How Nixon's White House Works

SURROUNDING the outwardly calm White House Oval Office that is the President's citadel is a symbolic battleground pocked with shell holes and scarred with trenches. The tactical objective of the attackers is the President's attention. The besiegers include great institutions and the meekest citizen. There are the representatives of the Federal Government itself: the Cabinet en bloc and as individuals, Senators and Congressmen, military chiefs, economic advisers, satraps of the independent and quasi-independent agencies.

Those are the front-line supplicants, but many others constantly seek to infiltrate the presidential stronghold. They include state governors and city mayors, and the senior national and state political leaders of the President's party. After them comes a helter-skelter militia of citizens, often sniping at one another, enemies of the President as well as friends: banker, lawyer, merchant, chief, cleric, doctor, scholar, journalist, student, housewife. Some advance to plead a cause, others to extol, still others to criticize and fix blame.

Patrolling the battlefield, defending the fortress against unwanted infiltrators, is the President's personal staff. It is his own creation. Each of the staff members is ultimately answerable to a constituency of only one man: Richard Milhous Nixon. Theirs is a hazardous occupation; often criticism aimed at the President falls short and bursts directly on them.

Throughout his first year in office, Richard Nixon's elaborately organized network of assistants, counselors, advisers and lesser factotums went largely unscathed. Any concern that it might insulate him from reality came only in sporadic muttering from Congressmen and disgruntled favor-seekers. No longer. When Nixon decided to move U.S. forces into Cambodia, evidently without realizing the outcry of protest that this would provoke, he set off angry charges that he is too isolated from many sections of American opinion. Interior Secretary Walter Hickel pleaded that Nixon pay more attention to the young, complained that he got a swift brush-off from the President's staff—and reported that he had been able to see Nixon alone exactly twice since taking office 16 months before.

All the King's Krauts

Suddenly it is fashionable in Washington to fret and fulminate that a palace guard has separated Nixon from realities. In the White House, the key figures around the President are Staff Chief H.R. (Bob) Haldeman, Domestic Affairs Aide John Ehrlichman and National Security Adviser Henry Kissinger. Because of their ancestry—and their closemouthed habits—the Teutonic trio is now known as "the Berlin Wall" in the White House pressroom. One Administration official calls them "all the king's Krauts"; another speaks of "the throne nursers." Kissinger refers to the other two as "the Praetorian Guard," and Haldeman and Ehrlichman are widely called "Von Haldeman" and "Von Ehrlichman"—or simply "the Germans." The nicknames are used by officials inside the White House and out, sometimes in jest, sometimes in bitterness. While Attorney General John Mitchell is not technically part of the White House staff, he comes in for equal criticism because Nixon consults him regularly about the whole panoply of presidential problems; his special intimacy with Nixon, which goes back to their days as law partners in New York City, irritates those with less access to the President.

Mitchell finds Nixon using him as a sounding board in making key decisions of politics and program; Kissinger virtually monopolizes the President's ear on foreign policy. Mitchell and Kissinger are envied and resented for their unrivaled influence. The appointed palace guards, Haldeman and Ehrlichman, screen nearly every person admitted to the President's lair and practically every piece of paper that reaches his desk or briefcase. They stir enmity because, their antagonists argue, the pair shuts him off from access to uncongenial views and even from members of his Cabinet.

Criticism and anger directed at the men who guard the President's doors and carry out his orders are no novelty. "This is a problem that must have started with George Washington," says one Nixon man. "If everybody went in immediately whenever he needed something, the White House wouldn't work." Harry Truman kept on his desk a sign that read THE BUCK STOPS HERE. It was a nice, punchy slogan, but the buck got to him only after it had filtered through his personal staff. Nor is it a new idea that the men who do the winnowing can exercise extraordinary power. Clark Clifford, a perennial adviser to postwar Democratic administrations, remembers an Eisenhower aide telling him that Ike was spared night work because his staff boiled 150-page memoranda down to two pages. Clifford replied: "There is only one trouble. If I could be the fellow who prepares the two-page memo, I'd be President instead of Ike."

Zooming 'Em Past

In Richard Nixon's guard, Haldeman and Ehrlichman are each a chief. They perfected the precise logistical machine that was Richard Nixon's 1968 campaign organization. For that reason, they are sometimes erroneously dismissed as mere "advance men"—schedulers and arrangers who precede a touring politician. Though they lack serious background in Government, they have become far more than that. Haldeman was a Los Angeles advertising executive,

DENNIS BRACK

MITCHELL

ARTHUR SCHATZ

EHRLICHMAN

MIKE MAUNEY

HALDEMAN

PICTORIAL PARADE

KISSINGER

Ultimately answerable to a constituency of only one man.

