

White House Says Nixon Aide Is Leaving But Denies Pressure

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MIAMI, Jan. 29 — The White House confirmed today that Dwight L. Chapin was leaving as President Nixon's appointments secretary, but denied that he was being forced out or that his departure resulted from his reported links to political campaign espionage by Republicans last year.

At a briefing at the temporary White House press office here, Ronald L. Ziegler, the President's press secretary, said that Mr. Chapin had decided to accept a "fine" offer to join a private business in the spring.

At the same time, Mr. Ziegler made what he described as a "general, broad, sweeping, all-encompassing" denial that the President, H. R. Haldeman, the White House chief of staff who is Mr. Chapin's immediate superior, or any other Administration official had asked Mr. Chapin to leave.

The New York Times reported yesterday from Washington that a high ranking Administration official said that Mr. Chapin was being forced out because of newspaper reports naming him as the White House contact with Donald H. Segretti, a California resident, who is widely known to have played a role in what has been described as widespread Republican effort to disrupt the Democratic primaries and harass Democratic candidates last year.

Asked about the report in The Times, which he smilingly referred to as "the publication that serves the city located on the northeastern tip of the United States," Mr. Ziegler said that he welcomed the oppor-

tunity to say that the article was "absolutely unfounded and untrue." He emphasized that Mr. Chapin, his friend from student days at the University of Southern California, "has every opportunity" to stay in the Administration.

The press secretary then recalled Mr. Chapin's six years of service to Mr. Nixon, including work last year in preparing for the President's trips to China and the Soviet Union, and noted that the appointments secretary had been named by the U.S. Jaycees as one of the 10 outstanding young men of America in 1972.

However, Mr. Ziegler went on, the 32-year-old Mr. Chapin has received "a number of very fine offers in the business world" and "I think he has made the decision" to accept one of them.

In response to further questions, Mr. Ziegler insisted that Mr. Chapin made the decision to leave on a personal basis, considering his family and his career.

Last year the White House denied that Mr. Chapin had been involved in the bugging of the Democratic National Headquarters at the Watergate complex, but it did not deny an article in The Washington Post that he had been the contact for Mr. Segretti in an effort to disrupt the Democratic campaign.

Mr. Nixon returned to Washington tonight from a long weekend at his home in nearby Key Biscayne and an overnight trip to Grand Cay in the Bahamas.