

Influence of Nixon Called Very Alive

By Michael Harris

William Safire, who wrote speeches for Richard M. Nixon before he began writing columns for the New York Times, talked yesterday about the former President's "silent majority" and said it still exists.

"When asked if they are conservative or liberal, most people will answer conservative," Safire said.

Although President Nixon is no longer an active political force, Safire said conservative voices are more numerous and articulate than they were even in the days when people in the White House were talking about "mandates" and "a new majority."

Newspaper readers are finding younger and more articulate conservative columnists in the pages of even the most liberal journals, Safire continued — men such as George F. Will and Patrick J. Buchanan and many others.

Safire, who left the Nixon administration early in 1973, or about 18 months before Mr. Nixon did, was in San Francisco for a series of interviews centered on "About the Fall," his controversial book about the successes



WILLIAM SAFIRE
Conservative voices

and failures of the former President and his staff.

Safire spoke of Henry Kissinger, a former friend, urging his prompt replacement "by three people — a national security adviser, a secretary of state and a roving envoy."

In his book, Safire described Kissinger as a man who carried out President Nixon's foreign policy — not as the originator of the administration's often-startling diplomatic initiatives.

He offered a mixture of praise and blame for Bob Haldeman, the aide who controlled all access to Mr. Nixon. Haldeman made serious mistakes, Safire said, but the decision to isolate the President was made by Mr. Nixon himself, and Haldeman was obeying orders when he carried it out.