Harry R. Haldeman

I THINK like the President, and that's why I believe I can serve him well." By that, Harry Robbins ("Bob") Haldeman means that he shares with Richard Nixon a deep-rooted belief in hard work, loyalty and efficiency. The identification began early. Haldeman was a student at U.C.L.A. in the late '40s. Alarm about the Communist threats was approaching its zenith, and his hero then was Congressman Richard Nixon. Today, at 43, still trim, tan and crew-cut, Haldeman very much resembles that student of decades past.

Around the White House, Haldeman is noted for his discipline and dedication to duty, traits acquired from his grandfather, who in 1922 founded an anti-Communist organization named the Better America Foundation, and a father whose abiding interest was the Salvation Army. His organizational talents appeared early: when he was 14, Haldeman turned the family's Toluca Lake, Calif., home into a summer camp for neighborhood children. Later, while at U.C.L.A. (B.S. in business administration), he managed the unsuccessful campaign for student body vice president of Jeanne Fisher, John Ehrlichman's wife-to-be.

Haldeman joined the advertising firm of J. Walter Thompson in 1949, just as the Alger Hiss trial was in full swing, and again found himself under the spell of a crusading Nixon. By 1956 he had joined Nixon as an advance man and within four years, he was chief of the advance men in the presidential campaign. "I labeled him the chief of the frogmen because he and his crew were always hopping about," says Herb Klein. "His wife collects artificial frogs even now."

Bacharach and Guitars. Haldeman's dedication to work carries over into his private life. Like Nixon, he is a stereo music fan, and prefers to work at home for an hour or two each evening with Burt Bacharach or guitar music in the background. Photography is his passion. He began shooting movies of the President and big state events last year with a camera he bought in a Bonn PX, and has since virtually filmed Nixon's every step. What socializing Haldeman does tends to be with like-minded members of the Administration. His closest friend in Washington is Ehrlichman, a former classmate at U.C.L.A., whom Haldeman enlisted as an advance man in the 1960 campaign. Haldeman was working with Nixon on a fund-raiser in Chicago in 1959 and invited Ehrlichman to come along to "find out what this is all about." In Washington, Haldeman, his wife Jo and their four children are frequent visitors at the Ehrlichmans, and sometimes join them for trips to Key Biscayne and Camp David.

Ehrlichman a real estate lawyer, before going to work for Nixon (*see boxes*).

The two men differ in style and function. Haldeman, says Herb Klein, Nixon's communications director, is "the city manager of the White House," the man who sees that things get done. He is in Nixon's office so often, says an associate, that "he's usually trying to get out at the same time everyone else is trying to get in." Haldeman runs his staff meetings tightly—"I bang 'em through hard and fast, I zoom 'em past" —and he is the only Nixon man who has no schedule of his own. His is shaped entirely by Nixon's.

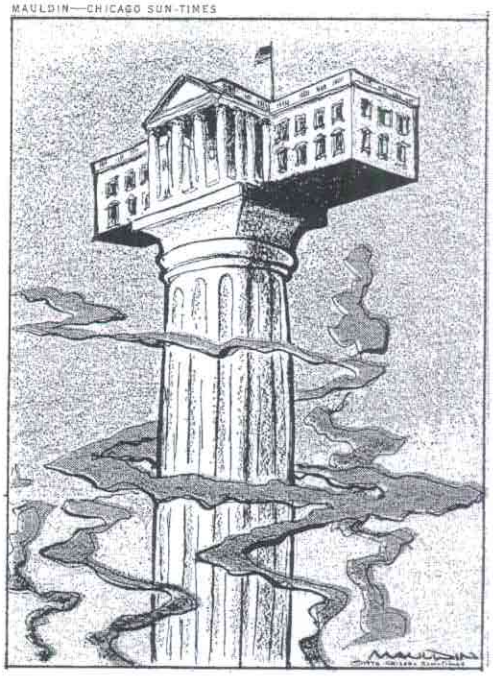
At night, when Nixon is working in the Lincoln sitting room and wants something, it is Haldeman who jumps. Says Haldeman: "He reads a memo item that some project is under way, and he'll call me and say, 'Stop that, I don't want it done that way.' " One leading Republican, asked what would happen if he wanted a man to see the President over Haldeman's objections, snapped the answer: "He wouldn't see the President." There is a route of appeal —but it leads back to Haldeman. One long acquaintance says: "It would be difficult to find a man more suited to this President's needs. If Haldeman has a weakness, it's this: when the President wants something done, there's never any argument—even when it is not in the best interest of the President."

