

The Watergate Scandal - Cast of Characters

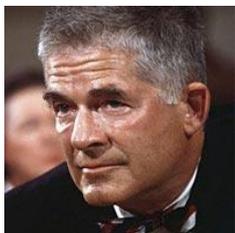


Richard Nixon:

The 37th president of the United States, Nixon became the first to resign his office in the wake of the Watergate scandal. Had he not resigned, he would have been impeached by the House of Representatives and convicted by the Senate.

On June 17, 1972, with Nixon just months away from what turned out to be a smashing re-election victory, four men broke into the offices of the Democratic National Committee at the Watergate office building in Washington. The incident was initially ignored by much of the political cognoscenti, as the White House denied any involvement. But as that turned out to not be the case -- as more testimony and evidence unveiled a vast administration conspiracy in the break-in and cover-up -- the one-time "third-rate burglary" ultimately cost Nixon his job, with many of his underlings (including his former attorney general) going to prison. The prospect of Nixon himself serving jail time ended when his successor, Gerald Ford, pardoned him for any Watergate-related crimes he may have committed.

Nixon died on April 22, 1994, at the age of 81.



Archibald Cox:

Cox, a law professor at Harvard who had served as Solicitor General under President Kennedy, was named the Watergate Special Prosecutor on May 18, 1973. He was given the authority to investigate the Watergate cover-up. From the outset, Cox made it clear to the Nixon administration that he would be an independent prosecutor, and independent he was. After the July 13th revelation by Nixon aide Alexander Butterfield of secretly recorded phone conversations by the president, Cox insisted that the White House turn over the tapes. The White House refused, but Cox persisted. On Oct. 20, 1973, Nixon ordered Attorney General Elliot Richardson to fire Cox; Richardson, who originally hired Cox, refused and resigned instead. Then the job of firing Cox went to Deputy Attorney General William French Smith. He too refused and was himself fired. Finally, Nixon got Solicitor General Robert F. Bork to carry out the order. The chain of events became known as the "Saturday Night Massacre," and was seen as the true beginning of the end for Nixon's presidency. Time magazine wrote: "By firing Archibald Cox, Nixon had removed one of his best hopes of eventual vindication -- a final judgment by an independent investigator that the president was in no way criminally implicated in the Watergate deceptions and transgressions."

After leaving the government, Cox returned to Harvard University and later became chairman of Common Cause, the liberal lobbying organization. He died on May 29, 2004, at the age of 79.



Sam Ervin:

Ervin was a canny Democratic senator from North Carolina who presided over the special Senate Watergate Committee hearings in the spring and summer of 1973. His "aw shucks" Southern charm -- he often referred to himself as "just an ol' country lawyer" -- won over millions of Americans who were glued to their TV sets to watch the hearings.

Interestingly, Ervin had compiled a fairly conservative record in the Senate, voting against civil rights legislation, affirmative action, and giving the vote to 18 year olds. But he was also a staunch champion of individual liberties.

The committee -- formally called the Select Committee on Presidential Campaign Activities -- began its hearings on May 17, 1973, the goal to investigate the questionable activities of the 1972 Nixon re-election campaign. The hearings exposed not only that people close to Nixon were implicated in alleged crimes, but that the administration had tried to cover them up. It was during one particular committee meeting, on July 13, 1973, where White House aide Alexander Butterfield revealed the existence of an elaborate secret telephone conversation recording system that ultimately led to Nixon's resignation.

Ervin did not seek re-election to a fifth Senate term in 1974, opting instead to retire. He died on April 23, 1985, at the age of 88.



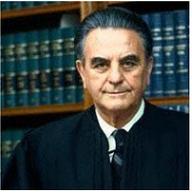
Peter Rodino:

Rodino was a fairly obscure Democratic member of Congress from Newark, N.J., who became chairman of the House Judiciary Committee in 1973. His first major order of business came later that year when he headed the House confirmation hearings of Republican House Minority Leader Gerald Ford to be vice president. But once the demand to impeach President Nixon grew, it was the committee's responsibility to open up an impeachment inquiry, which it did in October of 1973.

Throughout the hearings, Rodino made it painstakingly clear that he wanted the investigation to be about evidence, not politics. When the committee demanded tapes of Watergate phone conversations, what was turned over by the White House was filled with deletions. But Nixon stood his ground, refusing the committee's request. On July 24, 1974, the impeachment hearings became nationally televised. On July 27 the committee voted on the first of three articles of impeachment, obstruction of justice. Two days later it approved a second article of impeachment, this one on misuse of power. On July 30 the third article of impeachment passed: contempt of Congress for defying its subpoenas.

