

Nixon Cabinet: Interior and Agriculture

Walter J. Hickel, advocate of economic growth as Alaska's governor, faces tougher job at Interior

Governor Walter J. Hickel of Alaska, designated by President-elect Nixon to be the new Secretary of the Interior, has been a successful self-made businessman and politician in a huge, thinly populated frontier state where the popular demand is for rapid economic development. He now takes over a department where environmental quality, which sometimes is not easily reconciled with exploitation of resources, has become a major concern. Moreover, he will have to deal with a Democratically controlled Congress increasingly influenced by the "new conservation" view that human activities must not be undertaken without regard for their impact on the total environment. Accordingly, to succeed as secretary, Hickel must respond effectively to demands and political pressures of far greater complexity than any he has faced as governor of Alaska.

The considerations that go into the selection of the members of a President-elect's cabinet are seldom fully revealed, but, in the case of Nixon's choice of Hickel, there seems little mystery. First, by tradition, the Secretary of the Interior has been a Westerner, and Hickel not only qualified on that score but, as co-leader of Nixon's campaign in the West, had the President-elect in his political debt. Furthermore, as Nixon himself pointed out in announcing the selection, Hickel, as an Alaskan, has not been party to struggles in the contiguous western states, such as those over allocation of water and public-versus-private power.

Some had hoped Nixon would appoint an Easterner to the job, such as Representative Rogers C. B. Morton of Maryland, one of the House Interior Committee's ablest members, and Nixon did in fact discuss this possibility with Morton. Appointment of an Easterner would have underscored the Department of the Interior's broadening role as a *national* agency as much concerned about problems of the urban areas, such as water pollution and open-space conservation, as it is about such typically western problems as land reclamation, mining, and the exploitation of oil and gas. This suggestion was strongly resisted by Republican politicians in the West, however, and Hickel was chosen.

Hickel, who is 49, grew up in Kansas, the son of a tenant farmer. He left school at 16 and, a few years later, arrived in Anchorage, Alaska, with, as legend has it, nothing in his pocket but 37 cents and a borrowed \$10 bill. After a series of odd jobs, he became a carpenter and, from that, a small builder who eventually became a big builder and head of a multi-million-dollar operation in which he put up large housing developments, shopping centers, and motels and hotels. In 1966 Hickel, in his first try for elective office, won the governorship by defeating the Democratic incumbent, William Egan, who had served as governor ever since Alaska became a state, in 1958.

Some 90 percent of Alaska is made up of federal lands administered by various agencies of the U.S. Department of the Interior. So, as governor, Hickel necessarily has had to spend much of his time dealing with issues that also will be of concern to him as Secretary of the Interior. But from the governor's office at Juneau the view of Alaskan problems is very different from the view

from the secretary's office in Washington.

Despite its abundance of resources (its fish, timber, oil and gas, and magnificent scenery and wildlife), Alaska is still economically undeveloped by comparison with most states among the "lower 48," and the financial resources available to the state government are very limited. And while the state has attracted some settlers who put a high value on conservation, it has attracted many—and they seem the most vocal and politically active—who see themselves as pioneers entitled to the same freedom to exploit resources that western pioneers enjoyed a century ago. Accordingly, proposals such as the one for a \$2-billion Rampart Dam hydropower project, which would destroy a major nesting area for waterfowl by flooding the Yukon flats and creating a reservoir larger than Lake Erie, are popular with Alaskans. The Rampart project, though favored by Hickel as well as by other politicians, was stymied even before he took office—by an adverse report from the Department of the Interior under Secretary Stewart L. Udall.

The statehood act of 1958 gave Alaska the right to select and claim title to about 104 million acres (more than the acreage of California) from the federal domain. This process is still largely uncompleted, and for the last 2 years it has been arrested altogether, by order of Secretary Udall, pending a settlement of Indian and Eskimo land claims. As governor, Hickel has been unable to break this impasse; as secretary, he may have a better chance—but it will be his duty, as it has been Udall's, to see that the interests of the Eskimos and Indians are fully protected. Hickel, of course, regards himself as a friend of these indigenous peoples; as an aide observes, a land-claims task force established by the governor was made up largely of Indians and Eskimos.

Alaska's growing oil and gas industry has brightened the new state's economic prospects, and Governor Hickel has promised "every encouragement" for its development. For example, in 1967 he asked the Interior Department to grant an application, which the department had denied, to allow exploratory drilling for oil in the Arctic Wildlife Range, an ecologically fragile area of almost 9 million acres which lies east of the Prudhoe Bay oil field. Interior's policy was, and



Walter J. Hickel

is, to deny such applications pending a study of the area. Delays of this kind are a frustration to the Hickel administration, which has set up a "North Commission" to develop plans for an arctic transport system and to encourage Congress to undertake a costly extension of the Alaska Railroad into the arctic region.

Governor Hickel's record in the conservation field is not blank; he has taken steps, for instance, to combat water pollution (including pollution from oil in Cook Inlet) and to conserve the endangered salmon fishery. It is clear, however, that for the most part he has been preoccupied with problems of economic development. For this reason, some conservationists view his appointment as Secretary of the Interior uneasily. "We're naturally concerned," remarks Michael McCloskey, conservation director for the Sierra Club. "There's nothing in his background that would indicate a deep interest in conservation."

