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An alleged victim speaks out in defiance of Watergate ban

WASHINGTON — A federal judge has issued an order banning all pretrial publicity and conversation arising from the burglary and phone-tapping of the Democratic National Committee headquarters. The judge's order bans three classes of people from talking about the affair: law-enforcement officers, witnesses or potential witnesses and alleged victims and their associates.

Well, I am not a law-enforcement officer; I am not a witness or a potential witness. But I am an alleged victim. I allege myself to be a victim. I allege that the American people are also victims, and if the judge wants to interpret his injunction to prevent me from talking about what I consider to be an outrage to me personally and to every other American citizen, let him make the most of it.

Here we are in the middle of a presidential campaign and one of those who is running for president employs people who broke into the Watergate, spied upon people in the office of one of our major parties, installed bugs in the telephones of people working in those offices

and paid thieves by surreptitious and totally illegal finagling of funds through a foreign country. Now candidate Nixon says that he can't comment because it might damage the rights of the defendants.

What about damage to the rest of us? When the leaders of my country behave in an immoral and disgraceful and illegal fashion, I am damaged in the same way that I am enhanced when a John Glenn or a Joe Foss (World War II flying ace) behaves heroically.

I know it's old-fashioned of me but a Fourth of July parade can still bring tears to my eyes, and I don't think the old refrain, "Hat's off; the flag is passing by" is as corny as some of my contemporaries do. When Mr. Nixon's employes can rob, steal and spy; when Mr. Nixon himself can behave in the manner of the parent of a thieving son who says "Boys will be boys"; when his lawyers say it can't be brought to trial because it might prejudice the election, and a federal judge says we can't even talk about it, it seems to me high time that those of us who admire the flag start thinking about what it stands for.