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NIXON DECISION DUE SOON ON SUCCESSOR TO AGNEW; SCORES OF NAMES LISTED

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G.O.P. GIVES IDEAS

President in Seclusion at Camp David to Make Up Mind

By JOHN HERBERS

Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, Oct. 11 — President Nixon held intensive consultations with his staff and with political leaders today on whom he should nominate as Vice President and then flew to his mountaintop retreat at Camp David, Md., to make his decision.

An assistant said that the decision was expected soon.

Before Mr. Nixon left, Republican leaders, at his request, heaped on his desk scores of suggested names of people to replace Spiro T. Agnew, who resigned yesterday.

"He has not decided who or when it will be," Ronald L. Ziegler, the White House Press secretary, said after the President left by helicopter this evening, alone except for a military aide and Secret Service guards.

Mr. Ziegler would say only that the President would announce his decision "soon," indicating that it would come before the end of the week or early next week.

Connally Is Opposed

As the President departed without leaving the slightest public indication as to whom he might pick, Washington was like a political convention, awash with rumors, suggestions and campaigns for nominees. The only thing that seemed certain tonight was that if the President chose former Treasury Secretary John B. Connally of Texas the nomination would be rejected by the Democratically controlled Congress.

Although there was speculation in Congress and elsewhere that Mr. Nixon had already decided whom he would nominate, members of his staff said that if he had done so he had not told them.

"He is guarding his counsel as though it was a declaration of war," a senior White House official said.

The House minority leader, Gerald R. Ford of Michigan, who was emerging as a kind of favorite son candidate in Congress, told the House Republican Conference this morning that the President, in a meeting with Congressional leaders yesterday, laid down the following three broad criteria for

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his selection of a new Vice President:

1. A person with the ability to be President.

2. A person with a reasonable chance of being approved by a simple majority of both houses of Congress, as required under the 25th Amendment to the Constitution.

3. A person in tune with President Nixon's foreign policy.

A White House spokesman said that this was a fair assessment and added that the President had not ruled out persons who might run for President in 1976. Some influential Democrats in Congress have suggested he rule out such potential candidates.

Congressmen Canvassed

The Nixon criteria encompassed a broad range of politicians and public officials, subject to individual interpretation, and it invited an outpouring of campaigns by various groups and interest.

There were indications from the White House that the President would avoid, if he could, appointing a "caretaker" for the office, one would be expected to fill the Presidency only if Mr. Nixon died or became disabled before 1977 and

who would not be a contender for President in the next election.

This gave strength to campaigns for such figures as Governor Rockefeller of New York, Gov. Ronald Reagan of California and Mr. Connally.

Melvin R. Laird, the President's chief adviser for domestic affairs, surveyed members and found that, next to Mr. Ford, who has not been considered a Presidential contender, the names most mentioned were those of Mr. Connally and Governor Rockefeller.

Representative Peter A. Peyer, Republican of Westchester, trying to start a boom for Mr. Rockefeller, said that he talked to the Governor this morning and "he told me he is actively interested and is interested in serving the country this way [as Vice President] and he feels

he can provide help to the President to carry out his policies."

Some Back Texan

While a number of Republicans were campaigning for Mr. Connally, there was a definite antipathy toward the former Texas Governor in both houses of Congress, not only among Democrats but also among some Republicans.

Democratic leaders at a meeting this morning said that they were adamantly opposed to Mr. Connally on the ground that he shifted to the Republican party last spring and was thus considered a traitor to the Democrats.

"There is only one man I'd never vote for," said Thomas P. O'Neill, Democrat of Massachusetts, the House majority whip. "That's John Connally."

Attorney General Elliot L. Richardson, who has been mentioned as a possible nominee, ruled himself out, saying at a news conference this morning that "it would be highly inappropriate for me as the Government accuser of the Vice President "to be considered "for one moment as a potential successor to him."

Expression of Loyalty

The boom for Representative Ford was considered more an expression of loyalty by his friends in the Congress than a serious effort to make him Vice President.

Shortly before Mr. Nixon left for Camp David, where he frequently goes when he has an important decision to make, Republican leaders delivered to his office scores of sealed envelopes containing the suggested nominators of Republican con-

servatives, Senators and members of the Republican National Committee.

Mr. Ziegler said that the President had also received recommendations of members of his Cabinet. He said the President had talked by telephone with a number of persons outside Washington but he would not identify them.

Most of the consultations today were with members of his staff.

A public opinion poll conducted by Oliver Quayle today for the N.B.C. News showed support for the idea that the President should not rule out persons who might run for president in 1976.

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Poll Taken by Phone

About 93 per cent of the national sample of 535 persons, questioned by telephone, said that they thought it was a mistake to decide against a 1976 Presidential contender.

About 65 per cent said that Mr. Agnew had been right to resign. However, 54 per cent gave a favorable response to the job Mr. Agnew had been doing as Vice President while only 35 per cent praised Mr. Nixon's performance as President.