

Richard m. nixon presidential report card



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Richard Milhous Nixon was born on January 9, 1913 as an ordinary boy in an ordinary family. He was the second of five sons in a poor family struggling to make ends meet with a little grocery store. Nixon determined to make life better and used his World War two poker earnings to fund his first political campaign in 1946. He ended up becoming a Republican congressman who served both as Vice President under President Eisenhower and as the 37th President of the United States of America. As President, Richard Nixon had many roles to fill. Between donning the hats of Chief Executive, Chief of State, Chief Diplomat, Commander in Chief, Economic Chief, and Chief of Party, President Nixon somehow found a way to juggle it all and earn a B on his presidential report card.

Chief Executive is the role of being head of the Executive branch. As Chief Executive, President Richard Nixon issued 346 executive orders, some of which included establishing the President's Intelligence Advisory Board and identification requirements for unnecessary Federal property. Another example of Nixon's use of his Chief Executive powers was seen during the Watergate Scandal. People associated with Nixon's campaign snuck into the Democratic National Committee and were caught. Nixon attempted to use his executive privilege in order to not be forced to expand on the affair. Nevertheless, Nixon's attempt did not work, and he later confessed to the scandal. Consequently, Nixon's third example of making use of his role as Chief Executive was to evoke the power to resign office. President Nixon was the only president to resign and is therefore famous for this very act.

Chief of State requires one to be the face of America. The President must inspire America, becoming a revered icon for years to come. One example of Nixon fulfilling this role was seen in 1972 with Nixon's win against George McGovern by one of the largest margins in the history of the United States. Nixon's campaign included promising "peace with honor", putting the American people to ease with their President. In other aspects of this role, however, Nixon may not have been very great. Said Richard Reeves, a British author, President Nixon was "a strange man of uncomfortable shyness, who functioned best alone with his thoughts". This was not the image of America, and thus resulted in a decline of love for this president. Finally, Nixon gave a controversial speech following the Kent State shootings in May of 1970. These statements rallied up Americans, who were losing trust in Nixon and did not like the way in which this announcement was delivered to the people.

The role of Chief Diplomat is one of making and deciding foreign policy, and President Nixon was an expert in this position. He arranged with the Soviet Union to prevent missile strikes and to coexist peacefully. This arrangement was known as the Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty, otherwise known as SALT 1. Nixon also established good relations with China. Detente, or the smoothing over of hostilities between countries, was achieved as Nixon eased off on trade restrictions with China in 1970. Furthermore, in 1972, President Nixon and his wife flew to and talked with Mao Zedong, a leader of China. All of these successive events led to the peaceful relations with China that the United States experienced during this time period. Finally, President Nixon is most well-known as a chief diplomat for his work with Vietnam. In

the year 1972, President Richard Nixon made an agreement with North Vietnam through Le Duc Tho, a foreign minister in North Vietnam. This agreement symbolized the peace that was on the horizon.

As Commander in Chief, the president is expected to lead the United States military. Because the Vietnam war was very prominent in President Nixon's presidency, he saw many opportunities to lead the American military. Nixon led the military through the bombing of Ho Chi Minh trail in 1971 in order to thwart North Vietnam. Furthermore, Nixon led the country's military through Vietnamization, in which Nixon slowly withdrew American forces in Vietnam whilst training Southern Vietnam soldiers that would take America's place. An agreement between the United States and North Vietnam was signed in Paris in 1973, and American combat troops were out of Vietnam by March.

Though perhaps one of the most important roles of the president, the role of Economic Chief oftentimes gets overlooked. This role requires the president to be invested in the economy and ensure it is running properly. During Nixon's presidency, the Economic Stabilization Act of 1970 was passed, allowing the president to impose price controls to manage the economy due to the Vietnam war. Nixon did impose wage restrictions to control inflation, but by 1974, inflation reached 12.2 percent, making Nixon's actions futile. However, Nixon also created 2.8 million jobs while he was in office, making the economy safer and decreasing unemployment rates.

Lastly, the role of Chief of Party is one of representing one's own political party. President Nixon, being a Republican, appointed four conservative justices to the Supreme Court: Chief Justice Warren Burger, Lewis Powell,

William Rehnquist, and Harry Blackmun. During midterm elections, the Republican party - Nixon's party - lost 12 seats in the House of Representatives, but gained two seats in the Senate. This illustrates mixed views concerning Nixon in the United States during his presidency. The results provide evidence that Nixon was not hated, yet was not loved nationwide either. This conclusion is also supported with the fact that Nixon's average approval rating while in office was 49 percent. This roughly 50 percent average proves that Nixon was seen as a middle of the road president for the majority of his presidency.

President Nixon led a presidency full of controversy and disputes. Because of the Vietnam war, Nixon had plenty on his plate to deal with. He did not serve as a good Chief Executive, since the Watergate Scandal outshone everything else he did in this category and remains what he is remembered for today. Because Nixon was a loner and not a great public speaker or figure, he does not score well as Chief of State. Nixon does earn points for his actions as Chief Diplomat, securing relations with China and making agreements with Vietnam during the Vietnam war. Continuing on with Nixon's roles as president, he donned his Commander in Chief hat very well as he had a plethora of business to attend to in this regard. Though controversial in his strategies to combat the Vietnam war, he did get the American troops out as was said. Economically, Nixon attempted to better the economy by controlling prices in order to control inflation, thus making an effort to improve a weakened economy from the Vietnam war. Finally, the role of Chief of Party was very well handled by Nixon for the appointment of four conservative Supreme Justices into the Supreme Court. With all this in mind,

President Nixon earns a B on his report card. Though many Americans today remember Nixon only for the Watergate Scandal, Nixon did much more than that, and worked hard to better America both in the 1970s and today. He left behind a country with conservative Supreme Court Justices and good relationships with China. He also left behind a country healing from the Vietnam War. Without President Nixon, history would have turned out drastically different from the way it did, and America would not be as stable as it currently is in both foreign and economic affairs.

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