Observes a White House staffer: "Everything is funneled through these two guys. Haldeman is not at all interested in policy, and Ehrlichman is. This explains how they manage to get along. Ehrlichman views himself as a broker, a sifter of ideas, rather than an advocate." But he has taken substantive positions: in favor of Presidential Counsellor Daniel Patrick Moynihan's plan for a minimum annual welfare income, in favor of the conservationists who successfully blocked a Miami jetport in the Florida Everglades. He is as critical of the liberal press as Spiro Agnew, and once told a reporter who said that a Nixon decision would not go down well in the East: "It'll play in Peoria." His staff meetings are less bang-bang-bang than Haldeman's; he moves briskly, but everyone has his say. One joke has it that Ehrlichman eats breakfast the night before.

Ludicrous Blurts

One cause for the impression of White House isolation noted by some observers has been a "them and us" feeling in Nixon's men, an air that many beyond the castle moat are a threat to the monarch within. Haldeman mocked the critics last week by announcing that the "new password" among the Eastern media was "isolation of the President" (*see* PRESS). Richard Nixon's unease in public has contributed to that appearance of insulation.

The comfortable cushioning of the President has a special justification in Nixon's case. He tires easily, and is worried enough about his low threshold of exhaustion to have seen his doctor. So his aides ration his time and husband his energy. "We've got to watch out for the President," Haldeman explains. Nixon's rhythms of work are carefully plotted, and an elaborate machinery processes communications into the White House. Into the offices of deputies and assistants on the West Wing main floor, in the White House basement and in the nearby gray stone Executive Office Building pour reports from every branch of Government, information from around the nation and world, requests from Government officials and private citizens to see the President or his highest advisers. Even omitting secretaries and stenographers, the White House staff numbers more than 150, the largest of any President. The pipelines to the Oval Office are intricately patterned (*see chart, page 19*), and the flow can be stopped at any point —much to the frustration of anyone trying to get an idea through.



IVORY TOWER

Those outside complain of having to go through White House aides under 30 in order to get to anyone of consequence, and that grinds especially hard on Cabinet members who were major figures in their own right before coming to Washington. Few visitors see Nixon, if they do at all, without either Haldeman or Ehrlichman on hand. So blocked and desperate are some Senators that they find themselves ludicrously blurting ideas to Nixon during 15-second encounters in a White House reception line. Nine black Representatives, all Democrats, tried in vain for three months to see Nixon. John Ehrlichman explains: "We try not to permit opportunists to use the presidency as a grandstand. That group has been going around, with Adam Clayton Powell, holding hearings and taking extrem-

ist positions. This looked to me like a setup."

If any doubts daunt the regular rhythms of Haldeman and Ehrlichman they show no signs of it in their carefully ordered routines. Both rise early and get to work almost at once. Ehrlichman reaches the White House from his Great Falls, Va., home each morning at 7 and has breakfast in the basement mess. A Chrysler from the White House collects Haldeman at 7:30 in fashionable Kenwood, Md. Appointments Secretary Dwight Chapin is already in Haldeman's car along with Larry Higby, chief of the "beaver patrol" of clean-cut Haldeman assistants—John Brown and Alexander Butterfield are others —who ride herd on staffers to make sure Nixon's orders are carried out. In the car is a copy of the morning news summary that Nixon will see when he gets to his office at 8:30. It has been put together by Speechwriter Pat Buchanan and aides; it averages 30 pages, and once or twice a week includes a summary of magazine comment, editorials pro and con the Administration, and a foreign-press roundup.

While Ehrlichman is already holding his first staff meeting of the day, Haldeman, Chapin and Higby talk over the day's schedule. After they get to the White House at around 8 a.m., Haldeman gets the White House senior

HERBLOCK—WASHINGTON POST

"HOW ABOUT A BOLD MOVE TO REACH DISSENTERS—LIKE IF WE WERE TO OPEN DIRECT TALKS WITH MEMBERS OF OUR ADMINISTRATION?"

staff together for a brisk you-do-this session, anticipating what the rough spots of the day are likely to be. Ehrlichman is there, with Kissinger, and Presidential Counsellor Bryce Harlow, an Eisenhower Administration veteran.

