

The Clinton Impeachment

About President Clinton:

A Democrat, in 1992, Clinton defeated incumbent Republican President George Bush amid a slumping U.S. economy, and became the first President born after World War II. Clinton easily won re-election in 1996 over Republican Bob Dole, despite several ongoing controversies.

Born in Hope, Arkansas, on August 19, 1946, Clinton never knew his natural father. He had been killed in a car accident three months before his birth. In 1950, his mother married a car salesman who turned out to be a violent alcoholic that sometimes physically abused her.

In 1963, while he was a senior in high school, Bill Clinton traveled to Washington, D.C., as part of Boys Nation, a special youth leadership conference. The group was invited to the White House where young Clinton shook hands with President John F. Kennedy, an event that became one of the most memorable of his youth and which sparked an early interest in entering politics.

Clinton attended Georgetown University in Washington, D.C., earning a Bachelor's degree in International Affairs, and also worked in the office of Arkansas Senator J. William Fulbright, an outspoken critic of the Vietnam War. After college, Clinton won a Rhodes Scholarship and studied government at Oxford University beginning in October 1968.

Clinton was eligible for the U.S. draft and was ordered to report home to Arkansas for induction in May 1969. He went home in July but managed to obtain a draft deferment after signing up for the ROTC program at the University of Arkansas, promising to actually enroll later in the year. In the meantime, he returned to England where he attended demonstrations against the Vietnam War staged at the American Embassy in London.

In the U.S., a new draft lottery system based on birth dates was instituted. It resulted in a very high number for Clinton, indicating he would never be drafted. Clinton then sent a letter back to Arkansas stating that the idea of joining the ROTC had been an "objectionable compromise" and that he was no longer interested in joining.

After leaving Oxford, Clinton attended Yale Law School where he met his future wife, a law student named Hillary Rodham. Bill and Hillary were active politically, working on George McGovern's unsuccessful 1972 presidential campaign. After Yale, Clinton returned to Arkansas to teach law at the University of Arkansas, while contemplating a career in politics. He took the plunge in 1974 and ran unsuccessfully for the U.S. Congress, losing by just 800 votes.

Hillary, meanwhile, had gone to Washington, D.C., where she worked as a junior lawyer on the impeachment inquiry staff of the House Judiciary Committee during the 1974 impeachment hearings of President Richard Nixon. The staff produced a document titled "Constitutional Grounds for Presidential Impeachment." After Nixon's resignation, Hillary moved to Arkansas to be near Bill Clinton, married him in October 1975, and also took a faculty position at the University of Arkansas.

The following year, Bill Clinton was elected Attorney General of Arkansas, a springboard to his eventual run for governor. The Clintons now moved to Little Rock where Hillary took a job with the Rose Law Firm, becoming the firm's first woman attorney.

In 1978, 32-year-old Bill Clinton became the youngest governor in the U.S. However, he lost his bid for re-election in 1980 after alienating business leaders and social conservatives with his ambitious, reform-minded agenda. Two years later, Clinton successfully portrayed himself as a changed politician and won the election. He then became chairman of the National Governors' Association.

As a Democratic presidential candidate in 1991-92, Clinton successfully fended off nagging allegations of marital infidelity, pot smoking, and draft dodging. He was elected President with 43 percent of the popular vote, becoming, at age 46, the youngest President since John F. Kennedy. After his election, Clinton promised to lead "the most ethical administration in history."

Events Leading to Impeachment:

Widely considered the most investigated President ever, the Clinton administration was dogged by controversy from the very beginning. Controversial events within Clinton's administration as well as his own personal conduct would eventually provide opportunities for his opponents to damage him politically, and First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton as well. She had made it known from the beginning that she intended to step far beyond the traditional role of First Lady to directly involve herself in White House policy. She was appointed by the President to direct his task force on national health care reform.

The first major Clinton scandal involved the White House travel office and came to be popularly known as "Travelgate." In May 1993, seven long-time employees in the office were abruptly fired and replaced with friends of the Clintons from Arkansas. The FBI then investigated the fired employees, leading to allegations the investigation was being conducted under pressure from the White House solely to justify the firings.

