

Post
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'Profiting From Felonious Acts'

I was dismayed to read in last Sunday's Washington Post (Jan. 12) that Mrs. Maureen Dean, wife of one of the convicted Watergate conspirators, has received a "six-figure" retainer from a publishing company for a book she is in the process of writing. I also understand that her husband, John Dean, is presently negotiating an even larger retainer with another publishing company for his own book.

As is well known, numerous opinions have been rendered as to the fate of those involved in the Watergate debacle. There are those who advocate the maximum sentence for all offenders, while others express the view that these men have suffered enough for their misdeeds through public disgrace, ruined careers, etc. There is undoubtedly some merit to both sides of the issue.

I do feel, however, that regardless of the length of time they serve in prison, these individuals should not be entitled to profit from the felonious acts for which they have been found

guilty. I have no doubt that most of these persons will be writing books or "memoirs" allegedly revealing the inside story of their own involvement in the biggest political scandal since the birth of this nation. In my view, this makes a mockery of the concept of "justice for all," and is repugnant to the millions of honest, law abiding citizens who work most of their lives to make ends meet. The fact that these convicted felons can become prosperous celebrities as a result of their crimes should in itself be a crime.

It is my fervent wish that as Judge Sirica considers the multitude of factors that will assist him in arriving at a just sentence for those individuals recently found guilty, he will consider imposing some appropriate restriction that will restrain them, as well as members of their immediate families, from exploiting their participation in crimes which will haunt our country for years to come.

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