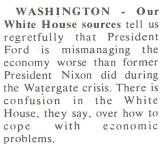
Merry-Go-Round

by Jack Anderson

Ford Men Botch Up Economy



sisting that inflation is the Israelis reportedly expect nation's number one problem. The measures he has adopted to fight inflation, meanwhile, are pushing the nation into a recession, and this, many economists believe, has become the number-one problem

the President got his ago, the Israelis already economic wires crossed. White House insiders say his economic advisors delivered a confidential forecast to him several weeks ago that unemployment would hit 7 per up hints that India may cent next year. This would be a sure sign of a recession.

But their confidential prediction never reached the Economic Pólicy Board while it was working out the President's economic tember. program.

top economic policymaking dangerous spot on the map. group. Yet its members went ahead with a plan to fight in- close to Gerald Ford now flation unaware that the believe he will not try to stay President's economic advisors, in effect, expected a 1976. recession.

President is fighting the time

War Drums: Once politics. again, the Middle East tinplode into flames.

Palestinian-Organization bargaining body for all Palestinians. But the Israelis, be tiring of the fray. In the who regard the PLO as a poast, he has enjoyed terrorist group, swear they political barnstorming. But won't negotiate with them. his performance this fall was The only alternative, it ap-lackluster. pears, is war.

Already, the two sides are White House sources tell us preparing for battle. Russia regretfully that President is pouring armaments into Ford is mismanaging the Syria. The Israelis are clamoring for rush deliveries of U.S. arms, including sophisticated missiles.

This has led intelligence analysts to believe the Israelis may even be planning a preemptive strike The President is still in- against the Arabs. The Egypt and Syria to launch long-range, ground-to-ground missiles at cities. To prevent this, they may decide to launch their missiles first.

Intelligence experts fear this would be the first step toward a nuclear exchange. There is now evidence that As we reported several years possess nuclear weapons. And the Egyptians have been promised a nuclear reactor from the United States.

> The CIA has also picked provide the Syrians with a nuclear reactor. The deal was struck, according to intelligence reports, when the Indian defense minister visited Damascus in late Sep-

The Middle East, clearly, This board is the nation's has become the most

Ford to Quit?: Sources in the White House after

The reasons are both per-. Thus, an increasing num- sonal and political. The ber of economists believe the primary reason, of course, is his wife's poor health. Betty wrong economic war with the Ford, even before her breast wrong weapons at the wrong surgery, had been uring her husband to retire from

Friends say that Ford derbox is threatening to ex- depends heavily on his wife for political advice. He has The Arab nations have for- sorely missed her views designated the during her illness. If she now Liberation asks him to step down, he as the probably would do so.

The man himself may also

Privately, GOP leaders

apprehensions.

It is just possible, therefore, that Gerald Ford may be content to settle for his assured place in history: a caretaker president who saw the nation through a crisis.

Hill Reform: The new Congress will be dominated by junior members who have been elected within the last six years. Even before the election, 61 senior members retired, rather than face the electorate again. Most of them were obstructionists who have helped to block

Now a majority appears to favor reform. The first test will come in December when the House Democrats hold their organizing caucus. The newcomers will set up a howl for congressional reforms.

They are also talking about checking the power of the

fear his bland style will also president. There will be hurt Republican chances in renewed support for a con-1976. They know him well' stitutional amendment that enough to tell him about their would permit Congress to remove a president in a

> There is even talk of establishing a ceremonial president who would attend to the formalities of the office, while a constitutional president will concentrate on governing the nation.

> three-fourths vote of each

House.

Some of the lessons of Watergate, it appears, may finally be adopted by the new Congress.

Washington During the last days of the Nixon Administration, one irate citizen forwarded a package of dried cow dung to the White House. The package broke open at the post office and perplexed authorities wondered what to do. They decided that regulations are regulations, so they wrapped up the cow chips and dispatched them to the Executive Mansion....