



Written by [Andrew Muller](#) on August 8, 2024

Nixon's Youngest Lawyer Reflects on Watergate 50 Years Later: "It Ended Up a Coup"

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Richard Nixon, America's 37th President, resigned his office on August 9, 1974, in the wake of the Watergate scandal. Considering the 50th anniversary of Nixon's resignation on August 9, 2024, Geoff Shepard, a Nixon White House official and the youngest lawyer to serve on Nixon's Watergate defense team, reflected on the rise and fall of the president in an intimate exclusive interview with Andrew Muller for The New American magazine.



Shepard, who also personally transcribed the Nixon tapes and ran the White House document room, said the legal attacks against Nixon and his people "ended up a coup."

"I didn't have a front-row seat," reflected Shepard, the author of *The Real Watergate Scandal*. "I was on the stage during the unfolding of the crisis." Despite many of his colleagues being indicted, prosecuted, and imprisoned, Shepard is the only member of the White House staff to have a letter of clearance from the special prosecutor.

After leaving D.C. to pursue a career as a lawyer in the insurance industry, Shepard discovered in 2003 that all the records of the Watergate special prosecution force are held by the National Archives. Receiving credentials to view the documents, Shepard discovered what he called a "secret cabal of all senior officials, of all three branches of government, who were secretly meeting and secretly coordinating their attacks on the



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Nixon administration.” The specially recruited group of 100 federal characters, including 60 lawyers, were so eager to “get Nixon’s and his people” that they “cheated,” Shepard shared.

Shepard’s research also uncovered written memoranda that prove at least ten separate illegal secret meetings with federal prosecutors and Judge John Sirica, who presided over the Watergate coverup and burglary trial. The federal prosecutors also met secretly with Judge Gerhard Gesell, who presided over the White House Special Investigations Unit, sometimes referred to as the Plumbers, trial.

Ultimately, the story of Nixon has broad applications for America’s current political landscape, argued Shepard, comparing the lawfare waged against Nixon to that of former President Donald J. Trump. While Watergate and its calamities are in the past, the lessons learned might help direct America to safer waters in 2024.

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