

TABLE OF CONTENTS

01. Introduction to the Committee
02. Introduction to U.S Government
03. The Huston Plan and White House Plumbers (1969-1971)
04. The Watergate Break-in and Cover-up
 - a. Wiretapping of the Democratic Party's headquarters
 - b. Initial Cover-up
 - c. Money Trail
 - d. Role of the Media
 - e. Investigation Grows Broader
05. The Watergate Crisis
 - a. The Senate Watergate Hearings
 - b. The Saturday Night Massacre
 - c. United States v. Richard Nixon
06. Final Investigation and Resignation
07. Timeline of the Watergate Scandal (1969-1975)
08. Key Figures of the Watergate Scandal
09. Bibliography

01. Introduction to the Committee

The Watergate Scandal is one of the biggest political scandals in the history of the United States, which happened in the early 1970s. It led to President Richard Nixon's resignation and deeply shook the American public's trust in the government.

It began on June 17, 1972, when five men were arrested for a break-in at the headquarters of the Democratic National Committee at the Watergate Complex in Washington, D.C. They planned to wiretap telephones and steal confidential files. Investigations later verified that these men were from the Republican Party, the same as President Nixon's party.

At first, the incident appeared to be a straightforward burglary. But thanks to investigative journalists Bob Woodward and Carl Bernstein, it was discovered that the White House was implicated in the break-in. Their series of articles in *The Washington Post* uncovered that the Nixon administration had attempted to cover up the crime. Further investigations revealed Nixon had secretly tape-recorded meetings in the White House. The tapes contained key evidence about the scandal. After the court asked for the tapes, Nixon originally refused but finally was forced to turn them in. The tapes unequivocally revealed that he had tried to impede justice by covering the break-in.

In response to these disclosures, Congress began impeaching Nixon. But before his impeachment proceedings could be finalized, on August 8, 1974, Richard Nixon resigned as president. Nixon was the first and only American president to have resigned. Nixon's vice president, Gerald Ford, became president and later granted Nixon a complete pardon.

The theft was not the only reason for Nixon's resignation, but an attempt to cover up this incident. After the scandal, new laws were passed in the United States on political ethics and election campaigns.

Numerous revelations and Nixon's efforts to obstruct the investigation in 1973 led the House of Representatives to initiate impeachment proceedings against Nixon. The Supreme Court's decision in *United States v. Nixon* (1974) forced Nixon to hand over the Oval Office tapes. The House Judiciary Committee approved three articles of impeachment against Nixon, whereupon Nixon resigned from office on August 9, 1974, becoming the only U.S. president to do so. His successor, Gerald Ford, pardoned him on September 8, 1974. The Watergate scandal resulted in 69 indictments and 48 convictions involving several high-ranking officials from the Nixon administration. The term "Watergate" has since become synonymous with a variety of clandestine and illegal activities carried out by Nixon's aides, including wiretapping of the offices of political opponents, unauthorized investigations, and misuse of government agencies for political purposes.

02. Introduction to U.S Government



The decade of the 1960s has been called one of the most turbulent in all of American history. Several major events shaped the era: the assassination of U.S. President John F. Kennedy; the killings of other national leaders, including Martin Luther King Jr., Robert Kennedy, and Malcolm X, and controversies and crises surrounding the cold war with the Soviet Union, the surging Civil Rights movement, and the escalating war in Vietnam.

The decade began with much promise and hope on the national political scene, with the election of a young, vibrant new president. However, America faced both foreign and domestic challenges. The cold war carried over from the previous decade and the 1962 Cuban missile crisis almost resulted in a full-scale nuclear war between the United States and the Soviet Union. Black Americans pushed for equal rights and were met with violent resistance on the part of Southern segregationists (people who supported the separation of the races). Then in 1963, on a November day in Dallas, President Kennedy was murdered, sending the nation into mourning.

Vice President Lyndon Johnson followed Kennedy as chief executive. Johnson envisioned America as a "Great Society," one in which federal government-sponsored social programs would eradicate poverty. Johnson's "Great Society" and "War on Poverty," however well intentioned, were ill-fated. On one level, government funds used for anti-poverty programs did little more than set up federal bureaucracies. Anti Poverty programs were expensive to run and, in the end, did little to uplift the nation's poor, and funding for these programs had to be diverted to pay for the escalating war in Vietnam.

Furthermore, Johnson encountered trouble with his Vietnam policy. In an attempt to halt the spread of communism in Southeast Asia, the president began sending troops in increasing numbers to fight in the rice paddies of Vietnam. Almost immediately, Americans began protesting this action. Year by year, the numbers of protestors increased significantly.

By 1968, Americans were deeply concerned about the fate of their country. To many, it seemed that the great American experiment in democracy was coming apart and was doomed to failure. That year witnessed a seemingly unending string of crises both foreign and domestic. On the international front, North Korean communists seized the USS Pueblo, a U.S. Navy freighter sailing in international waters. The communist North Vietnamese launched the Tet Offensive, a military action that served notice that the war in Vietnam would not be easily won. American soldiers no longer were the good guys; in the small South Vietnamese village of My Lai, they massacred hundreds of civilians. On the domestic front, antiwar protests did not let up. The nation was split down the middle, between those who intoned such expressions as "America, love it or leave it" and "My country right or wrong," and those who responded by avowing "Hell, no, we won't go" to Vietnam. Two leading national figures, Martin Luther King Jr., and Robert Kennedy, were assassinated. President Johnson declared he would not seek his party's presidential nomination. Blood was spilled on the streets of Chicago during the Democratic National Convention, as police clubbed and tear-gassed anti-war protesters.

That year, Richard Nixon was the Republican presidential nominee. During the 1950s, Nixon was the two-term vice president under Dwight Eisenhower; in 1960, he lost the presidency to Kennedy. This time around, Nixon defeated his Democratic opponent, Hubert Humphrey. By the end of the decade, Nixon presided over a country in which antiwar protests grew larger and louder and more frequent. Yet despite troop withdrawals from Vietnam, the American presence in Southeast Asia continued into the 1970s and civil unrest continued.

03. The Houston Plan And White House Plumbers

Watergate is the term used to connote a whole array of so-called “dirty tricks” and political misdeeds during Richard Nixon’s presidency. It amounted to a full-blown constitutional crisis—intelligence gathering on political opponents, smear campaigns, an “enemies list,” illegal campaign funds, illegal use of the Internal Revenue Service to persecute political enemies, illegal wiretaps, and much more, with executive privilege used to shield the transgressions. Many of those actions were carried out by a unit right inside the White House, applying orders conveyed by presidential acolytes. Some of these persons were prosecuted after the collapse of the conspiracy. One of the present authors, Luke A. Nichter, noticed some years ago that many of the documents and other trial exhibits of Watergate figures remained secret or under seal long after the trials. Nichter had been working on the Nixon tapes, in which Watergate was a principal subject. In 2009 Nichter wrote to Judge Lamberth of the Federal Court for the District of Washington, who had been a colleague of Watergate judge John J. Sirica from 1987 to 1992, to ask why so many records remained sealed. A year later Nichter repeated his query to the Washington Historical Society, which had hosted a Watergate exhibition and forwarded the historian’s question to the judge.

