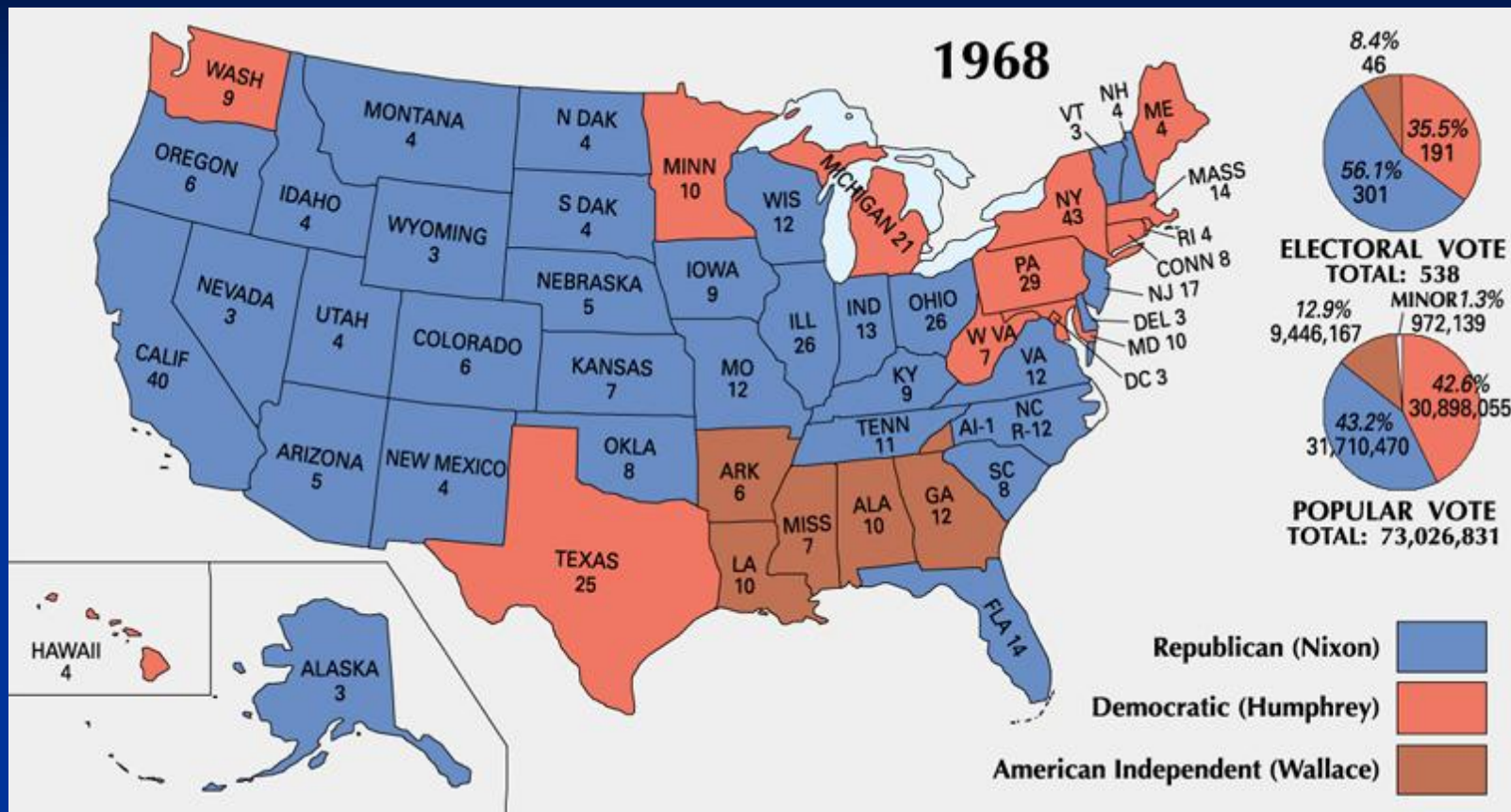


Nixon and Watergate

The Election of 1968



- Richard Nixon only narrowly won the 1968 election, but the combined total of popular votes for Nixon and Wallace indicated a shift to the right in American politics.

