

NIXON, ON COAST, CONFERS ON WAR

Also Meets Economic Aide
and Staff Chief in Start
of Vacation Weekend

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SAN CLEMENTE, Calif., May 29—After nearly seven weeks of almost continuing crisis, President Nixon settled in here today for a vacation weekend at his Western White House.

Mr. Nixon could not fully escape affairs of state, however, so he held a round of conferences this morning with his principal advisers.

The President met with Henry A. Kissinger, his national security adviser, on Vietnam, Cambodia and other world problems; with H. R. Halderman, his chief of staff, and with William Safire, who helps compose his statements on economic matters and has been drafting Mr. Nixon's long-awaited and oft-postponed address on the economy.

There was every indication now that the address would come soon, given the sudden increase in stock prices and the availability—for the first time in months—of good economic news to report to the nation.

But the President's major objective was to get a quick rest from his troubles. His choice of location, observers noted, was not without irony. For it was during a long vacation here last summer, in the opinion of some of his associates, when his present troubles began.

Mr. Nixon came here in early August and stayed until early September. Near the end of his sojourn, his aides insisted to newsmen that his one-mouth

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experiment in Presidential management, Western style had not only worked but had also given the voters of the West Coast a "sense of participation" in the running of the country.

The long stay here was Mr. Nixon's first big attempt to make his a portable Presidency, to take the White House out of Washington and to the country. But while he swam, golfed, worked and shopped, fissures opened among the thousands of federal employes he left back home.

Quarreling in Capital

The Defense and State Departments quarreled publicly over the meaning of what was then regarded as a sharp drop in enemy infiltration rates in Vietnam, and there was visible grumbling at the State Department when Mr. Nixon delayed his second round of troop withdrawals. Ever since then, it has been difficult for Mr. Nixon to persuade his foreign policy officers to keep their differences to themselves, and even now there is unrest at the State Department over Cambodia.

Similarly, during last summer's stay, the White House reaffirmed its go-slow policy on desegregation, enraging employes at the Department of Justice and arousing 40 of them to sign a petition of protest.

Meanwhile, two Presidential aides, Daniel Patrick Moynihan and Arthur F. Burns, disagreed publicly over how large the "peace dividend" would be when the war in Vietnam came to an end, leading to further grumbings about the Administration's inability to coordinate its public posture.

From the public came the first complaints that Mr. Nixon was "isolating" himself from their concerns by spending so much time in his well-protected seaside compound, and these complaints have been gathering momentum ever since.

It was here, too, that Mr. Nixon decided to install John D. Ehrlichman as a domestic affairs adviser equivalent in stature and influence to Dr.

Kissinger; and while Mr. Ehrlichman's performance has been generally commended, several White House aides are said to have felt cut off from the decision-making process ever since.

In recent weeks, under the pressure of events, Mr. Nixon has moved to meet some of these complaints and has gone to some lengths to widen the circle of his Cabinet and staff advisers and generate a feeling of access to him and to the decision-making process.

He has also reached to others outside his Administration, appointing advisers on campus affairs and seeking out student opinion. Late last night, for example, Mr. Nixon chatted aboard Air Force 1 with John Smith, 20-year-old student government president at the University of Tennessee. Mr. Smith expressed his opposition to the war but cited "many areas of agreement" with the President. He told newsmen afterward that he had been impressed with Mr. Nixon's willingness to listen and his fortitude in his weeks of crisis.

Given experiences like these, Mr. Nixon's aides maintain, the President is not likely to cloister himself here as he has in the past. Last year's experiment in Western style government will not be repeated. He will come here for several shorter stays instead, the aides say.