

FOREIGN SERVICE FACING SHAKE-UP

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Nixon Said to Want Younger Men in Top Posts—Senior Aides May Be Retired NYTimes

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WASHINGTON, Dec. 1—President Nixon has directed Secretary of State William P. Rogers to force the retirement or transfer of many senior officers in the State Department and in embassies abroad to allow the quicker promotion of younger Foreign Service officers, a White House official said today.

The official, who said he was familiar with the President's views, said that Mr. Nixon wanted to "vitalize" the State Department and foreign service in his second term.

His main concern, according to this official, is that many officers in their thirties and forties are very talented, but have been doing nothing but "shuffling papers" because of the older men in the hierarchy.

If the younger men are not able to move up, Mr. Nixon is said to believe, the Foreign Service will fail to attract good people in the future.

'Needs a Shake-up'

"The Foreign Service needs a shake-up to give it new vitality," the official said. "This applies to the embassy structure as well as the State Department."

Mr. Rogers already has told his top staff aides that there was need to bring younger people to the fore in the department and, in coming weeks, steps will be taken to accomplish this, a department official said.

There are currently about 3,100 career Foreign Service officers, based in Washington and abroad. The contemplated changes will only affect several hundred directly, one official estimated.

One way the department plans to carry out Mr. Nixon's wishes is to apply a little-used provision of the Foreign Service Act that calls for the retirement of ambassadors who are not given new jobs commensurate with their rank when they return to Washington.

Under Section 519 of the act, returning ambassadors must be given such jobs within 90 days or can be retired. In the past returning ambassadors have usually been given policy jobs in the department or "make-work" assignments such as heading unimportant task forces.

The department also plans to assign additional officers to work in other Government agencies, freeing their slots in the department for younger men.

Additionally, the department hopes that because of the stated policy in favor of promoting younger men, senior officers eligible for retirement will step down before they are compelled to do so.

At present, a Foreign Service officer can retire with 20 years service at the age of 50. He must retire when he is 60 unless he is one of the 50 or so career ministers or ambassadors, where the age limit is 65.