

Mathias Purge Threats End

White House Scandals Tend To Vindicate Md. Senator

By Douglas Watson
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There were widespread rumors three years ago that independent-minded Sen. Charles McC Mathias Jr. (R-Md.) would be purged this year by the Nixon-Agnew administration.

Now, after two years of White House scandals, Nixon and Agnew have had to leave office and several prominent Maryland Democrats and Republicans have declined to risk challenging Mathias.

"Things seem to have broken right for him said a key official in the Senate.

"I don't think there's any way he's going to be beaten this year," grudgingly remarked State Sen. William A. Wilson (R-Allegany), a conservative who disagrees with Mathias frequently.

However, Mathias clearly is running scared this election year, well aware of the 5 to 2 advantage in registered voters that Maryland Democrats have over Republicans, and concerned that this may be a bad year for a GOP incumbent, even for one who more often than not was at odds with Nixon and Agnew.

Despite his disagreements with the Nixon administration that just ended, Mathias during the past six years has been an influential senator on many major national issues.

One reason that the soft-spoken Mathias has attained above-average importance

for a first-termer in that exclusive, 100-member club called the U.S. Senate is his knack for being liked by his fellow lawmakers—including many who regularly vote the other way, according to numerous interviews.

The question now is how well liked Maryland's 52-year-old senior senator will be in his state's Sept. 10 Re-businessmen yesterday where defeats his one GOP opponent, then in the November general election against the winner among 11 Democrats now seeking the chance to challenge him.

Mathias was elected to the Senate in 1968's three-way race with less than a majority of the vote, receiving 541,893 votes (48 per cent), while Daniel B. Brewster, the Democratic incumbent, got 443,667 (39 per cent) and perennial candidate George P. Mahoney, running as an independent, collected 148,467 (13 per cent).

Mathias' mother confided to one of his aides just after his election, "This is the one thing that Mac has always wanted. He has always wanted to be in the Senate."

Mathias most likely will win or lose this year on the controversial record he has compiled since then. There are few people who are neutral about the former Frederick lawyer.

Speaking for many Mathias admirers, the administrative assistant for a leading GOP senator said

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recently: "The hopes that we have of reversing the erosion of public confidence in the Congress rest largely with people like Mathias, who really works hard at the job."

But Rep. Gilbert Gude (R-Md.), one of Mathias' closest friends and political allies, conceded, "There are some people on the right-wing who really dislike Mac with a passion."

One of those is his primary election opponent, Dr. Ross Z. Pierpont, a Baltimore surgeon, who has re-

peatedly attacked Mathias for being part of the "ultra-liberal left."

Discussing his political philosophy this spring, Mathias said, "I'm not all that liberal. In fact, in some respects, I'm conservative. A while ago, I introduced a bill preserving the guarantees of the Bill of Rights by prohibiting warrantless wiretaps. I suppose they'll say it's another liberal effort, but it's as conservative as you can get. It's conserving the Constitution."

During his first five years



By Harry Naltchayan—The Washington Post

Sen. Charles M. Mathias, as he appeared on a recent television interview show.

as a senator, Mathias voted in agreement with President Nixon 47 per cent of the time, compared with an average of about 63 per cent agreement among all Republican senators. He voted with the majority of his party 31 per cent of the time, compared with an average of about 60 per cent among all GOP senators.

The liberal Americans for Democratic Action agreed with Mathias' votes 90 per cent of the time last year and 60 to 78 per cent earlier

See MATHIAS, C2, Col. 1

MATHIAS, From C1

in his term. Americans for Constitutional Action, at the other end of the philosophical spectrum, has agreed with Mathias only 16 per cent of the time during the last five years.

The AFL-CIO feels Mathias voted right on 32 of 45 key votes as senator, while the U.S. Chamber of Commerce agreed with him on only two of nine votes to which it gave special consideration last year.

The League of Women Voters has agreed with Mathias on key votes 100 per cent of the time during the last three years. Mathias was present for 87 per cent of the votes those years, about average attendance.

Mathias began his Senate term praising President Nixon more than criticizing him. Of Nixon's proposed domestic program, Mathias said in 1969, "We could have a greater reform of our political system than the American people have seen at least since the first administration of Franklin Delano Roosevelt."

The direction of the Nixon-led Republican Party soon began to trouble Mathias. In 1969 he cautioned the GOP against following a "Southern strategy" aimed at attracting "all the conservatives and Wallaceite radicals."