In the summer of 2010 Chief Judge Lamberth, concerned with these gaps in the record himself, took up Nichter’s question and decided he could treat the historian’s letter as a petition to unseal Watergate court records, starting with material from the trial *U.S. v. Liddy, et al.* (G. Gordon Liddy was a leader of the White House “*Plumbers*” unit and later an intelligence chief for the Nixon re-election campaign. He was tried along with a number of the participants in the dirty tricks operation.) In November 2012 and July 2013 material from the Liddy trial documents was unsealed. The Justice Department, while seeking various extensions of time to respond to successive phases of the petition, cooperated in releasing records. On September 1, 2017 this led to the unsealing of the Huston Plan document, which since then has been under declassification review. It is now released to the public.

As noted, the Huston Plan figured in the impeachment of Richard Nixon. The second point of the bill of particulars for Article II of the impeachment resolution says of Nixon, “He misused the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Secret Service, and other executive personnel, in violation or disregard of the constitutional rights of citizens.” Nixon was “directing or authorizing” agencies to conduct or continue electronic surveillance and other investigations unrelated to national security or other lawful functions, using the information unlawfully as well, and directing that records of FBI wiretaps be concealed. The version

brought forward today is not the end of the line by any means. A lot of this document remains classified. If you subtract the frontmatter—cover, signatures, contents, a brief note—roughly 20 percent of the Huston Plan is still secret.

Dissidents themselves are the other major subject that has now been declassified. The report intended to cover the internal security threat in the United States. This included student protest groups, antiwar activists, the militant New Left, the so-called “Black Extremist Movement,” and such groups as the Communist Party of the United States, the Socialist Workers Party, and Puerto Rican Nationalist groups

At the top of the Nixon White House there was an intense focus on foreign powers’ alleged control of or influence over the political protest movement in America, and that was the other main thread of the ad hoc study group report. It discussed Soviet intelligence, Chinese communist intelligence, and Cuban intelligence. One odd aspect of this study is that it appears there was no equivalent focus on North Vietnamese intelligence, though this cannot be said with certainty since many deletions from this document center on foreign intelligence services, particularly the Soviet. Pro-Chinese dissidents feature in a number of the newly released passages, however. While this report takes the form of an analysis, it has come down in history as the Huston *plan* because of the constant focus on measures to be taken to increase surveillance.

This document is known as the Huston Plan because a principal participant in its creation and the events that followed was a Nixon White House aide named Tom Charles Huston. A fledgling conservative from Indiana, Huston had been president of the Young Americans for Freedom organization, and had met Richard Nixon after endorsing him over other Republican politicians. He’d earned a law degree with honors at the University of Indiana and joined the Indiana bar in 1966. Huston volunteered for the Nixon presidential campaign and subsequently was brought into the White House, after two years in the Army, as a member of Nixon’s speechwriting staff. Huston started there, but in due course was given the title of “special assistant to the president” and began to receive delicate assignments.

In early 1970 a rift developed between the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the Central Intelligence Agency which threatened to dry up the supply of intelligence and muddy the bureaucratic waters (as well as furnishing an excuse for White House involvement). Relations were already delicate—shortly before the “Days of Rage” protest mounted by the Weatherman faction in October 1969, the CIA had asked for wiretaps on associated persons and the Bureau had declined. Weatherman, of course, had been a prime target for the security services. Then an FBI informant supplied CIA with information on one of its own contacts, a Denver academic named Thomas Riha, which infuriated Director Hoover, who demanded to know who had squealed. CIA Director Helms refused to provide that information. Hoover retaliated by breaking the longstanding liaison relationship between the agencies, withdrawing his representative at the CIA, ordering his Denver office to have nothing to do with CIA whatever, and stipulating that all future contact with the spy agency be in

writing. By May, to show the FBI was being evenhanded, it had broken off liaison with every agency except the White House.

While these things took place behind the scenes, in the open there were more protests. In March 1970 Weatherman adherents making a bomb accidentally blew up a townhouse in Greenwich Village, New York. Nixon called them “young criminals posturing as romantic revolutionaries.” Nixon’s obsession with dissent had become palpable. An administration official quoted the president as complaining the intelligence system was incapable of tracking the activities of dissidents. In March Huston was designated White House point man on spy efforts. Only weeks later Nixon ordered an invasion of Cambodia to extend the Vietnam war, and the country exploded in a firestorm of protests. At Kent State and Jackson State universities, protesters were killed by National Guard troops or police. Nixon made a gesture to protesters, visiting some in the dark of night at the Lincoln Memorial, but he would not be swayed. After another White House effort to tie down the sources of protester funding, Tom Huston suggested to presidential chief of staff H. R. Haldeman that Nixon should meet with the heads of the intelligence agencies as a first move in a drive to reinvigorate intelligence collection on Americans. Huston told Haldeman they needed to overcome the agencies’ refusal to talk with each other by gathering them into a committee. The president’s purpose in meeting with the directors should be to order the creation of such a unit, with an initial look at the government’s toolkit for surveillance.

White House aide Tom Huston was tasked by US President Richard Nixon in the spring of 1970 with creating a new intelligence framework to track domestic threats. Significant social unrest had been brought on by the Vietnam War, particularly after Nixon decided to invade Cambodia. Large-scale demonstrations broke out on numerous college campuses during this time, and some of the events ended in fatalities. Nixon responded by attempting to create a more extensive domestic monitoring system. Huston created a plan to improve coordination between intelligence organizations like the FBI, CIA, and NSA as part of this endeavor. The plan called for easing restrictions on intelligence collection, increasing electronic surveillance, opening mail, breaking into homes, and expanding surveillance activities on college campuses.

The plan was vehemently opposed by FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover. The proposal was also considered excessive by many FBI personnel. Hoover formally objected through annotations, claiming that the plan might violate constitutional rights. His resistance seriously weakened the plan's feasibility. Under pressure from Hoover and Attorney General John Mitchell, Nixon eventually retracted his initial approval of the plan.

The Huston Plan was essentially canceled after just five days of operation. Although there was no formal revocation document, it was never put into effect. However, some of the strategies suggested in the plan were unofficially carried out in the years that followed. The plan's existence was made public by congressional investigations during the 1973 Watergate scandals. Nixon claimed to have canceled the plan after acknowledging that he had approved it. Later recordings, however, showed that he thought about reusing some of the plan's

components. Today, the Huston Plan is recognized as a prominent instance of an executive branch attempt to go beyond constitutional bounds in the interest of national security.

In other words, the Huston Plan suggested giving federal organizations like the NSA, CIA, FBI, and military intelligence a wide range of new surveillance capabilities. Legal restrictions on a number of contentious activities, such as opening citizens' mail, conducting warrantless wiretaps, carrying out illegal break-ins (also known as "black bag jobs"), and stepping up covert monitoring of protest movements and college campuses, were to be loosened or eliminated. In order to better coordinate interagency intelligence operations, Huston also argued for the establishment of a centralized oversight committee. Long-standing obstacles that hindered these agencies from working closely together or carrying out specific forms of domestic spying were specifically intended to be removed by the plan.

Despite Nixon's initial approval of the Huston Plan in July 1970, there was strong and immediate opposition to its implementation, chief among them FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover, who claimed that the plan would expose the government to ethical, political, and legal risks. Hoover and other Department of Justice officials were concerned that these actions might cause a significant scandal and lead to constitutional challenges if they were ever made public. Although evidence later revealed that some of the plan's recommendations were covertly implemented anyhow, the plan was officially rescinded in response to Hoover's objections just five days after Nixon approved it.

Until it was discovered during the Watergate investigations in 1973, a turning point in American political history, the Huston Plan was kept secret and unknown to the general public. The plan's existence sparked fresh worries about the Nixon administration's readiness to compromise civil liberties for national security when former White House Counsel John Dean turned over documents to Congress. Although the plan was never formally carried out, additional research showed that many of the abuses made public during Watergate were reflected in its authoritarian tone and methods.