The full House was on course to impeach the president. Nixon headed that off by resigning on Aug. 9, 1974.

Meanwhile, back home, Rodino's district was rapidly going from majority Italian-American to majority black, and there was a lot of pressure for him to retire and allow the district to be represented by an African-American. He finally stepped down at the end of 1988. He later was a professor at the Seton Hall University Law School. Rodino died on May 7, 2005, at the age of 95.



John Sirica:

Sirica was the chief judge of the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia when the cases of the early Watergate defendants landed in his lap. Sirica took the unusual step of publicly stating that the defendants were not being completely truthful. He approached the trials more like a prosecutor than as a judge, promising to impose the maximum sentence on the Watergate burglars. But his diligence paid off when one of the burglars, James McCord, wrote to Sirica in March of 1973 that political pressure was being put on the burglars to plead guilty and keep quiet. (The other burglars: Bernard Barker, Virgilio Gonzalez, Eugenio Martinez and Frank Sturgis.) *Time* magazine named Sirica its "Man of the Year" for 1973.

Interestingly, Sirica was a life-long Republican. He died on Aug. 15, 1992, at the age of 88.

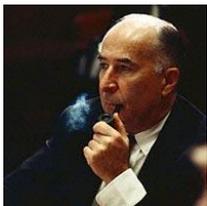


Leon Jaworski:

Jaworski, a Houston attorney, became the Watergate special prosecutor on Nov. 1, 1973, after the firing of Archibald Cox in what was known as the "Saturday Night Massacre." Once thought by some to be less vigorous in investigating alleged White House crimes, Jaworski proved the doubters wrong when he got a unanimous Supreme Court to order

Nixon to turn over the Oval Office tapes.

Jaworski returned to Washington, D.C., in 1977 as the special counsel to the House committee investigating the Koreagate scandal. He died on Dec. 9, 1982, at the age of 77.



John Mitchell:

Mitchell was Richard Nixon's former law partner and 1968 campaign manager when he was named as Attorney General in 1969. He quit the Justice Department shortly after the Watergate break-in to head up the president's re-election campaign in '72. In 1974 Mitchell was convicted on charges related to the Watergate break-in and subsequent

cover-up. Testimony showed that Mitchell approved of both the break-in and the hush money for the defendants. He served 19 months in prison. Mitchell died on Nov. 9, 1988, at the age of 75.



John Ehrlichman:

Ehrlichman was President Nixon's assistant for domestic affairs. He also was closely involved with the Watergate "plumbers," and was instrumental in the earlier White House "dirty trick" -- the break-in at the office of the psychiatrist to Daniel Ellsberg, the man who leaked the Pentagon Papers to the media. Ehrlichman resigned his White House post in

April of 1973 and was later convicted of conspiracy in both the Watergate and Ellsberg cases. He served 18 months in prison. He lived for a while in Santa Fe, N.M., later becoming a business consultant in Atlanta. He died on Feb. 14, 1999, at the age of 73.



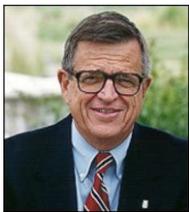
H.R. Bob Haldeman:

Haldeman was White House chief of staff under Nixon. Together with John Ehrlichman, they were known as the "Berlin Wall" -- you had to get past Haldeman and Ehrlichman if you wanted to see the president. Like Ehrlichman, Haldeman quit his White House job under pressure in April 1973 after being implicated in supplying the Watergate defendants with hush money, was convicted of Watergate-related offenses, and went to prison. Haldeman died on Nov. 12, 1993, at the age of 67.



Alexander Butterfield:

The head of the Federal Aviation Administration and an ex-Haldeman aide, Butterfield disclosed the existence of a tape-recording device in the Oval Office. The disclosure, made in July 1973 during the Senate Watergate Committee hearings, ultimately led to Nixon's resignation.



Charles Colson:

White House special counsel who went to prison in 1974 for his involvement in the Daniel Ellsberg break-in. Colson was also involved in the Watergate cover-up. He is now a born-again Christian and founder of the Prison Fellowship Ministries.



Kenneth Dahlberg:

Nixon's 1972 Midwest campaign manager, whose campaign check for \$25,000 to Commerce Secretary Maurice Stans wound up in the bank account of one of the Watergate burglars.



