

The Men Around Nixon: Some Faces Rarely Seen

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WASHINGTON — In the Nixon Administration's Washington you have to keep an eye on the man next to you on the street corner waiting for the spotlight to change.

He could be one of the most powerful men in the world, and you wouldn't necessarily recognize him.

Many of the men of power around Richard Nixon — the insiders who are running the world's most powerful nation — are relatively unknown.

H. R. HALDEMAN, White House "chief of staff," is probably the second most powerful man in Washington, second only to the President himself.

Haldeman has appeared on television only once in the three and a half years of his White House tenure. He is rarely interviewed.

But to insiders in the White House his power and influence is unquestioned.

"He's on a level all by himself," says one.

"When Henry Kissinger wants to do something he tells Bob Haldeman about it before he goes ahead."

HALDEMAN IS anything but alone in his near-anonymity. Many of his colleagues wear the same translucent coveralls.

Of a dozen senior staff members who participate in a regular 8:15 a.m. White House strategy session, managing the government, only two could be ranked as widely known to the public.

They are Henry Kissinger, the much-publicized international traveler and national security adviser, and Ronald

Ziegler, the press secretary whose job is to be the visible front man.

And even Ziegler could be considered something of an enigma, for although his face is familiar to millions he is almost always cast in the role of presenting, deadpan, official announcements.

LITTLE IS known, even by many White House regulars, about what role he may play behind the scenes.

Herbert G. Klein, the Administration's "communications director," is also often on public display. But he, too, is often merely a spokesman.

If Bob Haldeman is, indeed, alone at the second level of power, as many insiders believe, three others are widely believed to be only one short step down.

They are Kissinger, John Ehrlichman, the domestic affairs czar, and Charles Colson, who has now risen to be top political operative.

THEY RANK below Haldeman only because each is a specialist and thus are not involved across the board. Only Haldeman apparently has that distinction.

Haldeman also has something else. He has a personal relationship with Nixon that

seems, from the outside, at least, to be unrivaled.

"He's really the only one with whom the President appears to be completely comfortable," says one well-posted White House aide.

On many a weekend when the President goes to Camp David, in nearby Maryland, for meditation, Haldeman will be the only top aide in attendance.

KISSINGER MAY show up, as he often does, when foreign policy matters are

under consideration. Ehrlichman may be there when it's domestic policy. Haldeman is likely to be there either way.

Kissinger's role is, of course, unique. There has never been anyone quite like him at the White House in modern times. Few would question that he speaks for the President with authority on any matter relating to national security.

Yet many who have watched Nixon and Kissinger together discount the idea, sometimes promulgated in this city of intrigue, that Kissinger dominates the President.

"**MAKE NO MISTAKE** about it," says one insider who regularly attends the 8:15 meeting, "Henry Kissinger works for Richard Nixon — it's not the other way around.

"The foreign policies of the Administration are Nixon's. Kissinger is the adviser, and Nixon the boss. You can't miss it if you see them together."

Ehrlichman has risen to power on the basis of demonstrable intelligence and drive. He is a man who speaks his mind, often and in plain English — qualities Nixon admires.

He has a sense of command of presence as well as another quality Nixon treasures — absolute loyalty to the boss.

THAT QUALITY — loyalty — is often referred to by top aides as the most obvious qualification of Charles Colson, the political operator who has moved to the fore in this election year, perhaps the least known man of power.

Colson is known by his colleagues as a rough political fighter of the Boston school of hard knocks who talks, apparently instinctively, in terms of deals and political trade-offs.



Weinberger
... budget affairs



Timmons
... liaison with congress

"Charlie will say to me," says one, "you get so-and-so in here and you tell him what we want — and you tell him what we'll give to get it.

"I'll say to Charlie: 'He won't take that deal.' So Charlie will come up with another deal."

COLSON'S NAME has been mentioned publicly in speculation about the bugging of the Democratic National Committee headquarters.

"About two out of every five ideas Charlie has aren't worth a damn, they're so far out," says a White House friend. "The other three may be damned good ideas, though.

"Somebody has to ride herd on Charlie, and Bob Haldeman is perfectly willing to do the job.

"The President likes the idea that Charlie is in there fighting for him all the way. The White House is a very human place, you know."

OTHERS ON the senior staff groups are Donald Rumsfeld, of the Cost of Living Council; William E. Timmons, congressional relations; Casper Weinberger, budget; Herbert Stein, economic advisor, and Robert Finch and Peter Flanigan, all-around troubleshooters.

Rumsfeld was considered an ascending star by many when he took over the inflation fight last year — certainly one of the Administration's toughest. He is still one of the most attractive,

open figures in the group.

He could, however, be in some trouble currently because inflation is still around and could cause trouble in the election campaign. Nixon has a passion for results.

TIMMONS IS widely admired as a behind-the-scenes congressional tactician, perhaps even more effective than his predecessor, Clark MacGregor who took John

Mitchell's place as head of the Committee for the Re-election of the President.

He's a quiet, back-stage operator, however, and still unproven as top congressional relations man.

Weinberger is a "facts and figures" bookkeeper type, whose range is still largely unknown.

Stein is considered the Ad-

ministration's most effective public spokesman on the economy.

FINCH SEEMS to have lost his way since he returned to the White House after an unfortunate experience as Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare. He appears to be a man looking for something to do.

Flanigan is still considered a top man for tough, troubleshooting jobs.

A striking factor about most of the Nixon intimates on the White House staff is their relative youth.

Only three of the twelve are over 50 — Weinberger, Stein and Klein.

As the Nixon Administration has shaped up, power has tended to become concentrated in the White House itself, in spite of traditional Republican oratory in 1968 promising decentralization.

THE LARGEST two power centers in the Administration outside the inner White House councils are in the Defense Department, under Melvin Laird, and at Health, Education and Welfare, under Elliot Richardson.

The traditional barony at the State Department under William Rogers, the President's loyal personal friend, has lost power to Kissinger to a point of embarrassment.

At Defense, Laird came on strong in the early days of the Administration, but has tended to become more and more isolated. As time has passed he has become a spokesman for the military bureaucracy.

LAIRD, WHILE perhaps not disenchanted, is prepared to leave Defense if Nixon is re-elected.

The President is grateful to Richardson for bringing the vast HEW bureaucracy under tighter management — if not control.

Rogers is anxious to get out at State and will happily leave if Nixon is re-elected.

Many of the other top power figures will submit routine resignations if there is to be a second term — but most will probably stay on.