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# Special Investigations Involving US Presidents and Their Administrations Since 1973

Updated February 8, 2024 — Originally published April 3, 2018

HIGHLIGHTS || ○ ○ ○ ●

Barack Obama was the only president from Nixon through Trump whose administration did not face a special investigation.



## Overview

The A-Mark Foundation commissioned this report on special investigations involving presidents and those close to them following the May 17, 2017, appointment of Special Counsel Robert S. Mueller to investigate possible collusion among President Donald J. Trump, his presidential campaign, and Russia in the 2016 US presidential election.

This report effectively begins with the Watergate investigation of President Richard M. Nixon starting on May 19, 1973. There is some commentary for historical context on the appointment of the first special prosecutor investigation, initiated by President Ulysses S. Grant in 1875.<sup>[1]</sup> This report concludes with the investigation into Trump's 2016 presidential campaign, which ended on March 22, 2019.

Our criteria for the special investigations of the eight presidents included in this report versus the 24 investigations noted in the Appendix are as follows:

The eight special investigations beginning in 1973 were investigations by special prosecutors/independent counsels/special counsels that began with possible offense(s) tied directly or indirectly to the president in office, and the investigation of President Gerald R. Ford which began with the investigation of President Nixon. The other 24 special investigations in the Appendix either occurred prior to 1973, or seemingly involved personal behavior or actions not tied directly or indirectly to presidential administration business or action.

Excluded from this work entirely are investigations of presidents and their administrations that did not involve a special prosecutor, independent counsel, or special counsel, such as [impeachment proceedings](#), which occur in the House of Representatives.

On November 18, 2022, Attorney General Merrick Garland announced the appointment of Jack Smith as a special counsel to oversee two ongoing criminal investigations into actions undertaken during the Trump administration. Smith was assigned to investigate whether there was any unlawful interference with the transfer of power following the 2020 presidential election or the certification of the Electoral College vote on, or around, January 6, 2021;<sup>[2]</sup> as well as “the possible mishandling of classified documents and presidential records at Trump’s Mar-a-Lago estate.”<sup>[3]</sup>

The investigations are still in progress as of February 8, 2024, and may be added to this report once concluded.

On January 12, 2023, Garland also appointed a special counsel to investigate documents with classified markings found by personal attorneys for President Joe Biden at the President’s home and private office. Former Justice Department official Robert K. Hur was tasked with examining the “possible unauthorized removal and retention of classified documents or other records.”<sup>[4]</sup> On February 5, 2024, Hur released his final report, concluding that “no criminal charges are warranted in this matter.”<sup>[5]</sup>

## Summary: US Presidential Special Prosecutor / Independent Counsel / Special Counsel Investigations 1973 to 2019

The first special investigation of a US president occurred in 1875 in relation to the Whiskey Ring Scandal, a widespread scheme to defraud the government of tax revenue and raise campaign funds for President Ulysses S. Grant and other political candidates.<sup>[6]</sup> President Grant appointed John B. Henderson as special prosecutor to investigate the scandal, then fired him and appointed James Broadhead in his place. Grant was not the subject of investigation, but his private secretary, Orville E. Babcock, was indicted in the conspiracy. Grant testified to his innocence and Babcock was acquitted.<sup>[7]</sup> The cost of investigation was \$65,684.85, which was an estimated \$1,779,498.99 in 2023 dollars.<sup>[8]</sup><sup>[9]</sup>

Calculated online at in2013dollars.com on January 11, 2023.

While other special investigations have occurred in US history (see Appendix A), this report focuses on eight special investigations with alleged offenses tied directly or indirectly to the president in office, starting with Watergate in 1973.

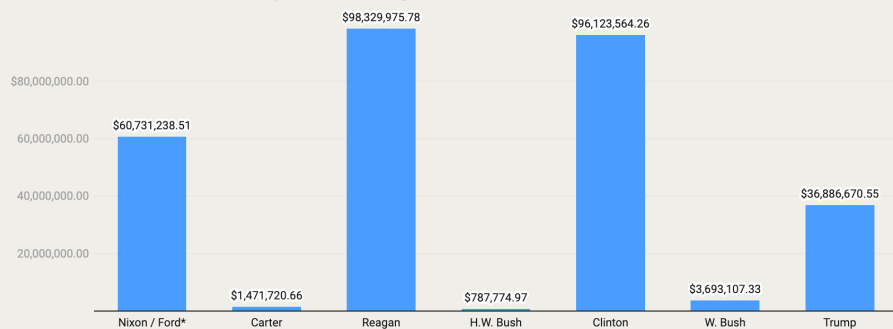
There have been nine completed presidential administrations since the beginning of Watergate to the date of this report, from Nixon to Trump. The only presidential administration that was not part of an investigation by a special prosecutor/independent counsel/special counsel was that of President Barack Obama.<sup>[10]</sup> The investigation of Gerald Ford was part of the Watergate investigation started during the Nixon administration.

A. US President in Office During Investigation	B. US President / Admin Involved in Investigation	C. Subject of Special Prosecutor / Independent Counsel / Special Counsel Investigations	D. Number of Days of Investigation, Dates Started and Ended	E. Total Cost of Investigation [Daily cost]
1. Nixon	Nixon	<b>Watergate:</b> Investigation initiated after agents of the Committee to Re-Elect the President were convicted of breaking into the DNC headquarters in the Watergate building.	The Nixon/Ford investigations ran from May 19, 1973 to June 20, 1977, for a total of <b>1,464 days</b> . <sup>a b</sup>	The total cost of the Nixon/Ford investigations in January 2023 dollars was <b>\$60,731,238.51</b> . <sup>c</sup>  [\$41,483.09/day]
2. Ford	Ford	Watergate special prosecutor also investigated alleged misuse of political contributions by President Gerald R. Ford.	Linked to Watergate investigation in #1	Linked to Watergate investigation in #1
3. Carter	Carter	<b>Peanut Warehouse:</b> An inquiry was initiated to investigate loans from the National Bank of Georgia to the Carter family business that may have been used to fund Carter's 1976 campaign.	The Carter investigation ran from March 23, 1979 to October 16, 1979, for a total of <b>208 days</b> . <sup>d</sup>	The total cost of the Carter investigation in January 2023 dollars was <b>\$1,471,720.66</b> . <sup>e</sup>  [\$7,075.58/day]
4. Reagan / H.W. Bush	Reagan	<b>Iran-Contra Affair:</b> Inquiry initiated when it was exposed that the US government was assisting Nicaraguan contra rebels, and selling arms to Iran.	The Reagan investigation ran from December 19, 1986, to August 4, 1993, for a total of <b>2,420 days</b> . <sup>f g</sup>	The total cost of the Reagan investigation in January 2023 dollars was <b>\$98,329,975.78</b> . <sup>h</sup>  [\$40,632.22/day]
5. H.W. Bush	H.W. Bush	<b>BNL Investigation:</b> An inquiry was initiated into "the Bush Administration's handling of a billion-dollar bank-fraud case involving illegal loans to Iraq." <sup>i j</sup>	The H.W. Bush investigation ran from October 16, 1992 to December 8, 1992, for a total of <b>54 days</b> . <sup>k</sup>	The total cost of the H.W. Bush investigation in January 2023 dollars was <b>\$787,774.97</b> . <sup>l</sup>  [\$14,588.43/day]
6. Clinton / W. Bush	Clinton	<b>Whitewater:</b> The initial investigation was to look into the Clintons' Arkansas land-deal investments while Bill Clinton was governor.	The Clinton investigations ran from January 20, 1994 to March 23, 2004, for a total of <b>3,716 days</b> . <sup>m n</sup>	The total cost of the Clinton investigations in January 2023 dollars was <b>\$96,123,564.26</b> . <sup>o</sup>  [\$25,867.48/day]
7. W. Bush	W. Bush	<b>Plamegate:</b> An inquiry was initiated into the leak of CIA agent Valerie Plame's identity after she was identified by name in a syndicated column. High-level George W. Bush admin officials were investigated, the vice president's chief of staff was prosecuted, then pardoned by Bush.	The W. Bush investigation ran from December 30, 2003 to December 11, 2007, for a total of <b>1,443 days</b> . <sup>p q</sup>	The total cost of the W. Bush investigation in January 2023 dollars was <b>\$3,693,107.33</b> . <sup>r</sup>  [\$2,559.33/day]
8. Trump	Trump	An inquiry was initiated to investigate alleged ties between President Trump's campaign and Russian officials in the 2016 presidential election.	The Trump investigation ran from May 17, 2017 to March 22, 2019 (when Robert S. Mueller submitted his report), for a total of <b>675 days</b> . <sup>s t</sup>	The total cost of the Trump investigation in January 2023 dollars was <b>\$36,886,670.55</b> . <sup>u</sup>  This cost covers May 17, 2017, to May 31, 2019, a total of <b>745 days</b> of DOJ expenditure reporting.  [\$54,646.92/day for the 675-day investigation]

