

Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, Oct. 20 — Following are the texts of the statement by Ronald L. Ziegler, the White House press secretary, regarding President Nixon's decision to discharge Archibald Cox, the special Watergate prosecutor, and William D. Ruckelshaus, the Deputy Attorney General; a letter of resignation from Elliot L. Richardson, the Attorney General, to President Nixon and the President's reply to Mr. Richardson; Mr. Nixon's letter to Robert H. Bork, the Solicitor General, and Mr. Bork's letter to Mr. Cox, and Mr. Ruckelshaus's letter of resignation to the President:

Ziegler Statement

I know many of you are on deadline. I have a brief statement to give you at this time, and following the reading of the statement we will have an exchange of a series of letters relating to action which President Nixon has taken tonight.

President Nixon has tonight discharged Archibald Cox, the special prosecutor in the Watergate case. The President took this action because of Mr. Cox's refusal to comply with instructions given Friday night through Attorney General Richardson that he was not to seek to invoke the judicial process further to compel production of recordings, notes or memoranda regarding private Presidential conversations.

Further, the office of the Watergate special prosecution force has been abolished as of approximately 8 P.M. tonight. Its function to investigate and prosecute those involved in the Watergate matter will be transferred back into the institutional framework of the Department of Justice, where it will be carried out with thoroughness and vigor.

In his statement Friday night, and in his decision not to seek Supreme Court review of the Court of Appeals decision with regard to the Watergate tapes, the President sought to avoid a constitutional confrontation by an action that would give the grand jury what it needs to proceed with its work with the least possible intrusion of Presidential privacy. That action taken by the President in the spirit of accommodation that has marked American constitutional history was accepted by responsible leaders in Congress and the country.

Mr. Cox's refusal to proceed in the same spirit of accommodation, complete with

his announced intention to defy instructions from the President and press for further confrontation at a time of serious world crisis, made it necessary for the President to discharge Mr. Cox and to return to the Department of Justice the task of prosecuting those who broke the law in connection with Watergate.

Before taking this action, the President met this evening with Attorney General Richardson. He met with Attorney General Richardson at about 4:45 today for about 30 minutes.

The Attorney General, on hearing of the President's decision, felt obliged to resign, since he believed the discharge of Professor Cox to be inconsistent with the conditions of his confirmation by the Senate.

As the Deputy Attorney General, Mr. William Ruckelshaus, refused to carry out the President's explicit directive to discharge Mr. Cox, he, like Mr. Cox, has been discharged of further duties effective immediately.

Professor Cox was notified of his discharge by the Acting Attorney General, the Solicitor General, Robert H. Bork, professor of law from Yale University.

We have available for you now the exchange of letters between Attorney General Richardson and the President and the other correspondence.

Richardson Letter to Nixon

Dear Mr. President:

It is with deep regret that I have been obliged to conclude that circumstances leave me no alternative to the submission of my resignation as Attorney General of the United States.

At the time you appointed me, you gave me the authority to name a special prosecutor if I should consider it appropriate. A few days before my confirmation hearing began, I announced that I would, if confirmed, "appoint a special prosecutor and give him all the independence, authority, and staff support needed to carry out the tasks entrusted to him." I added, "Although he will be in the Department of Justice and report to me—and only to me—he will be aware that his ultimate accountability is to the American people."

At many points throughout the nomination hearings, I reaffirmed my intention to assure the independence of the special prosecutor, and in my statement of his duties and responsibilities, I specified that he would have "full authority" for "determining

whether or not to contest the assertion of 'executive privilege' or any other testimonial privilege." And while the special prosecutor can be removed from office for "extraordinary improprieties," I also pledged that "the Attorney General will not countermand or interfere with the special prosecutor's decisions or actions."

While I fully respect the reasons that have led you to conclude that the special prosecutor must be discharged, I trust that you understand that I could not in the light of these firm and repeated commitments carry out your direction that this be done. In the circumstances, therefore, I feel that I have no choice but to resign.

In leaving your Administration, I take with me lasting gratitude for the opportunities you have given me to serve under your leadership in a number of important posts. It has been a privilege to share in your efforts to make the structure of world peace more stable and the structure of our own Government more responsive. I believe profoundly in the rightness and importance of those efforts, and I trust that they will meet with increasing success in the remaining years of your Presidency.

Respectfully,
ELLIOT L. RICHARDSON

Nixon Letter to Richardson

Dear Elliot:

It is with the deepest regret and with an understanding of the circumstances which brought you to your decision that I accept your resignation.

Sincerely,
RICHARD NIXON

Nixon Letter to Bork

Dear Mr. Bork:

I have today accepted the resignation of Attorney General Richardson and Deputy Attorney General Ruckelshaus. In accordance with Title 28, Section 508(B) of the United States Code and of Title 28, Section O. 132(A) of the Code of Federal Regulations, it is now incumbent upon you to perform both the duties of Solicitor General, and duties of and act as Attorney General.

In his press conference today, special prosecutor Archibald Cox made it apparent that he will not comply with the instruction I issued to him, through Attorney General Richardson, yesterday. Clearly the Government of the United States cannot function if employes of the

executive branch are free to ignore in this fashion the instructions of the President. Accordingly, in your capacity of Acting Attorney General, I direct you to discharge Mr. Cox immediately and to take all steps necessary to return to the Department of Justice the functions now being performed by the Watergate special prosecution force.

It is my expectation that the Department of Justice will continue with full vigor the investigations and prosecutions that had been entrusted to the Watergate special prosecution force.

Sincerely,
RICHARD NIXON

Bork Letter to Cox

Dear Mr. Cox:

As provided by Title 28, Section 508(B) of the United States Code and Title 28, Section O. 132(A) of the Code of Federal Regulations, I have today assumed the duties of Acting Attorney General.

In that capacity I am, as instructed by the President, discharging you, effective at once, from your position as special prosecutor, Watergate special prosecution force.

Very truly yours,
ROBERT H. BORK
Acting Attorney General

Honorable Archibald Cox
Special Prosecutor
Watergate Special
Prosecution Force
1425 K Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C.

Ruckelshaus Letter to Nixon

Dear Mr. President,

It is with deep regret that I tender my resignation. During your Administration, you have honored me with four appointments — first in the Justice Department's Civil Division, then as administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency, next as acting director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, and finally as Deputy Attorney General. I have found the challenge of working in the high levels of American Government an unforgettable and rewarding experience.

I shall always be grateful for your having given me the opportunity to serve the American people in this fashion.

I am, of course, sorry that my conscience will not permit me to carry out your instruction to discharge Archibald Cox. My disagreement with that action at this time is too fundamental to permit me to act otherwise.

I wish you every success during the remainder of your Administration.

Respectfully,
WILLIAM D. RUCKELSHAUS