The Church Committee, which looked into abuses by U.S. intelligence agencies, was eventually established in 1975 as a result of the Huston Plan, which is now seen as a pivotal moment in intelligence oversight reform and a major example of executive overreach. It is a historical cautionary tale about the perils of compromising constitutional rights in the name of national security and domestic control, especially when power is centralized in the hands of a select few with little to no public or legal accountability.

Lastly, to explain what the White House Plumbers, sometimes simply called the Plumbers are, the Room 16 Project, ODESSA or more officially, the White House Special Investigations Unit, was a covert White House Special Investigations Unit, established within a week of the publication of the Pentagon Papers in June 1971, during the presidency of Richard Nixon. Its task was to stop and/or respond to the leaking of classified information, such as the Pentagon Papers, to the news media. The work of the unit "tapered off" after the bungled "Ellsberg break-in" but some of its former operatives branched into illegal activities while still employed at the White House together with managers of the Committee for the

Re-Election of the President, including the Watergate break-in and the ensuing Watergate scandal. The group has been described as Nixon's "fixers".

04. The Watergate Break-in and Cover-up

a. Wiretapping Of The Democratic Party's Headquarters

The Watergate scandal began with a politically motivated break-in at the Democratic National Committee (DNC) headquarters, located in the Watergate office complex in Washington, D.C. On the evening of June 17, 1972, five men were arrested inside the DNC offices for attempting to install wiretapping devices and steal documents. When it was later found that these burglars were connected to the Committee to Re-Elect the President (CREEP), the name of President Richard Nixon's reelection campaign, a more complex conspiracy was revealed. The wiretapping involved multiple instances of espionage. It was a component of a larger scheme meant to compile political opponent intelligence in order to try to sway the 1972 presidential contest. The Nixon government used both legal and illegal means to discredit the Democratic Party since it considered it as a serious threat. The break-in aimed at obtaining private political information and maybe weakening the Democratic Party's campaign. The fact that James McCord, one of the burglars, was a former CIA officer and CREEP's security coordinator instantly sparked suspicions of a possible White House link. Finding this link revealed that this was an attempt at political surveillance rather than a haphazard, independent break-in. One of the biggest political scandals in American history began with the DNC's wiretapping. Even though the burglars were apprehended, the public was not aware of the full scope of the crime or its connection to the White House for months, which led to a protracted investigation and cover-up.

b. Initial Cover-up

The Nixon administration moved swiftly to hide the truth and safeguard the presidential reelection campaign after the burglars were arrested. Coordinating efforts to stifle the inquiry, high-ranking White House and Committee to Re-Elect the President officials worked This included telling the CIA to meddle with the FBI's probe under false pretenses that, should the investigation go forward, national security was under danger.

Nixon and his allies, including John Ehrlichman and H.R. Haldeman, started developing a cover-up plan whereby the burglars stayed silent and any White House participation would be denied. To trade their silence, the defendants received hush money paid for by funds. Press releases downplaying the break-in and discounting any affiliation to the government were sent concurrently.

This first cover-up worked just momentarily. In November 1972 Nixon defeated Democratic candidate George McGovern to secure an easy reelection triumph. The public mostly accepted the denials of the government, and at that time the media had only little

proof to refute the official story. Still, some tenacious reporters and investigators kept challenging the contradictions in the account.

The cover-up started to fall apart as more details surfaced, especially from insiders like FBI deputy director Mark Felt, sometimes known as "Deep Throat." What had started as an attempt to shield the government from embarrassment turned into a criminal conspiracy to thwart justice, revealing a general misuse of authority inside the Nixon White House.

c. Money Trail

The discovery that the money needed to undermine the thieves and other candidates' work was sourced from a fund belonging to Nixon further heightened the significance of this scandal. Alongside the unprecedented erosion of public trust, these financial flows, which neglected numerous financial laws, were uncovered with the help of Washington Post journalists. So the money trail revealed the systemic corruption at the heart of the Nixon White House. It showed that the break-in was not the action of rogue operatives, but part of a calculated campaign financed and authorized by top political leaders. This financial evidence played a major role in the prosecution of senior officials and contributed significantly to Nixon's eventual downfall.

d. Role of the Media

Media, and especially newspapers at that time, were the most important factor influencing public opinion on a subject. The news of the scandal, particularly from 'The Washington Post' mentioned in the previous paragraph, worried both the FBI and CIA, as well as Nixon himself, regarding their public image. Media was one of the biggest factors in shaping comments and decisions from the public and the court, and in creating awareness among the public to close the matter before it escalated further (as this situation had been in motion for much longer than it appeared in the background).

e. Investigation Grows Broader

The incident, which started as a theft case, quickly turned into a wide-ranging investigation into abuse of power and political corruption. White House advisor John Dean was one of the key witnesses who testified about the cover-up, directly accusing President Nixon and his aides. The discovery of a secret recording system in the Oval Office was one of the most significant findings of the investigation. Many conversations of Nixon, including those related to the Watergate cover-up, had been recorded with this system. However, by the time the court convened, Nixon had refused to turn over the recordings made with this recording system, which negatively impacted his public image and led to political and legal conflicts.

The recordings that Nixon refused to release were eventually taken from him through a court order and various pressures. The recordings were undeniable evidence of Nixon's

behavior against a fair country environment and fair election rules. A recording known as the 'smoking gun' revealed that Nixon instructed the CIA to halt the FBI's investigation. Depending on this evidence, representatives took many rights away from Nixon, related directly to the politics and laws and he eventually resigned. However, this resignation was not enough to stop the investigations. Nixon's most known helpers and workers, including Haldeman, Ehrlichman, and John Mitchell, were also questioned in court and imprisoned. This event, which shook the trust of the public and candidates, led to serious reforms in American politics and the system.

05. The Watergate Crisis

a. The Senate Watergate Hearings

By the time the Ervin hearings began on May 17, a new tenor for American political life had been set: eye-popping revelations of nearly undreamed-of venality at the heart of American power, followed by increasingly threadbare Oval Office protestations of innocence. It would not let up for the next 15 months. The daily televised hearings were quite possibly comparable in drama, import, and historic depth to the Constitutional Convention of 1787, the Lincoln-Douglas debates of 1858, and the Paris Peace Conference of 1919–20. Presided over by four Democrats led by Chairman Ervin, who became a folk hero (and to some a folk villain), and three Republicans led by Vice Chairman Howard Baker of Tennessee, the hearings were at first covered gavel-to-gavel on all three commercial television networks; a business sacrifice that spoke to the remarkable civic high-mindedness with which the country approached the Watergate inquiry. Soon the networks began showing the hearings on a rotating basis. Some Public Broadcasting Service (PBS) stations, however, continued to broadcast the hearings live daily, other PBS stations reran telecasts of the hearings at night, while still others did both.

Trading volume shot down on the New York Stock Exchange. Housewives threatened not to do a stitch of housework for as long as the hearings lasted. College students gathered around TV sets in corridors between, and sometimes during, classes; high schools set up TVs in the cafeteria for all-day civics lessons. “Never have I enjoyed watching television more than in the last two weeks,” one Washington Post letter writer testified, “with the spectacle of high human drama interwoven with the finest possible example of the democratic process at work unfolding before my eyes for hours on end, with no rehearsal, no canned laughter, very little commentary, and, best of all, almost no commercial interruption!”