Next, in July, a personal tragedy for the Clintons occurred as Vince Foster, Deputy White House Counsel, and life-long friend of the President, was found shot dead in a park just outside Washington from an apparent suicide.

Huge controversy erupted five months later when it was revealed that federal investigators had been denied access to Foster's White House office, but that Clinton aides had entered the office within hours of Foster's death. Speculation arose in the media that documents related to the Whitewater Development Corporation might have been removed. A month before his death, Foster had filed three years of delinquent Whitewater corporate tax returns.

The Whitewater controversy would eventually spark a federal investigation of President Clinton and the First Lady, that through a strange and remarkable series of political maneuverings and personal failings, would ultimately lead to the first-ever impeachment of an elected President.

Whitewater began back in 1978 when Bill and Hillary Clinton along with two Arkansas acquaintances, James B. and Susan McDougal, borrowed \$203,000 to purchase 220 acres of riverfront land in Arkansas' Ozark Mountains, then formed the Whitewater Development Corporation with the intention of building vacation homes.

In 1982, James McDougal purchased a small savings and loan in Little Rock and named it the Madison Guaranty. By the mid-1980s, Madison Guaranty had aroused the attention of federal regulators who questioned its lending practices and financial stability. For example, in 1985, a fund-raising event was held at Madison Guaranty to help eliminate \$50,000 of Governor Bill Clinton's campaign debt. Federal investigators later alleged that some of the funds had been improperly withdrawn from depositors' funds.

A major link between the Clintons and Madison Guaranty had been forged after McDougal hired the Rose Law Firm, where Hillary Clinton was a partner, to help the ailing institution. But by 1989, following a number of failed loans, Madison Guaranty collapsed and was shut down by the federal government which then spent \$60 million bailing it out. In 1992, the Federal Resolution Trust Corporation, during its investigation into the causes of its failure, named both Bill and Hillary Clinton as "potential beneficiaries" of alleged illegal activities at Madison Guaranty. A referral was then sent to the U.S. Justice Department.

Following Vince Foster's death in 1993, political pressure mounted in Washington for an independent investigation into Whitewater-Madison. The Clinton administration then turned over documents to the Justice Department including the files found in Foster's office. In January 1994, in order to stave off ever-mounting criticism from his political foes, President Clinton reluctantly asked Attorney General Janet Reno to appoint a special counsel. Reno chose former U.S. Attorney Robert B. Fiske of New York, a moderate Republican.

Two months later, further controversy arose with the sudden resignation of Associate Attorney General Webster L. Hubbell, after allegations were raised concerning his conduct while he was a member of the Rose Law Firm. Following his resignation, friends of President Clinton arranged about \$700,000 in income for Hubbell just as he was coming under scrutiny by Whitewater investigators. The President's close friend, Vernon Jordan, an influential Washington lawyer, was among those aiding Hubbell.

By the summer of 1994, the House and Senate Banking committees both began hearings concerning Whitewater and eventually called 29 Clinton administration officials to testify.

In August, Robert Fiske's tenure as special Whitewater counsel came to an abrupt end amid charges from conservatives that he simply was not aggressive enough in investigating Bill and Hillary Clinton. On August 5, 1994, following the renewal of the independent counsel law, the three-judge panel responsible for appointing independent counsels replaced Fiske with staunch Republican Kenneth W. Starr, a former Justice Department official in the Reagan administration, and federal appeals court judge and solicitor general in the Bush administration.

Thus began the four-year-long Starr investigation of the Clintons. Through an extraordinary set of circumstances, Starr's investigation would eventually veer away from Whitewater and delve deeply into the personal conduct of President Clinton, ultimately leading to his impeachment for events totally unrelated to Whitewater.

Amid all of the media attention paid to the Starr investigation and the House and Senate Whitewater hearings, allegations by a young woman from Arkansas went nearly unnoticed at first. In February 1994, Paula C. Jones appeared at a Washington gathering of conservative activists and alleged that, in 1991, Arkansas Governor Bill Clinton had committed sexual harassment by dropping his trousers in a Little Rock hotel room and asking her to perform a sex act. Jones, who was an Arkansas state clerical worker at the time of the alleged incident, claimed Clinton's state police bodyguard had summoned her to the hotel room.

