Presidential Removal and Resignation

The House of Representatives has the power of impeachment, that is, bringing charges against officials, and the Senate has the power to try and convict following House impeachment charges.

Impeachment Procedure

A president may face impeachment if he is charged with "treason, bribery, or other high crimes and misdemeanors."



Introduce Impeachment Articles

Any member of the House may introduce an article or articles of impeachment.





House Judiciary Committee Action

Impeachment charges are referred to the House Judiciary Committee, which then makes a recommendation to the full House as to whether impeachment is called for.





House Votes Yes

The House votes for impeachment. A simple majority vote is required.





House Votes No

Impeachment charges are dismissed.





Senate Impeachment Trial

The president faces a Senate impeachment trial with the chief justice of the Supreme Court presiding.





Removal from Office

If found guilty, the president can be removed from office and/or prevented from serving in other public offices.

He may then face charges in the public court system.

President Andrew Johnson's Impeachment Trial

Background

Impeachment charges against President Johnson were based on the questionable Tenure of Office Act of 1867. This Act denied the president the right to remove civil officials who were approved by Congress, including members of his own Cabinet, without the Senate's consent.

1868 - February 21 -- Johnson believes the Tenured Office Act to be unconstitutional. He orders the resignation of his Secretary of War, Edwin M. Stanton, who supports Radical Republican plans for Reconstruction program—plans that Johnson disagrees with. He appoints Lorenzo Thomas as Stanton's successor. Stanton refuses to leave and barricades himself in his office. February 28 The House votes to impeach Johnson 1868 for "high crimes and misdemeanors" based upon the Tenure of Office Act and Stanton's removal. 1868 -March-May The Senate conducts Johnson's impeachment trial. He is narrowly acquitted—by one vote. 1869 Johnson's term as president ends. The Tenure of Office Act is amended. 1875 Johnson successfully runs for a U.S. Senate seat from Tennessee. 1887 The Tenure of Office Act is repealed. 1926 The Act is finally declared unconstitutional.

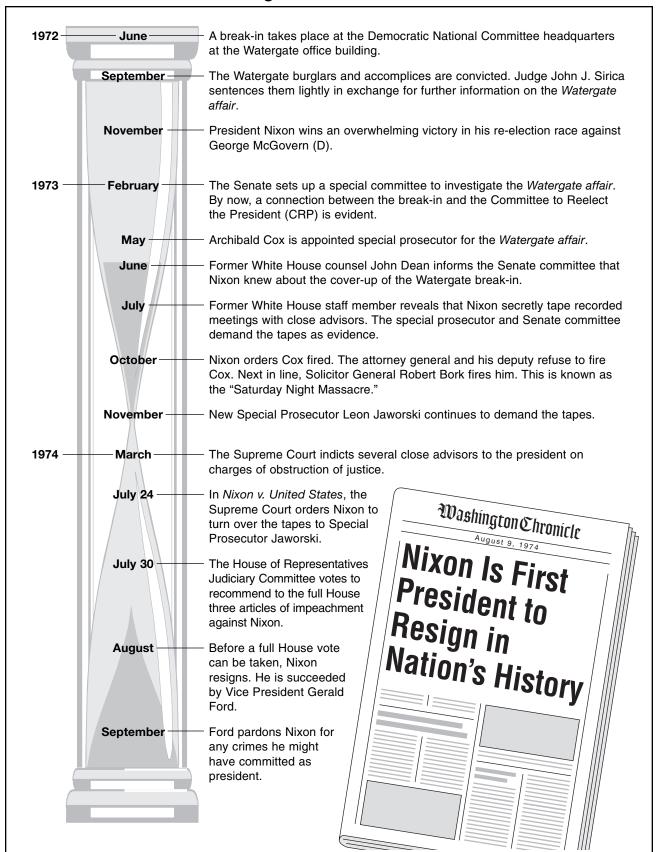




Three Facts about Johnson's Impeachment:

- 1. The legal counsel of the president had only ten days to prepare its defense.
- 2. One presiding senator and the Supreme Court chief justice coveted the job of the president.
- 3. Each day 1,000 tickets for the audience in the impeachment trial were issued.

President Richard Nixon's Resignation



President Bill Clinton's Impeachment Trial

