

MARVIN KALB: Hello and welcome to the National Press Club and to another edition of The Kalb Report. I'm Marvin Kalb. And our subject tonight, "Writing History. Bob Woodward, Carl Bernstein and Journalism's Finest Hour." That was, of course, the coverage of the Watergate scandal. The break-in, the scandal, the cover-up, the toppling of a President.

There have been other great finest hours in American journalism. But Watergate probably is at the very top, or close to it. At the time, a little more than 40 years ago, Bob Woodward and Carl Bernstein were both very, very young reporters at the *Washington Post*. On June 17th, 1972, five men tried bugging the Watergate office of the Democratic National Committee. They were caught. Woodward and Bernstein begin to cover the story. President Richard Nixon is at the heart of a cover-up.

On August 8th, 1974, Nixon resigns almost certainly one step ahead of impeachment. And God, what a story, and what a moment in American history. I am delighted, honored, really, to have both of you, Bob and Carl, here on The Kalb Report. And Bob, you had been at *The Post* for all of nine months, working as, I think, a nighttime police reporter when you were assigned to cover Watergate. To put it in its most charitable way, you were not the most experienced reporter on big deal Washington politics. [laughter] And yet you got the story. So tell us how it happened.

BOB WOODWARD: Well, a series of accidents. That morning, the editors sat around and said-- It was a beautiful day in Washington, a Saturday. And they said, "Who would be dumb enough to come in to work?" And my name rose to the top of the list. [laughter] And they sent me down to the courthouse to cover the arraignment of the five burglars. And, as Carl has always said, you know, Carl covered burglars for, you know, a dozen years at that point. You never had them in business suits.

And there they were. And the judge asked where the lead burglar had worked. And he didn't want to answer. And he kept whispering. And finally, the judge said, "Where?" And he said, "CIA." And I was in the front row. And my reaction was, "Holy--" [laughter]. And that began a series of clues. I mean Carl, of course, that day, was working anyway, right?

CARL BERNSTEIN: Well I was the chief Virginia reporter of the paper at the time.

MARVIN KALB: How long had you been at the paper then?

CARL BERNSTEIN: Well, I started at the *Washington Star* when I was 16. So by then, I had 12 years experience. And I had been at the *Washington Post* for six years. But I was writing a story about the Lieutenant Governor of Virginia running for the governorship. And I could see all this commotion around the city desk. And I said to myself, "That's a better story, whatever it is up there, than the one I'm working on." [laughter]

So I went up there to find out what it was. And I started to make some calls without being asked to. And eventually, the city editor said, "Okay, keep making calls." And that day, I got hold of the burglars' wives in Miami, and tried to talk to them in pidgin Spanish. But learned a little bit.

MARVIN KALB: And the next day was Sunday. And there were two reporters who came in on that Sunday.

CARL BERNSTEIN: Who were stupid enough to be there on a Sunday.

BOB WOODWARD: Carl and myself. And we did our first story together about James McCord, the lead burglar and his connections to the CIA. But also, he was head of security for the Nixon campaign. And that was, you know-- what?

MARVIN KALB: So this meant that, almost within the first 24-48 hours, you already had clues linking what they had done to the White House.

CARL BERNSTEIN: And, of course, the White House then called it a “third rate burglary,” to which it had no relationship whatsoever. And, of course, as we know now, it turned out to be the key to understanding that the Nixon Presidency was a criminal Presidency, almost from beginning to end, and that Richard Nixon was a criminal President of the United States.

MARVIN KALB: When did that thought, this criminal President, all that business, enter your mind?

CARL BERNSTEIN: Well, we had a story about 10 weeks into-- after the Watergate break-in, in which we wrote that John N. Mitchell, Nixon’s campaign manager and former law partner, had, while being Attorney General of the United States, controlled a secret fund that paid for Watergate and other undercover activities against the political opposition. And I’ll tell this story now.

MARVIN KALB: Yeah.

CARL BERNSTEIN: I'm going to take a second. So the White House immediately said that that story, when we called them for a comment, said, “The sources of the *Washington Post* are a fountain of misinformation.” And we typed out their response. And I said to the Press Secretary, “Well, is the story right? Did Mr. Mitchell control the funds?” “The sources of the *Washington Post* are a fountain of misinformation.”

So I had a phone call, a phone number for John Mitchell in New York. And I called him. And I said, “Mr. Mitchell, Attorney General, sir, we have a story in tomorrow’s paper I’d like to read to you.” He said, “Go ahead.” I said, “All right. Well, it says, ‘John N.

Mitchell, while Attorney General of the United States, controlled a secret fund.” And I got that far. And Mr. Mitchell said, “Jeeesus.” [laughter] And I got a few more words into the paragraph. And Mr. Mitchell said, “Jeeesus.” [laughter]

And then, he said, “Jesus Christ, all that crap, you're putting it in the paper? If you print that, Katie Graham,” referring to the publisher of the *Washington Post*, Katherine Graham, “is going to get her tit caught in a big fat wringer.” [laughter] And I was not used to speaking to Attorneys General. And I kind of instinctively jumped back from the phone myself, worried about my own parts more than Mrs. Graham’s perhaps. [laughter] And then he said, “And when this campaign is over, we’re going to do a little story on you two boys,” and hung up the phone.

MARVIN KALB: At which point you knew?

CARL BERNSTEIN: Well, at which point it was a very chilling moment for a 28 year old reporter.

BOB WOODWARD: And then you called Bradley--

CARL BERNSTEIN: We called Ben Bradley, our great editor. Told him what Mitchell had said. And Bradley said, “He really said that?” [laughter] And I said, “Yeah.” And Bradley said, “Do you have it in your notes?” And I said, “Yeah, I typed them all out.” He says, “All right, put it all in the paper, but leave out her tit.” [laughter]

BOB WOODWARD: And that’s what's called great editing. [laughter]

MARVIN KALB: That’s what's called great editing. Was that one of the reasons, by the way, that telling this story, was that one of the reasons why, from the very beginning, you both knew that you were onto something, not just journalistic, but historic. And you began to keep every not that you ever had of the report?

BOB WOODWARD: Yeah, yeah.

MARVIN KALB: Because that, in and of itself, is rather unusual.

BOB WOODWARD: Well, no.

MARVIN KALB: Yeah.

BOB WOODWARD: I mean you write everything down. You try to keep a record. It was clear this was an important story. But Mitchell's threat to Carl is important, because can you imagine Eric Holder, the Attorney General now, saying that to a reporter, even if he thought it? No. Because it would get out, and it would become a big deal. But Mitchell felt so insulated, felt so protected by the White House, by our political system and, quite frankly, by the press, that he could talk that way.

MARVIN KALB: What do you mean, protected by the press?

BOB WOODWARD: Exactly that. I mean no one picked that up. It was a kind of, "Oh yeah, isn't that interesting that John Mitchell just threatened the publisher of the *Washington Post*?"

CARL BERNSTEIN: And remember, most of our colleagues in the Washington Press Corps at the time did not believe the stories that we were writing for the first couple months on Watergate, including many of our colleagues at the *Washington Post*.

BOB WOODWARD: And right at that time, we were having coffee one morning in the little cafeteria they had off the newsroom. And Carl put-- It was a dime.

CARL BERNSTEIN: It was a dime in those days.

BOB WOODWARD: You could get a cup of coffee for a dime. Wasn't very good. And, as you've said-- I mean I watched this. You felt a chill go down your back. And you turned around to me, and you said, "My God. This President is going to be impeached." And my response was, "I think you're right. But we can never, ever use that word in this newsroom, because people will think we have a political agenda." And that was the fall of 1972. And it was a year before the whole impeachment drive began.