The White House responded aggressively to Jones's charges and attempted to undermine her credibility through repeated denials on behalf of the President along with off-handed remarks from Clinton loyalists deriding her as "trailer park trash," all of which served to infuriate Ms. Jones. On May 6, 1994, she filed a civil lawsuit against the President in federal district court in Arkansas, seeking \$700,000 in damages along with a personal apology from Clinton.

The President's lawyers now engaged in a series of legal maneuvers seeking to put off the case until after Clinton concluded his term of office. However, the attempt failed when a federal appeals court ruled the lawsuit could proceed while Clinton was still in office. That ruling was unanimously upheld by the U.S. Supreme Court which stated that the case was "highly unlikely to occupy any substantial amount" of the President's time. Thus, for the first time in U.S. history, a sitting President was subjected to a civil lawsuit for actions that occurred before he became President.

The Jones case served to focus media attention on various old allegations of marital infidelity concerning Bill Clinton. Incredibly, it was at this time, in the midst of the Jones controversy, that President Clinton began an illicit sexual affair with a 22-year-old White House intern named Monica Lewinsky.

Lewinsky had arrived at the White House in July of 1995 from Beverly Hills, California, to work as an unpaid intern in the office of Clinton's Chief of Staff Leon E. Panetta. By November, she accepted a low level paid job in the White House Office of Legislative Affairs.

That month, however, a temporary shutdown of the U.S. government occurred when the Republican-controlled Congress refused to appropriate federal funds due to political squabbling over President Clinton's budget. Thus most paid White House staffers stayed home. Lewinsky, still an unpaid intern when the shutdown occurred, showed up for work in Panetta's West Wing office on November 15, 1995. On that day, President Clinton strolled into the office for an informal birthday gathering at which Lewinsky openly flirted with him. Clinton then invited Lewinsky back to his private study, located adjacent to the Oval Office. They kissed, and later that evening, they met again and had their first sexual encounter.

The affair continued after Lewinsky became a paid White House employee and would last a total of 18 months. During their affair, the President and Ms. Lewinsky had ten sexual encounters in the Oval Office suite, including one instance in which the President, while engaged in sex, spoke to a Republican member of Congress on the telephone regarding sending U.S. troops to Bosnia.

Nervous White House staffers kept a wary eye on the young woman spending an inordinate amount of time around the President. On April 5, 1996, Lewinsky was transferred against her will to a public affairs position at the Pentagon, thus removing her from close proximity to the President. At the Pentagon, an unhappy Lewinsky struck up a friendship with Linda Tripp, who had also been transferred out of the White House. Lewinsky proceeded to confide intimate details of her extraordinary relationship with the President, which was still ongoing. Tripp then began secretly tape-recording Lewinsky's often-emotional telephone conversations.

For Bill Clinton, the unyielding momentum of the Starr investigation, the Paula Jones lawsuit, and the love-struck young Lewinsky, would all soon meld together and spell catastrophe for his presidency.

As the Paula Jones case proceeded toward trial, her lawyers attempted to establish a pattern of sexual misconduct by the President by questioning other women who alleged they also had sexual encounters of one sort or another with Clinton. Jones's lawyers had by now received anonymous tips regarding the Clinton-Lewinsky affair and also subpoenaed Monica Lewinsky.

Further problems ensued for the President via Independent Counsel Ken Starr. This occurred after Linda Tripp provided Starr's investigators with more than 20 hours of tape recordings of her telephone conversations with Lewinsky.

Starr's investigators learned, among other things, that Clinton's close friend Vernon Jordan had provided assistance to Lewinsky, on the President's behalf, in seeking a private-sector job in New York after Lewinsky had been listed as a potential witness in the Jones case. Jordan also found her a lawyer to help swear out an affidavit in the Jones case in which she denied having a sexual relationship with the President.

Since Jordan had once aided Whitewater figure Webb Hubbell, Starr now asked for, and received, permission from the U.S. Justice Department to expand his Whitewater probe to investigate Jordan's involvement in aiding Lewinsky. The focus of Starr's investigation thus shifted into the personal conduct of the President, under the pretext of determining whether Jordan and Clinton had encouraged Lewinsky to lie.