Press Secretary Ron Ziegler comes in later with Herb Klein. Does the President need to see someone today who has not been scheduled? Should someone else be dropped? What should Ziegler tell the press when they ask at the morning briefing about the Cambodian Foreign Minister, Yem Sambour, who says that he wants U.S. troops to stay until the war is over? Indonesia's Suharto has said at a state dinner the night before that he thinks all foreign troops should leave Cambodia; it is agreed that Ziegler will explain that Suharto meant the North Vietnamese and Viet Cong, since the U.S. has already said that its men would be out by June 30.

Staffing It Out

Haldeman and Ehrlichman go in to see the President at 9 a.m., fill him in on the results of the staff meetings. Normally Nixon has worked the night before in his private quarters, and he reels off a series of requests to Haldeman. Ask Chancellor Alexander Heard of Vanderbilt University, Nixon's temporary liaison man with academe, how the President can keep in touch with what is happening in the colleges after Heard leaves at the end of June. Get reports from Peter Flanigan, an important Ehrlichman aide who deals with the titans of finance, for the upcoming presidential dinner with business leaders. As Haldeman and Ehrlichman emerge from the Oval Office, Henry Kissinger enters to brief Nixon on foreign affairs. "I come out," Haldeman says, "with two to ten pages of notes. When the President begins his appointments schedule at 10 o'clock, I start in on my own work."

That includes many things. A White House staffer wants to see the President; Haldeman gets the details from Dwight Chapin and decides whether the matter merits a face-to-face meeting. If not, the staffer will be asked to send Nixon a memo. Nixon dislikes "the laying on of tongues," as White House locution has it, and much prefers spending three minutes reading a memo to hearing someone out in person for a quarter of an hour. Papers come down from the President with the scrawled notation: "Any comment? RMN." A neat red square is clipped to any urgent memo, any document seen by a key staffer is duly initialed, and everyone knows the deadlines for getting a note to Nixon. "If I have something ready by 2 p.m.," one aide says, "I know that the President will see it by that night."

That is when things are running smoothly. In a crisis, it is a different matter. When a staffer or Cabinet member has an overwhelming reason to see the President, Haldeman insists, they do. He says: "The Postmaster General got in without any trouble at all during the postal strike. Suppose Wally Hickel calls up at 2 a.m. and says there's been a disaster in oil pollution. He says, 'I've got to talk to the President.' He gets to talk to him." The whole staff system, Haldeman contends, "is set up to get

continued on following page

John Ehrlichman

THE Teutonic ring of the Ehrlichman name and the ever-widening boundaries of his power have made for a forbidding image outside the White House. But to men who work closely with him, he is a "very warm, very fine guy." Says Kenneth Cole, his closest assistant on domestic matters: "He's hard; he's fair. He's not afraid to say 'I don't agree,' not afraid to take a stand. But he has a wonderful way with people."

John Ehrlichman, 45, looks as approachable as a Junior Chamber of Commerce booster. His face settles quite naturally into a smile, while his waistline suggests a temporary breakdown in an otherwise vigorous self-discipline. Though he neither drinks nor smokes, Ehrlichman and his wife are fond of throwing family barbecues at their suburban Virginia home. Among friends, Ehrlichman displays a penchant for puns and a dry sense of humor. Last year he told the audience at a Women's National Press Club dinner that he works in the White House because it was the only way he could get off the Washington Beltway. Despite all this, Ehrlichman can be tough, even intemperate, when it comes to what he sees as disturbing trends in America. Last spring, in a meeting with leaders of the student Moratorium, he listened politely until the talk turned to violence. "Lawbreakers will be arrested," he said; when students raised the issue of massive disorders, he added grimly, "We can build the walls higher and higher."

Hiking Around Seattle. Raised as an only child in California and Washington State, Ehrlichman exudes the calm folksiness of the West. "I have never heard him raise his voice," says Cole. "He might say something like, 'Gee, I don't like the way that went,' but he never sounds excited." Friends concur, and one suggests that possibly his faith as a Christian Scientist has something to do with his steady optimism. The father of five and a dedicated family man, he has imbued his children with his own love of the outdoors, and before moving to the capital, frequently took them hiking around Seattle.