In 1971 Mathias charged, "Some White House staff men have pursued a political strategy which betrays substantive Nixon proposals." He added, "We cannot rally a responsible political majority behind the New American Revolution by appealing only to the fears and insecurities of a group that is all-white and prematurely aged"

In December, 1971, syndicated columnists Rowland Evans and Robert Novak wrote that not since former Sen. Charles Goodell (R-N.Y.) in 1970 "was defeated with White House connivance has any Republican so outraged Mr. Nixon and his senior staff as Mathias. The senator's liberalism and tendency to bolt party lines

have bred animosity in the inner sanctum."

During the same period, Mathias also was under heavy pressure from conservative Republicans in Maryland. He was greeted with scattered boos when introduced at several GOP functions around the state.

But, there was no purge. If one had been planned against Mathias, the slowly submerging Nixon administration was in no position to carry it out after the Watergate dam burst. When Mathias held a 1973 fundraiser that netted \$80,000, President Nixon sent a message of praise, saying, "I am pleased to share Sen. Mathias' same strong commitment to the cause of good government."

This came after Mathias repeatedly had urged the White House to disclose the Watergate facts, while most Republicans were minimizing the scandal.

"Bugging, wiretapping, breaking and entering are aggravated crimes when used to pervert a national election. I think it's important we send a message from Washington to everyone interested in clean politics around the country that these things are wrong," Mathias said in the fall of 1972

Mathias also voted to authorize the Senate investigation of Watergate.

Last December, Mathias said in a Senate address, "Watergate is the turning point in our nation's history. If we turn our backs to the grievous attacks that have been made on the Constitution and the laws of the land under the vague incantations of one man's view of national security, we will have lost our right to hold the precious gift of freedom won for us almost 200 years ago by men of courage, integrity and intelligence."

Unlike some lawmakers, according to colleagues, Mathias doesn't act like one who thinks every word he utters will be carved in stone. More than once he has arrived in the Senate cloakroom wearing farm work clothes in which he started the morning, with just enough time to slip on a coat and tie and make a roll call vote.

"Most of the members have great affection for him (Mathias)," said an aide to another senator. Mathias is

a close friend of Sen. Mike Mansfield (D-Mont.), the majority leader, and Sen. Hugh Scott (R-Pa.), the minority leader.

The two leaders have joined with Mathias at varying times in sponsoring legislation. On Dec. 21, 1973, Mansfield rose to praise campaign finance reforms proposed by Mathias, calling the Marylander, "The conscience of the Senate." High praise for a first-termer from the other party.

Mathias also has maintained cordial relations with senators who disagree with him much more often, such as James O. Eastland (D-Miss.) and Roman L. Hruska (R-Neb.). "It's his personality. He (Mathias) understands the members of the Senate," said a key GOP assistant there.

Mathias serves on four Senate committees, including the powerful Appropriations and Judiciary Committees. He also is on the District of Columbia unit and is co-chairman of a special committee on the termination of national emergencies, a singular honor for a Republican.

Mathias has received most attention in the Senate for his opposition to the Nixon administration on highly controversial issues and for his leadership in pushing for campaign financing and congressional reforms.

He was a "dove" on Vietnam before being elected to the Senate, being one of a small group of House Republicans who urged President Johnson to halt the bombing of North Vietnam. During the 1968 campaign, Mathias questioned the nation's Vietnam policy, "When we have to blow up and destroy the cities we're supposed to be there to protect."

Later, in the Senate, he was among those who pleaded unsuccessfully with President Nixon to set a deadline for withdrawal of American troops from Vietnam. He also spoke out against U.S. involvement in Laos and introduced a resolution seeking to end the Cambodian invasion.

Mathias joined with Mansfield in sponsoring the bill that repealed the Gulf of Tonkin Resolution that

President Johnson had used as his authority for greatly expanding American military intervention in Southeast Asia.

On other military matters, Mathias in 1969 voted with the majority against President Nixon's Sentinel anti-ballistic missile (ABM) program, saying in his maiden Senate speech that the proposed massive expenditures weren't worth while and would hurt prospects for world peace.

Mathias in 1970 was a sponsor of an unsuccessful amendment that would have placed a \$66 billion ceiling on defense spending.

Mathias voted against the White House's wishes on a number of other important occasions. He helped defeat two of President Nixon Supreme Court nominees, Clement F. Haynsworth and G. Harold Carswell, despite intense administration pressure to go along with them.