So we had a glimpse of it. But we had to be really careful because, as you may recall Marvin, at the time, the White House was unloading on us in a way that-- unprecedented. Ron Zigar, the Press secretary for Nixon would just say, "The *Washington Post* is engaged in a political campaign. Ben Bradley, the editor over there, was a friend of John Kennedy's." And on and on and on. All the other Republican operatives would give speeches. Bob Dole went up to Baltimore and gave a speech that went on, and called us every name in the book.

And so we're in a foxhole, in a certain extent, on all of this.

MARVIN KALB: It's an interesting point that takes off in many directions. But on the foxhole, for example, Carl I read somewhere recently that you were describing the relationship that you had with Bob as being in a kind of foxhole. And you also said that he was very warm, friendly. But you did acknowledge that you had disagreements, some of them you said very heated.

CARL BERNSTEIN: Yeah.

MARVIN KALB: Could you give us a sense of what one might be?

BOB WOODWARD: You said warm and friendly? [laughter]

MARVIN KALB: Like a state department spokesman.

BOB WOODWARD: I mean we were-- we were [simultaneous conversation] on each other.

CARL BERNSTEIN: It's been going on for 40 years. [laughter]

MARVIN KALB: Have you guys been at loggerheads all that time?

CARL BERNSTEIN: No.

BOB WOODWARD: Well, we look at things differently. But you know, as you pointed out, I'd been working at the *Post* for nine months. And it's great to have a partner like Carl who's been there forever. I think you go back to the Calvin Coolidge administration. [laughter]

CARL BERNSTEIN: At least, at least. But the great thing that happened is that we complemented each other. And we switched roles all the time. What would be expected of me, Woodward would do. What would be expected of Woodward, I would do, in terms of writing, in terms of reporting. And so--

BOB WOODWARD: Give us an example of the very heated argument.

CARL BERNSTEIN: Well, there's a story that we wrote that said that Chuck Colson, the President's Deputy Assistant, political operator, and John Mitchell had really been behind the Watergate operation and the whole huge campaign of political espionage and sabotage that Watergate was a part of. And we had the goods on the story. So I thought we had a number of people saying that this was the case. Bob didn't think that the story was ready to go. And he prevailed.

BOB WOODWARD: And we had a big fight about it. And I thought--

CARL BERNSTEIN: It says in the book, in *All the President's Men*, it was probably the biggest argument we ever had. And it was a hugely important story.

BOB WOODWARD: And it was never published. And the agreement we had over another ten cent cup of coffee was, if somebody said no, okay, no prevailed.

CARL BERNSTEIN: That's right.

BOB WOODWARD: And--

MARVIN KALB: You mean if one-- ?

CARL BERNSTEIN: If one of us said no--

MARVIN KALB: -- you would not go with the story.

CARL BERNSTEIN: But it even applied to the lead of a story.

BOB WOODWARD: But what's interesting about this story, never published. *Newsweek* last week has a cover story--

CARL BERNSTEIN: -- the reinvented *Newsweek*--

BOB WOODWARD: -- saying that they have a copy of this unpublished article. And they have drawings of the two of us, you know, beyond *Deep Throat*, some of the other secret sources that we had. And they feel like, you know, they've uncovered a dinosaur bone that didn't even run, wasn't even in the dinosaur. And that's 42 years later.

MARVIN KALB: It's an amazing story, wonderful story.

BOB WOODWARD: And it just-- I mean we were kind of looking at it. And, you know, I had to plead guilty and say, "We should have run that story."

CARL BERNSTEIN: Better late than ever.

BOB WOODWARD: Yeah, right, exactly. [laughter]

MARVIN KALB: The thing that's kind of interesting, and you mentioned a moment ago Bob Dole going up to Baltimore, ripping into the two of you. That had to have had some kind of play within the establishment of the *Washington Post*. Not everybody was Ben Bradley. Not everybody was Kate Graham. There must have been people who went to Kate Graham and said, "What are you doing? You're allowing these two maniacs to go running?"

CARL BERNSTEIN: Henry Kissinger did. It was then the National Security [simultaneous conversation]

MARVIN KALB: I know it was not on paper. I'm interested, was there--

CARL BERNSTEIN: Oh yes, the national editor of the paper, somebody that we loved deeply, actually, you know, worked with later, he went to Ben Bradley and said, look, he didn't have confidence in what we were writing. And he would like the national staff, not the local staff, of which we were a part, to take the story over. And Bradley said no, that these guys are coming in with the information. And, as long as that's the case, they're on the story.

MARVIN KALB: Let me ask you about Ben Bradley. And we know, by the way, that as we tape this program, and it's going out live to a lot of people, Ben is very ill at this point. But if you go back to Ben Bradley, was a giant in this industry. And Ben, as your editor-- every now and then I have the feeling he might have been more important, really, to getting the story out to the public than the two of you.

CARL BERNSTEIN: Absolutely.

MARVIN KALB: Because without him-- am I right?-- nothing would have happened.

CARL BERNSTEIN: Absolutely.

BOB WOODWARD: Well, I mean if he wouldn't publish these stories, Carl and I could have written letters to our mothers. [laughter] And that circulation was not [simultaneous conversation]

MARVIN KALB: Would she have published them?

CARL BERNSTEIN: That's right. [laughter]

BOB WOODWARD: It was not much, but Ben was--

CARL BERNSTEIN: His mother didn't believe what we were writing. [laughter]

BOB WOODWARD: That's right.

CARL BERNSTEIN: She was from Chicago, a Republican machine.

BOB WOODWARD: Right. She did. When Nixon said in the Frost interviews that what we wrote was trash, and that we were trash, I was, you know, that's tough stuff. And so I called my mother. And I asked her, "What do you think about the former leader of the free world calling us trash?" And she said, "Oh, you know, that's Washington. That's politics, and so forth." And she said, "What's this about being a Republican?" [laughter]

MARVIN KALB: I want to know, Bob, you--

BOB WOODWARD: But Ben was the-- For us, at that time, I mean we were in our late 20s. And he had all this experience. He was the boss. And he knew how to motivate people. He knew how to interrogate us in a way. If you've ever been interrogated by Ben Bradley, you know he won't just ask, you know, kind of, "Have you got something in your notes?" He said, "Exactly what was said?"

MARVIN KALB: Did you share everything with Ben?

CARL BERNSTEIN: No. He did not want-- He did not ask who a couple of sources were. He wanted to know where they worked, essentially. But he did not need to know their names. But one of the things that's so significant about Ben is that here is an editor without a real politics, whose real politics is about the truth. And that is what guided him in his career, guided him in his life. And that is why he was such a tough editor on us, and put us through these paces, and knew how-- you know, what the stakes were very early in this story. And he too wouldn't publish some stories.

Very early on, there was a story we had done about Ted Kennedy being investigated by the Nixon White House. And he took a look at it, and marked it up, and said, "Well, it's certainly not going on page one. I'll put it inside the paper, but that's it." He was tough on us, as he should have been.

MARVIN KALB: You once said, Bob, that Bradley was great because, “What he kept out of the paper as much as what he got into the paper.” Give us an example of something that he would look at the two of you square in the eye and said, “Guys, this won't make it. Not going to make the paper.”

BOB WOODWARD: All the time we were going through a process of, “This is what”-
- You know, Ben’s favorite line always was, after you did a story, said, “Okay, what have you got for tomorrow?” He was always thinking about the next paper. And that’s the right attitude. And so we would share. And there would be meeting-- We had great editors on the Metro staff, Barry Sussman, Harry Rosenfeld. Howard Simons was the managing editor. And, you know, we would mix it up and talk.

And we could work two or three weeks on a single story, and write them on things called typewriters, I think some people remember what those were. [laughter]

CARL BERNSTEIN: Manual typewriters.

BOB WOODWARD: Yeah.

CARL BERNSTEIN: No electric typewriters.

BOB WOODWARD: Yeah. You needed finger pressure.