John Dean:

White House counsel who during the Ervin hearings warned of a "cancer growing on the presidency." Later went to prison for his involvement in the cover-up.



E. Howard Hunt:

A former CIA agent who joined the Nixon White House in 1971 and became one of the original planners of the Watergate break-in. Hunt's phone number was found in an address book of one of the Watergate burglars, which connected them to the White House for the first time. Spent 33 months in prison.



G. Gordon Liddy:

In December of 1971, Liddy, a former FBI agent, became the general counsel to the Committee to Re-Elect the President (CREEP). Considered a mastermind for the White House's strategy of "dirty tricks," he was one of the original Watergate planners. He went to prison for his roles in the Watergate and Ellsberg break-ins, and served longer than most of the other defendants due to his refusal to testify.



Donald H. Segretti:

Political operative for CREEP. Involved in political "dirty tricks" for the 1972 Nixon campaign. In 1974, Segretti pleaded guilty to three misdemeanor counts of distributing illegal (in fact, forged) campaign literature and was sentenced to six months in prison, actually serving four months. One notable example of his wrong-doing was a faked letter on Democratic presidential candidate Edmund Muskie's letterhead falsely alleging that U.S. Senator Henry "Scoop"

Jackson, a fellow Democrat, had had an illegitimate child with a 17-year-old; the Muskie letters accused Senator Hubert H. Humphrey of sexual misconduct as well.



Maurice Stans:

Commerce secretary and later the finance chairman for the Committee to Re-Elect the President, Stans raised nearly \$60 million for Nixon's re-election. He insisted that he had no knowledge how some of the money he raised wound up in the Watergate cover-up. Did not go to prison but was fined for receipt of illegal corporate contributions.



Rose Mary Woods:

The longtime and loyal Nixon personal secretary, Woods took the blame for inadvertently erasing 18 1/2 minutes from a tape of a key Nixon phone conversation.



Ronald Ziegler:

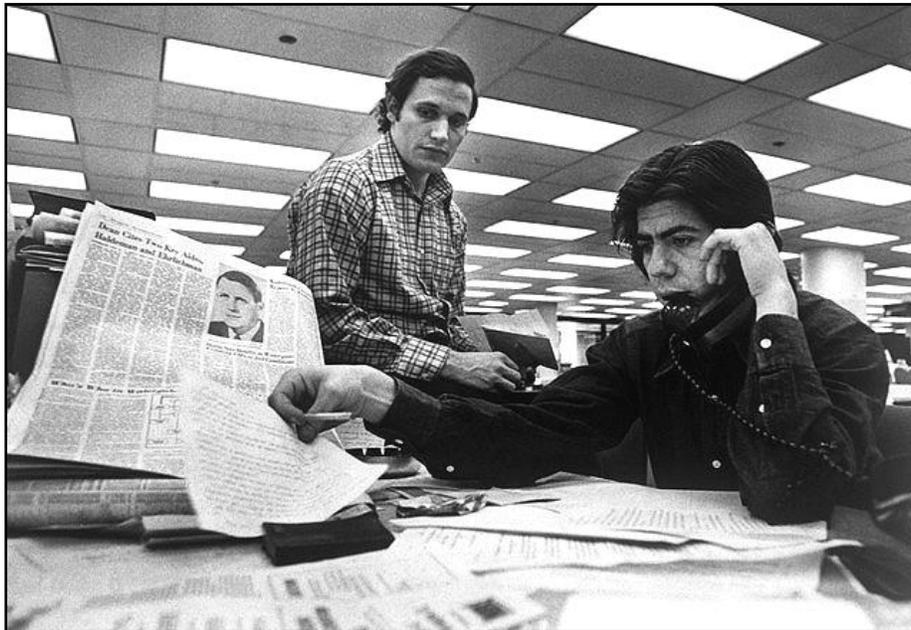
Ziegler was President Nixon's White House press secretary. Fiercely loyal to his boss, he initially referred to the Watergate break-in as a "third-rate burglary."



Mark Felt:

The confidential informant known for 30 years as "Deep Throat" is finally out of the shadows, identified as senior FBI official Mark Felt. But as the last major detail of the Watergate story was revealed, a younger generation strained to understand what the fuss was all about, and others realized they'd forgotten many of the key details. He died on December 18, 2008.

Bob Woodward & Carl Bernstein:



SOURCE: <http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=4678527>