

NIXON'S MAN

Haldeman Is Calling The Shots

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THE MAN who calls the political shots for President Nixon isn't his campaign manager, Clark MacGregor, but his chief of staff, H. R. Haldeman.



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Operating out of the White House on government salary, Haldeman has tried to remain the invisible man of the campaign. But we have established that most of the important campaign decisions have come through him.

The assumption is, of course, that he's acting for the President.

Haldeman issues political directives, approves campaign contracts, receives political reports and coordinates campaign activities.

It was Haldeman, for example, who proposed that a special advertising agency be established to handle the President's campaign advertising.

This unique outfit, known as the November Group, was created for the sole purpose of reelecting Nixon. It is staffed with GOP-minded hucksters carefully recruited from ad agencies all over the country.

Harry Robbins Haldeman, who prefers to be called "Bob," has been an advertising man since he was 23. He has used his quick mind to sell bug killer, floor wax, Disneyland, Seven-Up — and, more recently, Richard Nixon.

IN election years, Haldeman was able to take time off as vice president and Los Angeles manager of the giant J. Walter Thompson advertising agency to plump for Nixon.

Haldeman toured the country in 1956 as an advance man for the then Vice President, became chief advance man in 1960 when Nixon first sought the Presidency, returned to the campaign trail in 1962 to help Nixon lose the governorship of California and, finally, coordinated his successful campaign for the White House in 1968.

Nixon probably relied more heavily on Haldeman than on any other campaign technician during the 1968 race. After the election, Haldeman largely recruited the inner staff that would be around the President.

Briefing the press, Haldeman said there would not be a press secretary, no appointments secretary and no chief of staff. The man who helped merchandise Seven-Up as the "Un-cola" had invented the un-assistants.

Then he filled the jobs with his own people. Dwight Chapin, one of his J. Walter Thompson underlings, became appointments secretary; Ron Ziegler, another hand from the Los Angeles shop, was named press secretary; and John Erlichman, an old UCLA chum, moved in as another Presidential assistant. Haldeman himself became the un-chief of staff.

HAVING the President's complete trust, Haldeman largely decides who the President will see, who on the staff will be heard, what memorandum will make its way into the President's in-basket and who will be promoted.

Haldeman's own schedule has become so tight that he has acquired his own Haldeman to do for him what he does for Nixon. Haldeman's Haldeman is bright, young Lawrence Higby who prefers to be called "Larry." Among other White House aides, he is known even less formally as "Big L."

Haldeman likes to operate behind a screen. But on occasion, he has ventured forth into political combat. In the turbulent days following the death of Mary Jo Kopechne in Senator Ted Kennedy's automobile, Haldeman was on the telephone to key reporters, urging them to keep the pressure on Kennedy.

At the time, Kennedy appeared to be the most likely Democrat to challenge President Nixon in 1972.

Haldeman is now back behind the screen. But those on the inside say he is the most powerful man in the 1972 campaign, second only to the President himself.