**Chart Notes:** See the following footnotes for notes a-u. a,<sup>[11]</sup> b,<sup>[12]</sup> c,<sup>[13]</sup> d,<sup>[14]</sup> e,<sup>[15]</sup> f,<sup>[16]</sup> g,<sup>[17]</sup> h,<sup>[18]</sup> i,<sup>[19]</sup> j,<sup>[20]</sup> k,<sup>[21]</sup> l,<sup>[22]</sup> m,<sup>[23]</sup> n,<sup>[24]</sup> o,<sup>[25]</sup> p,<sup>[26]</sup> q,<sup>[27]</sup> r,<sup>[28]</sup> s,<sup>[29]</sup> t,<sup>[30]</sup> u.<sup>[31]</sup>

## Charts of Summary Metrics

**Chart I: Total Cost of Each Special Investigation in 2023 Dollars**



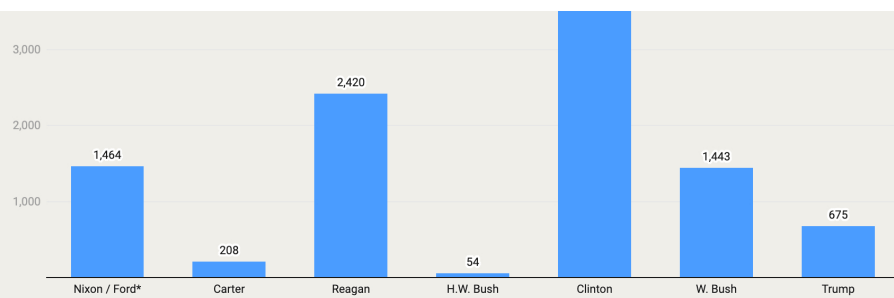
\* The Watergate investigation continued into the administration of Gerald R. Ford Jr., who was also investigated during the investigation of Nixon, after President Richard M. Nixon resigned. The amount shown for Nixon/Ford is the combined total found for the entire Watergate investigation across the two administrations.

Chart: A-Mark Foundation • [Get the data](#) • [Embed](#) • [Download image](#) • Created with [Datawrapper](#)

**Chart II: Total Number of Days of Each Special Investigation**

3,716

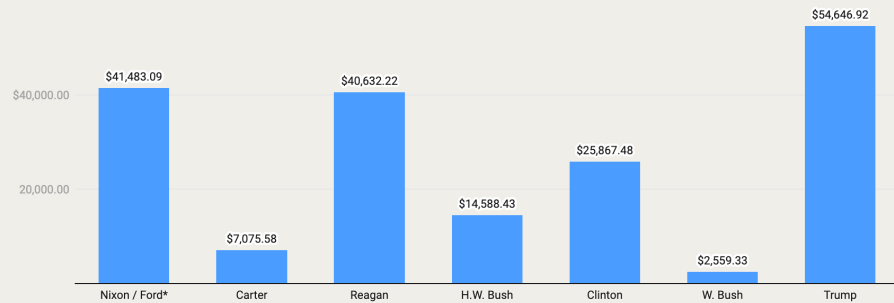




\* The Watergate investigation continued into the administration of Gerald R. Ford Jr., who was also investigated during the investigation of Nixon, after President Richard M. Nixon resigned. The days of investigation shown for Nixon/Ford are the combined total found for the entire Watergate investigation across the two administrations.

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**Chart III: Cost Per Day of Each Special Investigation in 2023 Dollars**



\* The Watergate investigation continued into the administration of Gerald R. Ford Jr., who was also investigated during the investigation of Nixon, after President Richard M. Nixon resigned. The amount shown per day of investigation for Nixon/Ford is the combined total found for the entire Watergate investigation across the two administrations.

Chart: A-Mark Foundation • [Get the data](#) • [Embed](#) • [Download image](#) • Created with [Datawrapper](#)

## A Summary of the Differences Among the Titles Special Prosecutor / Independent Counsel / Special Counsel

The titles for those tasked with conducting special investigations involving presidents and their administrations are sometimes used interchangeably in the media and other resources, but there is a difference among the official titles "Special Prosecutor," "Independent Counsel," and "Special Counsel."

This is a brief summary of the history behind the titles for those leading investigations and how each is appointed, and does not delve into the details of the many steps that take place before a special investigation is initiated, such as an internal Department of Justice or FBI investigation or a conclusion by a congressional committee that recommends a more thorough investigation.

Prior to reform in 1978, presidents themselves were among the officials able to appoint and fire special investigators, as in the case of President Ulysses S. Grant, who appointed two and fired one during the Whiskey Ring scandal.<sup>[32]</sup> Those investigators held the title of "Special Prosecutor."

In Watergate, Attorney General-designate Elliot L. Richardson<sup>[33]</sup> appointed the special prosecutor. When President Richard M. Nixon initiated the firing of the special prosecutor through the attorney general's office, Richardson resigned.<sup>[34]</sup>

After Watergate, the method for choosing a special prosecutor was changed so that the president could not fire the person working on the investigation. The *Ethics in Government Act of 1978*, initially meant to last for five years but extended until 1999, was enacted. Under the rules of this statute, a three-judge panel assigned to the US Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia<sup>[35]</sup> was now responsible for appointing a special prosecutor who would be independent from reprisal by the White House. Although the attorney general could not choose the investigator, they could still apply for the appointment of a special prosecutor under the statute.<sup>[36]</sup>

The title of special prosecutor was retained until the subcommittee on Oversight of Government Management "proposed that the name 'special prosecutor' be changed to 'independent counsel' to remove the pejorative connotation of the investigation."<sup>[37]</sup> In the *Ethics in Government Act Amendments of 1982*, "Special Prosecutor" was officially changed to "Independent Counsel."<sup>[38]</sup>

Even though an independent counsel could now be appointed independent from the executive branch, attorneys general on at least two occasions directly appointed investigators who served as "Special Counsel," which was still a viable choice under the statute and did not require approval by the three-judge panel.

An independent counsel could only be terminated by the attorney general, other than "impeachment and conviction," for "good cause, physical or mental disability ... or any other condition that substantially impairs the performance of such independent counsel's duties."<sup>[39]</sup>

The 1978 statute was amended, allowed to expire, and reauthorized over two decades until it finally expired in 1999. At that point, the Department of Justice established authority for the Attorney General to appoint a special counsel for special investigations. If the Attorney General is recused, the Acting Attorney General may make the appointment.<sup>[40]</sup> Under the Department of Justice regulations, a special counsel may only be removed "for misconduct, dereliction of duty, incapacity, conflict of interest, or for other good cause, including violation of Departmental policies."<sup>[41]</sup>

As of the date of this report, the current title for the investigator appointed for special investigations involving the White House directly or indirectly, like Robert Mueller's investigation into the Trump campaign/Russia collusion, is "Special Counsel." Constitutional scholars have disagreed on the question of whether a president can fire the special counsel. Some believe that a president could ask the Attorney General (or whoever appointed the Special Counsel) to fire the appointed investigator. If that person refused, the president could continue firing subordinates until he or she found someone willing to comply.<sup>[42]</sup>

## Special Prosecutor / Independent Counsel / Special Counsel Investigations Involving US

# Presidents and their Administrations

## Richard M. Nixon: Watergate

A. Start/End [# of Days]	B. Total Cost of Investigation	C. Name of Investigator / Title	D. Appointed By
5/19/1973 <sup>a</sup> / 10/20/1973 <sup>b</sup> [155]	\$6,795,000 <sup>c</sup>	<b>Archibald Cox</b> / First Special Prosecutor of the Watergate Special Prosecution Force [WSPF]	Attorney General-designate <b>Elliot L. Richardson</b>
11/5/1973 <sup>d</sup> / 10/25/1974 <sup>e</sup> [355]	July 1, 1974, to June 30, 1976 \$4,848,000 <sup>f</sup>	<b>Leon Jaworski</b> / Second Special Prosecutor after Cox fired by Nixon	Acting Attorney General <b>Robert H. Bork</b> <sup>g</sup>
10/26/1974 <sup>h</sup> / 10/1/1975 <sup>i</sup> [341]	\$11,643,000 for both Nixon and Ford admin investigations	<b>Henry S. Ruth Jr.</b> / Third Special Prosecutor after Jaworski	Attorney General <b>William B. Saxbe</b>
10/17/1975 <sup>k</sup> / 6/20/1977 <sup>l</sup> [613]	The total cost of the Nixon investigations in January 2023 dollars was \$60,731,238.51. <sup>n</sup>	<b>Charles F. C. Ruff</b> / Fourth and Final Special Prosecutor of the WSPF	Sworn in by Attorney General <b>Edward H. Levi</b> <sup>o</sup>
The Nixon investigations ran from May 19, 1973, to June 20, 1977, for a total of <b>1,464 days</b> . <sup>m</sup>			

