[Letter from John W. Dean III, Counsel to the President, to Henry S. Reuss, Chairman, Subcommittee on Conservation and Natural Resources, Committee on Government Operations, United States House of Representatives (Oct. 20, 1971), *reprinted in* Comm. Staff of the S. Comm. on the Judiciary, Refusals by the Executive Branch to Provide Information to the Congress 1964-1973, at 417 (Comm. Print 1974).]

The White House,

*Washington, October 20, 1971*.

Hon. Henry S. Reuss,

*Chairman, Conservation and Natural Resources Subcommittee, House of Representatives, Washington, D.C.*

Dear Mr. Chairman: This will acknowledge receipt and thank you for your letter of October 20, 1971 to Mr. Peter M. Flanigan, Assistant to the President, requesting that he appear before your Subcommittee to present testimony on October 21, 1971.

As a matter of long established principle and precedent, members of the President's immediate staff do not appear before Congressional committees to testify in regard to the performance of their duties on behalf of the President. This practice is, indeed, fundamental to the operation of our system of government.

Therefore, I wish to advise you that Mr. Flanigan respectfully declines the invitation to testify. However, we would be pleased to assist your Subcommittee in its work and to supply you with such information as you may request that will be appropriate to your Subcommittee's instant inquiry.

With kind regards,

Sincerely,

John W. Dean III,

*Counsel to the President*.