

# Nixon's Isolation Disgruntles Leaders

By Jack Anderson

Despite President Nixon's pains to establish closer touch with the world outside the White House, he continues to make his decisions in splendid isolation.

He has tried to break out of his isolation, and his press aides have played up his new accessibility. Yet the fortress he has built around himself, say insiders, is more formidable than ever.

To counter the charges that he consults only a few close advisers, the President has held a few more meetings, admitted a few more visitors and shaken a few more hands. He has tried to untangle his lines of communication, and he has admonished his aides to hearken to the voices of opposition.

Specifically, he has instructed Vice President Spiro Agnew and Attorney General John Mitchell to stop goading student activists and to encourage young dissenters to speak out. The President is now persuaded, say intimates, that open dialogue is the best steam valve to prevent more explosions on the campus this fall.

But at decision time, he still holes up in a hideaway and

pores over his "option papers." He relies, as ever, upon paperwork rather than the give-and-take of discussion. Only a few intimates, men he feels comfortable with, are able to get through to him with policy advice.

This column has talked to key Republicans, men who want Richard Nixon to succeed, about their access to him. For the sake of their own relationships, they have asked not to be identified. But here are their disturbing statements:

## BM and AM

- One White House aide said access to Nixon has been so narrowed that only those on his team before the 1968 convention can get in to see him for anything more than a pro forma meeting. Presidential advisers are categorized increasingly as BMs (Before Miami) and AMs (After Miami).

- Every other week, Republican congressional leaders are brought in for breakfast with the President. He takes the occasion more to brief them, however, than to consult them. One leader said the President treats them courteously and

gives them an insight into his thinking. But he pays little attention to their advice, waits until it is too late to prepare for legislative battles and doesn't give his legislative aides enough authority to act in his name.

- Liberal GOP Senators have all but given up their attempts to establish communication with the White House. They invited key aides to the Senate twice for closed-door discussions, once in the office of Sen. Clifford Case (R-N.J.), the next time in the office of Sen. Richard Schweiker (R-Pa.). Yet nothing came of the meetings, and no reciprocal invitation was extended to the liberals to attend a White House strategy session. Mr. Nixon has resumed his practice of inviting small congressional groups for evening cruises down the Potomac in the presidential yacht Sequoia. But he almost never joins the cruise himself.

- Conservative Republicans in the Senate are equally disgruntled over their inability to get through to the President. Such staunch conservative leaders as Senators Barry Goldwater (R-Ariz.) and Strom Thurmond (R-S.C.), have complained privately that they

can't get anyone at the White House to listen to them.

- Local GOP leaders across the country also have warned, says an aide, that the White House has lost touch with the people. Past Presidents used to keep in close contact with local leaders to find out what people are saying and thinking. Nixon's grass roots soundings, they say, are sporadic and unorganized.

- One top Republican leader, "disturbed over the President's isolation, summed up the problem in these words: "Can any man govern without refreshing his ideas? Nixon will end up like the fellow who milks into two pails at the same time and never hits either of them."

## Wrong Girl

A pretty girl in her early 20s was asked by the attendant at a Washington gas station whether she would like to try something different. When she found he was talking about heroin, she sweetly declined.

Not long afterward, narcotics agents called at the gas station. The pretty girl happened to be an aide to Rep. Claude Pepper (D-Fla.), chairman of the House Crime Committee.

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