

Conversation Number 742-13  
June 26, 1972, 11:31 A.M.-12:08 P.M.  
Oval Office  
President and Flanigan

[The president greeted Peter Flanigan at 11:31 A.M. The focus of their conversation was on trade problems, with Henry Kissinger joining briefly, and then filling ambassadorships before the election and after. Ambassadorial posts, such as Iceland, Holland, Pakistan, Malagasy, Panama and Bangladesh were addressed, with Flanigan noting that would leave Australia, Denmark, Italy, Jamaica, New Zealand, Spain, Sweden, Poland and Portugal to fill after the election. Flanigan told the president that the political appointees they would be sending to the Senate for confirmation, along with career appointees, did not include, in Flanigan's words, any "big contributors." As the conversation was coming to an end, Flanigan noted that some appointees were sensitive to the criticism of the Administration. The president dismissed Watergate as just another political attack, and absolved Mitchell of responsibility.]

**PRESIDENT:** The press reaches so much. They say, well, the IT and T case, the Carswell case, and the bugging incident show that this Administration—

**FLANIGAN:** [Unclear.]

**PRESIDENT:** That we're just callous and cynical about the hanky-panky going on, in the name of Christ, what are they talking about. Ah, steal the—

**FLANIGAN:** Victimless crime, that creates a campaign issue—

**PRESIDENT:** This bugging issue is so God damn ridiculous, that it's almost like a comic opera. And you know damn well that those Cubans were doing it for political reasons. I mean, they're supporting us against McGovern.

**FLANIGAN:** Sure.

**PRESIDENT:** And Republicans are going to be [winners], as sure as hell, and we know that. But, ah, anyone in their right mind also knows, I wouldn't and that the White House wouldn't have anything to do with such a stupid exercise. And Mitchell would not. Trouble is, Mitchell can't, of course, control every jackass in his shop.

**FLANIGAN:** And no one can in a political campaign. But for Kraft, and those people, to take that line that—

**PRESIDENT:** Well, [cross talking.] But the real charge is that, that this Administration creates this climate.

**FLANIGAN:** That's right.

PRESIDENT: Climate of repression. I'm not sure if it's across the country—

FLANIGAN: Somebody I suppose reads it.

PRESIDENT: What?

FLANIGAN: Somebody reads it.

PRESIDENT: No, [not enough to make any difference.]