On Friday, January 16, 1998, Starr's investigators had Tripp lure Lewinsky to a Washington hotel where Lewinsky was intercepted by FBI agents, brought to a hotel room, and pressured for hours by Starr's deputies toward cooperating with their Clinton probe. Tripp then departed the hotel and went home where she secretly met with one of Jones's lawyers and briefed him on the entire Clinton-Lewinsky affair.

The next morning, Saturday, January 17, President Clinton, in compliance with the U.S. Supreme Court ruling, arrived at his lawyer's office two blocks from the White House to give a pretrial deposition in the Jones case, with the procedure also videotaped. Sitting across the table from Paula Jones, the President was questioned for six hours by her lawyers and was quite surprised when they asked whether he ever had "sexual relations" with Monica Lewinsky along with other detailed questions. Clinton, somber and hesitant, denied under oath having sexual relations with Lewinsky, according to the definition provided by Jones's lawyers. Clinton also said he could not recall ever being alone with her in the White House. The President's denials would later be used as the basis of an article of impeachment.

By Wednesday, January 21, a firestorm of media speculation regarding Clinton and Lewinsky swept the airwaves and the Internet. Cable news networks provided nearly round-the-clock coverage of every whisper from the White House. Commentators and political pundits even talked of possible resignation or impeachment if indeed there had been an affair and the President had encouraged Lewinsky to lie. Inside the White House, Clinton met with his top aides and denied having a sexual relationship. He told senior aide Sidney Blumenthal that Lewinsky "came on to me and made a sexual demand on me," and when he had rebuffed her, Clinton added, she had threatened to say they had an affair. Later that day, Clinton sat down for a previously scheduled interview with TV journalist Jim Lehrer and declared: "There is no improper relationship..."

On Friday, Clinton met with his Cabinet and once again denied the allegations. After the meeting, several Cabinet members, including Secretary of State Madeleine Albright, emerged with statements of support. "I believe that the allegations are completely untrue," said Albright.

Three days later, January 26, Clinton attempted to quell all of the speculation. Standing alongside First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton and Vice President Al Gore in the Roosevelt Room of the White House, Clinton waged his finger at news cameras and declared: "But I want to say one thing to the American people. I want you to listen to me. I'm going to say this again: I did not have sexual relations with that woman, Miss Lewinsky. I never told anybody to lie, not a single time -- never. These allegations are false. And I need to go back to work for the American people."

For the next seven months, Clinton's friends and top advisors, including the First Lady, made numerous TV appearances upholding the President's denial, even citing "a vast, right-wing conspiracy" against the President. Several aides were also called to testify regarding any communications they had with the

President about Lewinsky and repeated Clinton's denials to all questioners, including to Ken Starr's federal grand jury.

Amid the festering scandal, the President received a bit of good news. On April 1, 1998, in Little Rock, Arkansas, U.S. District Judge Susan Webber Wright dismissed the Paula Jones sexual harassment lawsuit without a trial, stating that although Clinton's alleged behavior in the hotel room may have been "boorish and offensive," it did not meet the standard of sexual harassment under federal law.

However, Ken Starr was undeterred by the Jones case dismissal. In July 1998, Starr granted full immunity to Monica Lewinsky in exchange for her cooperation. She then turned over a blue dress to Starr that contained a stain from a sexual encounter with the President. The FBI obtained a blood sample from the President and was able to match his DNA with the stain on the dress. Evidence of a sexual encounter was now undeniable.

On August 6, Lewinsky made the first of her two appearances before Starr's federal grand jury. She was questioned extensively about her sexual relationship with the President and revealed shockingly intimate details. But she also told the grand jury that no one had instructed her to lie or had offered her a job to keep quiet about the affair.

On Monday, August 17, President Clinton, ignoring his own lawyers' advice, appeared voluntarily before the same grand jury via a live closed-circuit television hookup from the White House, with his appearance also videotaped. Clinton thus became the first President ever to testify in a grand jury criminal investigation concerning his own actions. The President was questioned at length regarding the information Lewinsky had provided, but repeatedly declined to answer specific questions concerning sex. The President's testimony would later be used as the basis of an article of impeachment.

