

The Presidential Cleanup Crew

WITH his top staff practically wiped out by scandal, President Nixon last week faced the grim problem of choosing replacements. To fill key posts, he needed aides in whom he had personal trust and whose integrity seemed invulnerable to challenge. To be his White House chief of staff, his Attorney General and his counsel, he selected three men who had already served him faithfully while avoiding the kind of animosity aroused by other Nixon aides. The trio:

GENERAL ALEXANDER MEIGS HAIG JR., 48, succeeds H.R. Haldeman as the man who runs the White House staff and governs accessibility to the President. For the duration of his temporary assignment, he may become the second most powerful man in the White House. His main mission will be to reknit a staff that has been torn apart by Watergate. It is another command performance asked of a man whose desire to be a soldier has often been frustrated by his talents as an organizer and superefficient headquarters type.

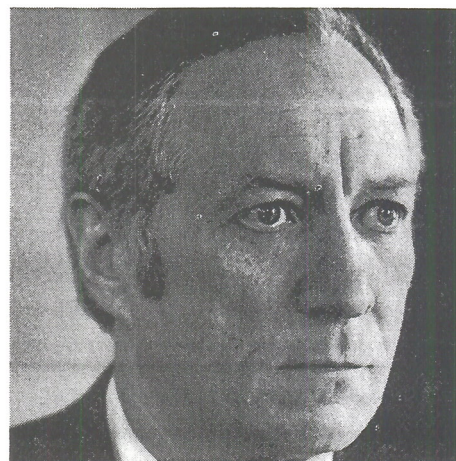
An undistinguished cadet at West Point, Haig graduated in the middle of his class (1947), learned the art of briefing while on General Douglas MacArthur's staff during the Korean War. That job and then a case of hepatitis kept him from the fighting. He was late getting to Viet Nam because Defense Secretary Robert McNamara wanted to keep him in the Pentagon as a special assistant. Finally, in 1966-67, he commanded first a battalion, then a brigade in combat. He was seriously wounded and had several close brushes with death. As a colonel, he was asked to join Henry Kissinger's staff temporarily in 1969, and soon became Kissinger's indispensable deputy. Departing on a trip to Europe, Kissinger told Haig that the office was not properly coordinated.

When he returned eight days later, it was.

Haig never aspired to be an innovator in diplomatic affairs, but shone as the organizer and expeditor, with a loudly expressed detestation of "gimmickry." As a substitute for Kissinger in briefing the President, Haig came to know Nixon well. During the last dry run for Nixon's journey to Peking, Haig served as advance man, inspecting each place the President would visit in China. He has also made twelve trips to Southeast Asia for the White House.

Haig is reputed to have no enemies, though he is envied by the 230 officers he leaped over in going from two-star to four-star rank. Appointed the Army's Vice Chief of Staff only last January, Haig will not have to leave the service to take his temporary White House assignment. He will have little time for his wife, a general's daughter, and their three children. And he won't be spending much time with the troops, either.

ELLIOT LEE RICHARDSON, 52, becomes Attorney General, replacing Richard Kleindienst, whose Justice Department was rather sluggish in exploring the depths of Watergate. Few men are better qualified by temperament and experience than Richardson to be the nation's chief legal officer. A Bostonian with an early out-of-character record of traffic violations (at least 14, some involving reckless driving while under the influence of liquor), Richardson edited the *Harvard Law Review* and went on to clerk for Learned Hand and Felix Frankfurter. As the U.S. Attorney for Massachusetts, he successfully prosecuted Bernard Goldfine for tax evasion after Goldfine's involvement in the Eisenhower Administration's saltiest scandal (though tame by Watergate standards). Later he was a vigorous and well-regarded Massachusetts attorney



LEONARD GARMENT

general. "Elliot," the cliché went, "would put his own mother in jail if he had to." Richardson is married to the daughter of a socially prominent Rhode Island family, and they have three children.

In Boston and in Washington, Richardson's personal integrity has never

on grounds of Executive privilege.

Even before the burglary of the psychiatrist's office, the White House had begun to shift its clandestine activities toward the effort to re-elect Nixon. In 1971, Nixon's prospects for re-election were not promising. A Harris poll in May showed Muskie with an eight-point lead over the President, assuming Alabama Governor George Wallace would run. Nixon, who had declared that "when I'm the candidate, I run the campaign," did not trust the Republican Party professionals to handle his re-election drive. He wanted a separate organization. A group of admen and pollsters were consulted; they found Nixon's personal popularity was so low that they advised that he stress the office rather than his name. Thus his organization became the Committee for

the Re-Election of the President. It was largely composed of Administration officials, who were relatively inexperienced in politics but who had demonstrated their total loyalty to Nixon.

The first Nixon aim was to knock down the chances of Muskie's or Senator Edward Kennedy's becoming his opponent and to build up McGovern, who was rightly considered the easier man to beat. This tactic of interfering in the Democratic campaign was approved by Haldeman. Hunt began probing the intimate backgrounds of the potential Democratic candidates. He investigated Kennedy's accident at Chappaquiddick Island. Hoping to further discredit him, Hunt fabricated a State Department cable falsely stating that President John Kennedy had ordered the assassination in 1963 of South

Viet Nam's President Diem. Liddy also joined the sabotage operations.

