[Letter from John W. Dean III, Counsel to the President, to Wayne N. Aspinall, Chairman, Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs, United States House of Representatives (Nov. 22, 1972), *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 157 (Comm. Print 1974).]

The White House,

*Washington, D.C., November 22, 1972*.

Hon. Wayne N. Aspinall,

*Chairman, Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs,*

*House of Representatives, Washington, D.C.*

Dear Mr. Chairman: By letters of November 13-14, 1972, you have requested Messrs. John Ehrlichman, Leonard Garment, Egil Krogh, Bradley Patterson, and myself, all members of the President’s personal staff, to appear and testify at hearings before your Subcommittee on Indian Affairs regarding the recent seizure and occupation of the Bureau of Indian Affairs Headquarters building. On behalf of all of the above individuals receiving invitations, I wish to thank you and respond.

As you know, it is a matter of well established principle and precedent that members of the President’s staff do not appear before Congressional committees to testify in respect to the performance of their duties on behalf of the President. This practice is, indeed, fundamental to the operation of our system of government. I must, therefore, respectfully advise you that the members of the President’s staff that you have invited to testify must decline.

Sincerely,

John W. Dean III,

*Counsel to the President*.