Before joining the Nixon campaign, Ehrlichman was a Seattle lawyer and an expert on zoning. Says his former partner Jack Hullin: "He was a tremendous worker, aggressive, competent, and he had all the attributes of a good trial lawyer." Friends remember him as being active in the P.T.A. and the local symphony, especially in the family-concert programs. Says his longtime friend James Cowles: "He is one of the cleanest-cut men I've ever run across, serious-minded, a really bright guy. I trust him, and I trust his judgment."

the pertinent information in. It spends all its time on that, and I think it's successful. This myth that there's a little group that manages and isolates the President—it's a myth and nothing else."

The screening is arduous, however. While Lyndon Johnson proudly showed visitors his 60-button telephone console, Nixon has just three direct lines—to Haldeman, Ehrlichman and Kissinger. Only four Cabinet members can count on getting through to Nixon at any time: Mitchell, of course, and Secretary of State William Rogers, Defense Secretary Melvin Laird and Labor Secretary George Shultz. Every program proposal is "staffed out," since Nixon dislikes to be unprepared when a visitor springs an idea on him. Haldeman supplies him with dossiers on everyone he is to see each day. In the competition for Nixon's attention, many ideas die without getting to his desk. Says Haldeman: "Not many people have discovered electricity."

While Haldeman's traffic-cop role at Nixon's office door has not changed since he assumed it in January 1969, Ehrlichman's responsibilities have continually grown and shifted. "I have a feeling that Ehrlichman is a little astonished that he's where he is," says one associate. He began as White House counsel and troubleshooter—policing conflicts of interest on the staff, helping assemble a package of crime legislation, managing Nixon's financial affairs (including sale of the President's New York apartment).

Idea Generator

At that point, Arthur Burns, a moderate conservative who now heads the Federal Reserve, and Pat Moynihan, a Democrat who served Kennedy and Johnson, were the top two staff men on domestic affairs. Each pushed his own ideas, Cabinet members pressed for theirs, and Nixon found himself in need of a coordinator of domestic programs comparable to Henry Kissinger in foreign affairs. The President put Ehrlichman in the job and will doubtless upgrade him further on July 1, when the Domestic Affairs Council—a counterpart to the National Security Council—comes into being.

Ehrlichman admits that he is no expert on the problems of the U.S., but he does not apologize. "I shouldn't be a generator of ideas," he says. "I'm an assistant, not an adviser. My knowledge of the kind of things we're dealing in here is very limited, and I'm the first to realize that. I'm learning a tremendous amount. I've got to know where the experts are, and I've got to know how to pull it out of them and get it before the President. Sometimes it helps to be uneducated, so you can ask stupid questions that need to be asked and get some hard answers. Questions like 'Do we have to do this at all?' and 'Why can't the states do this?' "

If Ehrlichman's credentials on domestic matters are slightly thin, Henry Kissinger's background in foreign affairs is impeccable. Kissinger, a Harvard scholar of defense and foreign policy, has suffered three staff resignations over the Administration's Cambodia venture, but his remains a solid shop. His 42 professionals are just that, and they provide Nixon with the same quality of technical exposition that he gets from his Council of Economic Advisers under Paul McCracken.

In some ways, Kissinger has an easier relationship with Nixon than Haldeman or Ehrlichman; he does not have to fend off unhappy Congressmen, and his specialty is Nixon's pet preoccupation. "The old man," says a Nixon aide, "doesn't give a damn about parks and stuff, relatively speaking. He's not interested in mobile homes or farm problems. He wants to talk to Henry Kissinger about foreign policy, and he expects the Germans to keep people away from him so he can do it." Kissinger has more experience in Washington than his two colleagues, since he was a defense-policy consultant under both Kennedy and Johnson.


WALTER BENNETT

KLEIN


BOB PETERSON

ZIEGLER


CHOTINER


WALTER BENNETT

DENT

Rationing time and husbanding energy.

Kissinger's dominance of foreign affairs has produced dire strain between him and the Department of State. No one at State bothers any longer to describe relations between Kissinger and Secretary Rogers as cordial. One State official complains: "Making decisions secretly and at the highest level has always tended to cut out contributions based on specific, regional expertise, and this is happening more frequently and seriously than ever before." The post that Kissinger fills was created by John Kennedy when he became impatient with the cumbersome State Department; he called State "a bowl of Jell-O." Nixon has continued and expanded the office.

Muse Together

Ehrlichman, who should know, says of Attorney General John Mitchell: "The President seeks his advice even on fairly mundane and minor details." "They muse together," says another observer. The special relationship between Nixon and Mitchell, according to Richard Kleindienst, Mitchell's No. 2 man at the Justice Department, results because Nixon knows that Mitchell is totally without political ambition, values his judgment, and respects his decisiveness. Mitchell is Nixon's lawyer in the broadest sense. Says Kleindienst: "To be a good lawyer, your client must have absolute confidence in you, and you must be absolutely honest. Very few people fit that definition. John Mitchell is one of them."

