

The trouble with Watergate - civil liberties and the scandal

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Another issue that has severe civil liberties implications surfaced recently in the Senate Watergate hearings when former Presidential Counsel John Dean III testified that the "enemies list" was kept to arrange Internal Revenue Service audits of Administration foes. If such audits were actually authorized, they represent ominous abuse of power and invasion of privacy. The government has access to almost any individual's financial records as it is and that fact presents enough dangers but to have that information used by the government for political purposes smacks of totalitarianism. (ACLU-NC Legal Director Charles Marson has learned, in the course of preparing his case against the Bank Secrecy Act for the Supreme Court, that Gordon Liddy and Howard Hunt discovered who Daniel Ellsberg's psychiatrist was by going through copies of his cancelled checks which they acquired through provisions of the Act.)

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