That night, the President appeared on national TV to address the American public and now admitted: "Indeed, I did have a relationship with Ms. Lewinsky that was not appropriate. In fact, it was wrong. It constituted a critical lapse in judgment and a personal failure on my part for which I am solely and completely responsible." The President also acknowledged he had been deceptive: "I know that my public comments and my silence about this matter gave a false impression. I misled people, including even my wife. I deeply regret that."

The next month, September 1998, would be worse for Clinton. On September 9, Ken Starr delivered his 453-page report and 36 boxes of evidence to the House of Representatives, citing 11 impeachable offenses allegedly committed by the President.

On September 11, the Republican-controlled House Judiciary Committee began releasing the Starr report to the public via the Internet. It contained near-pornographic descriptions of sexual encounters between Clinton and Lewinsky. Ten days later, the Judiciary Committee released the videotape of Clinton's August 17 testimony. The four-hour-long testimony was immediately broadcast in its entirety by American TV networks and globally via news satellites. The committee also released 3,183 pages of sexually explicit evidence, including Lewinsky's grand jury testimony, a photograph of her stained blue dress, and her "Dear Handsome" letters to Clinton.

The prestige of the presidency and America's status worldwide appeared to suffer as a now-humiliated Clinton was endlessly mocked by everyone from late-night TV comedians to average people on the street. By now, 78 U.S. newspapers, including USA Today, The Philadelphia Inquirer, Des Moines Register, Atlanta Journal-Constitution, San Jose Mercury News, and Detroit Free Press, had called on Clinton to resign. Numerous other papers, including The New York Times and Washington Post, denounced his conduct in their editorial pages but stopped short of calling for his resignation or impeachment. International papers expressed deep concern over the turmoil in Washington and its possible impact on the stability of U.S. global leadership.

Making matters worse for Clinton, the Republican-controlled House Judiciary Committee announced it would consider a resolution calling for a formal impeachment inquiry, the first step in the long process toward possible removal of Clinton from office. The super-charged partisan political atmosphere in Washington, combined with lingering anger over the President's deceit, and the allegations contained in the Starr report, all lent the necessary momentum. Thus the process moved forward and Clinton became only the third U.S. President to be seriously faced with the threat of impeachment. On October 8, the House of Representatives voted 258-176 to authorize an open-ended impeachment inquiry, with 31 Democrats joining the

Republicans in voting for the investigation. The House Judiciary Committee, consisting of 21 Republicans and 16 Democrats, then began televised hearings.

Witnesses appearing before the committee included Ken Starr himself, who accused Clinton of repeatedly engaging in conduct under oath that was deliberately deceptive in order to hide his affair with Lewinsky. The Democrats, in defense of Clinton, produced an array of scholars asserting that the charges against Clinton did not rise to the level of "high Crimes and Misdemeanors" mentioned, but not specifically defined, in the U.S. Constitution as grounds for impeachment, and therefore did not warrant removal of the President from office. The President's own lawyers described Clinton's conduct as "morally reprehensible" but not impeachable.

Judiciary Committee Chairman Henry Hyde also sent 81 written questions to the President asking Clinton to "admit or deny" various statements of fact contained in the Starr report. On November 27, the President responded in writing to the questions and forcefully denied having lied under oath. The President's responses to the 81 questions would later be used as the basis of an article of impeachment.

Republicans on the Judiciary Committee drafted a total of four articles of impeachment based on 60,000 pages of evidence provided by Ken Starr. The evidence included sworn testimony, grand jury transcripts, depositions, statements, affidavits, along with video and audio tapes, all concerning Clinton's attempts to conceal his extramarital affair with Lewinsky during the Paula Jones lawsuit and subsequent criminal investigation by Starr's office.

On Friday, December 11, the Judiciary Committee voted mainly along party lines to approve the first three articles of impeachment, accusing Clinton of committing perjury before Starr's grand jury and in the Jones case, and with obstruction of justice in the Jones case. Only one Republican on the committee sided with Democrats by casting a no vote on Article 2 charging Clinton with perjury in the Jones case.

