

Hickel's Future Is Chancy

WASHINGTON — (CST) — Like the man after the straight-edged razor fight who boasted his antagonist had "never touched me", interior Secy. Walter J. Hickel is OK as long as he doesn't turn two heads. So he does not intend to be ousted from President Nixon's Cabinet.

But recent events ought to have convinced his best friends that Hickel's tenure in Washington is chancy.

There are many ways of an administration's saying farewell to one of its ranking members without actually firing him, as was James E. Allen Jr., the U.S. Commissioner of Education.

On Friday, Kenneth N. Davis Jr., assistant Commerce Secretary, learned another way.

Subsequently, about the time he was saying that "It's just not true — there's no basis for it at all," his superior, Commerce Sec. Maurice H. Stans, was "accepting" his resignation.