Mitchell is characteristically laconic about his contacts with Nixon. "Sometimes I see him a couple of times a day or more," he says. "Other times I go three or four days without seeing him. There's no set schedule, and it's hard to average it out. It's as the issues come and as the spirit moves him."

Beneath the top quadrumvirate of Nixon's palace guard and trusted advisers—Haldeman, Ehrlichman, Kissinger and Mitchell—there are many key second-echelon figures. Among them:

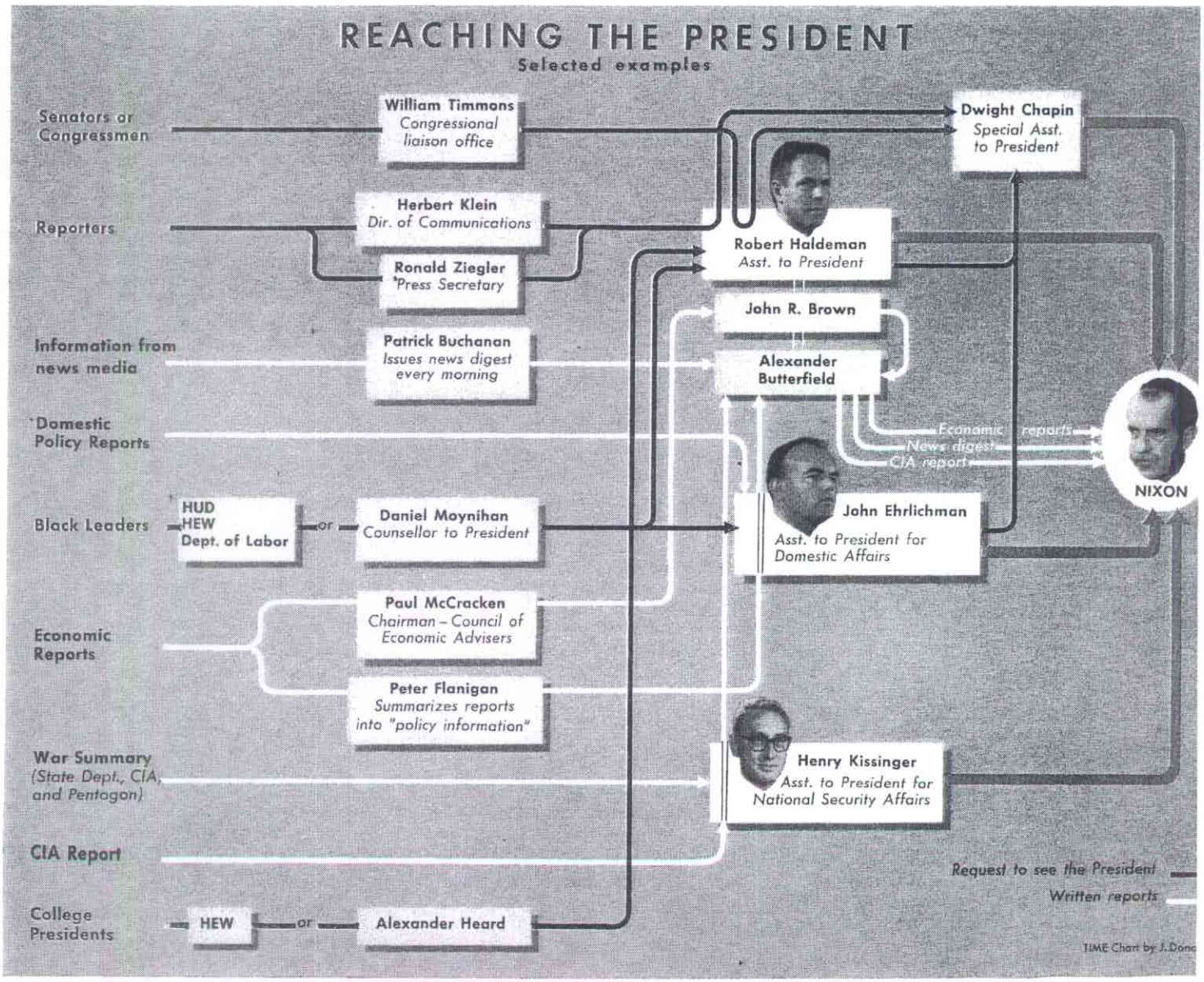
▶ Ronald Ziegler, 31, the boyish press secretary, and Herb Klein, 52, Nixon's rumpled chief of communications. After seeing Kissinger, Nixon meets with Ziegler daily for ten minutes to half an hour—more frequently when news is breaking fast—and Ziegler normally briefs the White House press corps twice a day. One White House aide puts his limitations precisely: "He's not an interpreter—he's a conveyor belt, a funnel." Ziegler, who worked in Haldeman's advertising agency, mixes computerese into his briefings: he talks of "inputs"

