

Rumsfeld Slated for Pentagon Duty

By Jack Anderson

President Ford's new staff chief, Donald Rumsfeld, won't be around the White House more than six months.

Sources in the President's confidence say he needed someone in a hurry to replace Alexander Haig, who had headed former President Nixon's White House staff.

The President, therefore, summoned Rumsfeld whom he actually had in mind to be the next Secretary of Defense. Our sources say Mr. Ford still intends to send the able Rumsfeld to preside over the Pentagon.

The President wanted to get rid of Haig, say our sources, because he held too tight a rein on the White House staff, which looked to him instead of Ford people for their orders.

The President's plans for Rumsfeld, of course, means Secretary of Defense James Schlesinger will be dropped from the cabinet. This will be a victory for Secretary of State Henry Kissinger, who has been feuding with Schlesinger over foreign-military policy.

WATCH ON WASTE: About

180 welfare officials gathered on exotic Frenchman's Reef in the Virgin Islands late last month to discuss the plight of the poor.

Choosing from a menu "laden with a host of superb continental specialties," they dined in lazy luxury as they talked about the hunger that is gaining in impoverished neighborhoods.

One conference session, for example, dealt with food stamp programs. It was presided over by an Agriculture Department official who was flown in from Washington, \$169 round trip.

When the problems of poverty became too depressing, the welfare officials could escape into the coral waters for "free snorkel lessons," or on afternoon tours of the Virgin Island paradise.

The delegates came from 31 states and regions. At least 10 federal officials from the Health, Education and Welfare Department slipped down to the Virgin Islands for the conference, at a minimum cost to the taxpayers of \$200 apiece, including hotel accommodations.

A spokesman for the American Public Welfare Association,

which sponsored the frolic, explained to us: "We hold the conferences in a different region every year, and this was the first time for the Virgin Islands."

YOSEMITE STORY: There is more to the story of how Yosemite National Park, with scenery no Hollywood studio could duplicate, became the backdrop for the TV series "Sierra."

We published the first installment Sept. 15. The Music Corporation of America, we reported, had taken over the camping and catering concessions in Yosemite in late 1973.

Not long afterwards, film crews belonging to an MCA subsidiary turned up in the park to film the "Sierra" series. Although nature provided them with some of the most spectacular scenery in the world, we reported, the Hollywood hotshots tried to improve it by painting the rocks in one area.

The "Sierra" TV shows are now appearing on the NBC network, which should be good for MCA's camping and catering business in Yosemite. The program's producer, Bob Cinader, denies that the series was created to promote tourism in the

park. But here, at least, are some curious coincidences:

- The series was not proposed to MCA, as usually happens, but MCA initiated it. "Somebody upstairs got the idea" for the show, Cinader acknowledged.

- The pilot show, originally titled "Park Ranger," was a sad flop. The scenery outperformed the actors, and only a bear impressed the test audiences. Yet miraculously, MCA was able to peddle the series to NBC. "They bought it in spite of the pilot," said Cinader.

- The producers had trouble completing the scripts and casting the actors. Off-duty park rangers were used as production assistants. Production costs were high, with each episode costing about \$60,000 more than programs filmed on studio lots.

Whether or not MCA planned it that way, the company could make up the extra costs in the tourist business that the TV series should attract to Yosemite. Cinader's comment on this: "There is no attempt made in the show to indicate that the park is Yosemite."

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