**Chart Notes:** See the following footnotes for notes a-o. a,<sup>[43]</sup> b,<sup>[44]</sup> c,<sup>[45]</sup> d,<sup>[46]</sup> e,<sup>[47]</sup> f,<sup>[48]</sup> g,<sup>[49]</sup> h,<sup>[50]</sup> i,<sup>[51]</sup> j,<sup>[52]</sup> k,<sup>[53]</sup> l,<sup>[54]</sup> m,<sup>[55]</sup> n,<sup>[56]</sup> o.<sup>[57]</sup>

### 1. Summary of the Investigation

After agents of the Committee to Re-Elect the President (CRP) broke into the Democratic National Committee headquarters in the Watergate building on June 17, 1972, and were convicted of "conspiracy, burglary, and wiretapping charges,"<sup>[58]</sup> allegations that high-level Nixon Administration officials might be connected eventually led to the appointment of Archibald Cox as special prosecutor on May 19, 1973, and the establishment of the Watergate Special Prosecution Force on May 25, 1973, the same day Archibald Cox was sworn in,<sup>[59]</sup> to June 20, 1977,<sup>[60]</sup> the firing of the first of four special prosecutors referred to as the "Saturday Night Massacre,"<sup>[61]</sup> and the subsequent resignation of President Richard M. Nixon.

### 2. Special Prosecutor/Independent Counsel/Special Counsel

- Archibald Cox – First Special Prosecutor of the Watergate Special Prosecution Force
- Leon Jaworski – Second Special Prosecutor after Cox fired by Nixon
- Henry S. Ruth Jr. – Third Special Prosecutor after Jaworski
- Charles F. C. Ruff – Fourth and final Special Prosecutor of the Watergate Special Prosecution Force

### 3. Dates of Investigation

First:

- START (Watergate investigation) – On May 19, 1973, Attorney General-designate<sup>[62]</sup> Elliot L. Richardson appointed Archibald Cox Watergate special prosecutor.<sup>[63]</sup> On May 25, 1973,<sup>[64]</sup> Richardson established Office of Watergate Special Prosecution Force and set out "Duties and Responsibilities of the Special Prosecutor."<sup>[65]</sup> Those duties included "full authority" in several matters including investigation of "allegations involving the President."
- END (Cox investigation) – The Cox investigation ended on October 20, 1973.<sup>[66]</sup> Prior to the firing, on July 23, 1973, Cox, acting on behalf of the June 1972 grand jury, issued a subpoena to Nixon<sup>[67]</sup> for tapes and documents.<sup>[68]</sup> On October 19, 1973, Nixon ordered that Cox "seek no further litigation" but on October 20, Cox refused the president's request and was fired by Acting Attorney General Robert Bork, referred to as the "Saturday Night Massacre."<sup>[69]</sup> The Watergate Special Prosecution Force was taken over by the Department of Justice Criminal Division.<sup>[70]</sup> On November 1, 1973, Bork announced the second special prosecutor, and re-established the Watergate Special Prosecution Force on November 2, 1973.<sup>[71]</sup>

Second:

- START (Jaworski investigation) – On November 5, 1973,<sup>[72]</sup> Leon Jaworski resumed the investigation.<sup>[73]</sup> On August 8, 1974, Nixon addressed the nation with intent to resign.<sup>[74]</sup> On August 9, 1974, Nixon resigned.<sup>[75]</sup>
- END (Jaworski investigation) – October 25, 1974,<sup>[76]</sup> was Jaworski's effective date of his resignation that he announced on October 12, 1974.<sup>[77]</sup> A third special prosecutor took over.

Third:

- START (Ruth investigation) – On October 26, 1974,<sup>[78]</sup> Henry S. Ruth Jr., succeeded Jaworski.<sup>[79]</sup>
- END (Ruth investigation) – On October 1, 1975,<sup>[80]</sup> Ruth leaves and Charles F. C. Ruff was named fourth special prosecutor.<sup>[81]</sup>

Fourth:

- START (Ruff investigation) – On October 17, 1975, Ruff was sworn in as part-time director.<sup>[82]</sup> During his time as special prosecutor, Ruff conducted an investigation into alleged misuse of political contributions by President Ford, and on October 14, 1976, Ruff concluded that there was no evidence of wrongdoing.<sup>[83]</sup>
- END of WATERGATE TASK FORCE – On June 20, 1977, Ruff finished his service as the last special prosecutor of the Watergate Special Prosecution Force and issued a final report dated June 1977.<sup>[84]</sup>

### 4. Conclusion

- September 8, 1974 - President Gerald Ford issued Nixon a full pardon.<sup>[85]</sup>
- October 26, 1978 - The Watergate investigation prompted a reform in appointments of special prosecutors in independent counsel investigations with the passage of the *Ethics in Government Act of 1978*.<sup>[86]</sup> "This ultimately became known as United States Office of the Independent Counsel, and was used for major investigations like Iran-Contra during the Reagan years and Whitewater during the Clinton years, which ultimately led to Clinton's impeachment."<sup>[87]</sup> "Since then, 21 special investigations have been launched, with seven leading to convictions and five still active [1999]. The total cost passed \$166 million through the last fiscal year."<sup>[88]</sup>
- The reform act expired in 1999. "Congress in 1978 passed a law in the wake of Watergate that allowed the appointment of

The bill must expire in 1999. Congress later passed a law in the name of Watergate that allowed the appointment of 'independent counsel' by a three-judge panel of a Washington, D.C. appeals court at the request of the attorney general, but the law had five-year sunset provisions and was ultimately allowed to expire in 1999, according to the Congressional Research Service.<sup>[89]</sup>

## 5. Cost of Investigation

- The Watergate investigation cost \$6.5 million or more, according to the Washington Post article titled "Watergate Cost Tops \$6 Million," May 21, 1974.<sup>[90]</sup>
- "The White House office does not maintain accounting or other records which would permit us to obtain precise information on the costs incurred on Watergate," GAO said. To make its estimate, GAO said, it examined White House payroll records and interviewed staff members to determine the percentage of their time devoted to Watergate."
- The "best estimates of the Watergate cost," according to a June 7, 1974, White House memo from the Office of Communication, with data broken down into the following categories (approximately \$400,000 is noted for White House Legal Staff):<sup>[91]</sup>

	A. Staff Members	B. Lawyers	C. Funds
Senate Watergate Committee	42 (the Earvin committee had a staff of 92 at its peak)	17	\$2 million
House Judiciary Committee	100	43	\$117 million
Special Prosecutor's Office	80	38	\$2.8 million
Grand Juries	N/A	N/A	\$225,000
GSA Audit of Nixon Homes	N/A	N/A	\$100,000
GAO Audit of Nixon Homes	N/A	N/A	\$100,000
White House Legal Staff (listed separately)	21	13	\$400,000
<b>Total</b>			<b>\$6,795,000 million</b>

- From the "Watergate Special Prosecution Force Report" Charter Documents in Appendix J: "Budget. The Special Prosecutor will be provided with such funds and facilities to carry out his responsibilities as he may reasonably require. He shall have the right to submit budget requests for funds, positions, and other assistance, and such requests shall receive the highest priority."<sup>[92]</sup>

## Gerald R. Ford Jr.: Continuation of Watergate

The Watergate investigation continued into the administration of Gerald R. Ford Jr. after Nixon resigned. The following special prosecutors overlapped into the Ford administration from the Nixon administration.