and "outputs," of "implementing" a policy within a "time frame." A chance for photographers to take pictures is solemnly billed a "photo opportunity." Less visible than Ziegler, Klein, as the Administration's image-maker, musters officials to help explain policy in public and coordinates the public relations departments of Government agencies. Klein sees Nixon less frequently than Ziegler, but one respectful colleague comments: "Herb is better clued in than I expected him to be. Herb is pretty good at the infighting."

▶ Harry Dent, 40, an acquisition from the staff of South Carolina Senator Strom Thurmond, and Murray Chotiner, 60, an old Nixon crony from California campaigns, tend the political store for the President. Dent handles patronage, is widely thought to be behind a move to get Republicans into third-level jobs in place of holdover Democrats. Dent sees Nixon at least twice a week, and screens Republican candidates for office who want time with the President. Representative George Bush, who is running for the Senate in Texas, got 35 minutes with Nixon last week; Lenore Romney, wife of Nixon's HUD chief and a candidate for the senatorial primary in Michigan, found that a brief audience with Nixon turned into a 45-minute lecture on political tactics. Nixon characteristically spends more time than scheduled with those who have managed to get appointments. But others less favored simply do not get through.

▶ William Timmons, 39, took over the congressional liaison job from Bryce Harlow last February. House Minority Leader Gerald Ford credits him with doing "a first-rate job," but a Midwestern Republican Senator complains: "I never see Timmons around. I suppose he must be *awfully* busy." A Republican Senate aide adds: "Haldeman, Ehrlichman, Ziegler—none of them have any understanding of the Hill. They don't realize that we are an equal branch of Government." California Representative Paul McCloskey Jr., a liberal Republican and a college friend of Ehrlichman's, thinks that the Nixon staff has wrapped the President in a cocoon. Says McCloskey: "For the President to isolate himself from all criticism, from differing opinion is a dangerous thing. Hell, every time I see the President the band has been playing *Hail to the Chief* and everyone has been bowing and scraping. That's not the real world. I see no one who has the guts to stand up to the President down there and say 'You're wrong.' He needs that, just as a Congressman does."

That sums up the principal complaint against the entire palace guard that surrounds Nixon. It is true enough that the loudest complainers are those whom Nixon does not see, but it can well be argued that their differing views are precisely what he needs to hear in order to grasp reality firsthand. What some have called "the triumph of the advance men" has left many open wounds all over town. Says one Nixon aide: "When you come into the White House after eight years on the other side, you bring in people who are bright but not experienced in Government—especially in protocol, the proprieties of dealing with the Hill and other parts of Government, which can matter more than



substance. They think they're bright —that's part of the problem—and experts in politics because they worked in a campaign. Actually, they know very little, especially about the politics of dealing with politicians."

The advance man lives for tomorrow's headlines, worries about deadlines on his flow charts, and reckons achievement by the number of specific tasks he manages to get done. These men, says a high official in one Government department, are "consumed with running the Government, but in the process they've lost sight of the fact that they ought to be running the country."

Gloomy View

That criticism is less than fair. Doubtless, the range of Richard Nixon's contacts outside his official circle is not so great as it might be, but to blame that upon his staff is hardly accurate. A President's staff is his own creature, and each President devises his own system. Nixon is far less isolated than Dwight Eisenhower was; for most of his Administration, Ike sat walled behind Assistant Sherman Adams. John Kennedy was undoubtedly more accessible than Nixon; he deliberately organized his staff to circumvent the massive federal bureaucracy. By contrast, Nixon has concentrated on trying to make the Government responsible to his aims—not always successfully. Lyndon Johnson was far more outgoing than Nixon—he saw, or telephoned hundreds of people nearly every day—but he did almost all of the talking.

Nixon prefers an orderly organization that frees him to concentrate, mostly alone, on one big question at a time. Says John Mitchell: "The President recognizes that time is one of the greatest assets he has. He is a man who does his homework, and that becomes quite time-consuming." Nixon also works alone on his major speeches, which his recent predecessors rarely did.

