

ROMNEY AND LAIRD LEAVING AS NIXON RESHAPES CABINET

President Says He'll Begin
Disclosing Choices Today
for New Administration

WEINBERGER MENTIONED

NOV 28 1972
Director of Budget Will Get
a Key Post—Rockefeller
and Connally Will Not
NYTimes

By JAMES M. NAUGHTON

Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, Nov. 27—

President Nixon announced today that he had accepted the resignations of two Cabinet members, George Romney and Melvin R. Laird, and would begin tomorrow designating new "players" in his second Administration.

The President disclosed that neither John B. Connally, the former Secretary of the Treasury, nor Governor Rockefeller

Excerpts from Nixon remarks
are printed on Page 40.

of New York would be named to key positions.

But he said that Caspar W. Weinberger, the director of the Office of Management and Budget in the White House, was in line for a significant post.

Meeting in Hangar

Mr. Nixon met with a dozen newsmen in a helicopter hangar at Camp David, the Presidential retreat in Maryland, not long after accepting the formal resignation of Mr. Romney, the Secretary of Housing and Urban Development.

Mr. Romney announced plans for a new national "Coalition of Concerned Citizens" that he said would attempt to enlighten the public on "life and death issues."

In formally announcing his resignation, Mr. Romney complained that candidates for the Presidency were unwilling to discuss the "real issues" facing the nation because of fear that they would lose votes.

Return to Private Life

The President also said he would reluctantly respect Mr. Laird's desire to return to private life after four years as Secretary of Defense. Mr. Laird's resignation had been expected, but it had not been officially acknowledged at the White House before today.

Mr. Nixon told the newsmen at Camp David, along with a larger group listening to his voice over a loudspeaker system in the White House, that he had discussed possible Cabinet positions with Mr. Connally and Governor Rockefeller.

But he added that both had indicated that they would "prefer at this time not to take a full-time Cabinet or Government position."

He said that Mr. Connally had agreed to undertake occasional assignments in the area of international economic affairs and that Mr. Rockefeller would continue to assist in

Continued on Page 40, Column 4

Continued From Page 1, Col. 8

"very intensive and very important research work" on urban policies.

Mr. Connally, who directed Democrats for Nixon during the President's successful campaign for re-election, and Mr. Rockefeller had each been mentioned as possible nominees for Secretary of State.

Mr. Nixon said that he wanted to remove their names from the speculation about the new Cabinet. But the capital gossip about the shape of his second Administration continued.

One senior Administration official, who asked that his identity not be disclosed, said that it now seemed likely that William P. Rogers would remain the Secretary of State, at least until sometime next summer.

At the same time, the official said that Kenneth Rush, the Deputy Secretary of Defense, might be nominated as Under Secretary of State.

Aside from Mr. Rogers, only two other Cabinet officers were considered likely to keep their present posts. They are George P. Schultz, the Secretary of the Treasury, and Rogers C. B. Morton, the Secretary of the Interior.

Richardson Mentioned

The most likely choice as the successor to Mr. Laird was said to be Elliot L. Richardson, the Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare.

By one account, a political conservative would probably be nominated as Deputy Secretary of Defense to balance the views of Mr. Richardson, a progressive Republican from Massachusetts.

Among those discussed as possible nominees for the number two position at the Pentagon were William J. Casey, the chairman of the Securities and Exchange Commission, and Mr. Weinberger.

Mr. Casey was said to have hoped, when he was named to head the regulatory agency last year, that it would be a stepping stone toward a post in foreign or military affairs.

Other informed Administration officials suggested that Mr. Weinberger would be a logical successor to Mr. Richardson at the Department of Health, Education and Welfare, which the White House had identified as a prime target for major spending cuts.

Ehrlichman Considered

Mr. Nixon was also said to have John D. Ehrlichman, the assistant to the President for domestic affairs, under consideration as the next Director of Management and Budget.

The President said that after having met at Camp David with all the Cabinet officials, he was now prepared to begin disclosing how they would figure into his plans to assure "vitality" in his second Administration.

Commenting on published speculation that the reorganization would increase White House power, the President said, "Exactly the opposite is the case."

He said that the way to make Government more responsive to the public was not to concentrate authority "in one office," but to delegate power "to responsible members of the Ad-

ministration team in the Cabinet, in the White House or in other agencies of the Government."

Pledging larger cuts in the White House staff than in others, Mr. Nixon said that it was time to bring Cabinet members "into closer contact with the White House and, of course, with the President himself."

Lack of access to the President's Oval Office was said to have been one of Mr. Romney's complaints about his four-year tenure in the Cabinet.

The formal announcement of Mr. Romney's departure was made at the Secretary's office rather than at the White House, as had been the custom.

A Presidential spokesman attributed the departure from custom to Mr. Nixon's being at Camp David.

Four hours later, Mr. Nixon made an unusual public appearance at the Catoctin Mountain retreat to discuss his reorganization philosophy.

Mr. Romney, who said he would remain in office until his successor had been confirmed by the Senate, avoided specific discussion of his differences with the White House over such matters as his unsuccessful

attempt to win support for a combined urban-suburban approach to big city problems.

Instead, he focused on his assertion that the nation needed, as he put it in his Nov. 9 letter of resignation, "a Coalition of Concerned Citizens" dedicated to informing the electorate about "life and death issues."

Mr. Romney declined to speculate on his successor. But Governor Rockefeller was known to have recommended Charles J. Urstadt, the New York State Commissioner of Housing and Community Renewal.

Romney Cites Letter

Donald Rumsfeld, the director of the Cost of Living Council, was said to be among those reluctant to fall heir to Mr. Romney's department.

There were reports that Secretary of Transportation John A. Volpe had been assured of an ambassadorial nomination but probably not the post in Rome, which he was said to prefer.

In contending that politicians "tend to avoid specific positions" on the basic issues facing the nation "for fear of offending uninformed voters and thus los-

ing votes," Mr. Romney cited a letter that he wrote in October, 1960, to Mr. Nixon, then the Vice President, and John F. Kennedy, then the Democratic candidate for President.

The letter urged both candidates to discuss underlying issues, such as "excessive concentration of union and corporate collective bargaining power" and ways to curb "the expansion of Federal Government power."

Asked if he believed Mr. Nixon had engaged in a discussion of the "real issues" in the campaign this year, Mr. Romney said that neither Mr. Nixon nor the Democratic nominee, Senator George McGovern, had done so.

Mr. Romney conceded that as a spokesman for Mr. Nixon in the campaign he had also avoided discussion of most such issues but said that he had done so because Mr. Nixon was "obviously" superior to Mr. McGovern.

Mr. Romney had spoken before of the possibility of founding a new citizens' organization. He said today he was still considering whether to "start from scratch" or to join forces with existing organizations.

He also said that "what I will organize is not a 'Republican Common Cause.' Common Cause is the citizen coalition group led by John W. Gardner, former Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare.

The remark prompted Mr. Gardner to issue a statement in which he said that he had had "no conversations" with Mr. Romney about participating in the new coalition.

Mr. Gardner, who served in President Johnson's Cabinet, disputed the implication, common among some supporters of Mr. Nixon, that Common Cause was partisan. He said the organization had sued to force both political parties to reform campaign spending practices and had filed complaints against 128 Democrats and only 98 Republicans for alleged violations of campaign spending laws.