

Official Secrets

by Anthony Lewis

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... The Pentagon papers defendants are charged under the general statute against stealing Federal property. The "property" supposedly involved is not the volumes of war history themselves but the information they include.

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If the Nixon Administration prevails with its theory that Government information is "property," or otherwise gets and sustains a conviction against Dr. Ellsberg and Mr. Russo, then leaking will be a crime.

The American press has been generally complacent so far about the prosecution of Daniel Ellsberg and Anthony Russo. If it understood the implications, I do not think it could be.