MARVIN KALB: You need both fingers.

BOB WOODWARD: And sent copies around to everyone. They would say, “What about this? What about that? Check this out,” and so forth. And so it worked. But the really interesting thing about Bradley was, he knew we were going into a really well-organized, well-funded criminal conspiracy by the Nixon White House and the Nixon campaign.

MARVIN KALB: When did he know that?

BOB WOODWARD: I think the time we did the Mitchell story.

CARL BERNSTEIN: Mitchell story.

BOB WOODWARD: But he--

MARVIN KALB: It's only three or four months into the story?

BOB WOODWARD: Yeah. And he said, "You're about to accuse the Attorney General, the former Attorney General of the United States of being a crook. You better be right." [laughter]

MARVIN KALB: What an amazing thing. The amount of trust that he vested of the two of you. How do you account for that? Did he really think you were that great?

CARL BERNSTEIN: Nope. He had the greatest of instincts based on this questioning methodology. But he had perfect antenna. He was a great reporter before he was an editor. And, because his bottom line and top line was about the truth, he would make sure that that story was truthful in fact, in context, every element of it. And it was-- it was like being in boot camp.

MARVIN KALB: Did you guys ever think that you were ever-- that your lives were ever in danger?

BOB WOODWARD: Yeah, we did. Mark felt *Deep Throat* said-- I think it was in May, '73, said, "The stakes are so high in this, lives could be in danger." I think I overreacted to it a little bit. He wasn't saying our lives--

MARVIN KALB: He didn't specifically say your lives--

CARL BERNSTEIN: He said, "Perhaps including your own."

BOB WOODWARD: Yeah, that's right, yeah.

CARL BERNSTEIN: -- is the language. [laughter] I remember it. [laughter]

MARVIN KALB: Did you take any steps?

BOB WOODWARD: Okay, here's what we did. I mean this is what-- This is what-- This is the way it was. I talked to him. I come back, type out the notes. And Carl and I are going through this. And, you know, wiretapping is going on all over the place. Lives could be in danger. Essentially, this is going to explode. Nixon is going to be involved. And so Carl never served enough time in the military, so he never observed the chain of command. He said, "We've got to go see Bradley."

It's two A.M. in the morning.

CARL BERNSTEIN: So he was a lieutenant and I was an E1. That's the difference.

BOB WOODWARD: Right. And so called Bradley. We go out to his house on Dexter in--

CARL BERNSTEIN: -- Wesley Heights.

BOB WOODWARD: -- Wesley Heights. And he opens the door. He's there in his bathrobe. And we say you know, "Come on outside, because there's wiretapping going

on.” And he finally thinks we’ve finally gone nuts. [laughter] And he comes out. And we tell him this. And there's the movie version of it, which is a little inflated, where Jason Robard is playing Bradley, says, you know, “Okay, go take a bath. Get back to work. Not much is at stake other than the freedom of the press, the future of the country.”

CARL BERNSTEIN: “And the Constitution.”

BOB WOODWARD: “And the Constitution.” [laughter] That was all. And we look back at our notes again. And you know what he said? This is interesting, and reflective of him. He looked at us and said, “What the hell do we do now?” [laughter] If you think about it, this is in totally uncharted territory. And that’s exactly the right question. “What the hell?” And so we met the next day up on the garden court at the *Washington Post*. And the other editors are really certain we have gone nuts at this point. And we start, you know, “What's the next story? What are we going to do?”

And, as you may recall, for 26 months until Nixon resigned, that story was, you know, every week, sometimes three or four front page stories on the *Washington--* in the *Washington Post*. It had a-- As Ben has said, at the time of the Senate Watergate hearings, you could-- in the newsroom at the *Post*, the little TVs were going, watching the hearings, all the networks covered them.

MARVIN KALB: Oh yeah.

BOB WOODWARD: Gavel to gavel. You could go-- You’d go get in a cab, and the cab driver would have the hearings on the radio. And then you’d get up and go to some office in the Hill, and you would go in there, and they’d all be watching this. This was a subject that was-- it consumed this town and, to a certain extent, the country.

MARVIN KALB: Let me ask both of you this question. You were so deeply into this story. I mean few journalists really have an opportunity to get into any story as deeply as you did into the Watergate story. And I'm wondering, for that reason, is there any part of the Watergate story that is still out there, that has not yet been discovered?

CARL BERNSTEIN: Well, we keep getting on the Nixon tapes, you know, month after month, year after year.

MARVIN KALB: No, no, but that's--

CARL BERNSTEIN: -- new, new elements.

MARVIN KALB: Yes. But are there people like the two of you, today, perhaps at the *Washington Post* or anywhere else, who are going after a story like this, that there's an element of Watergate that is still out there? Or, can one say properly that Watergate as a story, big banner across it, it's done?

BOB WOODWARD: Well, it's never done. And, as Ben Bradley used to always say, still says, the truth emerges. And it takes a lot of time. But, now, let's take an example of the *Washington Post*. Let's take the Secret Service. If we were talking three months ago, and we took a poll, and we said, "What do you think of the Secret Service?" people would say, "Great organization. You know, there's been no shooting. No one's been hurt," and so forth. And now, because of Carol Lennig's [?] reporting at the *Washington Post*, take a poll about the Secret Service. Gee, they let people jump the fence and get into the White House?

MARVIN KALB: The Secret Service is not in the league with Watergate, though.

BOB WOODWARD: No, no, I mean I'm not talking about magnitude, I'm talking about the point-- and this is the point in Watergate-- we didn't know what was going on. The conventional wisdom was, Nixon was too smart to be involved. Turned out not to be the case. We used to think the Secret Service is this premiere organization. Somebody does some reporting, and they say, "There are all kinds of problems." It connects, because reporting is necessary.

MARVIN KALB: I mean is there a Watergate out there? Are you inclined--
[simultaneous conversation]

CARL BERNSTEIN: The real question is, is there great reporting going on? And there is great reporting--

MARVIN KALB: That is not my question. [laughter] My question relates specifically to Watergate-type stories.

CARL BERNSTEIN: What do you mean? Do you mean--

MARVIN KALB: You know what Watergate is. Is there another Watergate out there?

CARL BERNSTEIN: Well you mean the President of the United States? What about-- What about the great stories that the *Boston Globe* did about the Catholic church, priests, and pedophiles? That is an incredible piece of reporting, one of the greatest pieces of reporting in the last 50 years.

MARVIN KALB: But you say-- I mean we don't know.

CARL BERNSTEIN: Right. You got to do the reporting.

BOB WOODWARD: We don't know whether there's a Watergate there. I mean I've done a couple of books on President Obama. And President Obama has lots of problems. There's lots of criticism of him. But, as one of his aides said, Obama has the armor of a good heart. And I think that is true. I have seen, in my report-- it doesn't mean it's not there. But I have seen no evidence that this sort of Watergate-like activity is going on in the Obama administration.

MARVIN KALB: Okay, I just want to take-- I just want to take a moment, now, to remind our radio and television and online listeners and viewers that this is The Kalb Report. I'm Marvin Kalb. And I'm talking with-- who are you?

CARL BERNSTEIN: Whatever the hell your-- Whatever the hell your names are.
[laughter]

MARVIN KALB: All about Watergate and America and journalism. Richard Nixon, you are covering him. What were your feelings about Nixon then? And what are your feelings about him now? Have they changed? Why? Let's start with Carl.

CARL BERNSTEIN: I come from a left-wing political background that had always been suspicious about Richard Nixon. My view coming into this story was that the President of the United States, Richard Nixon or anyone else, would have nothing to do with this kind of activity. And that was my view. In fact, I wrote a memo at first saying why I thought perhaps the CIA was involved in it. Then, eventually, I thought, well might be perhaps one of Nixon's political operatives. But it took a long time until we got hard information, that I thought--

BOB WOODWARD: Took about four months, though. Took only four months, three or four months.

