

General Haig to Run Nixon's Staff

N.Y. Times Service

Miami

General Alexander M. Haig was named assistant to the President yesterday as President Nixon began to redesign a White House staff devastated by the Watergate scandal.

The appointment of Haig, now vice chief of staff of the Army, was described by the White House as an "interim" appointment to continue most of the activities performed by H. R. Haldeman as head of the White House staff.

Haldeman and the President's top adviser on domestic affairs, John Ehrlichman, resigned after their names were prominently linked to the Watergate burglary last June and a subsequent effort to cover up the matter.

STEPS

The President decided on the appointment, according to White House press secretary Ronald L. Ziegler, as the first step in a complete re-evaluation of the operations of the White House.

It was made clear Haig will concentrate on those staff duties that had been Haldeman's. Kenneth W. Cole, now head of the domestic council, will "have his duties broadened" to assume more of the administrative and policy functions performed by Ehrlichman.

Ziegler also strongly hinted at the pending appointment of David Packard as secretary of defense to succeed Elliot Richardson, who just left that job to head the Justice Department. The move was made after Richard G. Kleindienst had resigned as attorney general because of his close personal

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ties to some of those alleged to have been involved in the scandal.

Packard served as deputy secretary of defense in the first Nixon administration. He resigned that post in 1971 to return to private business.

FAVORITE

Haig, meanwhile, has been a favorite of the President's for some time and is said to have impressed the President with his administrative skills in previous work as deputy assistant to the President for national security affairs beginning in 1970.

He has conducted several presidential missions to France and Southeast Asia in connection with the war in Vietnam. Haig is also a close associate of Henry Kissinger, the President's adviser on foreign policy.

Specifically, Haig's new duties were defined as those of White House staff coordinator and administrator of the immediate office of the President.

OFFICE

The general began work in Haldeman's office in the west wing of the White House just down the corridor from the Oval Office Thursday night. A final decision on his military status has yet to be made but he is expected to remain on active duty and he is still being paid by the military.

A resignation is not expected in view of later remarks that his interim appointment is not expected to be for more than a few months. Those details, a spokesman here said, would be worked out in a meeting

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between Haig and Army chief of staff General Creighton Abrams.

The President, meanwhile, continued a working vacation on Key Biscayne where he is said to be working on further details of staff and operations changes, although no further changes are expected to be announced this weekend.



AP Wirephoto

ARMY GENERAL ALEXANDER M. HAIG
Interim job of redesigning White House staff

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