Daniel Ellsberg and the Pentagon Papers

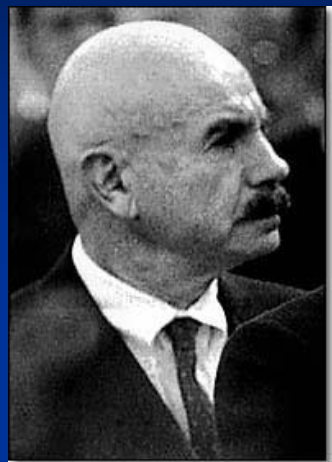


- Daniel Ellsberg was an employee of the Defense Department who leaked a classified assessment of the Vietnam War in 1971.
- When the *New York Times* and *Washington Post* began to publish the Pentagon Papers, the Nixon Administration sued them.
- The Supreme Court ruled that the papers could continue to publish the documents.

The White House Plumbers

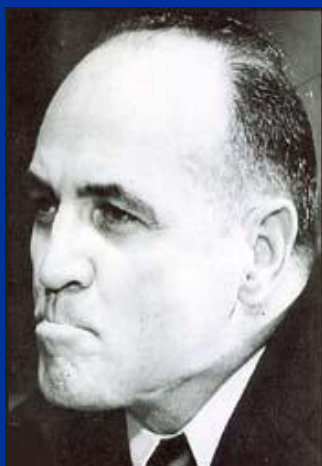


Howard Hunt



G. Gordon Liddy

- After the release of the Pentagon Papers, the White House created a unit to ensure internal security.
- This unit was called the Plumbers because they stopped leaks.
- In 1971 they burglarized the office of Daniel Ellsberg's psychiatrist, seeking material to discredit him.
- It was later revealed that Nixon's domestic advisor John Ehrlichman knew of and approved the plan.

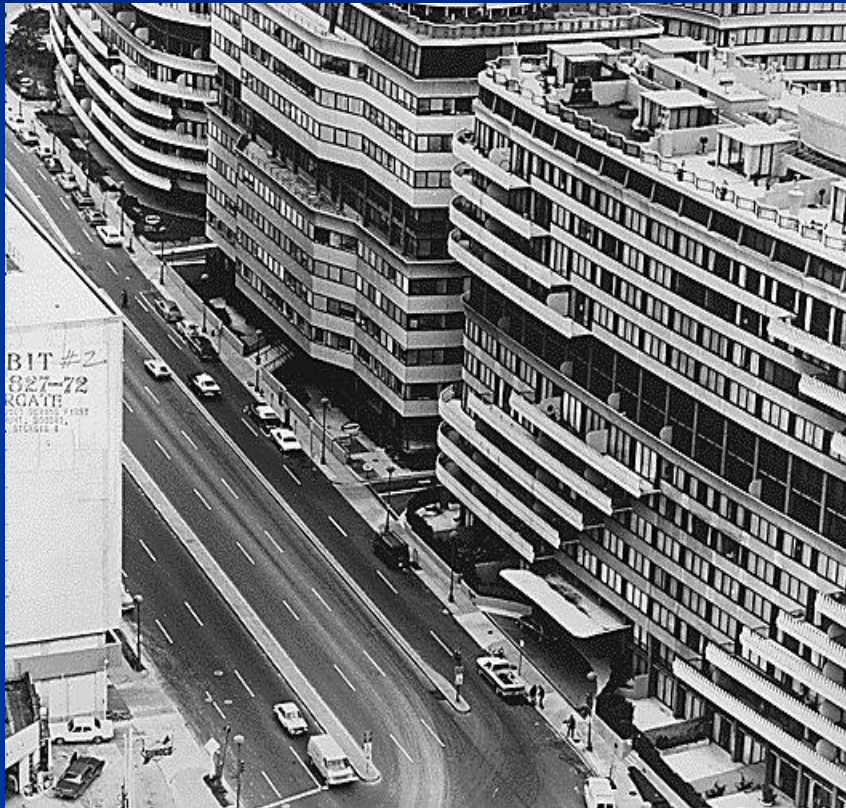


James McCord



Chuck Colson

The Watergate Break-in



- When initial polls showed Nixon in the Election of 1972, the Plumbers turned their activities to political espionage.
- On **17 June 1972**, 5 men were arrested while attempting to bug the headquarters of the Democratic Party inside the Watergate building in Washington D.C.
- One of the men arrested, James McCord, was the head of security for the Republican Party.
- The Nixon campaign denied any involvement.