Conservationists take no encouragement from the fact that Hickel fired the commissioner of natural resources whom he had inherited from the previous Democratic administration and replaced him with a geologist drawn from the executive suite of an oil company. This action still rankles in the memory of some Alaskans, for, even though Hickel had a perfect right to name his own commissioner, the man discharged was a respected, nonpolitical professional who had served some 15 years in Alaska's state and territorial governments.

Also, Hickel is regarded by some as an impulsive man who ignores advice that runs counter to his plans. For example, shortly after the disastrous earthquake of 1964, Hickel built his Captain Cook Hotel near the great fissure which had wrecked downtown Anchorage; the site was inside the "high-risk" area delineated by government seismologists. And, last summer, Hickel had the state buy a \$7-million Swedish-built ferry for service between Seattle and Alaskan ports, despite the Jones Act forbidding use of foreign-built ships in the U.S. coastal trade. He apparently acted in the mistaken belief that the Jones Act (which is protected by a potent coalition of maritime interests) could be easily amended, though he was warned that such was not the case.

Hickel and his staff are aware that some conservationists already regard him suspiciously as an advocate of headlong economic development. In their

view it is unjust for these critics to prejudge his performance in a new office which is quite unlike his old one, both as to the nature of the problems presented and as to the constituencies represented. And, it should be acknowledged, some things rumored about Hickel are said to be simply untrue. The governor's press secretary, Josef P. Holbert, says that Hickel has no interest whatever in any oil company or in oil and gas leases. Furthermore, according to Holbert, for anyone to suggest that the Hickel administration is a patsy for the oil industry is ridiculous, for not a barrel of oil leaves

Alaska, he says, without the state's getting a proper royalty.

Certainly Hickel is entitled to a chance to prove himself as Secretary of the Interior. But unless he does in fact demonstrate a perceptive and judicious concern for the broad responsibilities of that office, he is sure to clash with conservationists. These will include advisers to the Nixon administration itself; as Hickel has no doubt noted, the chairman of Nixon's task force on resources and the environment is Russell Train, president of the Conservation Foundation, a group guided by the spirit of the "new conservation."—LUTHER J. CARTER

Clifford M. Hardin, University of Nebraska Chancellor, Sees Important Role for Research at Agriculture

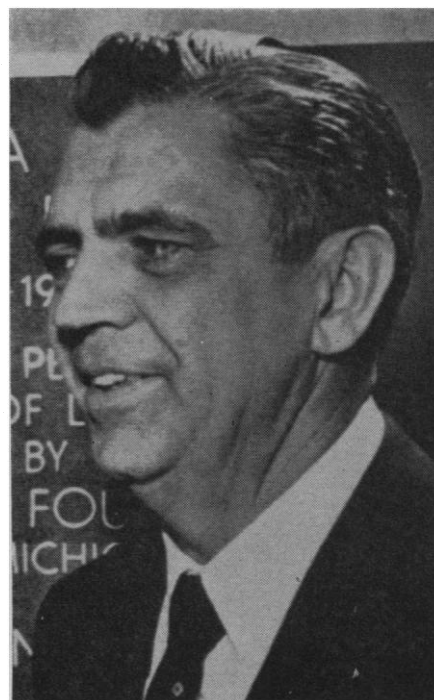
A successful career in education and an interest in scientific research are not the usual attributes of a secretary of agriculture, but they are two of the most notable qualities of Clifford M. Hardin, 53, the man chosen by President-elect Richard M. Nixon to head the nation's farm programs in the next administration. Hardin, who has been chancellor of the University of Nebraska since 1954, has taught agricultural economics and been a university administrator for the past 27 years. He has also directed research programs and has served on the National Science Board since 1966.

Hardin's farm policy views are not well known, a factor which may prove advantageous when the new secretary tries to reconcile warring agricultural interests. Hardin says it is "too early" to indicate what changes he might advocate in farm policy, but he told *Science* that research has a "terribly important" role to play in solving agricultural problems.

Hardin is chiefly known for his accomplishments as University of Nebraska chancellor. Enrollment has more than quadrupled under his leadership, reaching 30,000 students in 1968 (including 11,000 absorbed when the University of Omaha became part of the University of Nebraska in 1968). Hardin has been praised in Nebraska for his success in winning more money from the state legislature to pay higher faculty salaries, with the result that the university has one of the best paid faculties in the region. His administration has also established a continuing education program, has introduced educational television, has expanded the school's physical plant, and has instituted several

international programs, including one that led to the establishment of a new Ataturk University in Turkey.

At several points in his career, Hardin has been directly involved in planning and administering research. Before coming to Nebraska, he was dean of the school of agriculture at Michigan State University and for 4 years served as director of the university's agricultural experiment station, where he supervised some 300 research projects. John A. Hannah, Michigan State University president, recalls that Hardin "understood hard science" and was "much brighter than the crowd—we picked him



Clifford M. Hardin

out and made him a dean at a very young age."

