

THE FRONT PAGE

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RICHARD NIXON'S QUIET RIGHT HAND

His name appears occasionally in reports from San Clemente but other than that, **Frank Gannon**, Richard Nixon's right hand these days, is no household name.

Frank Gannon?

You won't find him mentioned in any Watergate stories but you will find Gannon in San Clemente where he has been since Nixon's resignation. Before that he was a \$35,300-a-year presidential assistant who stayed in Washington but out of political scandal after a 1971-72 stint as a White House Fellow. Now he is researching, along with Ron Ziegler and Ziegler's former assistant, Diane Sawyer, what could be the former President's last testament. When the book is published and Gannon sheds his deliberate low-profile researcher's role, you'll be hearing his name more often.

Gannon doesn't fit the old White House mold of brisk, Teutonic efficiency. He is 30ish, mustachioed, easy-going and personable. After his White House fellowship, he stayed aboard the sinking ship doing peripheral writing on domestic affairs. He has a favorite comedian, the irreverent Martin Mull, to whom Gannon gave a personal tour of the White House back in the good old days. He told Mull proudly that he was responsible for changing the color of the curtain the President stood in front of during television appearances from a sickly yellow to a more attractive blue. Gannon left with his chief and is now the full-time researcher—for Nixon's book, for which Warner Paperback Library reportedly paid \$2 million. It is not Gannon's first such undertaking. In England to study at Oxford in the mid-'60s, he worked with Randolph Churchill on his books about Winston Churchill. Gannon says he finds Nixon shares Churchill's remarkable ability to organize and retain information in his mind.

"I've started at the beginning—1913—and I'm up to 1946," Gannon reported from his office overlooking the Pacific Ocean before leaving for Whittier College to scour old student newspapers for mention of Nixon as a BMOC. Ziegler and Sawyer are researching the White House era, their efforts hamstrung by the cloudy legal status of Nixon's White House records.

Gannon compiles "research packets" that Nixon reads before dictating onto cassettes what will be the rough draft of the book his publisher hopes will come out next spring. But Gannon says no one around San Clemente has a deadline in mind. Most important, Gannon says, is that the book be good. He has said he doesn't think it should just be "self-justification," that Nixon "has the chance to be reborn in defeat, to re-think everything." But he assures a questioner his boss "isn't going to emerge as a warm, witty and wise closet liberal."



RETHINKING

Nixon's memoir and his low-profile aide,
Frank Gannon

CHECKING IN WITH THE RNC

According to a Republican National Committee staffer, forbidden phrases around the office are: "Pardon me," "What a creep," and "... left holding the bag." All three are unpleasant reminders of the Watergate era which GOPers hope will disappear with the recent arrival of O. C. "Mike" Carmichael to run the party's finance department. Word is that Carmichael, a Hoosier on the board of Gulf & Western and the W. R. Grace & Co., will be a virtual active vacuum cleaner who will take an unusually active role in reviving the party's contribution network.

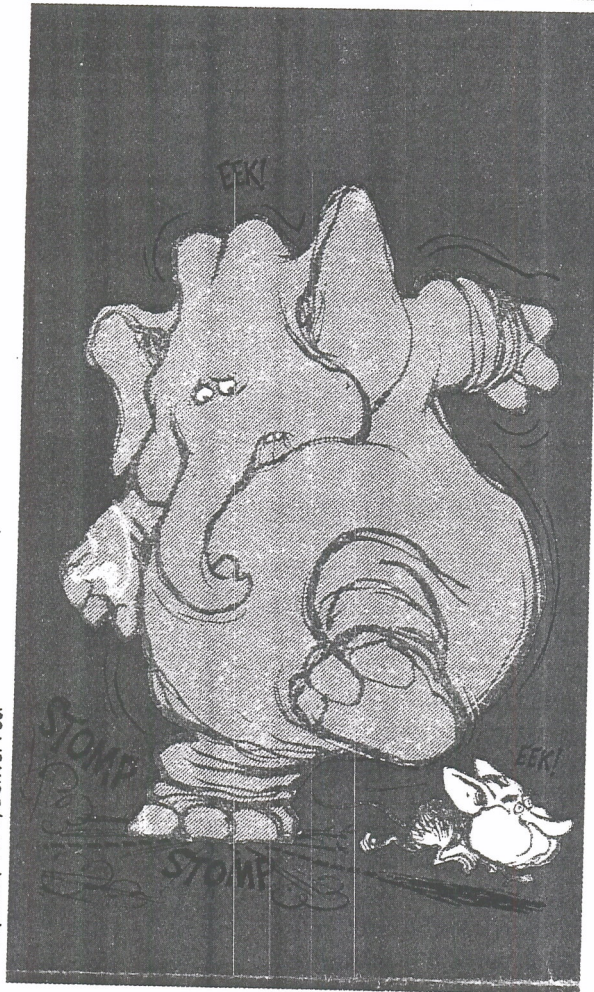
Like the opposition across town, the Democratic National Committee, the RNC is busy lecturing its workers on the finer points of the new campaign finance laws. The picture of one man whose 1972 fund-raising activity probably helped passage of that law, Maurice Stans, still hangs in the office of Buckley Byers, Carmichael's assistant, but post-Watergate friendships are spread all over the map these days; a dinner guest in Byer's Spring Valley home last month was one of the scandal's tougher truth-hounds, U. S. District Court Judge John Sirica.

THE FAST TRACK

Other than territorial squabbles between the groups investigating the CIA, it will be a while before any sensational headlines grow out of Senator



By Rudy Maxa



Pat Oliphant, 1974, Denver Post

RETRENCHING

Checking in with the post-Watergate RNC

Frank Church's (D-Idaho) select investigating committee. Staffers have been sitting patiently through agency briefings and the hard questions have not yet been hurled. "So far," says one Senate staffer, "it's been like two Sumo wrestlers struggling to get their weight into the ring. Now we're at the stage of bowing to one another . . ." You remember gasoline wars? Now it's a **massage parlor war** in downtown Washington. Men who work near the Connecticut Avenue corridor are handed \$5-off coupons for "Swedish massages" by the "world's most talented girls." Classified ads tout half-price offers, "combo specials" and list the women by first name . . . Also from the low-life grapevine comes word that a downtown Holiday Inn desk clerk was pleased to recognize the name of a guest registering recently. "**Harry Reems**," he said with a smile, "it's nice to have a movie star here." A trio of elderly women just arriving to attend the Daughters of the American Revolution convention gave Reems a bright smile but confessed they didn't recognize him. To Reems' displeasure, the desk clerk reeled off names of several porno flicks in which Reems starred: "Deep Throat," "Devil In Miss Jones," and "Dr. Feelgood." The women's looks turned so fiercely disapproving that Reems, in town to promote a paperback autobiography, switched motels immediately Camera shy: **Jeb Stuart Magruder** is not enthusiastic about being mentioned in the