Woodward, Bernstein and the *Washington Post*



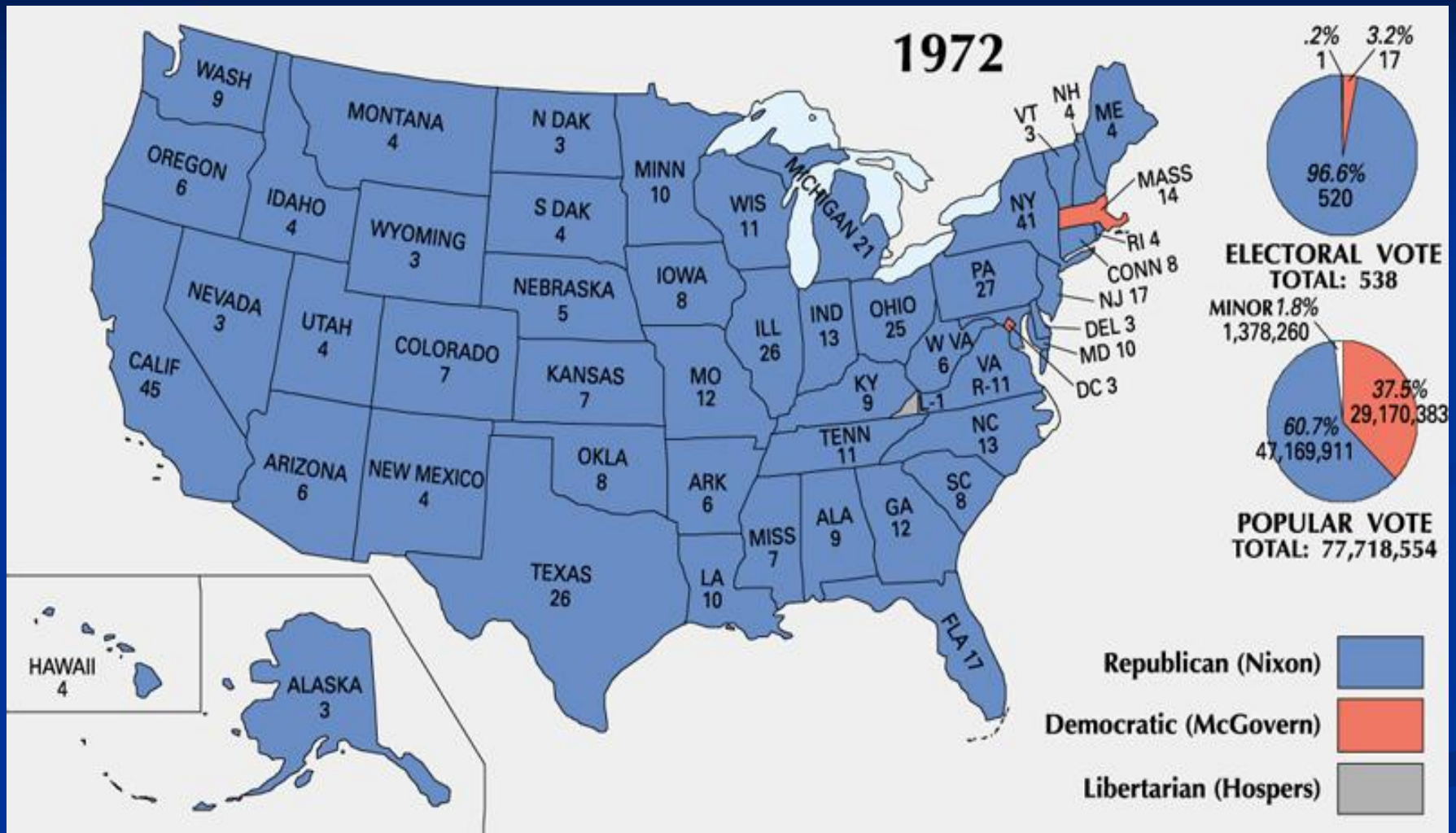
- Watergate came to public attention largely through the work of Bob Woodward and Carl Bernstein, investigative reporters from the *Washington Post*.
- Despite enormous political pressure, *Post* editor Ben Bradlee, publisher Katherine Graham, Woodward and Bernstein, aided by an enigmatic source nicknamed “Deepthroat” kept the story in the public consciousness until Nixon’s resignation.