CARL BERNSTEIN: Yeah.

MARVIN KALB: I know. But have your views changed?

CARL BERNSTEIN: Yes, yes.

BOB WOODWARD: You asked about Nixon and, you know, are there unanswered questions about Watergate. And I think the main question that is unanswered is why? Why he had risen to become President of the United States. And he never understood-- And this is a point Carl made years and years ago-- Never understood the goodwill that is visited upon a newly elected President. And from both parties. Because if the President succeeds, the country succeeds.

CARL BERNSTEIN: Until this particular President today.

BOB WOODWARD: And you listen to the tapes, and the rage and the hate and the using the power of the Presidency to settle scores endlessly. But, you know, why? Why not kind of-- It's like Nixon's at the casino. And he has actually won all the money. And he can't-- You know, he wants to see if one of the dealers has \$20 dollars in his pocket and he wants to get that too.

MARVIN KALB: It's so interesting. Bob, it's so interesting what you're saying now. I have a question. I'm saying to myself, as I wrote this question, that everyone at the time who covered Nixon, in one way or another, was touched by this man. I was CBS's diplomatic correspondent at that time. Nixon put me on his enemies list. To this minute, I haven't a clue as to why. I have no idea. He tapped my phone. I don't know why. He audited my income tax. Nothing, not a penny out of line. He had people break into my CBS office twice. Why? It's the same question you're asking. Was it because I as a reporter criticized his Vietnam policy? Is that what it's all about? Or is there more to this guy going on?

CARL BERNSTEIN: If you listen to the tapes, you hear the vengeance toward those he perceives as his political enemies, or those who he believes constrain his ability to do what he wants to do as the President of the United States, beginning with the anti-war movement. And Watergate really begins with the anti-war movement, and Nixon's setting up an anti--

MARVIN KALB: The anti-Vietnam War.

CARL BERNSTEIN: Pardon me, the anti-Vietnam War movement. And Nixon is setting up an illegal apparatus to wiretap, break in, put under surveillance, mail covers of people in the anti-war movement. And we hear him now on the tapes say, "I know this is illegal. But we have to do it."

BOB WOODWARD: And no President can admit that he authorized that.

CARL BERNSTEIN: That's what Nixon says.

BOB WOODWARD: It's a secret Houston plan. And, of course, thank God we've got the tapes, because there he is acknowledging that it is illegal.

CARL BERNSTEIN: In the first weeks and months of his Presidency.

BOB WOODWARD: And we've broken this down to-- You know, there were five wars, five Nixon wars. The first was the anti-war movement. The second one was against--

MARVIN KALB: Excellent piece in the *Washington Post* two years ago.

BOB WOODWARD: Pardon?

MARVIN KALB: That's the one you did in the *Post* two years ago.

BOB WOODWARD: Yes, exactly. But the second one is a war against the press. You're an example of that. "Let's tap telephones," because of what you were writing, or maybe people were leaking to you. The third war was against-- So he didn't like the anti-war movement. He didn't like the press. Didn't like-- ah, third group, the Democrats. They were going to try to win the Presidency. [laughter] And so we have to set up this whole apparatus of, not just the Watergate burglary, but massive sabotage, you know, espionage all over the place. And then the fourth war was the longest war while Nixon was there. And that was the war against justice, the obstruction of justice.

CARL BERNSTEIN: The cover-up.

BOB WOODWARD: The cover-up. And then the fifth one went on for more than 20 years. And that was Nixon's war against history, to try to say, "Oh no, it's just a blip. It's a little thing. I was misunderstood." And again, we have those tapes. Have you listened to these tapes? Have you actually put the headphones on?"

MARVIN KALB: Yes.

BOB WOODWARD: I think it should almost be a requirement of citizens.
[simultaneous conversation]

CARL BERNSTEIN: If you listen one year to the day before the break-in at Watergate, Nixon, Henry Kissinger, H.R. Haldeman, Nixon's Chief of Staff in the Oval Office. They're talking about some documents in a safe across town in the Brookings Institution, the think tank.

MARVIN KALB: I want to ask you about that.

CARL BERNSTEIN: A think tank here in town. Haldeman says, if they can get 'hold of those documents, they can "blackmail" is the word that Haldeman used, Lyndon Johnson. He means smear, because the documents they believe will show that Johnson's conduct of the Vietnam War was even worse than Nixon's. And you remember, there's this great movement against the war now.

And so they say, "Well, we've been-- You know, we really want to get these documents." And Nixon says, "Crack the safe. Firebomb the damn place. I don't care what you have to do to get those documents. I want them. Break in. Break"--

MARVIN KALB: I have the exact--

CARL BERNSTEIN: Give the quote. Go ahead.

MARVIN KALB: I have the exact quote here, because I think it's kind of interesting. He turns to Haldeman, and he says, "Goddamn it, get in and get those files." By the way, the files, it was presumed that there was a Johnson file on Vietnam that Nixon wanted very much. He says, "Goddamn it, get in and get those files. Blow the safe and get it. Get on the Brookings thing right away. I've got to get that safe cracked over there." Well, now, clearly something was cracked. [laughter]

CARL BERNSTEIN: The President of the United States saying this.

MARVIN KALB: No, but what I want to get at here, to the best of my knowledge, they never did anything about Brookings. But it's interesting.

CARL BERNSTEIN: Nixon returns to it time and time again over the next 13 days.

MARVIN KALB: But Carl, my question-- Hang on. My question is, the way that Presidents work, the way that staffs work around him, Haldeman must have known that Nixon goes off the deep end at least three times a day. If we pursued three things every day, we'd all go crazy. So let's just do one a day and ignore the others. Because they might have--

CARL BERNSTEIN: That's essentially what Haldeman writes in his book, as a matter of fact. That's a pretty good equation of it.

MARVIN KALB: Well you have to, at a certain point-- and I imagine this happens with President Obama as well. People very close to him listen to him explode about an issue, perfectly natural. And most of the time, though, go and do something. Sometimes they don't. President Kennedy used to wonder, "Why doesn't-- Why is it that I give an order. We shut down those missiles in Turkey." Six months later, he finds out nobody touched the missiles in Turkey. So Presidents give orders that are not necessarily followed. It's kind of interesting.

BOB WOODWARD: Yeah. It's more than interesting. But the significance of that tape, Nixon, Haldeman and Henry Kissinger. Now, where is Henry Kissinger say, "Wait a minute. We don't blackmail earlier Presidents. We don't do this. You know, this is a touchy subject, but you've got to deal with it." The anti-Semitic comments by Nixon on the tapes with Kissinger there.

CARL BERNSTEIN: Not once does he say, "Mr. President, I'm a refugee from Nazi Germany. Please don't talk that way."

MARVIN KALB: No, no. But what Nixon does do, he does, at one point, say in the articles that you guys both wrote, that as far as the Jews were concerned, he pointed to Len Garmet[?], he pointed to Kissinger, he pointed to Bill Safire. And he said that they

were good Jews. They were okay. It's the others that we can't trust. And in other words, he was--

CARL BERNSTEIN: You can never trust the bastards.

MARVIN KALB: You can never trust the bastards is exactly the lines.

BOB WOODWARD: I'm sorry, it's awful. There's no way--

MARVIN KALB: I'm not defending it. [laughter]

BOB WOODWARD: Okay. Okay.

MARVIN KALB: What, are you nuts?

CARL BERNSTEIN: And it's endemic.

BOB WOODWARD: Yeah. And it's about-- You know, at the end, the day Nixon resigned, he had that farewell address in the East Room of the White House. And he called his senior staff, cabinet officers and friends there. And there was no script. He was sweating, if you recall. It was televised live. He talked about his mother and his father. And, you know, no one will write a book about my mother. And there was just a book about Rose Kennedy out at the time.

