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'Obvious' Questions  
In Need of Answers

To the Editor:

Even before the Nixon Administration passed into history, many thousands of words, some unjustifiably defensive and many sanctimoniously vindictive, were written by political scientists, legal experts, historians, psychiatrists, and columnists on every conceivable aspect of the Watergate affair. But several quite obvious questions are still to be answered by a competent historiography:

1) What practical purpose was served by the commission of criminal offenses, such as the burglary of the Democratic National Committee headquarters, at a time when, according to all polls, the reelection of Richard Nixon was virtually assured, a prognosis which was fully borne out by a landslide election of 47 million votes?

2) Since almost all the perpetrators were trained attorneys were they not aware of the fact that those who instigated and committed the transgression would surely be found out, especially when so many people were involved?

3) Why and to what end did Mr. Nixon record all his incriminating, often profane, conversations which, even in the best circumstances, would have been severely damaging to his stature in history?

4) Since he had no legal obligation to preserve the tapes, why didn't he destroy all of them at the very outset when the story of the break-in made the first headlines?

Without the tapes, especially the one of June 23, 1972, there was no conclusive evidence beyond any reasonable doubt pointing to Mr. Nixon's active participation in the cover-up, or even his indirect guilt.

(As to testimony, there was no accusatory statement which inculpated Mr. Nixon directly, except John Dean's statement before the Ervin Committee. And Mr. Dean's credibility was badly diminished after the disclosure of his \$5,000 "loan" for his honeymoon.)

An answer to, or explanation of, these questions would be indeed highly interesting and instructive.

EDWARD W. JELENKO  
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