Watergate Enters the Nixon Campaign



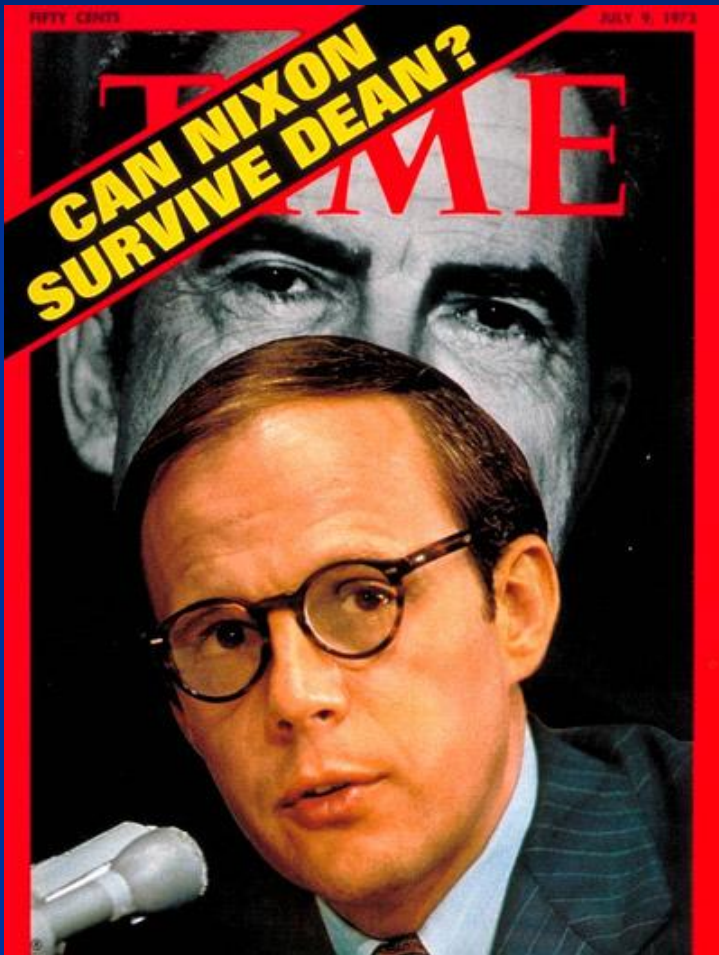
- The break-in was eventually tied to the Nixon reelection campaign through a \$25,000 check from a Republican donor that was laundered through a Mexican bank and deposited in the account of Watergate burglar Bernard Barker.
- Later it was discovered that Former Attorney General John Mitchell, head of Nixon's "Committee to Re-Elect the President," (CREEP) controlled a secret fund for political espionage.
- Mitchell would later go to prison for his role in the scandal

The Election of 1972



- Despite the growing stain of Watergate, which had not yet reached the President, Nixon won by the largest margin in history to that point.

Senate Investigation and the Oval Office Tapes



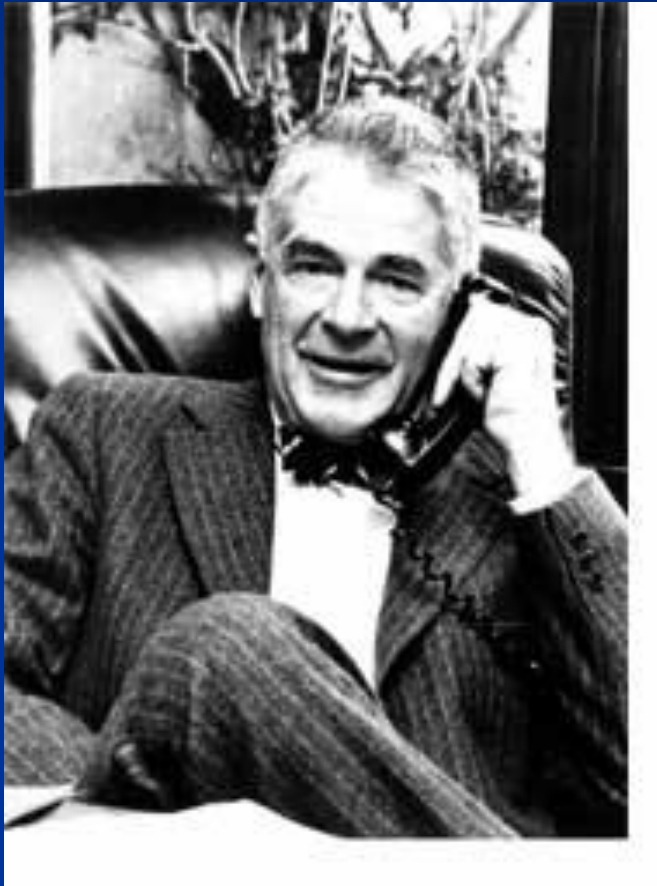
- The Senate began hearings into Watergate in **May 1973**.
- The hearings were televised in their entirety.
- They focused on when the President knew of the break-in.
- In **June 1973**, former White House legal counsel John Dean delivered devastating testimony that implicated Nixon from the earliest days of Watergate.