And then, he kind of waves his hand like, "This is the summation to the jury. This is"--
- And you have to give him credit for what he said. "This is why I called you here," implied. And then he says, precisely, "Always remember, others may hate you. But those who hate you don't win unless you hate them. And then you destroy yourself."

MARVIN KALB: Do you think he believed what he was saying at that time?

BOB WOODWARD: I think at the moment, he kind of decoded himself. And he realized that hate was the piston of so many things, and that, in fact, that hate had destroyed him, because he was resigning. And I think it was a flash of clarity there, an unscripted, unwritten line about hate. And, if you look at all of this stuff-- And, you know, we're talking about Obama and the armor of a good heart. I don't think Obama hates. I don't think Clinton hated. I don't think the Bushes hated. I think that this is, as Carl says, a unique President in terms of the criminality and the mindset, the mindset of-- I mean listen to those tapes.

CARL BERNSTEIN: The dog that never barks. The dog that never barks on the tape is the President of the United States saying, "What would be good for the country?" not once in all the tapes we know of has he said that.

BOB WOODWARD: Or his aides.

CARL BERNSTEIN: Or his aides.

BOB WOODWARD: What would be good? What would be right?

CARL BERNSTEIN: What would be good for the country, for the national interest?

BOB WOODWARD: It's all about Nixon. It's all about promoting him, or some public relations advantage, or some-- You know, we go back and look at this stuff in that article two years ago. And, you know, we were just kind of saying to ourselves, real honestly, you know, "We understated."

CARL BERNSTEIN: "This is much worse than we wrote about." Absolutely. But there's one other element about this. And that is Vietnam. That we now know from the

tapes that Nixon and Kissinger discuss why we cannot pull out of Vietnam, knowing that we're losing and we cannot win. But that really, continuing in Vietnam is a foreign policy move to encourage the rift between the Russians and the Chinese.

Meanwhile, after they recognize that, 25,000 more American soldiers are killed.

MARVIN KALB: 28,000.

CARL BERNSTEIN: 28,000. And God knows how many people who were citizens of Cambodia, Vietnam, etcetera. It is the single-most cynical thing I think I've ever encountered.

BOB WOODWARD: And your daughter wrote the book, haunting legacy about Vietnam. And I mean, I think its haunting legacy right now, as we're entering a new war in the Middle East.

CARL BERNSTEIN: Yes.

BOB WOODWARD: And what do you extract from it? But Carl, I mean that tape of the leader of the free world, the President of the United States, his national security advisor, just in a sense, anteing up thousands of lives for--

CARL BERNSTEIN: -- geopolitical strategy.

MARVIN KALB: Let me shift subjects for a moment. I want to talk to you about where journalism is today, where you think it may be going. And let me just ask you, Carl, are you a fan of the new media?

CARL BERNSTEIN: I'm a fan of great reporting when it's done by the new media. There's not enough of it done by the new media, but there's some great stuff. Look at what Pro Publica, this consortium of reporters is doing. There's a lot of great reporting out there.

MARVIN KALB: I'm not sure that Pro Publica you'd put in at the category of the new technology. They're using the old--

CARL BERNSTEIN: That's my point. The key for the new media to really do great reporting is the old legwork. That's the key. And that's what there's not enough of. There's not enough in daily journalism by major journalistic institutions, with the exception of some great ones like the *Washington Post* and *New York Times*, the *Wall Street Journal*, a few others. Networks do virtually none.

MARVIN KALB: They wouldn't like to hear that.

CARL BERNSTEIN: Well, take a look at what they put on the air.

MARVIN KALB: I do.

BOB WOODWARD: They do some. They do some. But they should do more of it. And here's the great danger of the internet culture, which is impatience in speed. And, you know, give it to me now. Tweet it and I'll understand it. And we're going to miss something. And I go back to this theme of, we don't know what's really going on. That the culture is not enough tilted toward, let's dig deep. Let's really find out. We need more Ben Bradleys. We've got a great new editor at the *Washington Post*, Marty Baron, who really is-- I think works 24/7 and is coming up with ideas and pushing things like Bradley did.

CARL BERNSTEIN: And lots of new reporters they've got.

BOB WOODWARD: Yeah. And Jeff-- [simultaneous conversation]

MARVIN KALB: And that is because-- And that is because, I imagine, that you have a money man now at the *Washington Post* who is prepared to provide the capital that allows the paper, Marty Baron, to go out and hire new reporters. So what is it, to go back to your point, Carl, about the shortcomings of contemporary journalism? Is it that there is not enough money around? That certainly can't be the case.

CARL BERNSTEIN: No, look at the networks. You started--

MARVIN KALB: -- go ahead--

CARL BERNSTEIN: -- at Murrow's CBS. You were not expected in the news division to make a profit.

MARVIN KALB: We lost money.

CARL BERNSTEIN: The rest of the network, the entertainment of CBS carried the news division. The networks today could hire 300 reporters each if they used a fraction of the profits from the entertainment. But they won't. They're public companies. They're responsible to stockholders. And there's no interest in doing it whatsoever.

But there's another factor. Not just the reporting that is being done, but not enough, but there's also good reporting is the best obtainable version of the truth. That's what Bradley understood. And we don't have enough viewers, readers, citizens who are interested in the best obtainable version of the truth in comparable-- in comparable numbers. You can't quantify this to what existed 30, 40 years ago, 25.

MARVIN KALB: So it's the responsibility of journalism, then, also rests with the citizens.

CARL BERNSTEIN: Absolutely. And, in fact, we have a culture, now, in which people, instead of them can only generalize so much. But millions and millions of people are looking, not for the best obtainable version of the truth, but for ideological ammunition that will buttress what they already believe, their orthodoxies, their religious beliefs, their political beliefs.

And a lot of good stories get ground up in the maw of this attitude that has nothing to do-- Now at Watergate, you know, one of the things about Watergate is, Republicans eventually were responsible for Richard Nixon leaving office. They cast the key votes against Nixon in the House Judiciary Committee. Barrett Goldwater led-- the Presidential nominee of his party in 1964-- great conservative.

MARVIN KALB: So you don't think that would happen now?

CARL BERNSTEIN: He led the delegation to the White House that told Nixon he had to resign.

MARVIN KALB: Would that happen now?

CARL BERNSTEIN: Very doubtful, because look at the culture of this town. Look at the culture of the State Legislatures. It is ideological, cultural warfare. And it's been going on for 25 years, 30 years in this country. And it makes the receptivity to the truth very difficult.

BOB WOODWARD: I mean this, we disagree a little on this. I mean the analysis is right. But in the business, the news business, you have to break through that.

CARL BERNSTEIN: That's right. [simultaneous conversation]

BOB WOODWARD: You can't kind of say, "Oh, it's the citizens' fault they're not listening to us." When people do a good story, it gets circulated. But the culture is different, as we have talked about the vote to set up the Senate Watergate Committee in 1973 was 77 to zero. Dozens of Republicans voting to investigate their President. Now you couldn't get a 77 to zero vote in the Senate to have more washrooms or something like that.

CARL BERNSTEIN: National Rhubarb Week.

BOB WOODWARD: But the variable here is, I think, the leaders of these news organizations. And that's where Bradley played an unduplicated role for us. When they were making the movie--

MARVIN KALB: But he had the [00:48:03] behind him.

BOB WOODWARD: Yes.

MARVIN KALB: And Marty Baron at the *Washington Post* today has [00:48:09], if that's the pronunciation, behind him.

BOB WOODWARD: Yeah.

MARVIN KALB: Well that's fine. In each case, there was a family interest, business interest, responsible interest. That's very rare in American journalism today. Everything is out there on the market. Everything is buyable. Everything is sellable.