A. Start/End [# of Days]	B. Total Cost of Investigation	C. Name of Investigator / Title	D. Appointed By
11/5/1973 <sup>a</sup> / 10/25/1974 <sup>b</sup> [355]		<b>Leon Jaworski</b> / Second Special Prosecutor after Cox fired by Nixon	Acting Attorney General <b>Robert H. Bork</b> <sup>c</sup>
10/26/1974 <sup>d</sup> / 10/1/1975 <sup>e</sup> [341]		<b>Henry S. Ruth Jr.</b> / Third Special Prosecutor after Jaworski	Attorney General <b>William B. Saxbe</b> <sup>f</sup>
10/17/1975 <sup>g</sup> / 6/20/1977 <sup>h</sup> [613]	Linked to Watergate investigation in #1	<b>Charles F. C. Ruff</b> / Fourth and Final Special Prosecutor of the WSPF	Sworn in by Attorney General <b>Edward H. Levi</b> <sup>i</sup>
Linked to Watergate investigation in #1			

**Chart Notes:** See the following footnotes for notes a-i. a,<sup>[93]</sup> b,<sup>[94]</sup> c,<sup>[95]</sup> d,<sup>[96]</sup> e,<sup>[97]</sup> f,<sup>[98]</sup> g,<sup>[99]</sup> h,<sup>[100]</sup> i,<sup>[101]</sup>

### 1. Summary of the investigation:

Although Watergate started under the Nixon administration and was initiated against President Nixon, the investigation extended into the Ford administration. On October 17, 1975, Charles F.C. Ruff was sworn in as part-time director, and he was the last of four special prosecutors on the Watergate investigation.<sup>[102]</sup> During his time as special prosecutor, Ruff conducted an investigation into alleged misuse of political contributions by Ford, and on October 14, 1976, Ruff concluded that there was no evidence of wrongdoing.<sup>[103]</sup>

### 2. Cost of Investigation

- During the Ford administration, the following amount was found to be appropriated for the Watergate investigation:<sup>[104]</sup>

Watergate Appropriations During Ford Administration	
July 1, 1974 to June 1975 appropriations <sup>a</sup>	\$2,804,000
July 1, 1975 - June 30, 1976 appropriations <sup>b</sup>	\$2,044,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$4,848,000</b>

**Chart Notes:** See the following footnotes for notes a and b. a,<sup>[105]</sup> b,<sup>[106]</sup>

## James E. Carter: Peanut Warehouse

A. Start/End [# of Days]	B. Total Cost of Investigation	C. Name of Investigator / Title	D. Appointed By
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3/23/1979 <sup>a</sup> / 10/16/1979 <sup>b</sup>	\$360,000 <sup>d</sup>	Paul J. Curran / Special Counsel	Attorney General Griffin Bell appointed a special counsel and was rebuked for not seeking an independent counsel for the investigation
The Carter investigation ran from March 23, 1979, to October 16, 1979, for a total of <b>208 days</b> . <sup>c</sup>	The total cost of the Carter investigation in January 2023 dollars was <b>\$1,471,720.66</b> . <sup>e</sup>		

**Chart Notes:** See the following footnotes for notes a-e. a,<sup>[107]</sup> b,<sup>[108]</sup> c,<sup>[109]</sup> d,<sup>[110]</sup> e,<sup>[111]</sup>

**1. Summary of the investigation:**

The Carter Peanut Warehouse, partially owned by President James E. Carter, was investigated and exonerated in 1979 of allegations that National Bank of Georgia loans made to the Carter family business<sup>[112]</sup> were "questionable" and some may have been used to fund the 1976 Carter presidential campaign.<sup>[113]</sup> Attorney General Griffin Bell's decision to appoint a "Special Counsel" instead of an independent "Special Prosecutor"<sup>[114]</sup> under the *Ethics in Government Act of 1978*<sup>[115]</sup> (passed in response to President Nixon's firing of the first Watergate special prosecutor), was questioned by members of Congress. Sen. Robert C. Byrd said the public, the press and Congress "must be certain that Mr. Curran is given the requisite independence,"<sup>[116]</sup> and Sen. Charles H. Percy said it was "troublesome that he could be fired by the Attorney General without cause and with no legal recourse."<sup>[117]</sup> In April, Curran was given full "prosecuting authority"<sup>[118]</sup> similar to the Watergate special prosecutors.

**2. Special Prosecutor/Independent Counsel/Special Counsel**

- Paul J. Curran - Special Counsel

**3. Dates of Investigation**

- START – March 23, 1979,<sup>[119]</sup> is the start date Curran cited in his report on the investigation, while a United States Department of Justice news release stated that Bell announced the appointment on March 20, 1979.<sup>[120]</sup>
- END – On October 16, 1979,<sup>[121]</sup> Curran presented his report to President of the Senate Walter F. Mondale.<sup>[122]</sup>

**4. Conclusion**

- From the "White House Statement on the Findings of a Special Investigation" dated October 16, 1979: "We said from the very beginning of the investigation that no moneys were diverted ... an[d] the report shows our statements were absolutely correct. We also said from the beginning that we would cooperate fully with the investigation, and the report shows we did exactly that."<sup>[123]</sup>
- Curran, in his October 16, 1979, report, noted that the president could have faced penalty for false statements made during his deposition: "On September 5, 1979 in the White House, I and my staff conducted a four hour deposition under oath of President Jimmy Carter." [Footnote: Jimmy Carter was subject to prosecution under Title 18, United States Code, Section 1001 and 1623 for any false statements made during the course of his deposition.]<sup>[124]</sup>

**5. Cost of Investigation**

- \$162,809 is the cost of the investigation reported by "FY 2008 Performance Budget Independent Counsel Congressional Justification," from justice.gov, accessed on March 21, 2018.<sup>[125]</sup>
- This report uses the cost reported in a washingtonpost.com article dated October 17, 1979: "Curran estimated that the investigation cost the government about \$360,000."<sup>[126]</sup>

**Ronald W. Reagan: Iran-Contra**

A. Start/End [# of Days]	B. Total Cost of Investigation	C. Name of Investigator / Title	D. Appointed By
12/19/1986 <sup>a</sup> / 8/4/1993 <sup>b</sup>  The Reagan investigation ran from December 19, 1986, to August 4, 1993, for a total of <b>2,420 days</b> . <sup>c</sup>	\$47,873,400 <sup>d</sup>  The total cost of the Reagan investigation in January 2023 dollars was <b>\$98,329,975.78</b> . <sup>e</sup>	Lawrence Walsh / Independent Counsel / Special Prosecutor	A three-judge panel of the US Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia for independent counsels

**Chart Notes:** See the following footnotes for notes a-e. a,<sup>[127]</sup> b,<sup>[128]</sup> c,<sup>[129]</sup> d,<sup>[130]</sup> e,<sup>[131]</sup>

**1. Summary of the investigation:**

According to the National Archives, "Records of Lawrence Walsh":

"In October and November 1986, two secret US Government operations were publicly exposed, potentially implicating Reagan administration officials in illegal activities: the provision of assistance to the military activities of Nicaraguan contra rebels during an October 1984 to October 1986 prohibition on such aid, and the sale of US arms to Iran in contravention of stated US policy and in possible violation of arms-export controls. In late November 1986, Reagan administration officials announced that some of the proceeds from the sale of US arms to Iran had been diverted to the contras."<sup>[132]</sup>

**2. Special Prosecutor/Independent Counsel/Special Counsel**

- Lawrence Walsh - Independent Counsel / Special Prosecutor

**3. Dates of Investigation**

- START – December 19, 1986,<sup>[133]</sup> "The 'Front Door' investigation, started by Federal Bureau of Investigation in November [26] of 1986, was transferred when Lawrence Walsh was appointed Independent Counsel on December 19, 1986."<sup>[134]</sup>
- END – On August 4, 1993,<sup>[135]</sup> Lawrence Walsh submitted his final report to the House of Representatives.<sup>[136]</sup> In the final report<sup>[137]</sup> Walsh wrote: "The criminal investigation of [then Vice President George H.W.] Bush was regrettably incomplete." President H.W. Bush had pardoned many defendants in the Iran-Contra investigation. In Chapter 27 of the final report, Walsh said of Reagan: "It was concluded that President Reagan's conduct fell well short of criminality which could be successfully prosecuted. Fundamentally, it could not be proved beyond a reasonable doubt that President Reagan knew of the underlying facts of Iran/contra that were criminal or that he made criminal misrepresentations regarding them."

