

# In new search for a defense chief, no clear favorite emerges

By Ray Moseley  
Chicago Tribune

WASHINGTON—Rebuffed Thursday in his long battle to have John Tower confirmed as defense secretary, President Bush is under heavy pressure to come forward quickly with a new nominee, but there is no clear favorite for the job.

Among the most prominent figures mentioned for the post are National Security Adviser Brent Scowcroft; former Defense Secretaries Donald Rumsfeld and James Schlesinger; and Norman Augustine, chairman and chief executive of the Martin Marietta Corp., a leading defense contractor.

But there are major question marks about nearly all of them, and Bush has been besieged by suggestions from White House aides, members of Congress and others as to whom he should appoint.

The list also includes former National Security Advisers Zbigniew Brzezinski and Gen. Colin Powell, former Transportation Secretary Drew Lewis, former Rep. Jack Edwards (R., Ala.), Sen. William Cohen (R., Me.), Sen. Jake Garn (R., Utah), Rep. Dick Cheney (R., Wyo.), former Defense Secretary Frank Carlucci, ex-astronaut and former Eastern Airlines board chairman Frank Borman and Paul O'Neill, chairman and chief executive of the Aluminum Corp. of America.

It is impossible to know how many of these men are on Bush's own list, or whether he is considering someone whose name has not surfaced publicly. Earlier the President said he would not appoint a sitting member of the House or Senate.

After the long, bruising fight over the Tower nomination, Bush may share the feeling of former President Calvin Coolidge when his administration was beset by scandal. "I have to appoint human beings to office," Coolidge lamented.

But Bush is under pressure to move quickly on the nomination because his administration is seven

weeks old and a number of urgent matters are being held up by the absence of a new team at the Pentagon.

Interagency reviews of national security policy have been hampered by lack of Defense Department representation. The administration also needs a defense secretary in place to begin making difficult choices on spending at a time of budget stringency, to deal with reform of Pentagon procurement practices, to appoint key subordinates and to deflect criticism that the administration has run adrift.

In recent days, press and congressional speculation has focused on Scowcroft as a possible defense secretary. He replied "No" when asked Thursday if he was in line for the job, but that is unlikely to still the speculation.

One source said Scowcroft cannot be ruled out, despite his disclaimer, because he has privately told friends that he considers the decision is up to the President.

Scowcroft would be an unusual choice, however, since he is a former Air Force general. Administrations traditionally have sought to preserve the principle of civilian control over the military in fact and symbol by keeping the defense secretary's job in civilian hands.

If this consideration prevails, then Powell, who is on active duty with the Army, also would be ruled out.

No one doubts the professional qualifications of Schlesinger, 59. But in a long career of government service as chairman of the Atomic Energy Commission, director of the Central Intelligence Agency, secretary of defense and secretary of energy, he displayed a difficult personality that alienated many of those who worked with him.

Rumsfeld, 55, also is highly regarded professionally but may be politically unacceptable to Bush. Rumsfeld, after briefly making a run for the Republican presidential nomination, withdrew in 1987 and last year gave his support to Sen. Bob Dole of Kansas in Dole's campaign against Bush.

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The New York Times \_\_\_\_\_  
The Washington Times \_\_\_\_\_  
The Wall Street Journal \_\_\_\_\_  
The Christian Science Monitor \_\_\_\_\_  
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Bush also is said to blame Rumsfeld for preventing President Gerald Ford from naming Bush as his vice presidential nominee in 1976.

But after the Tower debacle, Bush will be mindful of the need to choose someone who has no blemishes on his background, and that would be a factor in Rumsfeld's favor.

Rumsfeld held a number of important positions in the Nixon and Ford administrations, including those of defense secretary, White House chief of staff and ambassador to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization.

He is an adviser to a Chicago investment banking firm and former president and chairman of G.D. Searle & Co., the Skokie-based pharmaceutical manufacturer.

Augustine, 53, lacks the prominence of any of these possible candidates, but he may be on Bush's short list because he is widely known within the defense industry and Congress as an executive who has recommended overhaul of the scandal-ridden Pentagon procurement system.

Bush interviewed him early this year, apparently for the No. 2 job in the Pentagon, but friends said Augustine advised the President he would only be interested in the secretary's job.

Augustine has had a highly successful career at Martin Marietta.

O'Neill, the Alcoa executive, also was interviewed by Bush for a leading Pentagon job early in the year, but ruled himself out by saying he too would only be interested in becoming defense secretary.

Some White House sources are strongly tipping former Rep. Edwards of Alabama for the job. Now a Washington consultant, he has some defense clients, which could raise questions about possible conflict of interest.

But he and his wife are said to be close friends of the President and First Lady Barbara Bush.

*Tribune correspondent Timothy J. McNulty and researcher Michelle Baker contributed to this report.*