

HARLOW RESIGNS AS AIDE TO NIXON

Will Return to Lobbyist Post
With Procter & Gamble

By **ROBERT B. SEMPLE**
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WASHINGTON, Dec. 9 — Bryce N. Harlow, counsellor to President Nixon and a longtime friend, resigned today from the White House staff to return to private life.

Mr. Harlow will return to the Washington office of Procter & Gamble, where he served as director of governmental relations and chief lobbyist until 1968, when he answered a summons from Mr. Nixon and joined the campaign team.

His decision to return to private life appeared to eliminate the possibility that he would succeed Representative Rogers C. B. Morton as chairman of the Republican National Committee. There have been published reports that Mr. Nixon asked him to take the job, and Ronald L. Ziegler, the White House press secretary, made no serious effort to repudiate these reports this afternoon.

The implication was that Mr. Nixon had tried to get his old friend to take the job and had not succeeded. There seemed little prospect either, that Mr. Harlow would accept the job in the near future.

"He is returning to Procter & Gamble and therefore should not be included in your speculation about the chairmanship," Mr. Ziegler said.

A Delicate Job

After the election, Mr. Harlow was given the delicate job of handling Mr. Nixon's Congressional relations. His performance drew mixed reviews from Capitol Hill. Popular and politically wise, he was credited with knowing as much about the legislative process as anyone in Washington. But he worked with a small staff, seemed at times overwhelmed with the minutiae of his job, and some Democrats and liberal Republicans complained that their views were not getting through either to Mr. Harlow or Mr. Nixon.

Late last year, asserting that he wanted Mr. Harlow's counsel on a wider range of matters, the President elevated Mr. Harlow to the Cabinet-level post of counsellor to the Pres-

ident. Removed from the day-to-day strain of running the Congressional relations office, Mr. Harlow dispensed advice on a number of subjects, including politics. He was Vice President Agnew's traveling strategist in this year's mid-term elections.

Mr. Harlow has long been regarded as one of the wittier members of the Nixon Administration, combining a probing intelligence with a sense of humor rarely found in either political party. Last spring, at a Women's National Press Club dinner, the 5-foot 4-inch Oklahoman moved behind the lectern, waited for the applause to subside, then said gently:

"Don't wait for the rest of me. I'm standing up."

He often said that when he came to Washington he was 6 feet 3 inches tall but that years in politics had pounded him to his present stature. Mr. Harlow, who was born Aug. 11, 1916, worked in Congress after World War II and on President Eisenhower's White House staff.

Mr. Harlow's letter of resignation and Mr. Nixon's letter of acceptance were couched in warm language.

President's Comment

"Your keen insight, your leavening wit, your immense capacity for work, your rigorous conscience, all have been assets of great value to the White House and to me personally," the President wrote.

In his letter, Mr. Harlow said his leave of absence from Procter & Gamble had been extended several times, and that he now felt compelled to return.

The speculation here this evening was that Mr. Nixon was still searching for a successor to Mr. Morton, the Maryland Republican who was recently named to succeed Walter J. Hickel as Secretary of the Interior. Several National Committeemen said tonight that Mr. Harlow had been their first choice, and expressed some irritation that a successor had not been found.

The names of Donald Rumsfeld, director of the antipoverty program and an assistant to the President, and Robert H. Finch, counsellor to the President, have both been mentioned as possible choices, but White House and National Committee sources say that neither wants the job. Other possibilities are Representative George Bush, of Texas, who was defeated in a bid for a Senate seat in November, and Senator Robert Dole of Kansas, who is actively campaigning for the post.