#### 4. Conclusion

- In 1987, a requirement was made for tracking expenditures: "In 1987, Public Law 100-202 established a permanent, indefinite appropriation within Justice to fund expenditures by independent counsels. Independent counsels are required to report their expenditures from the appropriation for each 6-month period in which they have operations."<sup>[138]</sup>
- March 16, 1988 – Indictments: "On March 16, 1988, the grand jury handed down a 23 count indictment against [John] Poindexter, [Oliver] North, [Albert] Hakim, and Richard Secord."<sup>[139]</sup>
- December 24, 1992 – Bush pardons: "On December 24, 1992, President George H.W. Bush granted pardons to six defendants in the Iran-Contra Affairs. The defendants were Elliott Abrams, a former assistant secretary of state for Central America; former National Security Adviser Robert McFarlane; former CIA officials Duane Clarridge, Alan Fiers, and Clair George; and former Secretary of Defense Caspar Weinberger."<sup>[140]</sup>

#### 5. Cost of Investigation

- \$47,873,400 was the reported cost of the investigation according to a CRS Report for Congress titled "Independent Counsels Appointed Under the Ethics in Government Act of 1978, Costs and Results of Investigations."<sup>[141]</sup>

### George H.W. Bush: BNL Scandal/Iraqgate

A. Start/End [# of Days]	B. Total Cost of Investigation	C. Name of Investigator / Title	D. Appointed By
10/16/1992 <sup>a</sup> / 12/8/1992 <sup>b</sup>  The H.W. Bush Investigation ran from October 16, 1992, to December 8, 1992, for a total of <b>54 days</b> . <sup>c</sup>	\$372,392 <sup>d</sup>  The total cost of the H.W. Bush investigation in January 2023 dollars was <b>\$787,774.97</b> . <sup>e</sup>	<b>Frederick B. Lacey</b> / Special Counsel / Independent Counsel	Attorney General <b>William P. Barr</b>

**Chart Notes:** See the following footnotes for notes a-e. a,<sup>[142]</sup> b,<sup>[143]</sup> c,<sup>[144]</sup> d,<sup>[145]</sup> e,<sup>[146]</sup>

#### 1. Summary of the investigation:

- In an investigation also known as "Iraqgate"<sup>[147]</sup> or "Iraq-Gate,"<sup>[148]</sup> on October 16, 1992, Attorney General William P. Barr appointed retired federal judge Frederick B. Lacey "to investigate the Bush Administration's handling of a billion-dollar bank-fraud case involving illegal loans to Iraq."<sup>[149]</sup> In December, "Lacey was named special counsel in charge of investigating both matters, and he determined that no federal crime had been committed in either case."<sup>[150]</sup>

#### 2. Special Prosecutor/Independent Counsel/Special Counsel

- Frederick B. Lacey - Special Counsel / Independent Counsel

#### 3. Dates of Investigation

- START – October 16, 1992<sup>[151]</sup>
- END – December 8, 1992<sup>[152]</sup>

#### 4. Conclusion

- "Mr. Barr's refusal to seek a judicially appointed prosecutor in the case involving the Atlanta branch of the Banca Nazionale del Lavoro followed the recommendation of Frederick B. Lacey, his own counsel. Judge Lacey had submitted a two-volume report that found 'no reasonable grounds to believe further investigation is warranted with respect to the matters involved here.' Calls Accusations 'Nonsense'"<sup>[153]</sup>

#### 5. Cost of Investigation

- \$372,392 according to the "Summary of U.S. Department of Justice expenses for the investigation by Special Counsel Frederick B. Lacey of the conduct of the U.S. Department of Justice relating to the Banca Nazionale Del Lavoro," reported in the Congressional Record-House, June 8, 1993.<sup>[154]</sup>

### William J. Clinton: Whitewater

A. Start/End [# of Days]	B. Total Cost of Investigation	C. Name of Investigator / Title	D. Appointed By
The Clinton investigations ran from January 20, 1994, to March 23, 2004, for a total of <b>3,716 days</b> . <sup>a</sup>  1/20/1994 <sup>b</sup> / 10/6/1994 <sup>c</sup> [260]	\$6,073,000 <sup>d</sup>	<b>Robert Fiske</b> / Special Counsel  (succeeded by Starr and left the investigation on October 6, 1994)	Attorney General <b>Janet Reno</b> appointed Fiske, making him ineligible to continue his post when an independent counsel was requested
8/5/1994 <sup>e</sup> / 10/18/1999 <sup>f</sup> [1,901]	\$55,105,992 for the Starr, Ray, Thomas investigations. <sup>g</sup>	<b>Kenneth Starr</b> / First independently appointed Independent Counsel	<b>A three-judge panel</b> of the US Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia for independent counsels selected Starr
10/18/1999 <sup>h</sup> / 3/12/2002 <sup>i</sup> [877]	Total cost of the Whitewater investigation was \$61,178,992	<b>Robert W. Ray</b> / Second Independent Counsel	<b>A three-judge panel</b> of the US Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia for independent counsels
3/12/2002 <sup>k</sup> / 3/23/2004 <sup>l</sup> [743]	The total cost of the Clinton investigation in January 2023 dollars was <b>\$96,123,564.26</b> . <sup>m</sup>	<b>Julie F. Thomas</b> / Third and Final Independent Counsel	Sworn in after Ray resigned <sup>n</sup>

**Chart Notes:** See the following footnotes for notes a-n. a,<sup>[155]</sup> b,<sup>[156]</sup> c,<sup>[157]</sup> d,<sup>[158]</sup> e,<sup>[159]</sup> f,<sup>[160]</sup> g,<sup>[161]</sup> h,<sup>[162]</sup> i,<sup>[163]</sup> j,<sup>[164]</sup> k,<sup>[165]</sup> l,<sup>[166]</sup> m,<sup>[167]</sup> n,<sup>[168]</sup>

## 1. Summary of the investigation:

"Whitewater" is the blanket title for a series of investigations that started with "any possible violations of law relating in any way to President Clinton and the First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton's relationship with Madison Guaranty Savings and Loan Association, the Whitewater Development Corporation, or Capital Management Services."<sup>[169]</sup> Attorney General Janet Reno<sup>[170]</sup> appointed Robert B. Fiske, Jr. to lead the investigation, which also included the death of Vince Foster. Fiske found no link between Whitewater and Foster's death.<sup>[171]</sup> When Clinton signed the *Independent Counsel Reauthorization Act of 1994*, a panel of judges independently chose Kenneth Starr to continue the Whitewater investigation that ultimately included "Travelgate" on March, 22, 1996;<sup>[172]</sup> Filegate, on June 21, 1996;<sup>[173]</sup> and the Monica Lewinsky affair on January 16, 1998.<sup>[174]</sup> President Bill Clinton was impeached on December 19, 1998, in relation to the Lewinsky affair.<sup>[175]</sup>

## 2. Special Prosecutor/Independent Counsel/Special Counsel

- Robert B. Fiske, Jr. – Attorney General-appointed Special Counsel
- Kenneth Starr – First Independent Counsel under the *Independent Counsel Reauthorization Act of 1994*
- Robert Ray – Independent Counsel after Starr stepped down
- Julie F. Thomas – Independent Counsel who succeeded Ray to close out Whitewater investigation<sup>[176]</sup>

## 3. Dates of Investigation

First:

- START (Fiske investigation) – On January 20, 1994, Fiske was appointed Whitewater special counsel at Clinton's request on January 12, 1994.<sup>[177]</sup> At a press briefing with Attorney General Janet Reno, where she announced Fiske's appointment, Fiske defined his charter as broad, and potentially covering other matters, including the death of Vince Foster, which Fiske ruled a suicide on July 1, 1994.<sup>[178]</sup> "The specific language authorizes me to investigate whether any individuals or entities have committed a violation of any federal criminal law relating in any way to President William Jefferson Clinton's or Mrs. Hillary Rodham Clinton's relationships with Madison Guaranty Savings and Loan Association, Whitewater Development Corporation, or Capital Management Services."<sup>[179]</sup>
- END (Fiske investigation) – On October 6, 1994, Fiske stepped away from the investigation. He had been replaced by Kenneth W. Starr on August 5, 1994, after Clinton signed the *Independent Counsel Reauthorization Act of 1994* and Reno was denied her request to have Fiske re-appointed by a three-judge US Court of Appeals.<sup>[180]</sup> According to the court's order, Fiske was replaced because he was appointed by the "incumbent Administration" and needed to be replaced for the "appearance of independence."<sup>[181]</sup> During his tenure, Fiske conducted the first ever deposition of "a sitting president and first lady."<sup>[182]</sup>

Second, Third, Fourth:

- START (Starr investigation) – On August 5, 1994, Starr was appointed to continue the Whitewater investigation by a three-judge US Court of Appeals.<sup>[183]</sup>
- END (Starr investigation) / START (Ray investigation) – On October 18, 1999, "Kenneth Starr steps down as independent counsel. Robert Ray, an experienced federal prosecutor, is sworn in as his successor."<sup>[184]</sup>
- END (Ray investigation) / START (Thomas investigation) – On March 12, 2002, Ray resigned, and Julie F. Thomas became the last independent counsel on the Whitewater investigation.<sup>[185]</sup> On March 20, 2002,<sup>[186]</sup> Ray released his final report on Whitewater that exonerated the Clintons.<sup>[187]</sup>
- END (Thomas investigation) – On March 23, 2004, the office was terminated.<sup>[188]</sup>

