, unrelated to Watergate, in which he had engaged.” The President said that “these allegations were made in general terms” and “were largely unsupported by details or evidence.” He also said that he “turned over all the information I had” to Henry Petersen, the Assistant Attorney General in charge of the Criminal Division of the Justice Department, and “I ordered all members of the Administration to testify fully before the grand jury.” At his press conference the following week, on August 22nd, the President said that H. R. (Bob) Haldeman, his other former top assistant, had made an “accurate” statement to the Ervin committee about the President’s conversation with Dean on March 21st in regard to paying the defendants to keep silent. Nixon said that “the problem was, how do you get the money to them, and also, how do you get around the problem of clemency, because they are not going to stay in jail simply because their families are being taken care of. And so, that was why I concluded, as Mr. Haldeman recalls ... and did testify very effectively ... I said ‘John, it is wrong, it won’t work. We can’t give clemency and we have got to get this story out.’ ”)

The President refused today, as he had at San Clemente, to comment on the Justice Department’s investigation of charges that Vice-President Agnew accepted bribes and kickbacks from building contractors while he was serving as county executive of Baltimore County, Maryland, and as governor of the state. (There have also been reports that the payments continued after Agnew took office as Vice-President.) When, early last month, the papers reported that Spiro Agnew, Vice-President of the United States, was under federal investigation in Baltimore for criminal wrongdoing, it felt like an earthquake. The Vice-President held a press conference, calling the charges

“damned lies.” The Agnew story collided with the Watergate story, and spun it around. Until then, Agnew had been the respectable alternative to Nixon, untouched by the unfolding scandals, very likely the Republican candidate in 1976, and even possibly, if the President’s troubles continued to mount, the successor to the Presidency before then. It is not yet clear whether formal charges will be made against the Vice-President. Today the President expressed his “confidence in the Vice-President’s integrity during the period that he has served as Vice-President.”

The question of the financing of and improvements on the President’s houses at Key Biscayne, Florida, and San Clemente, California—one more issue that exploded in our midst in the past few months—came up today at the press conference. The story was a nuisance. Until it broke, it had been a truism of Watergate that such a banal matter as personal gain was not involved. The issue of the houses was also a diversion from the main question. Today the President was asked if he paid a capital-gains tax on that part of the San Clemente property he had sold to his friends, Charles G. (Bebe) Rebozo and Robert Abplanalp. (The White House has said that Rebozo and Abplanalp helped him finance the purchase of the California property.) Both are obscure figures—Rebozo a Miami banker, and Abplanalp, a Bronxville, New York, businessman and perfecter of the aerosol-spray valve. We know little about them except that they are the President’s most frequent companions in his frequent seclusion. Rebozo has a house in the Key Biscayne compound where the President has two houses. The President uses one of these houses as a home, the other as an office. Abplanalp has a retreat on Grand Cay Island, where the President seeks isolation. When the President goes to Florida, the three men often go out on Bebe Rebozo’s boat, the *Coco Lobo*.

Today, the President replied that the I.R.S. said that he did not have to pay a capital-gains tax on the sale of the land in California—even though an accounting firm retained by Mr. Nixon had found that he made a profit on the sale. The President said that this was “a matter of difference between accountants.” The President said that he resented “the implications” that “my private property was enriched because of what the government did.” He said that, actually, “what the government did at San Clemente reduced the value of the property,” that the gazebos and fences ordered by the Secret Service blocked the view. Presumably, they could never be removed. He said that he was a man of little wealth—“the first President in this office since Harry Truman” who did not own stocks or bonds.

Asked how he would restore confidence in his leadership, he said that it has been difficult “for four months to have the President of the United States by innuendo, by leak, by, frankly, leers and sneers of commentators, which is their perfect right, attacked in every way.” That, he said, caused the confidence to be “worn away.” He said that it was restored “by the President not allowing his own confidence to be destroyed.” The President continued, “And second, it is restored by doing something. We have tried to do things. The country hasn’t paid a great deal of attention to it, and I may say the media hasn’t paid a great deal of attention to it because your attention, quite understandably, is in the more fascinating area of Watergate. Perhaps that will

now change.” The President’s demeanor changed when he dealt with the questions about Watergate and about his property. He became tense, and he breathed hard. If one stood far enough to his right, one could see that, behind the lectern, his hips swivelled in a circular motion, as if within an invisible Hula Hoop.

SEPTEMBER 6

Each time the Congress reconvenes after a long recess, there’s a ritual whereby the press asks the returning politicians about the mood of what is known in Washington as “the country.” According to today’s papers, most of the returning politicians are saying that in the minds of their constituents the economy is the most important issue. They are saying that “the country” is tired of Watergate. But according to a study conducted within the television industry—and to the surprise of the industry itself—daytime television viewing increased, by seven percent, during the period between May and August in which the hearings of the Senate Select Committee on Presidential Campaign Activities, headed by Sam Ervin, Democrat of North Carolina, were televised. This is contrary to the history of the televising of such events. It may be that it is the politicians who are tiring of Watergate, and want to get it behind them.

Some of the politicians feel that the President’s position may grow stronger, and they do not want to be caught on the wrong side of the issue. The politicians also sense that Watergate is lowering still further the public’s esteem for politics. There has been uneasiness on Capitol Hill as the Ervin committee has moved toward the conclusion of its hearings on the actual break-in at the Watergate, and toward the beginning of hearings on campaign practices and money. Other politicians did not break into their opposition’s campaign headquarters, but many politicians did flout the spirit, and some even the letter, of the laws covering the raising and spending of campaign funds. Today’s *Washington Post* reports that the Ervin committee will resume hearings in about two weeks and hopes to conclude them by November 1st. Howard Baker, Republican of Tennessee, the vice-chairman of the committee, says that the committee will be “less meticulous” on the next subjects, because they are “less spectacular.”

Yesterday afternoon, in considering a bill appropriating money for the White House, the Senate rejected two amendments to bring expenditures for the White House under stricter congressional control. The amendments, offered by Senator Walter Mondale, Democrat of Minnesota, would have reduced the size of the staff of the Domestic Council and deleted an appropriation of one million dollars to the White House for what is called the “special-projects fund.” (The Domestic Council, set up to “coördinate” the work of Cabinet Departments, had been headed by John Ehrlichman, and at one point had a staff of about seventy.) The issue, said Mondale, was “the relationship between the executive and legislative branches of the government, and more fundamentally it is a question of whether we have learned from Watergate the essentiality of forcing executive decisions out into the open again.”

The issue was also whether the Congress wished to assume responsibility for