

Post 5-6-76 WXPost

MAY 6 1976

'People of Influence'

By Maxine Cheshire

President Ford gets a lot of conflicting advice these days. After one briefing recently, he turned to a top aide and asked: "How many 'on-the-other-hands' did you count? I counted 44" ... Author Victor Lasky, who wrote Martha Mitchell's speeches for the Committee for the Re-Election of the President during the 1972 cam-

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paign, was asked at a party the other night if he had ever seen former President Richard M. Nixon take more than one drink, either in public or private. "I've only seen Dick Nixon what I'd call drunk one time in public," replied Lasky refusing to say more.*

To promote his new novel, former Vice President Spiro T. Agnew snubbed local television talk shows all across the country, taping only network appearances before taking off for Europe. As a result, Washington's Channel 5 turned down novelist Sidney Sheldon as a guest on "Panorama" this week, despite the fact that his "Stranger in the Mirror"

is a current best-seller. Producer Jane Caper said she was "miffed" by the Agnew rejection and Sheldon had the same press agent, Betsy Nolan ... Sheldon's wife, Jorja, may have already spent some of her husband's royalties. She told actress Deborah Raffin at a party here that she has her eyes on a pair of emerald-and-diamond earrings currently owned by comedian Red Buttons' wife, Alicia. She has found a better way to make pin money than selling Tupperware. She picks up jewelry at estate sales and resells it to friends at a 10 per cent markup.

Photographer Richard Avedon is in and out of Washington, doing a portrait series for "Rolling Stone" on "People of Influence." On his list are Cabinet members like Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld, labor leaders like Frank Fitzsimmons, along with the three members of the new Intelligence Oversight Board for the CIA: Robert Murphy, Stephen Ailes and Leo Cherne ... At the "Blue Bird" showing for VP children, many youngsters were walking around with a sky-colored helium balloon. Two of Ethel Kennedy's enterprising offspring were spotted trailing a dozen.

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* Comment by Lasky, WXPost 19 May 76.