## 4. Conclusion

- October 8, 1998, "The House votes 258-176 to open an impeachment inquiry into the President, only the third such proceeding in U.S. history. Thirty-one Democrats join Republicans in voting for the inquiry."<sup>[189]</sup>
- June 30, 1999 – The Independent Counsel law expires during the Whitewater/Lewinsky investigations.<sup>[190]</sup> "Now responsibility for investigating official misconduct reverts back to the Justice Department where it was during Watergate and before. The attorney general will have the power to both hire and fire special counsels."<sup>[191]</sup> "With the congressional impeachment proceedings against Clinton resulting from the Lewinsky investigation, it was the Democrats' turn to rail against the independent counsel law, pointing to the fact that special investigations have no limits on cost, length and scope, and saying Starr was far overzealous in pursuing the Clintons."<sup>[192]</sup>
- January 19, 2001 – President Clinton admits making false statements and surrenders law license for five years.<sup>[193]</sup>
- January 20, 2001 - "Hours before ending his term in office, President Clinton issues 140 pardons. Included on the list is the Clintons' former Whitewater Development Co. partner, Susan McDougal."<sup>[194]</sup>

## 5. Cost of Investigation

- According to a washingtonpost.com article, the Whitewater investigation total was \$70 million dollars.<sup>[195]</sup> The Independent Counsel FY 2008 Performance Budget sets the cost at \$55,105,992<sup>[196]</sup> for the Starr, Ray, Thomas investigations: "Violation of any federal criminal law relating to what has become known as the 'Whitewater Affair', President Clinton's relationship with a former White House intern, the White House travel office, misuse of FBI files, and other matters -- several defendants involved."<sup>[197]</sup>
- Other estimates:
  1. "According to reports by GAO, the cost of Independent Counsels Thomas', Ray's and Starr's portion of the investigation, through September 30, 2005, has been \$73,597,345. In addition, GAO has reported that Robert B. Fiske, Jr. spent \$6,073,000, on the earlier 'Whitewater' investigation prior to Mr. Starr's appointment."<sup>[198]</sup>
  2. For this report, the \$55,105,992 for the Starr, Ray, and Thomas investigations was added to the \$6,073,000 investigation, for a total cost of \$61,178,992 for the Whitewater investigations.

## George W. Bush: CIA Leak/Plamegate\*

\* There are multiple sources for this description of the investigation including nbcnews.com, time.com, rollingstone.com, and motherjones.com

A. Start/End (if any)	B. Total Cost of Investigation	C. Name of Investigator / Title	D. Appointed By
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# of Days	Cost	Investigator / Title	Appointed By
12/30/2003 <sup>a</sup> / 12/11/2007 The W. Bush investigation ran from December 30, 2003, to December 11, 2007, for a total of <b>1,443 days</b> . <sup>b</sup>	2.58 million <sup>c</sup> The total cost of the W. Bush investigation in January 2023 dollars was <b>\$3,693,107.33</b> . <sup>d</sup>	<b>Patrick Fitzgerald</b> / Special Counsel / Special Prosecutor	Deputy Attorney General <b>James Comey</b>

**Chart Notes:** See the following footnotes for notes a-d. a,<sup>[199]</sup> b,<sup>[200]</sup> c,<sup>[201]</sup> d,<sup>[202]</sup>

### 1. Summary of the investigation:

After CIA agent Valerie Plame was identified by name in a syndicated column,<sup>[203]</sup> on September 30, 2003, the Justice Department launched an investigation. On December 30, 2003, Patrick J. Fitzgerald was appointed as special counsel to investigate the leak.<sup>[204]</sup> High-level George W. Bush admin officials were investigated, and “the investigation also touched on presidential adviser Karl Rove,<sup>[205]</sup> eventually resulting in the prosecution of Vice President Richard B. Cheney’s Chief of Staff I. Lewis “Lacey” Libby,<sup>[206]</sup> and the subsequent commutation of his perjury and obstruction of justice convictions from President Bush (Libby received a full pardon from President Donald Trump on April 13, 2018).<sup>[207]</sup>

### 2. Special Prosecutor/Independent Counsel/Special Counsel

- Patrick Fitzgerald – Special / Counsel / Special Prosecutor

### 3. Dates of Investigation

- **START** – On December 30, 2003, Deputy Attorney General James Comey announced the appointment of Patrick J. Fitzgerald as special counsel in charge of the “investigation into alleged leak of CIA agent identity.” Attorney General John Ashcroft had recused himself “based on the totality of the circumstances and the facts and evidence developed at this stage of the investigation,” according to Comey during a December 30, 2003, Department of Justice press conference.<sup>[208]</sup> On June 24, 2004, Fitzgerald questioned Bush for more than an hour, but Bush was not put under oath.<sup>[209]</sup>
- **END** – On December 11, 2007, “the administration official [Libby] dropped his appeal of his convictions.”<sup>[210]</sup> “The activities of the special counsel were, for all practical purposes concluded as of March 2008, but the office of the special counsel will continue for limited purposes, such as responding to congressional requests for information.”<sup>[211]</sup>

### 4. Conclusion

- On why he wouldn’t issue a final report, in 2005 Fitzgerald said: “I think what people may be confused about is that reports used to be issued by independent counsels. And one of the complaints about the independent counsel statute was that an ordinary citizen, when investigated, they’re charged with a crime or they’re not; they’re not charged with a crime, people don’t talk about it. Because of the interest in making sure that -- well, there’s an interest in independent counsels to making sure those investigations were done thoroughly but then people ended up issuing reports for people not charged. And one of the criticisms leveled was that you should not issue reports about people who are not charged with a crime. That statute lapsed. I’m not an independent counsel, and I do not have the authority to write a report, and, frankly, I don’t think I should have that authority. I think we should conduct this like any other criminal investigation: charge someone or be quiet.”<sup>[212]</sup>
- October 28, 2005 - Libby is indicted.<sup>[213]</sup> On June 5, 2007, Libby is sentenced to 30 months in prison for perjury and obstruction of justice, and resigns as Cheney’s chief of staff.<sup>[214]</sup> Bush commuted his sentence on July 2, 2007.<sup>[215]</sup> Libby received a full pardon from President Donald Trump on April 13, 2018.<sup>[216]</sup>

### 5. Cost of Investigation

- \$2.58 million, according to a chicagotribune.com article on April 1, 2008.<sup>[217]</sup>

## Donald J. Trump: Trump-Russia Collusion Probe

A. Start/End [# of Days]	B. Total Cost of Investigation	C. Name of Investigator / Title	D. Appointed By
5/17/2017 <sup>a</sup> / 3/22/2019 <sup>b</sup> The Trump investigation ran from May 17, 2017 to March 22, 2019, (when Robert S. Mueller submitted his report) for a total of <b>675 days</b> . <sup>c d e</sup>	The final reported cost of the investigation from May 17, 2017, to May 31, 2019, was about \$36,886,670.55 in 2023 dollars (\$31,773,751 in 2019) for a total of <b>745 days</b> of DOJ expenditure reporting.	<b>Robert S. Mueller III</b> / Special Counsel	Acting Attorney General <b>Rod J. Rosenstein</b>

**Chart Notes:** See the following footnotes for notes a-e. a,<sup>[218]</sup> b,<sup>[219]</sup> c,<sup>[220]</sup> d,<sup>[221]</sup> e,<sup>[222]</sup>

### 1. Summary of the investigation:

Acting Attorney General Rod J. Rosenstein appointed Robert S. Mueller III special counsel to conduct an investigation into, among other things, “any links and/or coordination between the Russian government and individuals associated with the campaign of President Donald Trump.”<sup>[223]</sup>

### 2. Special Prosecutor/Independent Counsel/Special Counsel

- Robert S. Mueller III – Special Counsel

### 3. Dates of Investigation

- **START** – On May 17, 2017, Robert S. Mueller III was appointed by Acting Attorney General Rod J. Rosenstein to serve as special counsel.<sup>[224]</sup>
- **END** – March 22, 2019, when Mueller “delivered his final report to Attorney General William Barr.”<sup>[225]</sup>

### 4. Related Court Documents as of April 4, 2019, from the United States Department of Justice website:<sup>[226]</sup>

- **U.S. v. Roger Jason Stone, Jr. (1:19-cr-18, District of Columbia):** Roger Jason Stone, Jr., 66, of Fort Lauderdale, Florida, was arrested in Fort Lauderdale on January 25, 2019, following an indictment by a federal grand jury on January 24, 2019, in the District of Columbia. The indictment, which was unsealed upon arrest, contains seven counts: one count of obstruction of an

official proceeding, five counts of false statements, and one count of witness tampering.