The feeling was not universal. Sticklers, including independent prosecutor Archibald Cox, decried the unfairness of what he characterized as trying the principals in the media. Game-show and soap-opera fans complained about the preemption of their favourite programs. Most significantly for the later ideological direction of the country, though hardly noticed by elites at the time, large portions of Americans derided the entire business as a political witch hunt (and would continue to view it into the 21st century). Still, some 35 million or so Americans watched the Ervin hearings at one time or another.

What did they see? Methodical portraiture of a White House riddled with unprecedented and extra-constitutional paranoia and corruption from the beginning, painted by a bipartisan panel backed by the awesomely thorough staff work of some of the best young legal minds in Washington (among them Hillary Rodham Clinton, who worked for the House Judiciary Committee during the impeachment hearings).

In the spring of 1969, national security adviser Henry Kissinger had wiretapped his staffers. In 1970 the White House set up an illegal money-laundering operation to fund its favoured Senate candidates. In 1971, after the disillusioned military analyst Daniel Ellsberg leaked the Pentagon Papers, the White House seemed to institutionalize what some have characterized as a culture of illegality. One young staffer named Tom Charles Huston had earlier recommended a plan, approved and then withdrawn by the president, that called for dramatically expanded illegal domestic spying activities by the CIA, FBI, and other intelligence agencies. His specific plan was rejected, but a very similar operation, which Americans came to know as the “Plumbers;” so called because its original purpose was to ferret out leaks, was soon at work carrying out some of the same tasks.

It was revealed that, as the 1972 campaign season rolled around, roving cells of saboteurs devised ways to weaken individual Democratic presidential campaigns while making it look like the campaigns were actually sabotaging each other. A parallel fascination of the hearings was the questioning of young Nixon aides who left senators incredulous with their explanations that “ends-justifies-the-means” morality had become semi-official White House policy. Another continuing thread was the examination of illegal sources of the money that funded the various clandestine operations. The drama was further intensified by ongoing investigation of the White House’s attempts at stifling the panel’s investigation even as it was still under way. The malfeasances multiplied every week, dredged up not merely by the Ervin committee but by journalists, the Watergate grand jury, Watergate special prosecutor Cox, and any number of related inquiries, including the trial in Los Angeles of Ellsberg (“Watergate West”), which had ended just before the Ervin hearings began.

The operative constitutional question tying the complexity together was framed with special eloquence by Vice Chairman Baker: “What did the president know and when did he know it?” Nothing, Nixon continuously maintained. That contention was thrown melodramatically into doubt by Dean on June 25, 1973, in a nearly seven-hour statement to the Ervin committee, watched by a huge portion of the American television audience, followed by five days of intense cross-examination. Dean’s account established the president as the prime mover behind the scandal and cover-up. However, these revelations were greeted with skepticism by many. It appeared that the entire extraordinary business would devolve into a stalemate, the president’s word against one of his aides—until, on July 16, Alexander P. Butterfield, formerly of the White House staff, disclosed that all conversations in the president’s offices had secretly been recorded on tape.

Both Cox and the Ervin committee promptly subpoenaed the tapes of several key conversations. Nixon refused to provide them on the grounds of executive privilege and national security. When Judge Sirica ordered Nixon to turn over the tapes and that order was upheld by the U.S. Court of Appeals in October, Nixon offered instead to provide written summaries of the tapes in question in return for an agreement that no further presidential documents would be sought. Cox rejected the proposal, and on October 20 the president ordered Attorney General Elliot Richardson to fire the special prosecutor. In an event that became known as the “Saturday Night Massacre,” both Richardson and William D. Ruckelshaus, the deputy attorney general, resigned rather than carry out the order, and Cox was finally dismissed by a compliant solicitor general, Robert Bork. It was another extraordinary historical moment. Many responsible American officials literally feared a White House *coup d'état*¹.

A storm of public protest pressured Nixon into finally agreeing on October 23 to release the nine tapes asked for by Sirica, but, of the nine tapes specified in Sirica’s order, only seven were actually delivered, and one of the seven contained a gap of 18 and a half minutes that, according to a later report by a panel of experts, could not have been made accidentally. The combined weight of all the allegations that had been made during the course of the investigation of the scandal led to the initiation of a formal impeachment inquiry by the House Judiciary Committee in May 1974.

On May 20 Judge Sirica ordered Nixon to turn over additional tapes to Cox’s successor as special prosecutor, Leon Jaworski. On July 24 the Supreme Court ruled unanimously that Nixon must provide the recordings. Between July 27 and 30 the House Judiciary Committee passed three articles of impeachment. On August 5 the president supplied transcripts of three tapes that clearly implicated him in the cover-up. With these revelations, Nixon’s last support in Congress evaporated. He announced his resignation on August 8, stating that he no longer had “a strong enough political base” with which to govern. Nixon left office at noon the following day, August 9.

b. The Saturday Night Massacre

The "Saturday Night Massacre" was a series of resignations over the dismissal of special prosecutor Archibald Cox that took place in the United States Department of Justice during the Watergate scandal in 1973. The events followed the refusal by Cox to drop a subpoena for the Nixon White House tapes at President Richard Nixon's request.

During a single evening on Saturday, October 20, Nixon ordered Attorney General Elliot Richardson to fire Archibald Cox; Richardson refused and resigned effective immediately. Nixon then ordered Deputy Attorney General William Ruckelshaus to fire Cox; Ruckelshaus refused, and also resigned. Nixon then ordered the third-most-senior official at the Justice Department, Solicitor General Robert Bork, to fire Cox. Bork carried out the dismissal as

¹ Sudden defeat of a government through illegal force by a small group, often a military one.

Nixon asked. Bork stated that he intended to resign afterward, but was persuaded by Richardson and Ruckelshaus to stay on for the good of the Justice Department.

The political and public reactions to Nixon's actions were negative and highly damaging to the president. The impeachment process against Nixon began ten days later, on October 30, 1973. Leon Jaworski was appointed as the new special prosecutor on November 1, 1973, and on November 14, 1973, United States District Judge Gerhard Gesell ruled that the dismissal had been illegal. The Saturday Night Massacre marked the turning point of the Watergate scandal as the public, while increasingly uncertain about Nixon's actions in Watergate, were incensed by Nixon's seemingly blatant attempt to end the Watergate probe, while Congress, having largely taken a wait-and-see policy regarding Nixon's role in the scandal, quickly turned on Nixon and initiated impeachment proceedings that would end in Nixon's resignation.



Initially, the Nixon White House claimed to have fired Ruckelshaus, but as an article published the next day by The Washington Post pointed out, "The letter from the President to Bork also said Ruckelshaus resigned", catching Nixon lying.²

The night he was fired, Cox's deputy prosecutor and press aides held an impassioned news briefing and read the following statement from him, "Whether ours shall continue to be a government of laws and not of men is now for Congress and ultimately the American people [to decide]."

On November 14, 1973, federal district judge Gerhard Gesell ruled firing Cox was illegal absent a finding of extraordinary impropriety as specified in the regulation establishing the special prosecutor's office. Congress was infuriated by what it saw as a gross abuse of presidential power – as were many Americans, who sent an unusually large number of telegrams to the White House and Congress in protest.

