

Ford, Cole Key Domestic Counselors

By Carroll Kilpatrick
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Vice President Ford and Kenneth R. Cole Jr. will be President Nixon's principal domestic advisers after the departure of counselors Melvin R. Laird and Bryce Harlow from the White House staff.

Officials said yesterday that Ford is playing an active role in determining domestic policy choices for the President and that Cole is working closely with him.

Mr. Nixon conferred with Cole yesterday on his expanded duties. He is now executive director on the Domestic Council, of which the President is chairman and the Vice President is vice chairman.

While the new Vice President will take over some of the responsibilities Laird has had since joining the White House staff in June, Cole will take over some of the others.

Laird announced Wednesday that he will leave his post Feb. 1 to become senior counselor for national and international affairs for Reader's Digest. Harlow is expected to leave a few weeks later to rejoin Procter & Gamble.

Laird recommended to the President that Cole be given new responsibilities and that Ford have a high-level liaison role with Congress.

In other developments, deputy press secretary Gerald R. Warren said that the President will not reimburse the government for federally-financed work at his California and Florida homes which the General Accounting Office said should have been paid for personally.

Warren maintained that the GAO report released this week questioned only "an infinitesimal" part of the federal funds expended on the homes. He recalled the Warren Commission recommendation that every precaution be taken to guard the President's security.

Mr. Nixon met with Anna Clinkscales, a Baltimore woman who said she had gone door to door in her neighborhood to door in her neighborhood in support of the President.

The President called her pledges of support "a very nice Christmas present." Mrs. Clinkscales said the support for the President "really came from our hearts."

In another action, the President announced that he would nominate G. McMurtrie Godley, former ambassador to Laos, to be ambassador to Lebanon.

Earlier this year, Godley was nominated to be assistant secretary of state for East Asian affairs, but when strong opposition developed in the Senate Foreign Relations Committee the nomination was withdrawn. Senators opposed his nomination because of his strong support for the Vietnam war and because he directed secret military operations in Laos.

The President also said he would nominate Robert S. Smith, deputy assistant secretary of state for African affairs, to be ambassador to the Ivory Coast.