BOB WOODWARD: Yeah, but it has an impact. And when they were making the movie version of our book, *All the President's Men*, about covering Watergate, the director, Alan Pakula, said, "Who do we get to play Ben Bradley?" And they came up with Jason Robards, because some people knew him. And it was a hard time in his life. And they called him in, and they said, "We will want you to play Ben Bradley. And we're going to pay you \$50,000 dollars." And Robards, "\$50,000 dollars? My God, that is wonderful."

MARVIN KALB: How much did they pay Robert Redford to play you?

BOB WOODWARD: I don't know. I don't know. [laughter]

CARL BERNSTEIN: I'm not going to--

MARVIN KALB: Did Hoffman get \$49,000 playing you?

CARL BERNSTEIN: That's a straight line, I'm not going near.

BOB WOODWARD: Yeah, yeah, right. Good idea. [laughter] And you have no idea how many women I've disappointed. [laughter] So they give the script to Robards. And I can't say this word on the air. But you'll get the idea. And so Robards goes home enthusiastically, reads the script, comes back and said, "I can't play Bradley." And they said, "What do you mean?" And he said, "Well, I read the script. All he does is run around and say, 'Where's the F'ing story?'" [laughter] And they said to him, "That's what the editor of the *Washington Post* does." [laughter] "That's his job. And all you have to do is figure out 15 different ways to say, 'Where's the F'ing story?'" [laughter] And, if you see the movie--

CARL BERNSTEIN: -- that's what he does.

BOB WOODWARD: -- he nailed it. [laughter]

MARVIN KALB: What can journalism do now to turn itself around sufficiently to attract the American people, to win them back? What do you think journalism needs to do?

BOB WOODWARD: By telling the truth.

CARL BERNSTEIN: Good stories. Good stories, day after day after day after day.

MARVIN KALB: Words, words, words, words, words, words, words.

CARL BERNSTEIN: Because one of the things about good stories inevitably, good stories controvert pre-judgment. They go against easy explanations so often. And you know, the best obtainable version of the truth, people-- some people are open to it. Many people are open to it. And the more we do, the more openness there'll be.

BOB WOODWARD: But sometimes you get it wrong. And, I mean, this is an important reality in this, that you don't understand it. When Ford went on television in September, 1974, he'd been President a month. And announced that he was giving Nixon a full pardon for Watergate. Remember, I was asleep, didn't see it. Carl called me up. And Carl always-- You know, you have the ability to say what occurred with the most drama in the fewest words. [laughter] And you said, "Have you heard?" And I said, "I haven't heard anything." And you said, "The son of a bitch pardoned the son of a bitch." [laughter] The good news is, even I got it. [laughter]

And we thought at the time, you know, it's perfect. It's the final corruption of Watergate. Yeah. I mean the guy who led it all gets a pardon. Forty people go to jail. Twenty-five years later, look at this through the eye of 25 years of history, a lot of time to dig into it,

talk to Gerald Ford endlessly, look at the legal documents. And it turns out, what Ford did was courageous, was gutsy, because--

MARVIN KALB: You didn't think so at the time.

BOB WOODWARD: Pardon?

MARVIN KALB: You didn't think so at the time.

CARL BERNSTEIN: More than guts. Here was somebody who said later that he did-- he gave Nixon a pardon so he could, one, have his own Presidency, two, there were great problems in the country at the time, inflation, economic problems. And that the country had to move on from Watergate. And he realized that he might lose his attempt to get elected to the Presidency in the race against Jimmy Carter in a couple of years if he pardoned Nixon. And probably, that is why he lost the election. It took such courage. And Ted Kennedy was among those who said the equivalent of, "The son of a bitch pardoned the son of a bitch" that day. And a number-- what, 15 years later or so, Ted Kennedy gave the Kennedy Family Profiles in Courage Award to Gerald Ford for that pardon. It's a great moment.

[simultaneous conversation]

MARVIN KALB: I have just a couple of concluding questions. Quickies. And I'd appreciate a quick answer of the two of you.

BOB WOODWARD: Oh, we're not good at that.

MARVIN KALB: I know that. [laughter] How did the movie, how did you respond to the movie? I mean how did you enjoy looking at yourself as Robert Redford, you as Dustin Hoffman?

CARL BERNSTEIN: We learned something from it. We were unaware, I think, of how huge a role the nighttime played in our reporting. And you see it in that movie. Every bit of information, almost, that we obtained, we obtained at night. And the movie is in darkness, the reporting part, because we went out at night.

BOB WOODWARD: We've come up with this saying, lies during the day, the truth at night.

MARVIN KALB: Another question. You both had seen as probably unparalleled in American journalism, of hitting it at the very top when you were still very young. Is that a good or a bad thing?

CARL BERNSTEIN: It is. [laughter]

MARVIN KALB: It is. Both a good and a bad thing?

BOB WOODWARD: I am crushed to hear that we're no longer young.

CARL BERNSTEIN: That's right.

MARVIN KALB: Well you're not. [laughter] Seriously. There are any number of young journalists in this audience here tonight. And I'd like to ask you very quickly, no more than 15-20 seconds each, what is the best advice that you could give to each one of these young people? Carl?

CARL BERNSTEIN: Be a good listener. People want to tell the truth if you give them a chance, or what they think is the truth. Don't shove a microphone in their face and run out the door 20 minutes later thinking you know the answers. Let them talk.

BOB WOODWARD: And it's the best job in the world. You get to make momentary entries in people's lives when they're interesting, and then get the hell out when they cease to be interesting. [laughter] And if you're a doctor or a lawyer, you have a lot of routine. You have a lot of the-- you know, the, "Oh yeah. I have to deal with that client."

CARL BERNSTEIN: [simultaneous conversation]

BOB WOODWARD: Yeah. In the business, in the news business, you start each day, "What's going on that has meaning? What's hidden? What don't we know? How do we follow that story? What are people talking about? What do people care about?" The greatest job in the world.

MARVIN KALB: Greatest job in the world. Unfortunately, I could go on for a bit longer than this. But our time is up. And I want to thank both of you, most sincerely, both of you for coming on down for talking to us, for sharing your ideas, for giving us insights into what it was like to cover Watergate. And I would also like to thank all of you who are here. Those of you who are here at the National Press Club, and those of you listening or watching on the new technology. Because all of us are dependent, in the final analysis, upon an alert, virile, exciting press. Because that, at the end of the day, determines whether we remain a free, virile, and exciting democracy.

Thank you guys very much. And that's it for now.

[applause]

MARVIN KALB: I'm Marvin Kalb. And, as Ed Murrow used to say, good night and good luck.

END

BEGIN Q & A

MARVIN KALB: Ladies and gentlemen, we have a wonderful opportunity, now, where I don't say a word, but you do. And there is a microphone there and a microphone there. And, if you have any questions, questions not speeches, please go over to the two people on either side, ask your question directed at either Bob or Carl. And let's start over here. Identify yourself please.

SAMUEL MORRIS: Hi. My name is Samuel Morris. I'm a student at GW. I'm a junior. And my question is whether both of you believe that the events would have transpired the way they did if it hadn't been you two working on the story.

CARL BERNSTEIN: Whether the events would have transpired if it hadn't been the two of us working on the story? You know, if history doesn't usually work, you don't know the answer to a question like that, is what I would say.

MARVIN KALB: I would say probably would not have found it. And it would not have happened if Ben Bradley had not been there. I think the three of you made an unmatchable--

CARL BERNSTEIN: We ought to say a word about Katherine Graham, actually, while we have the opportunity. She was the most extraordinary newspaper publisher, perhaps of her time.

