

THE NEW TEAM

THE TALENT SEARCH

Gerald Ford wanted to have an orderly transition of power. He achieved it by the simplest and most logical means—by asking all the members of Richard Nixon's Cabinet, as well as several top White House advisers, to stay on, at least temporarily. That left Ford free to concentrate on his first difficult manpower decision: choosing a new Vice President.

Who for Veep?

Early last week, Ford associates speculated that there were about a dozen possibilities for the job. In addition, since taking office, Ford has accepted the views of Republican leaders across the country. Ford plans to make his final decision by this week or next. The man he chooses must be confirmed by a majority vote of both Houses of Congress, as was the case when Nixon nominated Ford to succeed Spiro Agnew as Vice President last fall.

In deciding on his nominee, President Ford will be guided by a number of national and, inevitably, partisan considerations. He doubtless wants someone who will provide a measure of geographical and ideological balance, to help give the Administration a unifying effect on the nation. At the same time, however, associates say that Ford wants someone who will be acceptable to both the conservative and progressive wings of the Republican Party and who does not harbor presidential ambitions. Ford apparently does not want to give anyone a leg up on the party's nomination for President in 1976. Despite his many previous statements that he would not run for the nation's highest office in the next election, Ford will undoubtedly be under strong pressure to carry on as the G.O.P.'s nominee.

To many in Washington, the most likely candidate is former New York Governor Nelson Rockefeller. Senate Republican Leader Hugh Scott called him "my No. 1 choice," and Rockefeller also appears to have the public backing of one of Ford's closest political confidants, former Secretary of Defense Melvin R. Laird, who told one reporter last week: "Ford and Rockefeller will form a winning combination for the Republican Party." There were some who suspected that Laird floated Rockefeller's name in order to have it quickly shot down to enhance Laird's own chances for the nomination. That suspicion seems ill-founded, however.

Rockefeller has several advantages over the other possible nominees. His 15 years as Governor have given him extensive experience with Government

management. His personal political resources might help draw new talent to the Administration. As a former Assistant Secretary of State (1944-45) and chairman of Truman's Point Four Advisory Board (1950-51), he has a sound knowledge of foreign affairs, and might prove to be an additional source of advice for Ford in an area where the new President lacks expertise. In addition, Rockefeller's nomination would help bring moderate Republicans back into the party's mainstream. Some Republicans speculate that if Ford were to run in 1976, Rockefeller, who is now 66, might be willing to drop off the ticket

coup against Charles A. Halleck that installed Ford as Republican leader in the House. But Laird's nomination might be viewed as cronyism. Moreover, both Laird and Ford are much alike ideologically. Nonetheless, the betting is that Laird will play a key role in the Ford Administration, either in some formal White House role or as the President's foremost political adviser.

Another old friend of Ford's on the list of potential Vice Presidents is Representative Albert Quie (pronounced Kwee) of Minnesota. He shares most of Laird's disadvantages. A quiet but effective House member for 16 years who was a major force in shaping education bills over the past decade, Quie has had no significant administrative experience. He also is little known outside Minnesota or the capital.

Ford's apparent determination to select a moderate who could help heal the



DONALD RUMSFELD



ELLIOT RICHARDSON

in exchange for a key Cabinet post, perhaps Secretary of State.

But Rockefeller has drawbacks as well. Chief among them is the fact that some members of the Republican right wing have never forgiven him for his apostasy in 1964, when he refused to endorse the party's presidential nominee, Senator Barry Goldwater of Arizona. Indeed, a dozen conservative Republican Senators have already urged Ford to reject Rockefeller and nominate Goldwater instead. Still, Rockefeller has taken increasingly conservative positions on public issues. He left the governorship in 1973 to launch his Commission on Critical Choices for Americans, one of whose members is Gerald Ford. The founding of that group was regarded as a convenient way for Rockefeller to keep himself politically alive and active.

Of all the prospects, Melvin Laird is probably Ford's sentimental favorite for Vice President. Not only have the two been close friends for 20 years but they also teamed up in 1965 in the intraparty

nation's and party's wounds reduces the chances of several Republicans who may be too closely identified with the G.O.P.'s conservative or liberal wings. The conservatives would include Governor Ronald Reagan of California and Senator William Brock of Tennessee. Among the liberals: Senators Charles H. Percy of Illinois and Mark Hatfield of Oregon, and, surprisingly, former Senator Charles E. Goodell of New York. While a member of the House, Goodell helped his close friend Ford become minority leader in 1965. Goodell has been a Republican outcast since 1969, after he became *persona non grata* to the Nixon Administration largely because of his opposition to the war in Viet Nam.

A better-known liberal on the list is Elliot Richardson of Massachusetts, who resigned as Attorney General last year rather than carry out Nixon's order to fire Archibald Cox as Watergate prosecutor. In the past, Ford has spoken favorably of Richardson's abilities; he would give the Administration solid

ties with liberal and moderate Republicans and add to Ford's image of moral integrity. But many Republican leaders, particularly in the South and Midwest, regard him as too liberal.

