

Nixon Defection

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Younger Staff Members Quietly Downgraded

By Rowland Evans and Robert Novak

THE HIDDEN TURMOIL

Inside Richard M. Nixon's personal staff immediately after his nomination has erupted in the abrupt and unannounced resignation of one of Nixon's brightest young men: Richard J. Whalen, an innovative conservative intellectual and writer.

Whalen flew with the rest of the top-level Nixon staff from Miami Beach to San Diego, Calif., but suddenly returned home to Washington after a bitter clash at a San Diego staff meeting with John Mitchell, Nixon's law partner and campaign manager. Whalen is keeping his mouth shut about what precipitated his resignation; Nixon men, expressing hope that Whalen will return, dismiss it as a personality clash.

But more than personalities seems to be involved. Nixon's younger and newer staff members, such as Whalen, 32, have been quietly downgraded since their dominant role in the primary election campaigns. In the month prior to the Miami Beach convention, Nixon relied increasingly on veterans of his losing 1960 campaign now returning to the staff.

Two events may have set the stage for Whalen's departure. The first was the arrival of Time-Life executive James Keogh, an old-time Nixon staffer, to take over research for the campaign. The second was Nixon's selection of Gov. Spiro Agnew for the vice presidential nomination.

Whalen was not alone. Most of Nixon's younger aides left Miami Beach in a blue funk over the Agnew selection.

The shock value of Whalen's departure could be salutary for the Nixon campaign. Its initial impact seems to have strengthened the position of Robert Ellsworth, the former Kansas Congressman. Another new Nixon staffer, Ellsworth had worked closely with Whalen as chief archi-

Miami Beach Nixon staff meeting on the vice presidential selection, the night of Aug. 7, the only adviser actively backing Mayor John V. Lindsay, of New York, was Charles McWhorter, the veteran Nixon aide with an encyclopedic knowledge of Republican Party affairs. Most of the newer aides were pushing for Sen. Mark Hatfield, of Oregon.

But as each staffer had his say, none mentioned Agnew. At the end of the meeting, Nixon tipped his hand by asking the staff its opinion of Agnew as a running mate.

McCarthy Mistakes

THE RACIALLY integrated Mississippi Loyalist delegation, likely to be seated at the Democratic National Convention in place of Gov. John Bell Williams' regulars, will vote heavily for Vice President Humphrey — thanks largely to the ineptitude of Sen. Eugene McCarthy's campaign.

Until recently, McCarthy persisted in referring to the Loyalists as the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party (FDP) when, in fact, the leftist FDP is but a small fraction of the Loyalist coalition. Moreover, the McCarthy campaign's paid operative in Mississippi, Jan Goodman, has been anathema to the moderates dominating the Loyalist delegation, dating back to her days as an FDP office manager.

While Miss Goodman was working the far left, a key McCarthy strategist—former Democratic National Chairman Stephen Mitchell—was wooing the far right. The Loyalists were outraged when Mitchell paid Gov. Williams a recent visit in Jackson to plead McCarthy's cause.

The final McCarthy blunders came at last weekend's Loyalist Convention. Miss Goodman angered delegates by abrasively pressuring for McCarthy commitments. Worse yet, the McCarthy forces backed an FDP man, Rep. Robert Clark (the only Negro in the Mississippi legislature) for Democratic National Committeeman against Charles Evers. Evers, the state's best respected and most effective Negro politician, beat Clark by a 3-to-1 margin.

tect of the Nixon primary victories but had been subtly downgraded before the convention.

However, the loss of Whalen in itself would be a serious blow to the flexibility of the Nixon campaign. Although he is scarcely a liberal, Whalen was instrumental in pushing Nixon leftward on Vietnam and the urban crisis.

A footnote: In the first