I'll give you an example of her dedication to the truth, in publishing this very, very dangerous story for the *Washington Post*. About ten weeks in, soon after that conversation with John Mitchell, I got a call from the guard at the desk downstairs at the *Post* saying there was a subpoena server there for our notes. And so I said to the guard, "Well, don't let him upstairs. Keep him there." And I called Bradley. And Bradley said,

“Give me a minute.” And he called Katherine Graham. And he called me back, and he says, “Okay. You get out of the office. And they're not your notes, Katherine says they're her notes. And if anybody is going to go to jail, it's going to be her.”

MARVIN KALB: That's a great story.

CARL BERNSTEIN: And just think about what that took. And this is at a time, when we wrote the Mitchell story, when the *Washington Post* had finally gone public as a company. And Mitchell and others then proceeded to try and have the *Post* TV station licenses revoked, which was the lifeblood of the *Washington Post* company.

BOB WOODWARD: Challenged.

CARL BERNSTEIN: Challenged, right, at the time.

BOB WOODWARD: And the business about going to jail. And then Bradley, of course, who had a great sense of theatre, said, “Katherine's got the notes. If they come and arrest her, or she has to go to jail, can't you see her limousine pulling up to the women's detention center?” [laughter] And, as he put it, “Our gal getting out and going to jail to protect the First Amendment?” And he said, “That picture would run on the front page of every newspaper in the world.” [applause]

MARVIN KALB: Probably right. Yes, please.

MARK WINO: Good evening, gentlemen. My name is Mark Wino. I'm an alum at GW as well as a member of the National Press Club. And I work for *Kiplinger's Magazine*. Could you, in addition to Ben Bradley and Katherine Graham, could you talk about the editors that helped you craft your stories, and what you learned from them, guys like Howie Simons, Harry Rosenfeld, and Charles Puffenbarger[?]?

CARL BERNSTEIN: And Barry Sussman, who--

BOB WOODWARD: -- was the city editor.

CARL BERNSTEIN: And I'll say a word about Charles Puffenbarger, and then I'll let you answer the question. Because Puff never worked at the *Washington Post*, but he was, when I went to work when I was 16 years old at the old *Washington Star*, he was really one of my two mentors there. And he was a great, great editor. Learned a lot from him. He then became the Chairman of the Journalism Department at GW. Died a while ago. But I learned, and have a great debt of gratitude to him. But why don't you talk about--

BOB WOODWARD: Yeah, but I mean, Barry Sussman was the city editor, and was really hands-on, and gave us lots of guidance, and was the theoretician of what all of this was. Harry Rosenfeld was the metropolitan editor, and was kind of the spark plug of the operation. And you know, we were lucky. There was a convergence here of personalities that, if you take one piece away, it might not work.

MARVIN KALB: Thank you. Yes, please.

___: Also a George Washington alumnus. I wonder why Frank Will, the security guard, never got the credit he deserved at the Watergate. Because if it hadn't been for him, you guys wouldn't have had a story.

CARL BERNSTEIN: That's true. And it's an often-asked question. And at the risk of being not disputatious, but he did get credit. And the fact of your question indicates that he does. And obviously, everyone owes Frank Will a great debt of gratitude for being on the job that night, finding this piece-- [simultaneous conversation]

MARVIN KALB: I think it was also in the movie.

[simultaneous conversation]

CARL BERNSTEIN: Nixon wouldn't feel that way.

MARVIN KALB: It was in the movie was well.

CARL BERNSTEIN: I think he is in the movie.

MARVIN KALB: Yeah.

CARL BERNSTEIN: And so he has been given credit.

BOB WOODWARD: Not enough. Not enough.

CARL BERNSTEIN: But not enough, not enough.

MARVIN KALB: Next question, please.

SALEM: You talked about Henry Kissinger--

MARVIN KALB: What's your name please?

SALEM: My name is Salem. You talked about Henry Kissinger sitting in the office with Nixon and Halderman. Why do you think Kissinger got a free pass, more or less, and didn't get any bad press about him going on through the Watergate thing?

BOB WOODWARD: Wow. Easier to describe the creation of the universe. [laughter] Kissinger obviously did some good things. I mean, if you read our books, you will see that there is another side of this. And read some of the other things on him, and there's

a controversy. But the question was, did he have criminal knowledge or involvement in some illegal activity? And it was never established.

CARL BERNSTEIN: A gray area.

BOB WOODWARD: Yeah, which is--

CARL BERNSTEIN: But perhaps the press itself, after-- I think, and when we wrote *The Final Days*, particularly, about Nixon's last year in office, there's an awful lot about Kissinger in that book, and what his role was. And interesting--

MARVIN KALB: In terms of a conspiracy?

CARL BERNSTEIN: In terms of being adjacent to the conspiracy.

MARVIN KALB: Wait a minute. Wait a minute. Carl, what are you trying to say?

CARL BERNSTEIN: No, no, I'm trying to say--

MARVIN KALB: You said yes to something without backing it up.

CARL BERNSTEIN: No, wait a minute. There's a big difference between a criminal charge and a criminal charge coming forth, and having moral responsibility, or sitting and being silent, and listening to somebody say, "Crack the safe," who's the President of the United States. Kissinger also is very-- and has been very smart about his courtship of the press, his courtship of political establishment. He's brilliant. His use of the English language is incredible, literate in a remarkable way. And so all of these things have come together. And history--

MARVIN KALB: Do you believe that Kissinger is involved, was involved in a criminal conspiracy?

BOB WOODWARD: No.

CARL BERNSTEIN: No. No.

BOB WOODWARD: I mean, but-- And Carl, it's an interesting word, "adjacent." And-

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MARVIN KALB: Yeah, but it's a word that says, "I don't want to say what I'm saying."

BOB WOODWARD: No.

CARL BERNSTEIN: No. To the contrary. To the contrary.

BOB WOODWARD: Adjacent means next to, that he witnessed. I mean look at the tapes. Listen to the tapes and so forth. If you're at CBS and the head of CBS says, you know, "Let's break the safe. Let's blow the safe. Let's get in there," are you just going to kind of say, "Oh well, another day at CBS." [laughter] I mean I hope not. And Carl raised this question on the anti-Semitic remarks. I mean where is Kissinger going to Nixon and saying, "Look. Don't talk like that around me, please. What are you doing here?" Carl and I have speculated, many times, if Nixon had one good strong lawyer who would go in there and say, "You're the President of the United States. Knock this crap off."

Now, it didn't happen because Nixon wouldn't permit it, because Nixon's view of the Presidency and his power, as he articulated in the Frost interviews, that if the President does it, it's legal. Well, we are, as last time I checked, a Constitutional democracy. And

in a Constitutional democracy, the President doesn't decide what's legal. The laws do. And you go through-- Some lawyers have gone through lots of the tapes and said, "You could indict Nixon for 100 crimes."

CARL BERNSTEIN: Title 18. You could run right through it.

BOB WOODWARD: Yeah. I mean, it is just time and time again, it's not just abuse. It's not just illegality. It's, as Carl said, the dog that doesn't bark. It's the smallness of this man. And think about it. Step back. The Presidency is a wonderful, powerful office that can do and has done great things for this country and the people of the country. And to blow that chance is one of the tragedies of American history.

MARVIN KALB: Blow that chance. And yet, he opened a pathway to China. He's the one who did the Environmental Protection Agency. He did a number of things in addition in striking an arms control agreement with the Russians in 1972 that was an extremely important step away from both super powers going toward nuclear war. So don't knock the guy the way you are. It's unfair.

BOB WOODWARD: No, wait a minute. It's like the skipper of the Titanic saying, "You know, it was a great cruise except for that rock." [laughter]

MARVIN KALB: I think that's a good joke. It is a good joke.

BOB WOODWARD: It was a great cruise.

MARVIN KALB: It's a good joke, but it doesn't really address the issue.

CARL BERNSTEIN: No, it does address the issue, because first of all, the opening to China is a great act. Give him credit for that. In terms of EPA, didn't take a lot of

courage. He was a conventional Republican at the time, and got Republican support for it. Fine. But the basics of his Presidency, what his Presidency was about, really, was criminality.