On Saturday, the fourth article was approved, accusing Clinton of making false statements in his answers to the 81 written questions. The four articles were then forwarded to the full House of Representatives for consideration. Republicans controlled the House with 228 members compared to 206 Democrats and one Independent who normally sided with the Democrats.

With polls indicating that Clinton's job approval rating was holding steady at 60 percent amid a booming economy, and with most Americans disapproving of impeachment, Democrats now began a major push for an alternative to impeachment. They hoped for a congressional censure of the President that would reprimand him but leave him in office. However, their efforts got nowhere amid the fiercely partisan impeachment atmosphere in Congress.

Adding to the polarization, old rumors and allegations of marital infidelities came out of the woodwork against leading Republicans, including Speaker-designate Bob Livingston, who stunned his conservative colleagues when he admitted several marital indiscretions.

The House of Representatives had been scheduled to convene on Thursday, December 17, to begin considering the four articles of impeachment. However, on Wednesday, President Clinton ordered a series of military air strikes against Iraq, following the failure of Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein to comply with U.N. weapons inspectors. Clinton's timing drew an immediate chorus of criticism from Republicans, including Senate Majority Leader Trent Lott who stated: "I cannot support this military action in the Persian Gulf at this time. Both the timing and the policy are subject to question."

The President defended his timing when asked by a White House reporter if the attack was an attempt to avoid the impeachment vote in Congress. "I don't think any serious person would believe that any President would do such a thing."

Democrats wanted to postpone the impeachment proceedings until after the conclusion of the joint U.S.-British military operation, claiming it would be improper to debate removing America's Commander in Chief while U.S. pilots were "in harm's way." Republicans, however, allowed only a 24-hour delay, noting that impeachment proceedings had been held against President Richard Nixon while U.S. troops were still in Vietnam.

Thus, on Friday, December 18, 1998, the full House of Representatives gathered for the first time in 130 years to consider the impeachment of a President. Thirteen hours of fiery partisan oratory followed in which

over 200 members of Congress arose to speak their minds, quoting everyone from Abraham Lincoln to Martin Luther King Jr.

On Saturday, toward the end of deliberations, Speaker-designate Bob Livingston made a blockbuster surprise announcement on the House floor, saying he would quit Congress as a result of his now-admitted extramarital affairs, and also called on President Clinton to resign. "I must set the example that I hope President Clinton will follow," Livingston declared.

Meanwhile, televised news reports indicated the U.S. was in the midst of bombing Iraq again.

House Democrats also staged a brief walkout to protest the Republican refusal to allow consideration of a censure resolution as an alternative to impeachment.

Amid this extraordinary atmosphere, the House of Representatives voted on the four articles of impeachment, needing only a simple majority (218 votes) for approval of each article.

Articles of Impeachment:

RESOLVED that William Jefferson Clinton, President of the United States, is impeached for high crimes and misdemeanors, and that the following articles of impeachment be exhibited to the United States Senate:

ARTICLES OF IMPEACHMENT EXHIBITED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA IN THE NAME OF ITSELF AND OF THE PEOPLE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, AGAINST WILLIAM JEFFERSON CLINTON, PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, IN MAINTENANCE AND SUPPORT OF ITS IMPEACHMENT AGAINST HIM FOR HIGH CRIMES AND MISDEMEANORS.

Article 1: Perjury before Independent Counsel Ken Starr's grand jury.

In his conduct while President of the United States, William Jefferson Clinton, in violation of his constitutional oath faithfully to execute the office of President of the United States and, to the best of his ability, preserve, protect, and defend the Constitution of the United States, and in violation of his constitutional duty to take care that the laws be faithfully executed, has willfully corrupted and manipulated the judicial process of the United States for his personal gain and exoneration, impeding the administration of justice, in that:

On August 17, 1998, William Jefferson Clinton swore to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth before a Federal grand jury of the United States. Contrary to that oath, William Jefferson Clinton willfully provided perjurious, false and misleading testimony to the grand jury concerning one or more of the following:

- (1) the nature and details of his relationship with a subordinate Government employee;
- (2) prior perjurious, false and misleading testimony he gave in a Federal civil rights action brought against him;
- (3) prior false and misleading statements he allowed his attorney to make to a Federal judge in that civil rights action; and
- (4) his corrupt efforts to influence the testimony of witnesses and to impede the discovery of evidence in that civil rights action.

