

Conversation Number 343-42
June 26, 1972, 2:35- 3:00 P.M.
Executive Office Building
President and Colson

[The conversation transcribed below originally began at 1:38:27.0 on tape 343b and ended at the end of tape 343c. The conversation can be followed with the Subject Log.]

[I listened to this poor audio quality conversation several times, and decided not to take the time to try to transcribe what could be heard because there was little of substance. This was basically a session in which the president complained to Colson about the news media. It started with the president's displeasure over a *Washington Post* story that compared George McGovern to Dwight Eisenhower, which the president wanted Colson to knock down. There was a passing discussion about what the president would do with Ambassador Henry Cabot Lodge; he would not get Spain, which he wanted. Then the conversation turned to the bad press they were getting because of the bugging incident, particularly the piece by Joseph Kraft, which the president also raised with Flanigan. The point the president emphasized with Colson was the failure of the press to take any offense over the stealing of government documents and then publishing them, while they were taking great offense at a failed attempt to bug the DNC. The president made clear he felt both were wrong, but the press coverage was distorted. Nonetheless, he did not believe the Washington press coverage of the "bugging incident," as he called it at this stage, was having any impact on the people across the country. Still, he told Colson, they could not "merely sit here and wait for the thing to drop." The conversation moved on to meat, food prices and the economy.]