Some observers suggest that Hardin's appointment to the National Science Board, the policy-making body of the National Science Foundation, was motivated largely by the desire to have university administrators represented on the board.

Philip Handler, NSB chairman, says Hardin "brought to the board a broad knowledge of agricultural economics, of

the educational problems of rural America, and of the impact of federal programs on a large state university." Handler adds that Hardin "has a deep appreciation of the significance of science and technology in American society and the vital role of educational institutions, particularly their graduate programs, in the continuing process of utilizing science in the national interest."

Hardin earned his bachelors, masters, and doctors degrees at Purdue Univer-

sity. He has shown particular interest in agricultural economics and world food problems, but has also dealt with a variety of other issues while serving as a trustee of the Rockefeller Foundation, a past president of the Association of State Universities and Land Grant Colleges, a former director of the American Council on Education, and a past chairman of the Omaha branch of the Federal Reserve Bank of Kansas City.

—PHILIP M. BOFFEY

ABM: Senators Request Outside Scientific Advice in Closed Session

The need for scientific advice is a subject infrequently discussed during debates on the floor of either house of Congress. However, in a secret session on 2 October the Senate discussed at length the subject of scientific advice on deployment of the antiballistic missile (ABM) system, during a 2½-hour meeting. (A version of this closed debate, which had been censored by the Department of Defense at Senate request, was quietly slipped into the *Congressional Record* on 1 November.) The debate was initiated, in discussion of the 1969 defense appropriations bill, by John Sherman Cooper (R-Ky.), leader of a group of senators who worked to postpone deployment of an ABM system.

Although the Johnson Administration originally justified construction of a "thin" ABM system on the basis of protection against the threat of Communist China, critics responded that it was merely the opening wedge in a campaign to deploy a highly expensive system against the Soviet Union. In the debate, Senator Richard B. Russell (D-Ga.), chairman of the Armed Services Committee and an ABM backer, gave substance to the critics' original doubts when he discounted the Chinese threat and said, "I therefore am frank to say I consider it primarily the beginning of a system to protect the people of this country against a Soviet missile atomic attack."

In response to the dogged questioning of Senator Cooper about whether the Soviet deployment of an ABM system around Moscow had been slowed down, Russell replied, "The Soviets

have reduced the content of their anti-missile complex around Moscow." Russell said it had turned out that Soviet scientists had not done any better than U.S. scientists in developing an ABM system; the Soviets, he added, "are having all kinds of trouble."

During his exchanges with Cooper, Russell said "one of the most serious mistakes I have ever made" (in his chairmanship of the Armed Services Committee) was "in allotting vast sums to the Navy for missile frigates before we knew we had a missile that would work on them." At one point, Russell said, "we had a couple of billion dollars" tied up in missile-carrying ships because of the failure of the Tartar, Talos, and Terrier missiles. Russell said this error, which was based on the unanimous testimony "of everyone in the Department of Defense and the Navy," probably "cost the taxpayers \$1 billion because they had to rebuild the missiles three times." Russell said there were several other R&D programs costing over a billion dollars which had never been made operational, including the Navajo missile. Russell also agreed that the billions of dollars spent on the F-111 (TFX) warplane had been ill-spent. Russell argued that he had taken more time in considering the ABM system than in considering Tartar-Talos-Terrier and was thus convinced it would work.

Then, in a long verbal fencing match, Foreign Relations Committee chairman J. William Fulbright (D-Ark.) pressed Russell about the kind of scientific advice Russell's committee had requested on the ABM.

FULBRIGHT: Did I understand the Senator to say that no witnesses were brought into the hearings on this matter except Administration witnesses?

RUSSELL: We had no requests whatever. We heard all the witnesses who wanted to be heard. None of the Senators who have this great technical acumen as to the missile came before the committee.

FULBRIGHT: Mr. President, I want to ask a question. I am not criticizing.

RUSSELL: I say no, because none of them asked to come.

FULBRIGHT: I remember, in the joint hearings on the Nuclear Test Ban Treaty, there was testimony from such scientists as [George B.] Kistiakowsky and [Herbert F.] York, who were considered the greatest scientists in this area. At that time, I remember, they had great doubts as to the practicability of this kind of missile. Is it the practice of the Senator's Committee never to have witnesses except those of the Administration?

RUSSELL: No, that is not our policy.

FULBRIGHT: But in this case, no witnesses except those under the Administration did testify; is that correct?

RUSSELL: We heard all the witnesses who requested to come.

FULBRIGHT: I fail to make myself clear.

RUSSELL: I understand what the Senator is driving at. I did not get out and try to find some scientists opposed to this system, and subpoena them and bring them before the committee, if that is what the Senator means.

FULBRIGHT: No; I do not think scientists of this character have to be subpoenaed. I think they are just as interested in the welfare of the United States as the Administration.

RUSSELL: I did not know the names of any of them.

FULBRIGHT: Two of them whose names come to mind in this area were Kistiakowsky and York. . . . I am not trying to argue; I merely wanted to ask the question.