

Conversation Number 746-17
July 1, 1972, 12:16-1:00 P.M.
Oval Office
President, Haldeman and Ziegler

[This was a regular morning meeting to review the president's schedule, as well as the First Family's. Julie Nixon Eisenhower dropped by for part of the discussion, and when she departed, the president told Haldeman about his earlier conversation with California Governor Ronald Reagan. "He's a strange duck... he's just really strange. Weird guy," the president said. "He is," Haldeman agreed. Both agreed he was a good public speaker, as was the president's Treasury Secretary, John Connally. Haldeman pointed that Clark MacGregor was a far better public speaker than John Mitchell. He also told the president he had informed Vice President Agnew of Mitchell's resignation. Haldeman was surprised that Agnew was not surprised by Mitchell's departure, and thought it better. Haldeman was not aware that on June 20, 1972, Magruder, after an evening tennis game with Agnew, told him the Watergate break-in had been "our operation." Agnew said, in that case, he did not want to know anything more.¹ When Ziegler arrived in the Oval Office at 12:53 P.M., the president wanted to know how he was going to handle Mitchell's resignation. The conversation transcribed below originally began at 0:14:17.0]

ZIEGLER: You had a lunch with him yesterday, he informed you of his personal decision.

PRESIDENT: Right.

ZIEGLER: You understood, as you reflected in your letter—

PRESIDENT: I set forth my thoughts in my letter.

ZIEGLER: His first paragraph of his letter is very good too.

PRESIDENT: [Cross talking with Haldeman.]

HALDEMAN: His letter is damn good.

ZIEGLER: So there's nothing more that has to be said.

PRESIDENT: Well, they'll try to get into [whether it's related to] Watergate, or [unclear] the White House, or something like that, the whole thing. But I'd say the hell with them. [Noise, then firmly and clearly:] They tried to do with that the walkie-talkie? For Christ's sakes. When the story came in, was they'd found a map of Watergate in it, and a, ah—

ZIEGLER: Bugging.

PRESIDENT: And a bugging device. Shit.

HALDEMAN: It wasn't a bugging device, it was a—

ZIEGLER: Well, it was about not the type of bugging device they described, it was more about the type used on an intercom system [unclear.]

[After speculation about the type of device, the conversation turned again to Mitchell's resignation, which all agreed would be a big story, and "a tragic story." The conversation originally ended at 0:15:16.0.]

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¹ Jeb Stuart Magruder, *An American Life: One Man's Road to Watergate* (New York: Atheneum, 1974) 226.