Less than a week after the Saturday Night Massacre, an Oliver Quayle poll for NBC News indicated that, for the first time, a plurality of U.S. citizens supported impeaching Nixon, with 44% in favor, 43% opposed, and 13% undecided, with a sampling error of 2 to 3 per cent.

c. United States v. Richard Nixon

United States v. Nixon, 418 U.S. 683 (1974), was a landmark decision of the Supreme Court of the United States in which the Court unanimously ordered President Richard Nixon

² Front page of The New York Times, October 21, 1973, announcing the dismissal of Cox and the departure of Richardson and Ruckelshaus

to deliver tape recordings and other subpoenaed materials related to the Watergate scandal to a federal district court. Decided on July 24, 1974, the ruling was important to the late stages of the Watergate scandal, amidst an ongoing process to impeach Richard Nixon. *United States v. Nixon* is considered a crucial precedent limiting the power of any U.S. president to claim executive privilege.

Chief Justice Warren E. Burger wrote the opinion for a unanimous court, joined by Justices William O. Douglas, William J. Brennan, Potter Stewart, Byron White, Thurgood Marshall, Harry Blackmun and Lewis F. Powell. Burger, Blackmun, and Powell were appointed to the Court by Nixon during his first term. Associate Justice William Rehnquist recused himself as he had previously served in the Nixon administration as an Assistant Attorney General.

Less than three weeks after oral arguments, the Court issued its decision.

On July 9, the day following oral arguments, all eight justices (Justice William H. Rehnquist recused himself due to his close association with several Watergate conspirators, including Attorneys General John Mitchell and Richard Kleindienst, prior to his appointment to the Court) indicated to each other that they would rule against the president. The justices struggled to settle on an opinion that all eight could agree to, however, with the major issue being how much of a constitutional standard could be established for what executive privilege meant.

Burger's first draft was deemed problematic and insufficient by the rest of the Court, leading the other Justices to criticize and re-write major parts of the draft. The final draft would eventually heavily incorporate Justice Blackmun's re-writing of Facts of the Case, Justice Douglas's appealability section, Justice Brennan's thoughts on standing, Justice White's standards of admissibility and relevance, and Justices Powell and Stewart's interpretation of executive privilege.

The stakes were so high, in that the tapes most likely contained evidence of criminal wrongdoing by the President and his men, that they wanted no dissent. Despite the Chief Justice's hostility to allowing the other Justices to participate in the drafting of the opinion, the final version was agreed to on July 23, the day before the decision was announced, and would contain the work of all the Justices. The Court's opinion found that the courts could indeed intervene on the matter and that Special Counsel Jaworski had proven a "sufficient likelihood that each of the tapes contains conversations relevant to the offenses charged in the indictment". While the Court acknowledged that the principle of executive privilege did exist, the Court would also directly reject President Nixon's claim to an "absolute, unqualified Presidential privilege of immunity from judicial process under all circumstances."

The Court held that a claim of Presidential privilege as to materials subpoenaed for use in a criminal trial cannot override the needs of the judicial process if that claim is based, not

on the ground that military or diplomatic secrets are implicated, but merely on the ground of a generalized interest in confidentiality.

“Neither the doctrine of separation of powers nor the generalized need for confidentiality of high-level communications, without more, can sustain an absolute, unqualified Presidential privilege of immunity from judicial process under all circumstances,” Chief Justice Warren Burger wrote in the opinion.

It concluded that "when the ground for asserting privilege as to subpoenaed materials sought for use in a criminal trial is based only on the generalized interest in confidentiality, it cannot prevail over the fundamental demands of due process of law in the fair administration of criminal justice."

Nixon was then ordered to deliver the subpoenaed materials to the District Court.

Nixon resigned sixteen days later, on August 9, 1974.

06. Final Investigation and Resignation

Nixon's position was becoming increasingly precarious. On February 6, 1974, the House of Representatives approved H.Res. 803³ giving the Judiciary Committee authority to investigate impeachment of the President. On July 27, 1974, the House Judiciary Committee voted 27-to-11 to recommend the first article of impeachment against the president: obstruction of justice. The Committee recommended the second article, abuse of power, on July 29, 1974. The next day, on July 30, 1974, the Committee recommended the third article: contempt of Congress. On August 20, 1974, the House authorized the printing of the Committee report H. Rep. 93–1305, which included the text of the resolution impeaching Nixon and set forth articles of impeachment against him.

On August 5, 1974, the White House released a previously unknown audio tape from June 23, 1972. Recorded only a few days after the break-in, it documented the initial stages of the cover-up: it revealed Nixon and Haldeman had a meeting in the Oval Office during which they discussed how to stop the FBI from continuing its investigation of the break-in, as they recognized that there was a high risk that their position in the scandal might be revealed.

Haldeman introduced the topic as follows:

... the Democratic break-in thing, we're back to the—in the, the problem area because the FBI is not under control, because Gray doesn't exactly know how to control them, and they have ... their investigation is now leading into some productive areas ... and it goes in some directions we don't want it to go.

³ Resolution providing appropriate power to the Committee on the Judiciary to conduct an investigation of whether sufficient grounds exist to impeach Richard M. Nixon, President of the United States.

House Judiciary Committee members and staff, 1974

After explaining how the money from CRP was traced to the burglars, Haldeman explained to Nixon the cover-up plan: *"the way to handle this now is for us to have Walters [CIA] call Pat Gray [FBI] and just say, 'Stay the hell out of this ... this is ah, business here we don't want you to go any further on it.'"*

Nixon approved the plan, and after he was given more information about the involvement of his campaign in the break-in, he told Haldeman: *"All right, fine, I understand it all. We won't second-guess Mitchell and the rest."* Returning to the use of the CIA to obstruct the FBI, he instructed Haldeman: *"You call them in. Good. Good deal. Play it tough. That's the way they play it and that's the way we are going to play it."*

Nixon denied that this constituted an obstruction of justice, as his instructions ultimately resulted in the CIA truthfully reporting to the FBI that there were no national security issues. Nixon urged the FBI to press forward with the investigation when they expressed concern about interference.

Before the release of this tape, Nixon had denied any involvement in the scandal. He claimed that there were no political motivations in his instructions to the CIA, and claimed he had no knowledge before March 21, 1973, of involvement by senior campaign officials such as John Mitchell. The contents of this tape persuaded Nixon's own lawyers, Fred Buzhardt and James St. Clair, that *"the President had lied to the nation, to his closest aides, and to his own lawyers—for more than two years"*. The tape, which Barber Conable referred to as a "smoking gun", proved that Nixon had been involved in the cover-up from the beginning.

In the week before Nixon's resignation; Ehrlichman and Haldeman tried unsuccessfully to get Nixon to grant them pardons, which he had promised them before their April 1973 resignations.

The release of the smoking gun tape destroyed Nixon politically. The ten congressmen who had voted against all three articles of impeachment in the House Judiciary Committee announced they would support the impeachment article accusing Nixon of obstructing justice when the articles came up before the full House. Additionally, John Jacob Rhodes, the House leader of Nixon's party, announced that he would vote to impeach, stating that "coverup of criminal activity and misuse of federal agencies can neither be condoned nor tolerated".

On the night of August 7, 1974, Senators Barry Goldwater and Hugh Scott and Congressman Rhodes met with Nixon in the Oval Office. Scott and Rhodes were the Republican leaders in the Senate and House, respectively; Goldwater was brought along as an elder statesman. The three lawmakers told Nixon that his support in Congress had all but disappeared. Rhodes told Nixon that he would face certain impeachment when the articles came up for vote in the full House. By one estimate, out of 435 representatives, no more than

75 were willing to vote against impeaching Nixon for obstructing justice. Goldwater and Scott told the president that there were enough votes in the Senate to convict him, and that no more than 15 Senators were willing to vote for acquittal—not even half of the 34 votes he needed to stay in office.