Senate Investigation and the Oval Office Tapes



- The Administration was eager to discredit Dean and his testimony so it began to release factual challenges to his account.
- When former White House aide Alexander Butterfield was asked about the source of the White House information, he revealed the existence of an automatic taping system that Nixon had secretly installed in the Oval Office.
- These tapes would become the focus of the investigation.

The Saturday Night Massacre



Archibald Cox

- The Administration reached an agreement with the Senate Watergate Committee that its Chairman would be allowed to listen to tapes and provide a transcript to the Committee and to Special Prosecutor Archibald Cox.
- The deal broke down when Cox refused to accept the transcripts in place of the tapes.
- Since the Special Prosecutor is an employee of the Justice Department, Nixon ordered Attorney General Elliot Richardson to fire Cox.

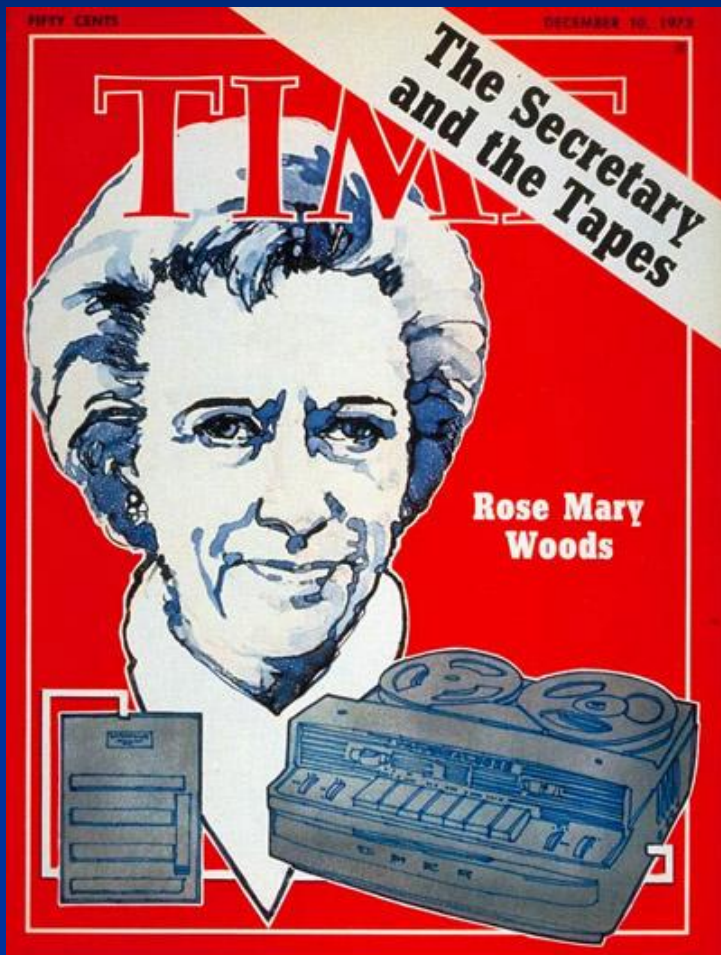
The Saturday Night Massacre



Robert Bork

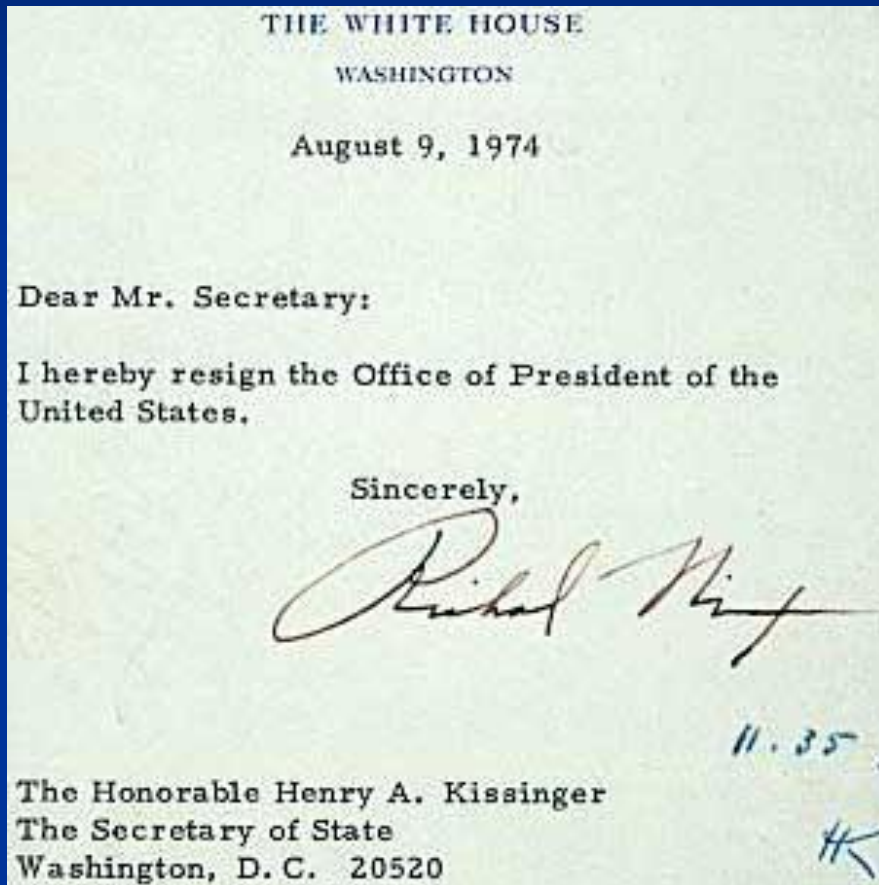
- When Richardson refused, he was fired.
- Nixon ordered Deputy Attorney General William D. Ruckelshaus to fire Cox .
- When he refused, he was fired.
- Nixon then ordered Solicitor General Robert Bork (who was later nominated for the Supreme Court by Reagan) to fire Cox and he complied.
- The *Washington Post* reported on the “Saturday Night Massacre.”

The Smoking Gun Tapes



- When the Supreme Court forced Nixon to surrender the tapes.
- Nixon was implicated from the earliest days of the cover-up:
