



Associated Press

MIDAIR CONFERENCE: President Nixon conferring with William P. Rogers, left, Secretary of State, and Henry A. Kissinger, security adviser, en route to Washington.

It was also expected that Mr. Nixon would spend much of his time making important decisions on the next budget, which is to be presented to Congress early next year. As it turned out, the President never got around to that.

Mr. Kissinger returned from his trip last Tuesday and went into conferences with the President, Secretary of State William P. Rogers, and others. Public pressure for a response to the North Vietnamese peace proposal, made on July 1, was growing, and the President's aides seemed to wiggle uncomfortably under the pressure.

News of spreading strikes in the communications industry and new strike threats in transportation added to the discomfort. But nobody on the President's staff would talk about them.

Then there was Mr. Nixon's television appearance last Thursday night, when he disclosed that Mr. Kissinger had visited Premier Chou En-lai in Peking, and that the President would go there sometime before next May on a "journey for peace." The gloom and tension in the Presidential party lifted immediately and there seemed to be surprise that they had pulled it off so well.

Elated Nixon Ends Western Vacation

By JOHN HERBERS

Special to The New York Times

SAN CLEMENTE, Calif., July 18—In a mood approaching euphoria, President Nixon and his top advisers flew back to Washington today facing a critical stage of world diplomacy, a rash of national strikes and unresolved budgetary problems.

The President ended a 12-day working vacation at the Western White House, highlighted by his dramatic announcement last Thursday that he would make a "journey for peace" to Peking before next May in an effort to rebuild peaceful relations between the United States and Communist China.

That, of course, was the reason for the high spirits that permeated the Presidential party, in sharp contrast to the tension that had been apparent at the start of Mr. Nixon's vacation.

The officials were circumspect about where they believed the visit to China would

lead, both politically for the President and in world events, but there was a feeling that the announcement of the trip had, at least for the time being, put the Administration on a new footing with the American people.

It was a strange setting for the machinations of the executive branch to be turning out one of the most momentous international developments in many years.

Orange County is an enormous and wealthy compound of the Los Angeles metropolitan area, a vast suburban sprawl with freeways, factories, orange groves, military bases, amusement parks and asparagus fields.

It is also a center of conservative strength in Southern California.

Republican Pickets

One of the ironies of the China development occurring here was that it brought out a group of about 50 Republican pickets who marched before the Presidential estate, carrying banners that said Mr. Nixon's forthcoming trip to

China was another "liberal trend which has brought our country to the brink of a socialist state."

The county's beach communities, of which San Clemente is one, form a compound within the compound. This time of year there are continual blue skies, moderate weather and soothing surf.

The Western White House, a walled area overlooking the sea, is yet another compound. Adjacent to the Nixons' Spanish-style home at Mateo Point is a group of stark, low buildings that contain the President's office, conference rooms, staff offices and a small auditorium.

Transportation within the compound is by golf cart. The President has his own—"Golf Cart No. 1"—with its name on it, and it is frequently seen parked beside his office door as Mr. Nixon's dogs wander about and greet visitors.

Waiting for Kissinger

The President arrived at this Western Shangri-La on July 6 to vacation and await the return of his chief national security adviser, Henry A. Kissinger, who was making an around-the-world fact-finding trip.