Mathias refused to sponsor the Nixon administration's proposed changes in the Voting Rights Act, which he felt would weaken the measure, but instead backed a five-year extension of the law. He also voted against the administration-backed D.C. crime bill be-

cause of its "no knock" provision, which both houses of Congress now have voted to repeal.

Mathias has been one of the leading advocates of campaign finance reform. He has said, "No problem confronting our nation today is greater than that of our steadily eroding confidence in our political system... This erosion of confidence results from undeniable evidence that our current political campaign process—relying on big money and secrecy—corrupts our principles, our leaders and ourselves."

In 1971, Congress enacted the Federal Elections Campaign Act that contained the first campaign-finance reforms in many years. The measure included 13 amendments offered by Mathias.

The Senate last year passed a broader campaign-finance bill backed by Mathias that would limit spending by congressional candidates and provide for partial public funding of election campaigns. The House recently approved a narrower bill without provision for any public funding.

In his re-election campaign, Mathias has imposed these voluntary limitations on his own fund-raising: a \$100 maximum on contributions, all contributions and expenditures in checks and not cash, reporting of all contributions and expenditures, and an overall ceiling on his spending such as the Senate bill would require.

To make Congress more responsive and responsible, Mathias has urged an end to the seniority system, called for many more committee meetings to be open to the public, sought full public disclosure by members of Congress of their income sources and pushed for a revised budgetary process under which appropriations would have to be made within the limits of a previously set expenditure ceiling.

On another front, a pending bill from the special committee Mathias jointly heads would end all existing national "emergencies." These "emergency" situations that have been declared over recent decades and then largely forgotten have granted Presidents extraordinary powers delegated under nearly 600 laws.

Mathias has been criticized most heatedly for allegedly being "pro-busing." In January, 1973, when a crowd of 2,000 angry Prince George's County parents held a rally in front of the U.S. Capitol to demand that Maryland members of congress seek to stop a court-ordered busing plan for the county, Mathias was one of those lampooned in song:

"I'd like to get myself a bus/A bus for me and you. We'll send a corps to Baltimore/ And pick up (Judge Kaufman's crew/ And then we'll pick up (former school board member) Mrs. Wolf/ And

get Mathias too /We'd drive them round Right out of town/ We'd save our children, too."

Mathias denies being pro busing saying recently, "I have never done anything that promoted busing." He did vote this year against a proposed anti busing amendment by Sen. Edward J. Gurney (D-Fla.) on the grounds that it would have reopened all previously decided school desegregation cases.

Mathias has introduced amendments to require that no court-ordered busing be started in the middle of a school year, that no student be bused beyond the second nearest school to his home and that busing can only be used as a last resort to bring about school desegregation.

Mathias' emergence as an influential senator on many national issues has not kept him from paying attention to local matters. He claims partial credit for bringing the level of federal aid to Maryland up from \$73 per person in 1969 when he took office (46th among the 50 states) to \$196 per person by 1973 (32d).

An extensive lobbying effort by Mathias and J. Glenn Beall Jr., Maryland's other Republican U.S. senator, resulted in President Nixon's 1971 decision shifting Ft. Detrick, at Frederick, formerly the Army's biological warfare research center, to cancer research.

Mathias has shown special interest in protecting Mary-

land's natural resources. He was the chief sponsor of legislation authorizing creation of the 20,000-acre Chesapeake and Ohio Canal National Historic Park. He has sponsored bills to better preserve Assateague Island and Antietam National Battlefield and has called for a federal-state commission to coordinate protection of the Chesapeake Bay.

Because his state is just next door to the Capital, Mathias' Senate staff of 40 to 45 people has one of the heaviest volumes of constituent contacts. For example, it receives an average of 400 to 500 letters a day. Five staffers are assigned full-time as caseworkers to help solve problems of complaining citizens.

Mathias realizes that he doesn't always vote the way many of his constituents might like. He ended a campaign speech in Columbia on June 27 by quoting Edmund Burke's famous words to the electors of Bristol in 1774: "Your representative owes you, not his industry only, but his judgment; and he betrays instead of serving you if he sacrifices it to your opinion."

As the crowd of Mathias supporters applauded, Mathias added, "I would point out that Edmund Burke was defeated at the next election — but it was still the right answer." A louder round of applause seemed to show that such declarations by Mathias don't condemn him to follow Burke to defeat this year.