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Nixon still convinced of innocence

NEW YORK (AP) — As the world around him was caving in during his last week as president, Richard Nixon was still convinced he had not committed an impeachable offense and was determined to "fight it out," Newsweek magazine reported Sunday.

But some of Nixon's top staff members, including White House Chief of Staff Alexander Haig, sought ways to show Nixon that resignation was the only way out.

"If I knew there was an impeachable offense, I would not make the Senate go through the agony of trying to prove it," the Newsweek article quotes Nixon as telling a meeting of his Cabinet on Aug. 6, 1974, three days before he resigned. "I will go through this with my head high — right up to the end, if it comes."

The Newsweek article is the second installment of excerpts from the book, "The Final Days," by Washington Post reporters Bob Woodward and Carl Bernstein, due for publication next month.

The authors' disclosures of high-level complicity in the Watergate

scandal won a Pulitzer prize for their newspaper.

Newsweek's first installment painted a picture of a broken Richard Nixon in his last days, drinking too much, crying and threatening suicide. The assertions were disputed by Nixon's two sons-in-law, Edward Cox and David Eisenhower, who said they saw nothing to indicate Nixon was mentally unstable in his final days in office.

In the final excerpts, Nixon is shown as steadfastly against resigning, outraged at suggestions that he quit and angry with the press for "haunting" him.

The article also tells of futile attempts by Nixon aides Bob Haldeman and John

Ehrlichman to obtain pardons from Nixon for their part in the Watergate affair. The article says Haldeman's request to Haig for a pardon from Nixon "sounded as if Haldeman was warning that he would send Nixon to jail if he didn't get a pardon."