

Santarelli Resignation Is Reported

By William Claiborne
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Donald E. Santarelli, who has said he thinks that President Nixon should resign because "There is no White House anymore," has submitted his resignation as head of the Justice Department's Law Enforcement Assistance Administration, Nixon administration sources said yesterday.

An announcement is expected within the next day or two, even though Justice Department and White House spokesmen refused yesterday to either confirm or deny the report.

A Justice official said that news stories about Santarel-

li's public comments on the presidency were discussed yesterday in a regular Monday morning public-affairs staff meeting attended by Attorney General William B. Saxbe, but that Saxbe would have no comment.

"It's a matter between Santarelli and the President," the Justice official said.

Deputy White House press secretary Gerald R. Warren said he would neither confirm nor deny the report that Santarelli had already submitted a letter of resignation.

Santarelli could not be reached, and an aide said the LEAA administrator

was not taking telephone calls or accepting appointments to talk with newsmen.

The 36-year-old Nixon appointee became the focus of public attention a week ago when he was quoted in a news report as saying that Watergate disclosures have "measurably cheapened" government service, and that he was thinking about quitting soon.

In the meantime, he was quoted as saying in the Associated Press interview, he planned to "very assiduously avoid" the use of President Nixon's name in public.

Later, Santarelli said he portion of the interview that



DONALD E. SANTARELLI
... focus of attention

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he had made the remarks in a portion of the interview that he had understood was to be off the record with nothing attributed to him by name. He did not deny the accuracy of the report, but said the comments had been taken out of context from "casual conversation."

In another interview, published Sunday in the Philadelphia Inquirer, Santarelli was quoted as saying:

"There is no White House anymore. It pains me, but I think he (Mr. Nixon) should resign. After all, you've got the cleanest vice president in history over there, his whole life's been gone over by every agency imaginable, he's got 'USDA Prime' stamped on every haunch."

When Santarelli found out that those remarks, made in an interview in April, were to be published, he said he had misunderstood the ground rules and had not expected to be quoted. He also said his remarks had been misinterpreted.

Following publication of both accounts, Santarelli issued statements praising Mr. Nixon's support of the LEAA, which administers about \$900 million in yearly federal grants to state and local law-enforcement agencies.

In response to the interview published Sunday, he said he had been discussing

"various future hypothetical" situations.

In response to the Associated Press interview, Santarelli had issued a statement saying:

"It is true that I avoid using the President's name in circumstances where I deem it to be counterproductive, such as student audiences, since I try to run LEAA in a nonpartisan, nonpolitical way. There are many instances when I do use the President's name as chief executive."

Two days later, Santarelli said in a speech here that the LEAA "has been one of the principal thrusts against crime by the administration of Richard Nixon." He added he was "proud to have been a part of one of the brightest programs of this administration."

Santarelli was named head of LEAA on March 20, 1973, after serving as a deputy associate attorney general and an assistant U.S. attorney.

He was one of the chief architects of the D.C. crime bill, the President's model criminal-justice reform program that included such controversial measures as "no-knock" police entry and preventive pretrial detention for repeat offenders.