And go back to Vietnam as we did, and as you have written. That is the index of how awful what happened was, because how many people died because of the cynicism of this President?

MARVIN KALB: I want to be very clear about-- No, no, just a minute. I want to be very clear about this. Richard Nixon did not like me. But I never had any personal negative feelings toward him or, by the way, toward any President.

CARL BERNSTEIN: Nor did we.

MARVIN KALB: Good. Great. I'm delighted to hear that. Your description of Nixon's criminality, I believe, is accurate. I also believe that you have carried this to a point where you are not allowing any positive--

BOB WOODWARD: No, we just--

CARL BERNSTEIN: I just said that the opening to China is a great achievement. Détente, you can have an argument that détente was the right approach, or that Reagan's approach was the right approach, which was not détente, and to be confrontational. But it certainly was an interesting and workable arrangement with the Soviet Union at the time.

MARVIN KALB: Interesting?

CARL BERNSTEIN: I said interesting and workable.

MARVIN KALB: Are you aware of how difficult it was to get that?

CARL BERNSTEIN: Actually, I think that Nixon and Brezhnev were able to form a relationship. And it was very constructive.

MARVIN KALB: And they used each other.

CARL BERNSTEIN: Of course.

BOB WOODWARD: I was about to say that. Of course the Soviet/China split, I mean the CIA was telling Nixon and Kissinger, "Look," in a sense, inviting them open relations with the Chinese, and you will aggravate this split. And there are historians who argue, this was low-hanging fruit and obvious. Now, I agree with Carl, it was a good thing. But now, wait a minute. Would you want another President who does some good things, who shreds the Constitution to be in the Oval Office?

MARVIN KALB: No, obviously. I mean it's a silly question, because it's such an obvious question.

BOB WOODWARD: No, it's not-- [simultaneous conversation]

CARL BERNSTEIN: We're responding to what you asked.

BOB WOODWARD: Yeah. You're saying, "Give him a break," kind of.

MARVIN KALB: I am only saying that, when we examine-- I don't have to say this to you two, you're the best.

CARL BERNSTEIN: Finish.

MARVIN KALB: When you examine, when you examine anybody, particularly a President, all of it has to be taken into account.

CARL BERNSTEIN: Absolutely.

MARVIN KALB: And that's fine then. We all agree. So what are you arguing? Over here or over here. I lost track. Let's go there.

EMILY: Hi. My name is Emily. I'm a freshman at GW. And in my journalism class, we were talking about how journalism falls victim to the culture industry, in which like citizens are duped into thinking that new stories are different, when in fact they're like carbon copies of each other. Do you think traditional journalism took part in that? Why or why not?

CARL BERNSTEIN: I had trouble hearing it. It was about news stories being the same? You mean they get picked up?

EMILY: Yeah, like culture industry in which news stories--

CARL BERNSTEIN: The what?

EMILY: Culture industry.

CARL BERNSTEIN: The culture? I don't know what the culture industry is, unfortunately. Can you define it for me a little bit?

EMILY: In which citizens are like duped into thinking that news stories are different, when in fact they're like carbon copies of each other.

CARL BERNSTEIN: Well, I think that some news stories are carbon copies of each other. Some news stories are different. I don't have a conspiratorial view of the overall production of news in this culture.

BOB WOODWARD: -- answer.

MARVIN KALB: Well, we've got about two more minutes. Yes, please.

___: To a certain extent, your earlier conversation segues into this. I was interested in having you comment on what it says about American press, American public, and Richard Nixon. The fact that he was able to, to a certain extent, resurrect himself.

CARL BERNSTEIN: I would ask this--

BOB WOODWARD: -- I missed that resurrection.

CARL BERNSTEIN: Absolutely. [laughter] I didn't see the tomb open. [laughter]

BOB WOODWARD: I mean he made the effort. But, you know, it goes to the line of questioning, you know, what was this Presidency about? And was it a good Presidency? And yes, good things happened. But, I mean, look at the whole history of this country, and it's vitality grows from its Constitution and the adherence to law by the participants, including the citizens, including the President. And the President-- I mean all you have to do is listen to, time and time again. Let's get the FBI on you. Let's get the IRS on you. Democrats, opponents. Do you think that's what it says in the law, that oh yes, the President can get members of the other party, or people who are opponents? It does not. It is that there will be equal application of the law.

And so we have it time and time again. And it is, if we had Presidents like that, we would lose our democracy.

CARL BERNSTEIN: Right. As far as we know, this is a Presidency that's really sui generis in its criminality, that there's nothing like this in our history that we know of.

MARVIN KALB: Were you guys on the enemies list?

CARL BERNSTEIN: No.

BOB WOODWARD: No.

CARL BERNSTEIN: No, we were friends.

MARVIN KALB: Were your income taxes ever checked by Richard Nixon?

CARL BERNSTEIN: Don't know.

MARVIN KALB: Well you would know. You'd have to file.

BOB WOODWARD: We were audited at one point.

MARVIN KALB: Were you audited at the time of Nixon?

CARL BERNSTEIN: Well no, not-- We were making \$30,000 dollars a year.

MARVIN KALB: Was your phone bugged? [laughter]

BOB WOODWARD: Pardon?

MARVIN KALB: Was your phone bugged?

BOB WOODWARD: You were. I was making \$15.

CARL BERNSTEIN: That's right. [laughter]

MARVIN KALB: Was your phone bugged?

BOB WOODWARD: Not that we know of. Not that we know of, and so forth.

MARVIN KALB: Hang on. All of those things happened to me. So I don't like the implication that you're attempting to leave, that I am in any way defending Richard Nixon. [laughter] I was simply saying--

BOB WOODWARD: With your own words you did, Marvin.

MARVIN KALB: No, no, no my friend. What I did was to say that there were things that he did that you were then, under a little bit of pressure, acknowledging he did.

CARL BERNSTEIN: That didn't take any pressure. No pressure whatsoever.

MARVIN KALB: Because I have a feeling that this-- this is not-- quite the word-- You have left an impression that is unfair. And I'm calling you on it, in front of everybody.

BOB WOODWARD: Okay. I don't think so. How many--

MARVIN KALB: And I think that it's unfair, and you don't think so?

CARL BERNSTEIN: Let's take a vote of the audience. Let's divide us.

BOB WOODWARD: That's unfair.

CARL BERNSTEIN: That's unfair?

BOB WOODWARD: That's unfair. But how many school boards are sitting around saying, "Let's name the new local school the Richard M. Nixon School"? [laughter] How many?

MARVIN KALB: None.

BOB WOODWARD: No. Because they're aware of history and the Constitution, in this sense. And who is going out and running for Senate or a Congressman, and saying, "I'm going to be just like Nixon"? [laughter]

MARVIN KALB: Well they're not even saying that about Barack Obama.

BOB WOODWARD: No, wait. It was Barry Goldwater, again. He took us up one night, we went up to his apartment. And he got his diary out, and he read it to us, about how, when he visited Nixon the day before Nixon announced his resignation. And Goldwater said-- and he wrote this out, and we have a Xerox of his diary. And he said, "We went in there, the congressional leaders, Republican leaders. And Nixon said, 'Well, let's see. I'm going to be impeached in the House. Charged in the Senate. Barry, how many votes do I have? Twenty?'" Now, of course, he needed-- he would need 30-plus, 34.

CARL BERNSTEIN: For acquittal.

BOB WOODWARD: For acquittal. And Goldwater says, "Mr. President, on my count you have four. And mine is not one of them." And this is the conscience of the Republican party. And what Goldwater told us, the reason Nixon left is simple, too many lies, too many crimes.

MARVIN KALB: Absolutely. And I want to thank both of you very much for being here. [applause] Thank you all for being here as well.

END