# The 1970s

## Domestic Policy under Nixon

Moderate republican, government actually slightly expands under Nixon. It expands by:

* Taking the U.S. dollar off the gold standard
* Temporary freezes on wages and prices
* New government organizations that can make laws
  + Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)
  + Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA)

Nixon ran for reelection in 1972 and won by a landslide against George McGovern. His landslide sets up the Watergate scandal.

## The Watergate Scandal

Nixon and his advisors were worried about leaks to the press, so they assembled a team called “the plumbers” (because they fix leaks). The plumbers plant bugs in the DNC headquarters in the Watergate hotel. Enemies of the Nixon administration want to raise a case and try to take down Nixon. They want to subpoena the tape recorder in the oval office, Nixon refuses. Congress gets the tape and wants to impeach for obstruction of justice. Nixon resigned, 1974. First and only president to resign. Gerald Ford becomes president. Ford was a moderate Republican, well liked. Only man to become president without being voted in.

Ford pardons Nixon in 1974, very controversial move.

## 1975: The Fall of Saigon

North Vietnamese forces attack again. Ford needs permission from Congress to intervene, Congress does not give permission. South Vietnam fell to the communists. Many South Vietnamese wanted to escape the communists, symbol of America’s failure in Vietnam.

## 1970s Decor

Lots of browns and orange, kind of space age. Brutalist Architecture was popular for school and government building. Lots of concrete, flat surfaces, and sharp angles.

Car styles also changed. Japanese cars got a lot of the market share. Ford Pinto was very popular.

## 1970s Films

Films reflected a jaded look at America and its place in the world. More naturalistic approach rather than technicolor. Cop dramas are also popular.

## Election of 1976

Ford runs against Jimmy Carter, Carter wins. Ford has an embarrassing moment in a presidential debate. Close race, Carter wins.

## Iran Hostage Crisis

Islamic fundamentalist movements in the middle east, want to topple pro-west leadership. The Shah of Iran was overthrown, American embassy was stormed and Americans were held hostage. Big deal. Operation Eagle Claw was going to rescue the hostages, but it was a failure before it got started. Embarrassing for the Carter administration. Hostages were returned on Jan 20, 1981, after 444 days of being in captivity. They were released minutes after Reagan took office.

## THe Warren and Burger Courts

Warren and Burger courts moved jurisprudence in a more permissible and liberal direction. Significant court cases in the 60s and 70s

* Engel v. Vitale - school prayer, what can the government do relating to religion in government. A public school had a mandatory prayer at the beginning of the day, the court ruled that since it’s a public school, it’s unconstitutional.
* Miranda v Arizona - Miranda was arrested without being told his constitutional rights. Movement for police being required to explain constitutional rights before making an arrest.
* New York Times Co v United States - Pentagon Papers case - government report on US actions in Vietnam, meant for government officials. Contained embarrassing details about the US government. Was leaked to the press. Government thought they should be able to stop information like this from being published. Court ruled in favor of the New York Times via prior restraint.
* Roe v Wade - abortion - “Roe” was an alias for a woman seeking an abortion in Texas. Supreme Court ruled that states had to allowed abortion.
* Regents of the University of California v Bakke - affirmative action - Bakke was a white vietnam vet, wanted to go to medical school after the war. Applied to UC Davis, who wouldn’t admit him despite good test scores. UC Davis has a certain number of slots set aside for minorities, Court didn’t like the “quota” system, ruled against it. Ruled in favor of Bakke. Court said that affirmative action could exist, but not as a quota system.