At the same time in 1971, Dwight L. Chapin, the President's appointments secretary, arranged for Donald Segretti to set up a team of infiltration and sabotage agents. Segretti was paid by the President's personal lawyer, Herbert W. Kalmbach. The agents reported to Gordon Strachan, an assistant to Haldeman, while Haldeman apparently was the top supervisor. By March 1972, the loose network had at least 30 agents.

Muskie's campaign was plagued by mysterious problems, though there is no proof that the Nixon operators caused all of them. As early as August 1971, someone reprinted on his stationery a Harris poll dealing with Chappaquiddick. This mailing went to Democrats in Congress, raising complaints that



NIXON DECORATING GENERAL HAIG

DIRCK HALSTED

been challenged. But his ability to stand up for his principles has come into some question since he became Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare in 1970. A liberal Republican like his predecessor, Robert Finch, he often fared poorly in fights with conservatives in the Administration over such issues as welfare reform and school busing. He never wavered in his loyalty to the President, who often overruled him in favor of hard-nosed staffers. Then Nixon named him Defense Secretary—a post he held just 91 days before getting his latest assignment. He was reluctant to change jobs again, in part because he believed it would be more appropriate for the new Attorney General to come from outside the Administration. He accepted the commission at the President's insistence because "I have an overriding duty to do so." Perhaps he sensed that as Attorney General he might face a conflict between his seemingly unshakable loyalty to Nixon and his affection for lawful, orderly government.



ELLIOT RICHARDSON

WALTER BENNETT

LEONARD GARMENT, 49, persuaded by Nixon to become the unofficial successor to the discredited legal counsel, John W. Dean III, is "a different kind of guy" by consensus of White House cognoscenti. He is, most agree, "more compassionate, more relaxed" than other presidential aides. Says one admirer: "He has made no enemies—he's even made friends for the White House. Name one other guy in there that you can say that about!" Garment is described as "a liberal guest in a conservative house." He has often spoken up in White House councils as a minority of one; how he has survived there for almost four years is something of a mystery. One possible reason: he never really cracked the inner circle. But he is appreciated for his personality, wit, intellect and ability to square his liberal leanings with the President's policies.

Born in Brooklyn to immigrant Jewish parents, Garment helped support

himself while in Brooklyn College and Brooklyn Law School by playing the clarinet and tenor sax in a number of bands, including Woody Herman's. Among the odds and ends, as he calls them, that he has performed for Nixon, Garment once played his professional clarinet to the President's stumple-thumb piano at a White House party.

Garment went straight from law school to the New York City firm then known as Mudge, Stern, Baldwin & Todd, where he was ensconced when Nixon joined in 1963. Garment was then a Kennedy supporter and was later to vote for Lyndon Johnson. Still, he grew close to Nixon even before the new partner seemed capable of making a political comeback. Then, in the 1968 campaign, he served as a versatile adviser, talent scout and speech doctor. But he never rivaled the influence of still another law partner, John Mitchell, whom Garment is said to have proposed as campaign manager. Garment was not included on the White House team until months after Nixon's inauguration, when he became a special consultant. Garment has served conspicuously as a patron of the arts. One of his oldest friends is Michael Straight, deputy chairman of the National Endowment for the Arts. Thanks to a stipulation in Straight's gift of a \$250,000 estate to the Fairfax County Park Service, Garment lives there, in a \$275-a-month rented house, with his Brooklyn-born wife and two children.

Less conspicuously, Garment has served the President by responding to blacks' criticisms of Administration policies, dealing with militant Indians—most recently in connection with Wounded Knee—and handling a multiplicity of civil rights problems. Now he will have to deal more visibly with a wider range of thorny problems, including Watergate. He is to be the White House liaison man with the Justice Department during the investigation.

Muskie was campaigning unethically. Schedules and poll data vanished from desks. As Muskie recalls: "We were convinced that there was a spy in our campaign headquarters."

Before the first primary in New Hampshire on March 7, many white residents of that state complained of telephone calls late at night from people claiming to represent the "Harlem for Muskie Committee." The callers urged them to vote for Muskie because "he's been so good for the black man."

In Florida, shortly before the March 14 primary, Muskie stationery was used for an unsigned letter, mailed to thousands of Floridians, falsely charging Democratic Candidates Hubert Humphrey and Henry Jackson with sexual misconduct. (Last week a federal grand jury in Orlando indicted Saboteur Seg-

retti, charging him with conspiracy in the mailing.) Muskie finished a poor fourth in that primary, behind Wallace, Humphrey and Jackson.

Next, Muskie had surprising problems in California: trouble with floodlights that disturbed his delivery; his stationery was used again to tell potential large donors to keep their cash because he preferred to get a lot of collections from less affluent givers. Given the normal chance for foulups in any political campaign, it would be absurd to suggest that all of these incidents were the result of sabotage. But Segretti's activities provide ample reason for suspicion.

The Nixon men, meanwhile, were also looking ahead to the contest with whoever the Democratic candidate might be. As early as February, Plumber Liddy was again promoting wiretap-

ping plans. He had charts drawn up illustrating how to organize an eavesdropping campaign against the Watergate headquarters of the Democratic National Committee and the Miami Beach convention headquarters of the Democratic candidates.

Liddy and Hunt later helped carry out those bugging plans at the Watergate in at least one wiretapping break-in before they were arrested after the second foray in June. Investigators are trying to determine whether the two men were still working under the same officials as in their Ellsberg-psychiatrist burglary. If so, Young, Krogh and Ehrlichman also might have known about the Watergate plans. Krogh said last week that he intends to tell whatever he knows to the grand jury.

While it is not yet clear how many