 - authorizing the payment of hush money
 - attempting to use the CIA to interfere with the FBI investigation.
- One tape has an 18 ½ minute gap.
- Nixon's secretary Rosemary Woods demonstrated how she could have inadvertently erased the tape, but no one bought it.
- "The smoking gun tapes," were released in **August 1974**, just after the House Judiciary Committee approved Articles of Impeachment against Nixon.

Nixon Resigns



- On **27 July 1974**, the House Judiciary Committee approved Articles of Impeachment against Nixon.
- The House was to vote on the matter soon.
- Nixon conceded that impeachment in the House was likely, but he believed that the Senate vote to remove him would fail.
- On **5 August 1974**, when the “smoking gun tape” became public, a delegation from the Republican National Committee told Nixon that he would not survive the vote in the Senate.
- On **9 August 1974**, Richard Nixon became the first American president to resign.

Aftermath



Ford announcing the pardon

- More than 30 government officials went to prison for their role in Watergate.
- Richard Nixon was not one of them.
- In September 1974, President Gerald Ford gave Nixon a full pardon.
- The identity of Deepthroat was kept secret until W. Mark Felt unmasked himself in 2005.

Aftermath

- Federal Election Campaign Act 1974
 - Freedom of Information Act 1976
 - Government in the Sunshine Act 1976
 - Ethics in Government Act 1978
-
- Damaged public confidence in government
 - Damaged the reputation of the presidency
 - No one is above the law