- **U.S. v. Michael Cohen (1:18-cr-850, Southern District of New York):** Michael Cohen of New York, New York, pleaded guilty on November 29, 2018, to making false statements to the US Congress in violation of 18 U.S.C. 1001 (a)(2). Cohen was sentenced on December 12, 2018, to serve two months in prison and pay a \$50,000 fine.
- **U.S. v. Paul J. Manafort, Jr. (1:17-cr-201, District of Columbia):** Paul J. Manafort, Jr., of Alexandria, Va., pleaded guilty on September 14, 2018, to a superseding criminal information filed ... in the District of Columbia, which includes conspiracy against the United States (conspiracy to commit money laundering, tax fraud, failing to file Foreign Bank Account Reports and Violating the Foreign Agents Registration Act, and lying and misrepresenting to the Department of Justice) and conspiracy to obstruct justice (witness tampering). On March 13, 2019, Manafort was sentenced to serve 73 months in prison, with 30 months to run concurrent with his sentence in the Eastern District of Virginia.
- **U.S. v. Viktor Borisovich Netyksho, et al (1:18-cr-215, District of Columbia):** A federal grand jury in the District of Columbia returned an indictment on July 13, 2018, against 12 Russian nationals for their alleged roles in computer hacking conspiracies aimed at interfering in the 2016 US elections. The indictment charges 11 of the defendants with conspiracy to commit computer crimes, eight counts of aggravated identity theft, and conspiracy to launder money. Two defendants are charged with a separate conspiracy to commit computer crimes.
- **U.S. v. Konstantin Kilimnik (1:17-cr-201, District of Columbia):** A federal grand jury in the District of Columbia returned a third superseding indictment on June 8, 2018, against Konstantin Kilimnik, of Moscow, Russia. Kilimnik is charged with conspiracy to obstruct justice and obstruction of justice.
- **U.S. v. Richard W. Gates III (1:17-cr-201, District of Columbia):** Richard W. Gates III of Richmond, Va., pleaded guilty on February 23, 2018, to a superseding criminal information that includes: count one of the indictment, which charges conspiracy against the United States, in violation of 18 U.S.C. 371 (which includes conspiracy to violate 26 U.S.C. 7206(f), 31 U.S.C. 5312 and 5322(b), and 22 U.S.C. 612, 618(a)(1), and 618(a)(2)), and a charge of making false statements to the Special Counsel's Office and FBI agents, in violation of 18 U.S.C. 1001.
- **U.S. v. Paul J. Manafort, Jr., and Richard W. Gates III (1:18-cr-83, Eastern District of Virginia):** Paul J. Manafort, Jr., of Alexandria, Va., and Richard W. Gates III, of Richmond, Va., were indicted by a federal grand jury on February 22, 2018, in the Eastern District of Virginia. The indictment contains 32 counts: 16 counts related to false individual income tax returns, seven counts of failure to file reports of foreign bank and financial accounts, five counts of bank fraud conspiracy, and four counts of bank fraud. On March 1, 2018, the court granted a motion to dismiss without prejudice the charges against Gates, following his guilty plea in a related case in the District of Columbia (1:17-cr-201). On August 21, 2018, a federal jury found Manafort guilty on eight counts: counts 1-5, subscribing to a false individual income tax return for tax years 2010-2014; count 12, failure to file reports of foreign bank and financial accounts for year 2012; count 25, bank fraud; and count 27, bank fraud. The court declared a mistrial on 10 counts (counts 11, 13-14, 24, 26, 28-32). As part of his plea agreement on September 14, 2018, Manafort admitted his guilt of the remaining counts against him in this case. On March 7, 2019, Manafort was sentenced to 47 months in prison and ordered to pay a \$50,000 fine.
- **U.S. v. Alex van der Zwaan (1:18-cr-31, District of Columbia):** Alex van der Zwaan, of London, pleaded guilty on February 20, 2018, to making false statements to FBI agents, in violation of 18 U.S.C. 1001. Van der Zwaan was sentenced on April 3, 2018, to serve 30 days in prison and pay a \$20,000 fine.
- **U.S. v. Internet Research Agency, et al (1:18-cr-32, District of Columbia):** A federal grand jury in the District of Columbia returned an indictment on February 16, 2018, against 13 Russian nationals and three Russian entities accused of violating US criminal laws in order to interfere with US elections and political processes. The indictment charges all of the defendants with conspiracy to defraud the United States, three defendants with conspiracy to commit wire fraud and bank fraud, and five defendants with aggravated identity theft.
- **U.S. v. Richard Pinedo, et al (1:18-cr-24, District of Columbia):** Richard Pinedo, of Santa Paula, Calif., pleaded guilty on February 12, 2018, to identity fraud, in violation of 18 U.S.C. 1028. On October 10, 2018, Pinedo was sentenced to serve six months in prison, followed by six months of home confinement, and ordered to complete 100 hours of community service.
- **U.S. v. Michael T. Flynn (1:17-cr-232, District of Columbia):** Lieutenant General Michael T. Flynn (Ret.), of Alexandria, Va., pleaded guilty on December 1, 2017, to making false statements to FBI agents, in violation of 18 U.S.C. 1001.
- **U.S. v. George Papadopoulos (1:17-cr-182, District of Columbia):** George Papadopoulos, of Chicago, Illinois, pleaded guilty on October 5, 2017, to making false statements to FBI agents, in violation of 18 U.S.C. 1001. The case was unsealed on October 30, 2017. On September 7, 2018, Papadopoulos was sentenced to serve 14 days in prison, pay a \$9,500 fine, and complete 200 hours of community service.

## 5. Conclusion

- Excerpts from Attorney General William P. Barr's "main findings of the special counsel's two-year investigation into Russian interference in the 2016 presidential election."<sup>[227]</sup>  
 "The Special Counsel's investigation did not find that the Trump campaign or anyone associated with it conspired or coordinated with Russia in its efforts to influence the 2016 US presidential election. As the report states: '[T]he investigation did not establish that members of the Trump Campaign conspired or coordinated with the Russian government in its election interference activities.' ... The Special Counsel therefore did not draw a conclusion - one way or the other - as to whether the examined conduct constituted obstruction. Instead, for each of the relevant actions investigated, the report sets out evidence on both sides of the question and leaves unresolved what the Special Counsel views as 'difficult issues' of law and fact concerning whether the President's actions and intent could be viewed as obstruction. The Special Counsel states that 'while this report does not conclude that the President committed a crime, it also does not exonerate him.'"

## 6. Cost of Investigation

- Total reported costs from May 17, 2017, to May 31, 2019: \$36,886,670.55 in 2023 dollars<sup>[228]</sup> (\$31,773,751 in 2019).<sup>[229]</sup> <sup>[230]</sup> <sup>[231]</sup> <sup>[232]</sup>
- Costs include those reported by the Special Counsel's Office (\$16,408,751), and additional Department of Justice costs that would have been spent on other investigations (about \$15,365,000).
- The investigation uncovered tax evasion, leading to an estimated \$48 million recovered by the government.<sup>[233]</sup>

A. Reporting Period	B. Special Counsel Cost to Date	C. DOJ Component Expenses	D. Total Investigation Costs
May 17, 2017, to September 30, 2017	\$3,213,695 <sup>a</sup>	\$3,546,000 <sup>b c</sup>	\$6,759,695
October 1, 2017, through March 31, 2018	\$4,506,624 <sup>d</sup>	\$5,476,000 <sup>e</sup>	\$9,982,624
April 1, 2018, through September 30, 2018	\$4,567,533 <sup>f</sup>	\$3,906,000 <sup>g</sup>	\$8,473,533
October 1, 2018, through May 31, 2019	\$14,800,000 <sup>h</sup>	\$6,467,000 <sup>i</sup>	\$21,267,000 <sup>j</sup>

**Chart Notes:** See the following footnotes for notes a-i. a,<sup>[234]</sup> b,<sup>[235]</sup> c,<sup>[236]</sup> d,<sup>[237]</sup> e,<sup>[238]</sup> f,<sup>[239]</sup> g,<sup>[240]</sup> h,<sup>[241]</sup> i,<sup>[242]</sup>

## Conclusion

There have been nine completed presidential administrations since the beginning of Watergate to the date of this report, from Nixon to Trump. The only presidential administration that was not part of an investigation by a special prosecutor/independent counsel/special counsel was that of President Barack Obama.

The Mueller investigation took 675 days, which does not put it in the top three for the most days for a special presidential investigation: 3,716 for Whitewater; 2,420 for Iran-Contra; and 1,464 for Watergate. Although reporting of costs for each investigation varies and they are not apple to apple equivalents, the Mueller investigation into the Trump campaign was the fourth overall costliest; by per-day costs, it was first.

The metrics from the charts and information in this work suggest that the time and costs of the various presidential investigations don't follow any discernible or clear patterns. Given the complexities of some of the investigations, questions not covered in this report may emerge from it, such as:

- Was the \$83 million for the Clinton investigation too much or was the \$650,000 spent on the H.W. Bush investigation too little?
- Were the 3,716 days spent on the Clinton investigations more important to our country than the 1,443 days spent on the W. Bush investigation?
- Were all or some of the investigations politically motivated at the start?
- Were any of the investigations extended or underfunded or cut short for political reasons?
- Should the counsel on the investigations be investigated? If so, by whom?