That is his style, and his presidency will ultimately be judged by what he achieved or failed to achieve, not by the way he went about it. Moreover, a President cannot deal with every question personally, and so he must have a staff to screen people and problems he is to confront; thus it becomes a mark of skill in Government for anyone to discover a way to get presidential attention. Says Jerome Rosow, an Assistant Secretary of Labor: "If there is a palace guard, you have to learn to deal with it. That's just the way things are. The guys who get through the palace guard are not only the favorites. They are the ones who are the most effective. They are the guys who make the most cogent arguments, the ones who get the job done." As it happens, Rosow's boss, George Shultz, is very good at precisely these things.

George Reedy, who was Lyndon Johnson's press secretary, takes a gloomy view of the inevitability of presidential isolation. In *The Twilight of the Presidency*, published earlier this year, he writes: "From the President's standpoint, the greatest staff problem is that of maintaining his contact with the world's reality that lies outside the White House walls. Very few have succeeded in doing so. They start their administrations fresh from the political wars, which have a tendency to keep men closely tied to the facts of life, but it is only a matter of time until the White House assistants close in like a Praetorian Guard."

A President must claw hard to reach the outside world. He must fight his own natural inclination and that of the men around him to make his life as easy as possible. Says Haldeman, who thinks that Reedy over-generalized his experience under Johnson: "I agree that the place *could* entrap a President. That's why President Nixon physically leaves the place and goes to Camp David or Key Biscayne. Kennedy said that one good thing about the White House is that it was a short walk to the office —but that cuts both ways."

UPI

NIXON WITH HARDHAT LEADERS
"I see all kinds of people."

There is almost a built-in corrective to presidential isolation, argues Bryce Harlow. As his Administration wears on, every President gets into trouble and he begins to feel cloistered—and the inner circle expands as he reaches out for fresh opinion. There is already evidence of this in Nixon's Washington. John Mitchell, the patron of Clement Haynsworth Jr. and G. Harrold Carswell, recently expressed his concern at "the amount of popular cynicism about the Supreme Court." Before a group of his own restive civil rights lawyers, he pointed proudly to his department's accomplishments for Southern blacks; in one year, it added 108 school districts to the 162 desegregated from 1954 to 1969. When an ugly confrontation seemed likely between Mississippi state police and students at Jackson State after the shootings, he ordered Assistant Attorney General Jerris Leonard off on an Air Force plane to smooth things out there.

One important Republican Senator thought that Nixon's sleeplessness on the eve of the May 9 Washington demonstration was "the best thing that has happened recently. It was the first sign, the first indication that things were getting through to him." There have been others. Interior Secretary Wally Hickel finally got to see Nixon last week. Students have had ready access to White House offices and aides since the college strikes began, and reporters have found some normally closemouthed Nixon assistants not only available but downright candid about their jobs. These are only straws in the wind, but Nixon is obviously sensitive about the charge of isolation. One adviser criticized Nixon's welcome to New York City's construction workers because it would offend students sympathetic to antiwar demonstrators attacked by the hardhats. But Nixon jumped on a Wall Street businessman who made the same point at a White House dinner last week—a dinner that itself was a gesture toward the nation's suffering investors.

"I see all kinds of people," Nixon answered. "I'll continue to see all kinds of people—students, teachers, sociologists, businessmen, hardhats. Do you know that one of them who saw me had lost a son in Viet Nam and he told me, 'Mr. President, if you'd gone in sooner and captured that ammunition, you might have gotten the bullet that killed my boy.' So don't anyone give me any crap about not seeing hardhats."

Far Too Early

Nixon's testy reply raises a further question: Even if he does see all kinds of people, does he listen to them? If he does not, his staff cannot help him. And even if he does listen, the sum of what he hears will not necessarily add up to the ultimate form of communication with the country, which is leadership; only an inner certainty can provide that. In *Mandate for Change*, Dwight Eisenhower argued: "Organization cannot make a genius out of an incompetent; even less can it, of itself, make the decisions which are required to trigger necessary action. On the other hand, disorganization can scarcely fail to result in inefficiency and can easily lead to disaster." Nixon has an organization of his own design, and it functions the way he wants it to. If it isolates him or if he chooses to isolate himself, he will lose political touch. That would cost him dearly in the congressional elections this fall, and it could end his public career in 1972. But it is far too early in his Administration to make any such judgment.