

ROWLAND EVANS AND ROBERT NOVAK 14 Mar 72

Hatchet-man plays secret role in Nixon's re-election effort

WASHINGTON — Frederic V. Malek, the tough young hatchet-man on the White House staff, is playing a secret role in President Nixon's re-election campaign as clandestine agent of the powerful H. R. "Bob" Haldeman.

Officially, Malek remains on the White House payroll as a personnel manager, totally removed from the campaign. In fact, he is playing a key role in the affairs of the Committee to Re-elect the President, located one block from the White House, despite his lack of any political experience.

Malek's unpublicized function is to "coordinate" campaign activities for youth, the aged and other special groups. But in reality he is the eyes and ears of White House staff chief Haldeman.

Indeed, although the re-election campaign is supposed to be under John Mitchell's control, Haldeman's influence is present through Malek and other agents. Accordingly, any free discussion by Nixon campaign operatives that might suggest something less than Mr. Nixon's infallibility is inhibited by the certainty that a disapproving Haldeman will hear all.

Nor has Malek, a self-made millionaire of 34 and graduate of West Point and the Harvard business school, displayed the flexibility essential to campaign politics. He was the White House agent in the preemptory dismissal of top Interior De-

partment officials in 1970 and the FBI investigation of CBS News correspondent Daniel Schorr last year.

Sen. Edmund S. Muskie is considering hiring a onetime ghostwriter for the former Gov. Nelson Rockefeller at \$100,000 a year for the