

Shakeup of Nixon's Cabinet Forecast

By Vera Glaser

WASHINGTON — (CDN) — Some turnover in President Nixon's cabinet is expected late this year or early in 1971, White House sources admit privately.

"There's nothing imminent," a senior presidential aide insisted. He would not indicate which seats may change.

He was commenting on a flurry of rumors forecasting cabinet resignations. The reports are linked to crises wracking the administration in recent months.

White House officials concede there is some discontent in high quarters. They profess to regard the uneasy situation as a kind of loyalty test.

Tough Times

"When you're running high in the polls, that's a swinging party and nobody wants to leave," a source said.

"When things get tough, you begin to separate the guys who are dedicated to helping Nixon from those here to boost themselves personally."

In the Departments of

State and of Health, Education and Welfare, there is open criticism of the cabinet secretaries and low morale.

The resignation talks swirls around Interior Secretary Walter Hickel, Health, Education and Welfare Secretary Robert Finch and Commerce Secretary Maurice Stans.

Questions

The blunt, outspoken Hickel wrote a letter to the President recently which was leaked to the press before Nixon saw it. It raised questions about the administration's relations with youth.

"Hickel ought to get out," one angry White House official said, "but let's face it, to can him at this time would not be bright."

Finch is an old and close friend of the President, but insiders say their relations have deteriorated.

Recently Finch permitted an angry band of welfare lobbyists to invade his office and harangue him for hours. Some White House officials think he handled it badly.

With Finch hospitalized, apparently from exhaustion,

his education commissioner, Dr. James E. Allen, Jr. took an opportunity to poke at the administration's Asian policy.

Even so-called "liberals" in the White House were turned off.

"Allen's putting himself up to be the biggest martyr in the administration and the press is cooperating," a source said.

Stans found it necessary to make it clear at a top staff meeting that he does not intend to resign. He has the President's confidence, Stans asserted, emphasizing that he likes his job and finds it challenging.

Stans is said to have irked State Department officials by taking a Latin American tour recently. State felt Stans injected himself needlessly into complex trade discussions. Commerce officials insisted Stans' trip had the President's blessing.

Oldest Member

Treasury Secretary David Kennedy, an associate says, "wants to retire." Although Kennedy has not been on the hot seat recently, he is the oldest Cabinet member. When some of the nation's economic problems become more manageable, he reportedly plans to leave.

After 6 months in office the Nixon Administration, despite ups and downs, has a perfect score on cabinet tenure.

Several resignations would have reached the President's desk by now, had the law of averages held.

During their first year in office, Presidents Truman, Eisenhower, Kennedy and Johnson had lost at least one cabinet member.

Closest Group

The cabinet secretaries who appear closest to the President are Attorney General John Mitchell, Defense Secretary Melvin Laird, Secretary of State William Rogers and Labor Secretary George Schultz.

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Hickel Invited To White House

WASHINGTON — (UPI) — President Nixon invited Interior Secretary Walter Hickel to the White House today for a private session, the first since Hickel wrote the much publicized letter to the President three weeks ago urging the administration to listen more to youthful dissenters.

The White House said Hickel requested the meeting to discuss several subjects, including development of natural resources and the environment.

Hickel attended a cabinet meeting at the White House two weeks ago. He has met privately with the President only twice previously since talking office.

Hickel said he had received 15,000 letters since he wrote his letter to Nixon. He gave no indication how many of them were favorable.

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