

The Press, and Watergate

by Charles McCabe

[On investigation by Edward Jay Epstein, commissioned by  
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What the press did was not dig, but accept leaks. Within a week of the Watergate brea-in, nearly all the pertinent facts were in the possession of the FBI and other government agencies. Over a period of long months these facts were leaked to newspapers, chiefly the Washington Post.

The leaking was political in motivation. The leaks came from career officials of the FBI and the Justice Department, and even from Republican Senators on the Hill. The leakers were men in open revolt against the sustematic corruption of the judicial process by White House and Creep executives under the leadership of the almost universally hated Haldeman and Ehrlichman combo.

What brought the roof down on Mr. Nixon, in the end, was less the press than the arrogance of the men he chose as lieutenants, and the open contempt they showed to the legislative and judicial branches of the government. ....