"Smoking Gun" tape of Nixon and H.R. Haldeman's conversation in Oval Office on June 23, 1972

Faced with the inevitability of his impeachment and removal from office and with public opinion having turned decisively against him, Nixon decided to resign. In a nationally televised address from the Oval Office on the evening of August 8, 1974, the president said, in part:

In all the decisions I have made in my public life, I have always tried to do what was best for the Nation. Throughout the long and difficult period of Watergate, I have felt it was my duty to persevere, to make every possible effort to complete the term of office to which you elected me. In the past few days, however, it has become evident to me that I no longer have a strong enough political base in the Congress to justify continuing that effort. As long as there was such a base, I felt strongly that it was necessary to see the constitutional process through to its conclusion, that to do otherwise would be unfaithful to the spirit of that deliberately difficult process and a dangerously destabilizing precedent for the future.

... I would have preferred to carry through to the finish whatever the personal agony it would have involved, and my family unanimously urged me to do so. But the interest of the Nation must always come before any personal considerations. From the discussions I have had with Congressional and other leaders, I have concluded that because of the Watergate matter I might not have the support of the Congress that I would consider necessary to back the very difficult decisions and carry out the duties of this office in the way the interests of the Nation would require.

... I have never been a quitter. To leave office before my term is completed is abhorrent to every instinct in my body. But as President, I must put the interest of America first. America

needs a full-time President and a full-time Congress, particularly at this time with problems we face at home and abroad. To continue to fight through the months ahead for my personal vindication would almost totally absorb the time and attention of both the President and the Congress in a period when our entire focus should be on the great issues of peace abroad and prosperity without inflation at home. Therefore, I shall resign the Presidency effective at noon tomorrow. Vice President Ford will be sworn in as President at that hour in this office.

The morning that his resignation took effect, the President, with Mrs. Nixon and their family, said farewell to the White House staff in the East Room. A helicopter carried them from the White House to Andrews Air Force Base in Maryland. Nixon later wrote that he thought, *"As the helicopter moved on to Andrews, I found myself thinking not of the past, but of the future. What could I do now?"* At Andrews, he and his family boarded an Air Force plane to El Toro Marine Corps Air Station in California, and then were transported to his home La Casa Pacifica in San Clemente.



The resignation recording of Richard Milhous Nixon, the 37th president of the United States. (August 8, 1974)

07. Timeline of the Watergate Scandal (1969-1975)

January 1969

Richard Nixon is inaugurated as the 37th president of the United States.

February 1971

Richard Nixon orders the installation of a secret taping system that records all conversations in the Oval Office, his Executive Office Building office, and his Camp David office and on selected telephones in these locations.

June 13, 1971

The New York Times begins publishing the Pentagon Papers, the Defense Department's secret history of the Vietnam War. The Washington Post will begin publishing the papers later in the week.

1971

Nixon and his staff recruit a team of ex-FBI and CIA operatives, later referred to as “the Plumbers” to investigate the leaked publication of the Pentagon Papers. On September 9, the "plumbers" broke into the office of Daniel Ellsberg’s psychiatrist, in an unsuccessful attempt to steal psychiatric records to smear Daniel Ellsberg, the defense analyst who leaked the Pentagon Papers to the press.

January 1972

One of the “plumbers,” G. Gordon Liddy, is transferred to the Committee to Re-Elect the President (CREEP), where he obtains approval from Attorney General John Mitchell for a wide-ranging plan of espionage against the Democratic Party.

May 28, 1972

Liddy’s team breaks into the Democratic National Committee Headquarters at the Watergate complex in Washington, D.C. for the first time, bugging the telephones of staffers.

June 17, 1972

Five men are arrested after breaking into the Democratic National Committee Headquarters. Among the items found in their possession were bugging devices, thousands of dollars in cash and rolls of film. Days later, the White House denied involvement in the break-in.

June 17, 1972

A young Washington Post crime reporter, Bob Woodward, is sent to the arraignment of the burglars. Another young Post reporter, Carl Bernstein, volunteers to make some phone calls to learn more about the burglary.

June 20, 1972

Bob Woodward has his first of several meetings with the source and informant known as “Deep Throat,” whose identity, W. Mark Felt, the associate director of the FBI, was only revealed three decades later.

August 1, 1972

An article in The Washington Post reports that a check for \$25,000 earmarked for Nixon's 1972 re-election campaign was deposited into the bank account of one of the men arrested for the Watergate break-in. Over the course of nearly two years, Bob Woodward and Carl Bernstein continue to file stories about the Watergate scandal, relying on many sources.

August 30, 1972

Nixon announces that John Dean has completed an internal investigation into the Watergate break-in, and has found no evidence of White House involvement.

September 29, 1972

The Washington Post reports that while serving as Attorney General, John Mitchell had controlled a secret fund to finance intelligence gathering against Democrats. When Carl Bernstein calls Mitchell for comment, Mitchell threatens both Bernstein and Katharine Graham, the publisher of the Post. The Post prints the threat.

October 10, 1972

Woodward and Bernstein report that the FBI had made connections between Nixon aides and the Watergate break-in.

October 1972

Articles by Woodward and Bernstein describe the existence of a major "dirty tricks" campaign conducted against Democratic Presidential candidate Edmund Muskie, orchestrated by Donald Segretti and others paid by CREEP and Nixon's private attorney.

November 7, 1972

Nixon is elected to a second term in office after defeating Democratic candidate George McGovern.

January 8, 1973

The Watergate break-in trial begins.

January 30, 1973

Former Nixon aide and FBI agent G. Gordon Liddy and James McCord, an ex-CIA agent and former security director of the Committee to Re-elect the President (CREEP), are convicted for their roles in the break-in at the Watergate complex. They are found guilty of conspiracy, bugging DNC headquarters, and burglary. Four others, including E. Howard Hunt, had already pleaded guilty. Judge John J. Sirica threatens the convicted burglars with long prison sentences unless they talk.

March 21, 1973

In a White House meeting, White House Counsel John Dean tells Nixon, “We have a cancer, within, close to the Presidency, that’s growing.” He and Nixon discuss how to pay the Watergate bribers as much as \$1 million in cash to continue the cover-up.

March 23, 1973

Watergate burglar James McCord’s letter confessing the existence of a wider conspiracy is read in open court by Judge Sirica. The Watergate cover-up starts to unravel.

April 6, 1973

Dean begins cooperating with Watergate prosecutors.

April 9, 1973

The New York Times reports that McCord told the Senate Watergate Committee that a Republican group, the Committee to Re-elect the President (CREEP) had made cash payoffs to the Watergate burglars.

April 27, 1973

Acting FBI director L. Patrick Gray resigns after admitting that he destroyed documents given to him by John Dean days after the Watergate break-in.

April 30, 1973

The Watergate scandal intensifies as Nixon announces that White House aides John Ehrlichman and H.R. Haldeman have resigned. White House counsel John Dean is fired. (In October that year, Dean would plead guilty to obstruction of justice.) Attorney General Richard Kleindienst resigns. Later that night, Nixon delivers his first primetime address to the nation on Watergate, stressing his innocence.

May 17, 1973

Senator Sam Ervin opens the Senate Select Committee on Presidential Campaign Activities into the Watergate incident.

May 18, 1973

The first nationally televised hearings of the Senate Select Committee begin. Attorney General-designate Elliot Richardson appoints law professor and former U.S. Solicitor General Archibald Cox as special prosecutor in the Watergate investigation.

