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SChronicle The Nixon Men on Ford's Ad Staff

By Vera Glaser
Washington

If President Ford's television spots have a familiar ring to voters out in the primary states, there's a reason.

He's using the same advertising man Richard Nixon did in 1972 — Peter H. Dailey of Los Angeles, who is a friend of former White House aide H. R. Haldeman.

Dailey says he is using essentially the same pitch and some of the same personnel to merchandise Ford as he used for Nixon.

In 1971 Dailey formed the "November Group," a team of advertising specialists borrowed from big New York agencies. Millions were spent to polish Nixon's image and engineer his 1972 landslide.

Last November Dailey, who

suffered professionally as a result of his association with Nixon, was hired again, this time by Howard (Bo) Callaway, who was then Ford's campaign manager. Callaway has since resigned in a conflict-of-interest flap.

The 25-person operation Dailey now runs for Ford, called Campaign '76 and located in the same building as Ford's political headquarters, is expected at least to double by November. An attempt to recruit the old Nixon hands has all but failed. "Some were a little turned off by the whole thing," Dailey said.

Three who came back are media consultant George Karalekas of De Garmo, Inc. of New York; art director Jack Frost, a veteran of Republican campaigns, and copy writer Gene Russo.

Those who sign on for Ford, Dailey said, must be "committed

to the President, but not interested in government careers, so they can be completely frank in reacting to ideas."

Day-to-day operations of Campaign '76 are run by Bruce Wagner, 32, who is on leave from Grey Advertising in New York. Dailey files in from the West Coast periodically for policy meetings with campaign chief Rogers Morton. Stuart Spencer and sometimes Ford himself.

At his first meeting with the President, Wagner recalled, "He looked me straight in the eye and said, 'Remember, Bruce, you can't change the man.'" Wagner translates that as meaning Ford will not compromise on principle.

Karalekas, who shuttles between New York and Washington, describes the Ford effort as "more relaxed, less intense and more open than Nixon's."

In "The Making of the President 1972," Theodore White wrote that Dailey was one of the few who could talk to Haldeman directly. But Dailey claims now their friendship was "never close." Dailey was hired for the Nixon team by former Attorney General John Mitchell, who, like Haldeman, was later convicted in the Watergate cover-up.

So far, in the 1976 primaries, Dailey has used 30- and 60-second television spots and dignified blue brochures to promote Ford as President, not as a political candidate. That's essentially the tack taken for Nixon.

Ford's TV spots stress two main points — that he brought the country out of the "long national nightmare" of Watergate and is "bringing the economy out of its slump."