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Mr. Henry Kearns was President of the Export-Import Bank, appointed by Mr. Nixon as his first appointment to that post when Mr. Nixon became President. Mr. Kearns had known Mr. Nixon well for nearly a quarter of a century. He said that Mr. Nixon had indicated that he understood very well the tremendous impact that the Export-Import Bank can have and the President's initial instructions to him were to take a wide scope to get done the kinds of things that Mr. Kearns thought needed doing without expecting or heeding any real guidance from other parts of the Government. Mr. Kearns stated that he found, as a result of those instructions and as a result of the general knowledge that the bureaucratic jungle had, that Mr. Nixon had given him free rein and a relatively unsupervised regime until the last year. During that last year he found that the State Department, the White House Staff, the Treasury and others were beginning to close in on him and to try to take over the operation. He fought against it and felt that he had been successful in resisting this encroachment but that it had proceeded fairly rapidly after he resigned and Mr. William Casey took over.

Mr. Kearns related the following incident which took place in 1971. Mr. Kearns had an appointment to see President Nixon in order to present him officially the annual report of the Export-Import Bank. This was an occasion

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which was to be used for picture taking and a little subsequent publicity prior to that to enhance its activities . Just before he went in to see the President, Halderman got a hold of him and said, "You've got five minutes." Mr. Kearns indicated that he understood and felt that this was quite adequate for his purpose which was ceremonial. When he got in, Mr. Nixon said to him, "Sit down, Henry." Mr. Kearns said, "I can't do it, Mr. President, I've only got five minutes with you." Mr. Nixon said, "Sit down, I want to talk to you." Mr. Kearns said, "I'm sorry but Bob Halderman has indicated that your schedule is such that I should only stay five minutes. The President said, "But I want to talk to you. And if the President of the United States wants to talk to somebody he can talk to him." The President ordered coffee, pointed to a stack of papers, and said, "Look, here are the decisions I've got to make today. I want to talk to you about some of these." So the President spent about an hour and a half going over a stack of papers with Henry Kearns, asking Henry Kearns' opinion of various elements in them. At the end of the hour and a half when Mr. Kearns walked out, Bob Halderman walked up to him and said, "You son of a bitch, you'll never see him again." Mr. Kearns said that was an accurate statement, the threat was carried out. Other than a ceremonial occasion in

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large groups, he was never permitted to see President Nixon again.

Mr. Kearns reported that a few months after Mr. Nixon came into office, he was - Mr. Kearns was one of the small group having dinner with the President - the President spoke up about the fact that he had discovered a surprise that there was no way in which a previous President had been able to pass on to his successors the details of the decision-making process of the presidency and that he had concluded that he himself would spend four or five years after he had concluded the presidency, trying to write up the details of this process. Mr. Kearns stated that he had learned that the President had discovered some- time after taking office that Mr. Johnson and Mr. Kennedy had had the habit of recording conversations that transpired. Mr. Johnson had told him that both he and Jack Kennedy had had to play them back and decide which ones should be destroyed and which ones should be retained for historical purposes. It was Mr. Kearns' belief that on the discovery of this fact Mr. Nixon coupled that with his desire to retain a record from which he could write and began the process of recording every conversation. He is further convinced that Mr. Nixon subsequently forgot about the decision and proceeded to destroy himself by the lack of care with which these conversations were recorded and by an irresistible

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desire to retain what had been recorded even after he discovered that it was damaging.

Mr. Kearns went on to say that while going through a receiving line a couple of years later he said to the President, "There's a very important matter about which I've got to talk to you." He said Mr. Nixon stiffened, leaned backward and said, "Look, I've got many more important things with which to deal." He said that it was quite apparent that Mr. Nixon had been well poisoned by Halderman in his case by that time.