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**NIXON FEELS TRIP  
'SCORED POINTS'**

**But the Secret Service and  
the F.A.A. Are Dismayed  
by Fuel-Saving Move**

By R. W. APPLE Jr.

Special to The New York Times

LAGUNA BEACH, Calif., Dec. 27—President Nixon began a post-Christmas vacation at his San Clemente estate today convinced, as one aide said, that his trip across the country by commercial jet had "scored points with the public."

But the Secret Service and the Federal Aviation Administration expressed considerably less enthusiasm about the trip, apparently the first ever made by a President on a scheduled airliner.

Mr. Nixon took a commercial plane instead of his own jet to save fuel in the energy crisis.

The Secret Service, which is responsible for Presidential security, said in Washington that it "would prefer the President to use military aircraft for security reasons." Ronald L. Ziegler, the White House press secretary, replied that "they O.K.'d his traveling" on a United Air Lines jet.

Alexander P. Butterfield, administrator of the aviation agency, said he was "dismayed" that the agency had been given little advance notice of the trip. He himself found out about it only when the United DC-10 was taxing onto the runway at Dulles Airport outside Washington.

"This serious oversight," said

Continued on Page 12, Column 1

Continued From Page 1, Col. 7

the outspoken Mr. Butterfield, who was the first man to disclose the existence of the Watergate tapes, "left precious little time for our air traffic people to implement their special precautionary procedures which must always be followed when the President takes to the air lanes."

Reply by Ziegler

To that, Mr. Ziegler replied: "The success of the trip was based on the fact that no extraordinary measures were taken except for the secret Service security of the aircraft. Whenever the President does something unique it may draw criticism, but the key to the President's ability to fly on a regularly scheduled flight was not to make it known in advance."

Considerable grumbling was also heard from some members of the staff and from the White House press corps, who were still coming into Laguna Beach, 10 miles north of San Clemente, late this afternoon, almost a day behind Mr. Nixon.

No Press 'Pool'

Not even the customary press "pool" of four or more reporters was permitted to accompany the President. Gerald L. Warren, the deputy press secretary, defended the decision on security grounds, although at least two reporters knew of Mr. Nixon's plans an hour or more before he left Washington.

But in the view of senior White House officials, the trip was a public relations coup that showed Mr. Nixon as a man of the people, not afraid to mingle with ordinary travelers; as a national leader setting an example in energy conservation, and as a President with a flair for the unusual.

"I think the President enjoyed himself," Mr. Ziegler said.

By one calculation, Mr. Nixon, by his decision, saved at least 60,000 gallons of jet fuel, which is similar to home heating fuel. Normally, a Presidential trip to California

would entail a transcontinental flight not only by his own plane but also by a back-up plane, a press plane, three helicopters and a steady stream of White House courier aircraft.

No Government Aircraft

"He gave absolutely strict instructions that no Government aircraft are to come to California" during this trip, the press secretary said.

The guessing among junior staff members was that the President would probably fly back to Washington on Jan. 2 or 3.

Why Mr. Nixon chose to come to California instead of Florida remained something of a mystery. If the weather was a factor, he must have been disappointed; the Southern California skies were leaden this afternoon, with temperatures hovering in the upper 50's.

One theory advanced by aides was that airline seats were more readily available to California. Another was that the President wanted to see the Rose Bowl game between the University of Southern California and Ohio State University in nearby Pasadena on Tuesday.

Physician to Wed

But the most widely advanced explanation was that Mr. Nixon wanted to attend the wedding tomorrow afternoon of the White House physician, Maj. Gen. Walter Tkach of the Air Force, with whom the President has a close friendship.

General Tkach, who is 56 years old, is to marry Cheryle Ann Gaillard, 26, who formerly worked at San Clemente, in the chapel of the Bishop School at La Jolla.

Mr. Nixon arrived in his office at 10:30 this morning, speaking by telephone with Secretary of State Kissinger; William Simon, the energy administrator, and Gen. Alexander M. Haig Jr., the White House chief of staff. General Haig was to fly to California later.

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