In doing this, William Jefferson Clinton has undermined the integrity of his office, has brought disrepute on the Presidency, has betrayed his trust as President, and has acted in a manner subversive of the rule of law and justice, to the manifest injury of the people of the United States.

Wherefore, William Jefferson Clinton, by such conduct, warrants impeachment and trial, and removal from office and disqualification to hold and enjoy any office of honor, trust or profit under the United States.

(Approved 21-16 by the House Judiciary Committee on Friday, December 11, 1998)

(Passed 228-206 in the House of Representatives at 1:25 p.m. on Saturday, December 19, 1998)

Article 2: Perjury in the Paula Jones civil case.

Article 3: Obstruction of Justice related to the Jones case.

In his conduct while President of the United States, William Jefferson Clinton, in violation of his constitutional oath faithfully to execute the office of President of the United States and, to the best of his ability, preserve, protect, and defend the Constitution of the United States, and in violation of his constitutional duty to take care that the laws be faithfully executed, has prevented, obstructed, and impeded the administration of justice, and has to that end engaged personally, and through his subordinates and agents, in a course of conduct or scheme designed to delay, impede, cover up, and conceal the existence of evidence and testimony related to a Federal civil rights action brought against him in a duly instituted judicial proceeding.

(Approved 21-16 by the House Judiciary Committee on Friday, December 11, 1998)
(Passed 221-212 in the House of Representatives at 1:59 p.m. on Saturday, December 19, 1998)

Article 4: Abuse of Power by making perjurious statements to Congress in his answers to the 81 questions posed by the Judiciary Committee.

Consequences:

With Articles 1 and 3, pertaining to perjury and obstruction of justice, having been approved by the House of Representatives, Senate Majority Leader Trent Lott announced that President Clinton's impeachment trial would begin in the Senate on Thursday, January 7, 1999.

The televised proceedings in the Senate chamber began with formalities required by the Constitution including a formal reading of the charges and the swearing-in of all 100 senators by William H. Rehnquist, Chief Justice of the U.S. Supreme Court, who would preside. Senators then proceeded one by one to the front of the chamber to sign an oath book pledging to do "impartial justice."

Remarkably, the partisan rancor, which had been so evident during the House proceedings, appeared at first to be somewhat diminished in the Senate as the 55 Republican and 45 Democratic senators began their solemn duties, sitting in silent judgment of Clinton with the potential outcome being the first-ever removal of an elected President.

Although this was the second impeachment trial in U.S. history, it marked the first time an elected President was faced with possible removal from office. Andrew Johnson had ascended to the presidency following the assassination of President Abraham Lincoln and thus was not elected. President Johnson was impeached by the House in 1868 but later acquitted by a single vote following a Senate trial.

Now, in the Senate chamber, a team of 13 Republican managers (prosecutors) from the House of Representatives, led by Judiciary Committee Chairman Henry Hyde, faced off against seven defense lawyers representing President Clinton, led by main White House Counsel Charles Ruff. Opening statements by each side lasted three days, after which individual senators were allowed two days of questioning. The senators passed 150 written queries to Chief Justice Rehnquist who read them aloud to the House prosecutors and Clinton's lawyers.

In making their case against the President, House prosecutors accused Clinton of "willful, premeditated, deliberate corruption of the nation's system of justice through perjury and obstruction of justice." Clinton's lawyers countered: "The House Republicans' case ends as it began, an unsubstantiated, circumstantial case that does not meet the constitutional standard to remove the President from office."

With opinion polls showing that Clinton's job approval rating now surpassed 70 percent despite his impeachment, and with most Americans favoring a speedy conclusion of the Senate trial, Democratic senators proposed that the impeachment case against Clinton be dismissed outright for lack of merit. The senators were also aware, following informal head counts, that there would never be enough votes in the Senate to convict the President, with two-thirds of the Senate (67 votes) needed. To obtain the 67 votes, twelve Democratic senators would have to vote to convict the President in addition to all 55 Republicans, a highly unlikely prospect.

