

Nixon in Seclusion--

Pondering

SF Examiner

WASHINGTON — (UPI) — President Nixon was in virtual seclusion yesterday apparently pondering the exploding Watergate scandal, one of the most serious crises of his long political career.

More top-level indictments and resignations are believed to be imminent.

Nixon canceled a meeting with his main economic strategists to spend the weekend at Camp David, Md., the "mountaintop" where he frequently goes to weigh major decisions.

This time he had only personal aides with him — and absent were his two top White House advisers who usually accompany him everywhere, chief of staff H. R. Haldeman and domestic affairs assistant John D. Ehrlichman.

Amid reports that Halde-

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man and Ehrlichman were fighting to keep their jobs, Sen. Robert J. Dole, the Republican National Chairman in 1972, said the two men ought to resign.

Jump off Ship

The Kansas Senator also said members of Nixon's re-election camp "were questioning everyone's loyalty to the President during the campaign, but now they're jumping off the ship saying 'This guy did it' or 'That guy did it.'"

The Ripon Society, a young liberal Republican organization, said Watergate had "destroyed" Nixon's election mandate and will bring down "the real cabinet" — Nixon aides chosen primarily for their loyalty to him rather than competence.

The June 17 bugging of the Democratic National Committee headquarters at the Watergate complex and the allegations of other political espionage and sabotage in the 1972 Presidential campaign now have touched nearly every one of Nixon's top political and White House aides.

Acting FBI Director L. Patrick Gray III, a long-time Nixon associate, and Assistant Commerce Secretary-Designate Jeb Stuart Magruder, a former White House aide and deputy campaign manager, resigned as the weekend approached.

Earlier Leavings

Dwight L. Chapin, Nixon's appointments secretary, and

Charles Colson, his special counsel, resigned earlier this year to take private jobs.

Former Attorney General John N. Mitchell quit as campaign manager two weeks after Watergate.

All five men — and others — have been linked in some way with the allegations.

(The Washington Post reported in Sunday editions that at least two high-level White House officials pinned the Watergate cover-up squarely on presidential aides Haldeman and Ehrlichman.

(A third White House official, presidential lawyer John W. Dean III, plans to swear under oath that he gave regular reports on the cover-up to Haldeman and Ehrlichman at their direction, said the Post.

(According to one high-level White House source, said the Post, the President and his top advisers are aware of Dean's plans and are attempting to devise a strategy that would offset Dean's charges.

(The Post quoted its sources as saying that the current state of White House confusion and internal staff warfare is largely attributable to what Dean has already told federal investigators and the fear that he will reveal more.

The Post's sources said Dean has knowledge of illegal activities, including wiretapping, by the Nixon Administration dating to 1969.