Another close friend of Ford's—and an extremely dark horse among the vice-presidential possibilities—is Interior Secretary Rogers Morton. A former Representative from Maryland and Republican national committee chairman from 1969 to 1971, Morton is a conservative but has few enemies among either Republicans or Democrats. He probably would easily win acceptance from party leaders and confirmation by



MELVIN LAIRD



ALBERT QUIE

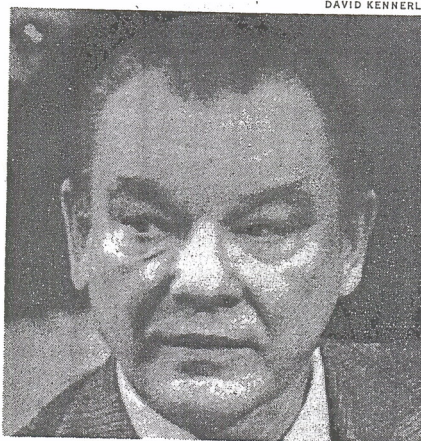
Congress. Other potential candidates for Veeep—all moderates—include Republican National Chairman George Bush, Washington Governor Daniel Evans, Tennessee Senator Howard Baker and former Pennsylvania Governor William Scranton.

The Cabinet

Sooner or later, Ford will undoubtedly remake his Cabinet and the top White House staff. In Washington the betting is that at least one major job will be offered to a Democrat. Almost certainly Henry Kissinger will stay on as Secretary of State until January 1977. Other Cabinet members who will probably be asked to carry on until the end

of the term are Earl Butz of Agriculture and James Schlesinger of Defense. Last spring Ford considered, if he became President, firing Schlesinger because he seemed ineffective in dealing with Congress. That proved not to be the case, and the two men have long since patched up their differences.

Ford associates think it likely that he will eventually ask for the resignation of William Simon as Treasury Secretary. Simon is considered dispensable because of his recent identification with the Nixon Administration's faltering economic policies. Health, Education and Welfare Secretary Caspar Weinberger reportedly would like to return to California, though Ford probably will permit him to stay if he wishes. If Weinberger leaves, among his likely successors are Laird or NATO Ambassador



ROBERT T. HARTMANN



NELSON ROCKEFELLER

Donald Rumsfeld, a former Congressman from Illinois and onetime director of the Office of Economic Opportunity. At Interior, Rogers Morton undoubtedly will be asked to stay on as Secretary, unless by chance Ford taps him for the vice presidency.

Ford appears undecided on whether he will retain Secretaries Claude Brinegar of Transportation, Peter Brennan of Labor, Frederick Dent of Commerce, James Lynn of Housing and Urban Development, and foot-in-mouth Attorney General William Saxbe. If Saxbe is asked to resign, a good stroke might be

for Ford to reappoint Richardson to the job, thus putting the Justice Department back into the hands of a man who early insisted that Watergate be fully investigated and that those involved be prosecuted. Chances are, though, that if Richardson is brought back into the Cabinet, it will be in a less prestigious post.

The White House Staff

At the White House, Ford insisted on some changes from the start. He had never disguised his distaste for Press Secretary Ronald Ziegler, who left the White House with Nixon, and as his first non-Cabinet appointment, the new President named Detroit *News* Washington Bureau Chief J.F. terHorst as White House spokesman. He was Ford's press secretary during his first campaign for Congress in 1948, and became head of the *News's* Washington staff in 1961. To help him restructure his staff, Ford last week appointed a four-man team of advisers: former Virginia Representative John O. Marsh Jr., Morton, Rumsfeld and Scranton. They will have plenty of jobs to offer people who would like to sign on with the Ford team.

Early departures are forecast for Budget Director Roy Ash and his deputy Fred Malek, who has recently accepted an executive position with secretive Shipping Tycoon Daniel K. Ludwig. Nixon Speechwriters Ray Price, Pat Buchanan and the Rev. John McLaughlin are certain to go, as are Nixon Lawyer J. Fred Buzhardt and Presidential Adviser Leonard Garment. The President has asked General Alexander M. Haig Jr. to stay on as chief of staff during the transition. As House Republican leader, Ford grew to respect William Timmons; it seems likely that he will want to keep him as the White House liaison with Congress.

Two longtime members of the Ford staff seem headed for highly responsible jobs in the White House: L. William Seidman, a wealthy and able accountant from Grand Rapids who recently became Ford's management and budget adviser, and Philip W. Buchen, who was Ford's law partner in 1941 and lately has served as a key adviser. Ford has decided to appoint his former chief of staff and frequent speechwriter, ex-Newspaper Reporter Robert T. Hartmann, as a White House counselor.

Before taking office, Ford said that he would be looking for advice from other old colleagues and friends as well, among them Bryce Harlow, a former aide to both Presidents Eisenhower and Nixon, and William G. Whyte, a vice president of United States Steel Corp., who has worked in Washington for many years. Ford gave no indication of whether he will ask these men to join his staff. Harlow, though, is considered by some as a prime candidate for the job of White House chief of staff.