Meanwhile, the already-shaky bipartisan pact of cooperation fell apart after House prosecutors, aided by Independent Counsel Ken Starr, met privately with Monica Lewinsky on January 24 to discuss her possible testimony in the trial.

Three days later, the Senate voted along party lines and defeated the Democrats' motion to dismiss the charges against Clinton, then voted in favor of seeking videotaped depositions from Lewinsky, Vernon Jordan, and Sidney Blumenthal.

Democrats strongly objected to calling any witnesses, claiming they were not necessary, given the voluminous House record already available. Republicans, however, claimed the Democrats were trying to stop them from presenting a thorough case against Clinton. They originally wanted to call up to 15 witnesses.

On February 1, Monica Lewinsky was questioned by House prosecutors behind closed doors for four hours, with the procedure videotaped. The President's lawyers asked her no questions and instead read her a brief

statement of apology: "Ms. Lewinsky, on behalf of the President, we'd like to tell you how very sorry we all are for what you have had to go through."

Vernon Jordan and Sidney Blumenthal were questioned by House prosecutors over the next two days. But it quickly became evident that the depositions were unlikely to change any votes in the Senate. There was no 'smoking gun' or any new revelation.

On February 4, the Senate voted 70-30 against calling Lewinsky to testify in person. The vote came as a relief to many in Washington who dreaded the prospect of Lewinsky testifying in the historic Senate chamber about her sexual encounters with the President. Instead, videotaped excerpts of her February 1 deposition would be used. Thus, two days later, Americans, for the first time, saw and heard Lewinsky as 30 video excerpts were played on TV monitors in the Senate chamber during final presentations by House prosecutors and Clinton's lawyers.

The video clips mostly concerned her New York job search, affidavit in the Jones case, and the hiding of small gifts Clinton had given her, all of which formed the basis for the obstruction of justice charge against the President. Video clips of the depositions given by Vernon Jordan and Sidney Blumenthal, along with earlier footage of President Clinton's August 17 grand jury testimony, his Jones case deposition, and his emphatic denial from January 1998, were also presented. In several instances, the same video was shown by House prosecutors and Clinton's lawyers, with entirely different meanings attached, according to whomever was giving the interpretation.

On February 8, closing arguments were presented with each side allotted a three-hour time slot. On the President's behalf, White House Counsel Charles Ruff declared: "There is only one question before you, albeit a difficult one, one that is a question of fact and law and constitutional theory. Would it put at risk the liberties of the people to retain the President in office? Putting aside partisan animus, if you can honestly say that it would not, that those liberties are safe in his hands, then you must vote to acquit."

Chief prosecutor Henry Hyde countered: "A failure to convict will make the statement that lying under oath, while unpleasant and to be avoided, is not all that serious...We have reduced lying under oath to a breach of etiquette, but only if you are the President...And now let us all take our place in history on the side of honor, and, oh, yes, let right be done."

With closing arguments completed, the Senate began three days of closed-door deliberations on the two articles of impeachment, with each senator limited to 15 minutes of speaking time. Senate Democrats had attempted, but failed, to open this process to the public via television.

On Friday, February 12, television cameras were once again turned on inside the chamber and senators gathered in open session for the final roll call. With the whole world watching, senators stood up one by one to vote "guilty" or "not guilty." On Article 1, the charge of perjury, 55 senators, including 10 Republicans and all 45 Democrats voted not guilty. On Article 3, obstruction of justice, the Senate split evenly, 50 for and 50 against the President.

With the necessary two-thirds majority not having been achieved, the President was thus acquitted on both charges and would serve out the remainder of his term of office lasting through January 20, 2001.

About two hours after his acquittal, President Clinton made a brief appearance in the White House Rose Garden and stated: "Now that the Senate has fulfilled its constitutional responsibility, bringing this process to a conclusion, I want to say again to the American people how profoundly sorry I am for what I said and did to trigger these events and the great burden they have imposed on the Congress and on the American people."