

What They Said in Resigning

The Letters to Mr.

Washington

Text of the letters of resignation of Attorney General Richard G. Kleindienst, White House chief of staff H. R. Haldeman, and presidential assistant John D. Ehrlichman. The letter of resignation from White House counsel John W. Dean III, which President Nixon said was requested, was not made public.

Kleindienst

Dear Mr. President:
It is with deep regret and

after long and searching thought that I hereby submit my resignation as attorney general, to take effect upon the appointment and qualification of my successor.

Even though, as you know, I had previously indicated a desire to leave the government this year for family and financial reasons, the circumstances surrounding the disclosures made to me on Sunday, April 15, 1973, by Assistant Attorney General Petersen, United States Attorney Titus and Assistant United States Attorney Sil-

bert, dictate this decision at this time. Those disclosures informed me, for the first time, that persons with whom I had had close personal and professional associations would be involved in conduct violative of the laws of the United States. Fair, and impartial enforcement of the law requires that a person who has not had such intimate relations be the Attorney General of the United States.

It is not for me to comment now on the tragedy that has occurred. However,

I will always be mindful of your charge to me from the very beginning that the entire matter be fully investigated and that the full effect of the law be administered no matter who it might involve or affect. You can be proud of the Department of Justice for the manner in which it, from the beginning, has responded to that charge.

Finally, let me express my deep personal appreciation to you for having appointed me the 68th attorney general of the United States. It is the greatest honor I shall ever have. I shall always be humbly proud to have been part of the Department of Justice and to have had the opportunity to serve my country as part of your administration.

Sincerely,
Richard G. Kleindienst."

Haldeman

Dear Mr. President:

As you know, I had hoped and expected to have had an earlier opportunity to clear up various allegations and innuendoes that have been raised in connection with matters related to the Watergate case. It now appears that this process may consume considerable time. Meanwhile, there is apparently to be no interruption in the flood of stories arising every every day from all sorts of sources.

I fully agree with the importance of a complete investigation by the appropriate authorities of all the factors that may be involved; but am deeply concerned that, in the process, it has become virtually impossible, under these circumstances for me to carry on my regular responsibilities in the White House.

It is imperative that the work of the office of the President not be impeded and your staff must be in a position to focus their attention on the vital areas of domestic and international concern that face you, rather than being diverted by the daily rumors and developments in the Watergate

Nixon

case. For these reasons, I submit my resignation as assistant to the President.

I intend to cooperate fully with the investigation — and will at my request be meeting this week for that purpose with the U.S. attorneys and with the counsel to the Senate select committee.

I am convinced that, in due course, I will have the opportunity not just to clear up any allegations or implications of impropriety but also to demonstrate that I have always met the high and exacting standards of integrity which you have so clearly and properly demanded of all who serve on the White House staff.

I have full confidence that when the truth is known the American people will be totally justified in their pride in the office of the President and in the conduct of that office by President Nixon.

Respectfully,
H. R. Haldeman.

Ehrlichman

Dear Mr. President:

For the past two weeks it has become increasingly evident that, regardless of the actual facts, I have been a target of public attack. The nature of my position on your staff has always demanded that my conduct be both apparently and actually beyond reproach. I have always felt that the appearance of honesty and integrity is every bit as important to such a position as the fact of one's honesty and integrity.

Unfortunately, such appearances are not always governed by facts. Realistically, they can be affected by rumor, unfounded charges or implications and whatever else the media carries. For instance, this week totally unfounded stories appeared in the Los Angeles Times claiming I had asked our embassy in Lebanon to help the Vesco group in a banking deal. I not only did not do so but, in actual fact, I caused the State Department to cable the embassy that no one at the White House had any inter-

est in the Vesco dealings. Since I have already reported to you many of the facts in the Gray case, I need only say that at no time did I directly or indirectly suggest that Mr. Gray should do other than keep the Hunt documents, although there have been reports to the contrary. Equally without merit are the source stories about some alleged involvement in the Watergate matter.

As I analyze my situation, I have to conclude that my present usefulness to you and ability to discharge my duties have been impaired by these attacks, perhaps beyond repair.

It is not fair to you and my staff colleagues for me to try to do my job under these circumstances. Too much of my time and attention is and will be consumed in concern for and straightening out such allegations. At my request, I am going to have separate interviews this week with the district attorney and the Senate committee council. Thus, I am looking forward to an early review of the facts and evidence with the appropriate authorities, and I should spend the time necessary in relation thereto.

One of the toughest problems we have in this life is in seeing the difference between the apparent and the real, and in basing our actions only on that which is real. We all must do that more than we do. I have confidence in the ultimate prevalence of truth; I intend to do what I can to speed truth's discovery.

Therefore, Mr. President, I submit to you my resignation. There are on the domestic council staff so many good people of ability that I am confident a transition of my responsibilities can be affected without loss of progress. I will do all I can to assist in accomplishing the transition.

Yours sincerely,
John D. Ehrlichman