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Archibald Cox: Conscience Of A Nation



Synopsis

By October 1973 special prosecutor Archibald Cox was tracing the Watergate cover-up to the Oval Office. President Nixon demanded that he stop. In the "Saturday Night Massacre" two heads of the Justice Department quit before Nixon found a subordinate (Robert Bork) willing to fire Cox. Immediately public opinion swung against the president and turned Cox into a hero "seemingly Washington's last honest man." Cox's life was distinguished well before that Saturday night. He had been a clerk for the legendary judge Learned Hand, a distinguished professor at Harvard Law School, and the Solicitor General, arguing many Supreme Court cases. He exemplified what we want lawyers to be. At its core Archibald Cox is the story of a Yankee who went to Washington but refused to leave his principles behind.

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Customer Reviews

In a time curiously bereft of public heroes, the life and achievements of Professor Archibald Cox of Harvard University stands in bold relief as a reminder of what a man of singular dedication, an ethic of public service, and a lifetime of professional integrity can do to change the course of history. This wonderful biography by law professor Ken Gormley recounts the life and accomplishments of this extraordinary person, a man who stood face to face in opposition to one of the most popular and powerful Presidents of the 20th century and, to his undying credit, never blinked. It is a riveting tale of man whose allegiance was to the simple notion that our nation is one ruled by law and not by individual personality. It also tells the captivating story of man who spent a lifetime serving the

American people, living by his principles, and passing them on so memorably as a law professor at Harvard University. Cox appears everywhere in the pantheon of modern American accomplishment during his more than sixty year career. He first clerked for the legendary Supreme Court Justice Learned Hand in the midst of the Depression before embarking on a course as a pioneer in public labor law, soon to be asked to serve the federal executive, first as a Special Assistant to the National Defense Mediation Board, and then with the Solicitor General's office. Finally, shortly after the end of the war, he accepted a teaching position with Harvard Law School, where he was destined to become a leading legal expert in labor law. It was in this capacity that he eventually became an advisor to John F. Kennedy, a Harvard graduate and the junior Senator from Massachusetts.

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