

Policy Team-VI

Nixon's Counselors Urge Defense Shift

Reporters of *The Washington Post* have intensively interviewed many of the men, inside and outside the Government, who are contributing ideas and advice on national policy to Vice President Richard M. Nixon. This is the sixth of a series of articles based on these interviews.

By Murrey Marder
Staff Reporter

The advisers around Richard M. Nixon are urging more effective defense forces to meet the threat of "limited war," and greater attention to the potentialities of science for war and peace.

There are many indications that the Vice President privately concurs.

Because of President Eisenhower's preeminence in military matters, Nixon publicly has backed the President down the line on every defense issue. But he has also left himself room to shift the emphasis to more according to "what our potential opponents are doing, and also in the light of new technological development."

Nixon is carrying into the campaign his broadsides against those who talk about the United States "being a second-class military power . . ." This kind of talk is ridiculous, he has said, for "America today is still, and under proper leadership will remain, the strongest nation militarily, economically and morally in the world today."

A "second-class" posture today is not what his own outside advisers (and most critics) are concerned about. They agree the United States is

Senator Kennedy proposes 3-point plan for Mid-east peace, pledges action if elected. Page A12.

Nixon admits President made important Administration decisions. Page A2.

strong now. But some of them are very uneasy about possible future slippage. Others are insistent upon a stronger defense capability which will remove any doubt whatever that the United States can withstand a Soviet threat or thrust at any level.

Close to Secretary Gates

With all of Government within his reach, Nixon has extended the knowledge of defense policy which he gets on the National Security Council by private checking with top officials.

He has a personal relationship with Defense Secretary Thomas S. Gates Jr. Gates often talks with Nixon when Gates is about to make a major policy speech. Nixon's staff draws on other officials and specialists in the Defense Department for information and ideas, as well.

For critical evaluations of United States defense strength, the Nixon forces also have gone to Republicans who have worked inside the Administration in the past.

An example is Robert C. Sprague, a member of Nixon's Policy Advisory Group.

Sprague, turned 60 this month, is a graduate of the Naval Academy, a post-graduate student at Massachusetts Institute of Technology, and a former Naval architect, who twice has been called in by the Eisenhower Administra-

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