

Jack Anderson —with Les Whitten

WASHINGTON — Getting the jump on Jimmy Carter, President Ford is preparing to demonstrate that he can knock bureaucratic heads together and get more efficiency out of the federal government.

He will begin, unless the plans go awry with a dramatic overhaul of the scattered bureaucratic enclaves that deal with energy problems. His reorganizers are busy behind closed white House doors, pulling together the widespread energy functions and putting them under one giant superagency.

The reorganization plan is supposed to be ready, according to internal White House documents, on August 20. This happens to be the day after the

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Republican national convention will wind up.

If the President wins the nomination, he could beat Jimmy Carter to the punch with a move to streamline the federal bureaucracy. The Democratic candidate

has made an issue of the cumbersome bureaucracy, promising a shake-up if he should become President.

Inside the Ford Administration, meanwhile, the reorganization move has touched off some savage infighting. Critics claim that it not only is strictly a campaign stunt but that the proposed superagency would rival such

balkanized departments as Health, Education and Welfare or House and Urban Development in mindboggling unmanageability.

But White House advocates believe the reorganization would increase bureaucratic efficiency and speed U.S. energy independence, thereby saving billions.

As laid out in the documents, the superagency might include the Federal Energy Administration, Energy Research and Development Administration, Federal Power Commission and Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

It probably would also draw in bits and pieces of the Agriculture, Commerce,

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Defense, Interior, State Transportation and Treasury Departments, not to mention the Council of Economic Advisors, Energy Resources Council, Environmental Protection Agency and Water Resources Council.

This jumble of bureaucratic jigsaw pieces are supposed to be fitted into one vast agency, with the possibility of forming a smaller, secondary agency to handle the regulatory functions.

The White House documents reveal that the work on this gigantic shotgun marriage began on May 20. The task force was given three months to prepare a "presidential decision paper" for Ford to contemplate.

But the machinery to reform the bureaucracy has already developed its own bureaucratic barnacles, with the resulting inevitable delays. The timetable, therefore, may have to be extended.

The new superagency would be

charged with the responsibility for developing a "comprehensive energy policy" to replace the present catch-as-catch-can methods of dealing with crises.

Specifically, the agency would be expected to increase production, reduce energy demand, promote "fossil, water, nuclear, solar and geothermal" energy, manage a 500-million-barrel strategic oil reserve, assure fair distribution of energy, set up contingency plans for handling any future oil shortage and generate electricity.

Footnote: White House sources said it is far too early to know whether the task force study will result in formal action. "We aren't at the bottom line," said one presidential aide.

NIXON vs. PRESS: The hostilities between the working press and Richard Nixon during his White House years produced some extralegal and illegal government harassment. Now Sen. Frank Church, D-Ida., citing our own case, has called upon the Justice Dept. to

investigate whether "any violation of federal law" occurred.

Here are a few of the allegations, which the senator has called to the attention of Atty. Gen. Edward Levi:

—The Central Intelligence Agency illegally assigned 20 agents to keep us under surveillance. They allegedly took photographs of people entering our offices and planted a microphone in our cellutex ceiling. The CIA file on us, which Sen. Howard Baker, R.-Tenn., has described as a foot thick, referred to the hidden mike cryptically as "Celutex II." The CIA project had the secret title, "Operation Mudhen."

—White House plumbers G. Gordon Liddy and E. Howard Hunt sought poison from the CIA to slip into our drinks or apply to our steering wheel. The plumbers also directed an intensive investigation of us.

—The FBI arrested our associate Les Whitten and obtained a list of our long-distance calls from the telephone company. No charges were brought against Whitten, and Judge John Sirica ordered the FBI to destroy the long-distance call slips.

—W. Donald Stewart, the Pentagon security chief during the Nixon years, has stated that the military conducted at least 11 investigations of us. One suspected source named Gene Smith, was hauled before a grand jury, but nothing came of it.

—The Justice Dept. cooperated with International Telephone and Telegraph in investigating us. ITT hired the famous detective firm, Intertel, which worked with the Justice Dept. in an attempt to discredit us.

—The White House assigned a special investigator, named Jack Caulfield, to conduct a separate, three-month investigation of us. Memos from Nixon aides H. R. Haldeman and Charles Colson showed that the purpose was to discredit us.

The Internal Revenue Service conducted a year-long investigation of us with negative results.