

Federal Aide Who Quit Blames News Reports

Washington

Expressing concern about "recent misleading reports of remarks attributed to me," Donald E. Santarelli has resigned as head of the Law Enforcement Assistance Administration, the White House said yesterday.

In a letter to President Nixon dated last Saturday and released by the White House yesterday, Santarelli said he was "concerned, unhappy, that recent misleading reports of remarks attributed to me have raised questions about my commitment to you and your administration. Let me assure you of my continued public and personal support."

Santarelli had criticized President Nixon's handling of the Watergate scandal in recent interviews with the Associated Press and the Philadelphia Inquirer.

In each case, Santarelli

Richmond's New Mayor Takes Office

Richard Nelson, a Richmond city councilman since 1972, took office yesterday as mayor of the city.

The 46-year-old councilman was chosen to succeed Mayor Booker T. Anderson during a regular council meeting Monday night. The term of office is one year.

The council also named Gary Fernandez as vice-mayor.

said after the interviews were published that he had misunderstood the ground

rules of the interviews and had not meant for his remarks to be published. He did not challenge the accuracy of the comments attributed to him.

The entire AP interview with Santarelli was tape recorded by the AP reporter, who volunteered in advance to exclude any portions that Santarelli did not want on the record.

At no point in the ensuing question - and - answer session did Santarelli make such a request.

In his letter to Mr. Nixon, Santarelli said:

"Circulation of these reports, wrongful that they are, may harmfully affect my ability to continue to serve credibly your administration as administrator of LEAA."

"Above all, however, I wish to make clear that the report that I even suggested your resignation is one of those infamous journalistic contextual contortions that give words wholly different meaning than was intended. I am personally appalled that even such a suggestion could be attributed to me."

In response, Mr. Nixon praised Santarelli, saying that during his five years in the Justice Department Santarelli had "worked tirelessly toward reform of our system of criminal justice" and had "added distinction to your own outstanding career."

Associated Press