June 3, 1973

The Washington Post reports that Dean told Watergate prosecutors that he discussed the cover-up with Nixon at least 35 times. On June 25, Dean testifies before the Senate Select Committee about Nixon’s involvement.

June 13, 1973

Prosecutors discover a memo to John Ehrlichman regarding plans for the Plumbers’ break-in of Daniel Ellsberg’s psychiatrist.

July 13, 1973

Alexander Butterfield, former presidential appointments secretary, meets with Senate investigators, where he reveals the existence of an extensive, secret taping system in the White House. On July 16, he testified before the Senate Committee in a live broadcast, revealing that since 1971 Nixon had recorded all conversations and telephone calls in his offices.

July 18, 1973

Nixon reportedly orders the White House taping system disconnected.

July to October 1973

President Nixon refuses to turn over recordings of his White House conversations to the Senate investigation and to Cox. The tapes are believed to include evidence that Nixon and his aides had attempted to cover up their involvement in the Watergate break-in and other illegal activities. Nixon files appeals in response to various subpoenas ordering him to turn over the tapes.

August 15, 1973

The same day the Senate Select Committee wraps up its hearings, Nixon delivers a second primetime address to the nation on Watergate, saying "It has become clear that both the hearings themselves and some of the commentaries on them have become increasingly absorbed in an effort to implicate the President personally in the illegal activities that took place." He reminded the American people that he had already taken "full responsibility" for the "abuses that occurred during my administration."

October 10, 1973

Vice President Spiro Agnew resigns, amidst bribery and income-tax evasion charges, unrelated to the Watergate break-in. Two days later, Nixon nominated Michigan Congressman Gerald Ford as vice president. Ford is sworn in in December.

October 19, 1973

Nixon attempted a legal maneuver to avoid handing over the tapes to Cox by suggesting U.S. Sen. John Stennis to summarize the tapes for investigators. Cox will refuse the offer the next day.

October 20, 1973

Nixon orders the firing of special prosecutor Archibald Cox in what becomes known as the "Saturday Night Massacre." Attorney General Elliot Richardson and Deputy Attorney General William French Smith resigned rather than carry out these orders. Solicitor General Robert F. Bork fires Cox. Several days later, Leon Jaworski was appointed as the second special prosecutor.

November 17, 1973

During a televised press conference in Florida, Nixon famously declares, "I'm not a crook," and continues to profess his innocence.

November 21, 1973

White House Watergate counsel J. Fred Buzhardt reveals the existence of an 18 ½ minute gap on the tape of Nixon-Haldeman conversation on June 20, 1972. The White House is unable to explain the gap, although Nixon's secretary Rose Mary Woods, will later claim she accidentally erased the material.

March 1, 1974

Indictments are handed down for the "Watergate Seven," including John Mitchell, H.R. Haldeman and John Ehrlichman. The grand jury names Nixon as an "unindicted co-conspirator."

April 30, 1974

Transcripts of more than 1,200 pages of edited transcripts of the Nixon tapes are released by The White House.

May 9, 1974

The House Judiciary Committee starts impeachment proceedings against Nixon.

July 24, 1974

The Supreme Court ruled that Nixon must surrender dozens of original tape recordings of conversations to Jaworski.

July 27-30, 1974

Three articles of impeachment are debated and approved by the House Judiciary Committee against Nixon; obstruction of justice, misuse of power and contempt of Congress. The impeachment was sent to the floor of the House for a full vote but the vote was never carried out.

August 5, 1974

Nixon releases transcripts of three conversations with Haldeman on June 23, 1972. Known as the "smoking gun," the transcripts reveal Nixon's involvement in the Watergate cover-up.

August 8, 1974

President Nixon resigns. In a nationally televised speech, the president says, "I have never been a quitter. To leave office before my term is completed is abhorrent to every instinct in my body. But as president, I must put the interest of America first...Therefore, I shall resign the presidency effective at noon tomorrow."

August 9, 1974

Nixon signs his letter of resignation. Vice President Gerald Ford becomes president.

September 8, 1974

Nixon is pardoned by President Gerald Ford for any offenses he might have committed against the United States while president.

January 1975

Former chief of staff H.R. Haldeman, former domestic policy advisor John Ehrlichman, and former attorney general and Nixon campaign manager John Mitchell are tried and convicted of conspiracy charges arising from Watergate. In total, 41 people will receive criminal convictions related to the Watergate scandal.

8. Key Figures of the Watergate Scandal

Richard Milhous Nixon (January 9, 1913 – April 22, 1994) was the 37th president of the United States, serving from 1969 until his resignation in 1974. A member of the *Republican Party*, he previously served as the 36th vice president under President Dwight Eisenhower from 1953 to 1961, and also as a representative and senator from California. His presidency saw the reduction of U.S. involvement in the Vietnam War, *détente* with the Soviet Union and China, the Apollo 11 Moon landing, and the establishment of the Environmental Protection Agency and Occupational Safety and Health Administration. Nixon's second term ended early when he became the only U.S. president to resign from office, as a result of the *Watergate scandal*.

Seeking to bring the North Vietnamese to the negotiating table, Nixon ordered



military operations and carpet bombing campaigns in Cambodia. He covertly aided Pakistan during the Bangladesh Liberation War in 1971 and ended American combat involvement in Vietnam in 1973 and the military draft the same year. His visit to China in 1972 led to diplomatic relations between the two nations, and he finalized the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty with the Soviet Union. Nixon made important changes to United States policy towards Native Americans through legislation and executive action, reversing Eisenhower's Indian termination policy in favor of supporting Native American self-determination. Nixon imposed wage

and price controls for 90 days, began the war on cancer, and presided over the Apollo 11 Moon landing, which signaled the end of the Space Race. He was re-elected in 1972, when he defeated George McGovern in one of the largest landslide victories in American history. By those past actions we can tell that he aimed to have great relations with the people and tried to solve many problems as well as arranging the foreign relations of the United States.

Mark Felt

William Mark Felt Sr. (August 17, 1913 – December 18, 2008) was an American law enforcement officer who worked for the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) from 1942 to



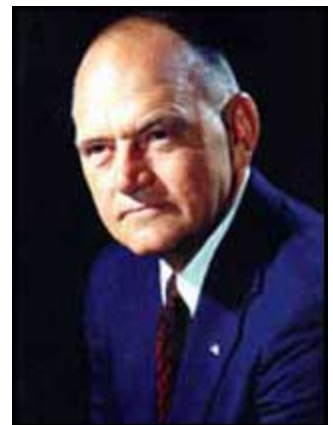
1973 and was known for his role in the Watergate scandal. Felt was an FBI special agent who eventually rose to the position of Deputy Director, the Bureau's second-highest-ranking post. Felt worked in several FBI field offices prior to his promotion to the Bureau's headquarters. In 1980, he was convicted of having violated the civil rights of people thought to be associated with members of the Weather Underground, by ordering FBI agents to break into their homes and search the

premises as part of an attempt to prevent bombings. He was ordered to pay a fine, but was pardoned by President Ronald Reagan during his appeal.

