

Ch 32 Section 2 Watergate: Nixon's Downfall

President Nixon and His White House

An Imperial Presidency

- Depression, WW II, Cold War make executive most powerful branch
- Nixon expands presidential powers, ignores Congress

The President's Men

- Nixon has small, loyal group of advisers; like him, desire secrecy
 - **H. R. Haldeman**, White House chief of staff
 - **John Ehrlichman**, chief domestic adviser
 - **John Mitchell**, Nixon's former attorney general

The Drive Toward Reelection

A Bungled Burglary

- **Committee to Reelect the President** break into Democratic headquarters
- **Watergate** scandal is administration's attempt to cover up break-in
 - destroy documents, try to stop investigation, buy burglars' silence
- *Washington Post* reporters link administration to break-in
- White House denies allegations; little public interest in charges
- Nixon reelected by landslide over liberal Democrat George McGovern

The Cover-Up Unravels

The Senate Investigates Watergate

- Judge **John Sirica** presides burglars' trial, thinks did not act alone
- Burglar leader James McCord says lied under oath, advisers involved
- Nixon dismisses White House counsel John Dean; others resign
- Senator Samuel J. Ervin heads investigative committee

Startling Testimony

- Dean declares Nixon involved in cover-up
- Alexander Butterfield says Nixon tapes presidential conversations

The Saturday Night Massacre

- Special prosecutor Archibald Cox subpoenas tapes; Nixon refuses
- Nixon orders Cox fired, attorney general Elliot Richardson refuses
- **Saturday Night Massacre**: Richardson resigns; deputy refuses, fired
- Cox's replacement, Leon Jaworski, also calls for tapes
- Vice President Spiro Agnew resigns, revealed he accepted bribes
- Nixon nominates, Congress confirms Gerald R. Ford as vice-president

The Fall of a President

Nixon Releases the Tapes

- March 1974, grand jury indicts 7 presidential aides
 - charges: conspiracy, obstruction of justice, perjury
- Nixon tells TV audience he is releasing edited transcripts
- July, Supreme Court rules unanimously Nixon must surrender tapes

The President Resigns

- House Judiciary Committee approves 3 articles of **impeachment**
 - formal accusation of wrongdoing while in office
 - charges: obstruction of justice, abuse of power, contempt of Congress
- Nixon releases tapes; show knows of administration role, cover up
- Before full House votes on impeachment, Nixon resigns

The Effects of Watergate

- 25 members of administration convicted, serve prison terms