

Muriel Morisey

Senior Legislative Assistant, Representative Shirley Chisholm of New York

Special Exhibit: A Century of Women in Congress

Staff and the Impeachment of President Nixon: Part One

Muriel Morisey explains the strict confidentiality of the Watergate investigation.

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Well, the most important thing, of course, was that there were no—this—the impeachment investigation staff was completely separate and worked under strict confidentiality. A member of that staff was fired because that person communicated something about the impeachment investigation to a member of John Conyers' regular staff, and that was a firing offense. John Doar expressed the role of the impeachment investigation as preparing for a grand jury presentation, and the grand jury was the House Judiciary Committee. So the goal was to determine whether, as a matter of the facts and as a matter of the law, what, what constitutes high crimes and misdemeanors for impeachment purposes—whether President Nixon should be impeached. That's what, that's what we were all tasked with doing. And he, he insisted, as a matter of sort of the culture, that we respect and never forget we were investigating the President of the United States, and we had to refer to him as President Nixon, Mr. Nixon, the President. Nobody, at least not if John Doar was going to find out it, would call him anything but that. There were no Tricky Dick and—you know, there were very disparaging and offensive nicknames floating around about President Nixon. Not in that—not among that staff.