As Deputy Director, Felt saw everything compiled on Watergate before it was given to Gray. The Agent in Charge, Charles Nuzum, sent his findings to Investigative Division Head Robert Gebhardt, who passed the information on to Felt. From the day of the burglary, June 17, 1972, until the FBI investigation was mostly completed in June 1973, Felt was the key control point for FBI information. He had been among the first to learn of the investigation, being informed the morning of June 17. Ronald Kessler, who spoke to former Bureau agents, reported that throughout the investigation they "were amazed to see material in Woodward and Bernstein's stories lifted almost verbatim from their reports of interviews a few days or weeks earlier"

Patrick Gray

Louis Patrick Gray III was acting director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) from May 3, 1972, to April 27, 1973. During this time, the FBI was in charge of the initial investigation into the burglaries that sparked the Watergate scandal, which eventually led to the resignation of President Nixon. Gray was nominated as permanent director by Nixon on February 15, 1973, but failed to win Senate confirmation. He resigned as acting director on April 27, 1973, after admitting to destroying documents that had come from convicted Watergate conspirator E. Howard Hunt's safe; documents received on June 28, 1972, 11 days after the Watergate burglary, and given to Gray by White House counsel John Dean.



Gray first learned of the Watergate break-ins on June 17 from Wes Grapp, the Special Agent in Charge of the Los Angeles field office. Gray immediately called Mark Felt, his second in command. At the time, Felt only had limited information, remaining unclear as to whether it was a burglary or bombing attempt.

Charles Nuzum

Charles A. Nuzum was an agent of the FBI who oversaw the investigation into the Watergate scandal. Nuzum was chief of the FBI's bankruptcy, antitrust and wiretapping unit at the time of the break-in at the Watergate office.

At the time of the Watergate scandal, Mr. Nuzum was chief of the FBI's bankruptcy, antitrust, and wiretapping unit. Nuzum led the investigation into the Watergate burglary. The investigation revealed that the White House was connected to the burglary, and the burglary to an ever so expanding set of other numerous crimes, taken under to punish the so-called political enemies of Nixon's administration. Nuzum would inform his superiors, which also included Robert Gebhardt, the FBI's assistant director of the investigative division. Robert Gebhardt then would send the reports to the FBI's associate director, Mark Felt. Felt then passed the information on to L. Patrick Gray, the FBI's acting director. Many of the key memos from this period contain the name and initials of Charles Nuzum.

John P. Mohr

John Philip Mohr (20 April 1910 – 25 January 1997) was an administrator with the Federal Bureau of Investigation. John P. Mohr, a then-Assistant Director of the FBI during the Watergate crisis, played the behind-the-scenes role that captured the internal struggle the Bureau itself experienced throughout the investigation. Despite not being connected to the break-in or cover-up at Watergate, Mohr was an FBI leader while the agency found itself under unprecedented political scrutiny. His integrity was undermined by charges of impropriety, including improper relationships with private contractors, that brought a cloud over ethics and integrity at the FBI. While he did not obstruct the Watergate investigation, his actions served to raise questions about how widespread political influence and corruption from within might have corrupted the FBI's ability to conduct a fair and impartial inquiry.

Angelo Lano

Angelo Lano played a key role in the FBI investigation of the Watergate scandal as the lead agent on the case. The moment the break-in at the headquarters of the Democratic National Committee in June 1972 took place, Lano and his team began constructing the connections between the burglars and those associated with President Nixon's re-election campaign. Evident through his tenacity and carefulness, Lano helped to uncover prominent evidence that linked the break-in to top administration officials, even when the investigation was attempted to be stifled. His efforts were instrumental in uncovering the extent of the cover-up and eventually contributed to President Nixon's resignation. Lano's success demonstrated the importance of independent law enforcement in holding top officials accountable.



Edward S. Miller

Edward Samuel Miller (November 11, 1923 – July 1, 2013) was the deputy assistant director of the Inspections Division under Mark Felt with the United States Federal Bureau of Investigation. He was known for the 1980 trial for conspiracy of injuring and oppressing the citizens of the United States and his investigation of the Weather Underground group.

Bruce J. Gebhardt

Bruce J. Gebhardt (born 1949/50) is an American former (FBI) special agent who served as Deputy Director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation. The son of Bob Gebhardt, also an FBI agent and special agent in charge, he was born in Baltimore, Maryland and attended Western Illinois University and Sam Houston University, earning a master's degree in criminology from the latter.

James Adams

James B. Adams was the then Associate Director of the FBI. As the Bureau's second highest-ranking officer, Adams held the position of ensuring that the FBI was independent and professional despite heightened political pressure. Although he wasn't a player in field work, he played a leading role in managing internal operations and guiding agents working on the case. His leadership steered the Bureau through a politically charged atmosphere as it continued to pursue the truth of the scandal.

Paul Magallanes

Paul Magallanes was one of the FBI agents directly involved in Watergate investigations. He worked under lead agent Angelo Lano and helped trace money movement and interview witnesses, laying down important information that revealed the links between the Watergate burglars and Nixon campaign officials. His keen investigative research was critical in building a case that demonstrated the scope to which the scandal reached within the U.S. government.

John Mindermann

John Mindermann was among the other FBI agents in the Watergate investigation. He worked closely with Angelo Lano and Paul Magallanes to reconstruct evidence and follow leads linking the break-in to the Committee to Re-elect the President. Mindermann's sharp investigative methods and dedication helped him to disentangle the broader conspiracy, and he was an important team member that introduced key information on the scandal to the public arena.

James A. Watson

James A. Watson also played a supporting but important part in the Watergate scandal's investigation by the FBI. Being an FBI agent, he was part of the investigating team which was assigned the duty of investigating the June 17, 1972, break-in of the headquarters of the Democratic National Committee. Watson assisted the head agents like Angelo Lano and John Mindermann in interviews, in gathering evidence, and in following leads amongst burglars and government officials tied to President Nixon's re-election. Watson never served

as the public face of the investigation but his work as an investigator contributed to piecing together the evidence to uncover the overall conspiracy.

Richard Long

Richard Long served as an FBI agent involved in the early stages of the Watergate investigation. While he was not one of the lead or widely recognized figures in the case, Long contributed to the broader investigative efforts following the June 17, 1972 break-in at the Democratic National Committee headquarters. He worked with other agents to gather evidence, conduct interviews, and trace the origins of the financial and logistical support behind the burglary. Long's role, like many other agents in the field, was vital in supporting the FBI's mission to uncover the full scope of the conspiracy, despite political pressure and efforts to derail the investigation.

Bibliography

[Watergate scandal - Wikipedia](#)

[Encyclopedia Britannica | Britannica](#)

[News from California, across the nation and world - Los Angeles Times](#)

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Impeachment_process_against_Richard_Nixon

<https://www.britannica.com/event/Watergate-Scandal>
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Watergate_scandal#Final_investigations_and_resignation
<https://www.history.com/articles/watergate-scandal-timeline-nixon>
<https://watergate.info/analysis/watergate-and-american-political-values/>
<https://www.encyclopedia.com/social-sciences/culture-magazines/1960s-government-politics-and-law-overview>
https://youtu.be/ehKRO0N-dIg?si=wZR-ImwjS_AU_sJ0
https://youtu.be/ZEOGJJ7UKFM?si=CFT4_ohnxMOe_wAL
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Saturday_Night_Massacre#References
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_v._Nixon
[https://psi329.cankaya.edu.tr/uploads/files/Ritchie,%20Investigating%20the%20Watergate%20Scandal%20\(1998\).pdf](https://psi329.cankaya.edu.tr/uploads/files/Ritchie,%20Investigating%20the%20Watergate%20Scandal%20(1998).pdf)
[Spying on Americans: Infamous 1970s White House Plan for Protest Surveillance Released | National Security Archive](#)
<https://youtu.be/TxedzEHuai0?si=djZ0ZtQHXMHB2YAu>