We hope this report will add a bit of sunlight to the somewhat arcane world of special prosecutor / independent counsel / special counsel investigations.

## Appendix A: 24 Special Investigations Not Featured in This Report

The following is a list of the other 24 special investigations by a special prosecutor/independent counsel/special counsel that were not part of the research on the eight special investigations in this report; those investigations included possible offense(s) tied directly or indirectly to the president in office, and the investigation of President Gerald R. Ford which began with the investigation of President Nixon.

The 24 special investigations in this Appendix either occurred prior to 1973, or they seemingly involved personal behavior or actions not tied directly or indirectly to a presidential administration's business or action.

<b>A. US Presidential Administration under which the Special Investigation Started</b>	<b>B. Summary of Special Prosecutor / Independent Counsel / Special Counsel investigations that are either prior to 1973, or when the investigations seemingly involved personal behavior or actions not tied directly or indirectly to administration business or action.</b>
1. Grant	<b>1875:</b> President Ulysses S. Grant appointed John B. Henderson as the first special prosecutor to investigate a widespread scheme involving whiskey distillers and government officials who conspired to defraud the government of tax revenue. Known as the <b>Whiskey Ring Scandal</b> , Grant fired Henderson and appointed James Broadhead after Henderson raised questions about Grant's involvement in the scheme. <sup>a</sup>
2. Garfield	<b>1881:</b> President James A. Garfield appointed William A. Cook as special prosecutor/special counsel <sup>b</sup> to investigate alleged bribery of post office officials and postal routes, which was known as the <b>Star Route Scandals</b> . <sup>c</sup>
3. Roosevelt	<b>1903:</b> President Theodore Roosevelt appointed Charles J. Bonaparte and Holmes Conrad as special prosecutors to investigate alleged bribery involving <b>post office officials</b> . <sup>d</sup>
4. Roosevelt	<b>1903:</b> US Attorney General Philander Knox appointed Francis J. Heney as special prosecutor to investigate alleged land fraud deals that became known as the <b>Oregon Land Fraud Trials</b> . <sup>e</sup>
5. Coolidge	<b>1924:</b> President Calvin Coolidge appoints two special prosecutors, one Democrat and one Republican, to investigate alleged improper <b>federal oil reserve leases</b> made during the Harding administration. Known as the <b>Teapot Dome Scandal</b> , "it marked the first time a U.S. cabinet official served jail time while in office." <sup>f</sup>
6. Truman	<b>1952:</b> President Harry S. Truman appointed Special Assistant Attorney General Newbold Morris as special prosecutor <sup>g</sup> to look into corruption at <b>the IRS</b> , but Morris started with an investigation into Department of Justice officials, which resulted in his firing by Attorney General J. Howard McGrath. <sup>h</sup>
7. Carter	<b>1979:</b> A three-judge federal panel <sup>i</sup> appointed Arthur H. Christy as special prosecutor to investigate <b>Hamilton Jordan</b> , Carter's chief of staff, for alleged cocaine use. <sup>j</sup>
8. Carter	<b>1980:</b> A three-judge federal panel appointed Gerald Gallinghouse as special prosecutor to investigate <b>Timothy Kraft</b> , Carter's national campaign manager, for alleged cocaine use. <sup>k</sup>
9. Reagan	<b>1981:</b> A three-judge federal panel appointed Leon Silverman as special prosecutor to investigate allegations of corruption against Secretary of Labor <b>Raymond J. Donovan</b> . <sup>l</sup>
10. Reagan	<b>1984:</b> A three-judge federal panel appointed Jacob A. Stein as special prosecutor to investigate alleged corruption by <b>Edwin Meese</b> , who was being considered for attorney general. <sup>m</sup>
11. Reagan	<b>1986:</b> A three-judge federal panel appointed James C. McKay as independent counsel to investigate allegations of false testimony by <b>Theodore Olson</b> , a former assistant attorney general, regarding EPA documents. <sup>n</sup>
12. Reagan	<b>1986:</b> A three-judge federal panel appointed Whitney North Seymour Jr. as independent counsel to investigate allegations that <b>Michael K. Deaver</b> , former White House aide, was involved in improper lobbying practices. <sup>o</sup>
13. Reagan	<b>1987:</b> A three-judge federal panel appointed Carl S. Rauh as independent counsel <sup>p</sup> to investigate allegations involving the finances of Lawrence Wallace, <b>former assistant attorney general</b> . <sup>q</sup>
14. Reagan	<b>1987:</b> A three-judge federal panel appointed James McKay to investigate allegations of illegal lobbying by <b>Lyn Notziger</b> , Reagan's former political director. <sup>r</sup>
15. H.W. Bush	<b>1990:</b> A three-judge federal panel appointed Arlin M. Adams as independent prosecutor to investigate allegations that <b>Samuel Pierce</b> , former HUD secretary, defrauded the government. <sup>s</sup>
16. H.W. Bush	<b>1992:</b> A three-judge federal panel appointed Joseph E. DiGenova as independent counsel <sup>t</sup> to

	investigate allegations that <b>Janet G. Mullins</b> , a H.W. Bush White House assistant, made false statements and an investigation into the search of Bill Clinton's passport files. <sup>5</sup>
17. Clinton	<b>1994:</b> A three-judge federal panel appointed Donald C. Smaltz as independent counsel to investigate allegations between Agriculture Secretary <b>Michael Espy</b> and Tyson Foods Inc. <sup>6</sup>
18. Clinton	<b>1995:</b> A three-judge federal panel appointed David M. Barrett as independent counsel to investigate allegations that <b>Henry G. Cisneros</b> , head of HUD, lied to the FBI. <sup>7</sup>
19. Clinton	<b>1995:</b> A three-judge federal panel appointed Daniel S. Pearson as independent counsel to investigate allegations of the illegal private financial dealings of Commerce Secretary <b>Ronald H. Brown</b> . <sup>8</sup>
20. Clinton	<b>1996:</b> A three-judge federal panel appointed Curtis Emery von Kann as independent counsel <sup>9</sup> to investigate allegations of improper fund-raising by <b>Eli J. Segal</b> when he was head of Americorps. <sup>10</sup>
21. Clinton	<b>1998:</b> A three-judge federal panel appointed Ralph I. Lancaster as special prosecutor to investigate allegations of bribery by Secretary of Labor <b>Alexis Herman</b> . <sup>11</sup>
22. Clinton	1998: A three-judge federal panel appointed Carol Elder Bruce as independent counsel to investigate allegations that Interior Secretary <b>Bruce E. Babbitt</b> made false statements regarding an Indian casino request. <sup>12</sup>
23. Clinton	1999: Attorney General Janet Reno appointed John C. Danforth <sup>13</sup> as special counsel to "head a review into <b>events surrounding the assault on the Branch Davidian compound in Waco, Texas</b> ." <sup>14</sup>
24. Trump	<b>2020:</b> On December 1, 2020, Attorney General William Barr announced that he had appointed US Attorney John Durham as a special counsel in October. Durham was assigned to investigate the origins of the <b>FBI investigation into claims that Russia interfered in the 2016 presidential election and whether the Trump campaign had any ties</b> to those actions. Barr said the same regulations that were used in the Mueller investigation applied to Durham's work. <sup>15</sup>  The <b>final Durham report</b> , dated May 12, 2023, concluded that the Department of Justice and FBI "failed to uphold their important mission of strict fidelity to the law,... [and] senior FBI personnel displayed a serious lack of analytical rigor toward the information they received," but did not recommend "any wholesale changes in the guidelines and policies" at the Department of Justice or FBI.

**Chart Notes:** See the following footnotes for notes a-f1. a,<sup>[243]</sup> b,<sup>[244]</sup> c,<sup>[245]</sup> d,<sup>[246]</sup> e,<sup>[247]</sup> f,<sup>[248]</sup> g,<sup>[249]</sup> h,<sup>[250]</sup> i,<sup>[251]</sup> j,<sup>[252]</sup> k,<sup>[253]</sup> l,<sup>[254]</sup> m,<sup>[255]</sup> n,<sup>[256]</sup> o,<sup>[257]</sup> p,<sup>[258]</sup> r,<sup>[259]</sup> s,<sup>[260]</sup> t,<sup>[261]</sup> u,<sup>[262]</sup> v,<sup>[263]</sup> w,<sup>[264]</sup> x,<sup>[265]</sup> y,<sup>[266]</sup> z,<sup>[267]</sup> a1,<sup>[268]</sup> b1,<sup>[269]</sup> c1,<sup>[270]</sup> d1,<sup>[271]</sup> e1,<sup>[272]</sup> f1,<sup>[273]</sup>

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