

Watergate Primary Source Worksheet

I. U.S. v. Nixon (1974)

- a. What were the three reasons that Nixon gave for refusing to turn over the White House tapes?

- b. What do these reasons illustrate about Nixon's understanding of the division of power within the federal government?

- c. How did Nixon's argument illustrate his ideas about the power of the presidency?

- d. What did Chief Justice Burger say about the origins of executive privilege? How does this origin justify his decision about Nixon releasing the tapes?

- e. Explain Burger's statement, "A President and those who assist him must be free to explore alternatives in a way many would be unwilling to express except privately." How did the court interpret executive privilege?

- f. Do you agree with this analysis that United States v. Nixon expanded the power of the presidency? Why or why not?

II. Transcript of White House Tapes, June 23, 1972 – conversation between President Nixon and Chief of Staff H.R. Haldeman. (Note: Pat Gray is the Acting Director of the FBI, and Mark Felt is the Associate Director of the FBI. Helms is the Director of the CIA and Walters is the Deputy Director of the CIA)

- a. Haldeman tells Nixon, "the FBI is not under control." Why does the FBI need to be controlled?

- b. What is Nixon's plan for dealing with the FBI's investigation of the Watergate break-in?

- c. What does this excerpt imply about the relationship between the FBI and the CIA?

- d. What does this tape reveal about Nixon's view of his power as the president?

- e. Why is this tape called the "Smoking Gun" tape?