

Nixon's Reorganization Plan Follows Historic

By JACK ROSENTHAL

Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, June 11 —

For 33 years, commissions, White House advisers and students of the Presidency have insisted, with increasing urgency, that the President of the United States does not have enough power.

For all the talk of his being the most powerful man in the free world, they say, Presidential capacity to act in domestic affairs has not nearly kept pace with the explosive growth in the size and complexity of domestic problems.

After Dwight D. Eisenhower was elected President in 1952, President Truman remarked:

"He'll sit right here and he'll say, 'Do this, do that,' and nothing will happen. Poor Ike. It won't be a bit like the Army. He'll find it very frustrating."

President Nixon acted yesterday on the advice of those who say his power is too limited. He appointed Secretary of Labor George P. Shultz, one of his most valued associates, as director of a powerful new Office of Management and Budget, a position that some knowledgeable observers believe could soon be virtually that of an assistant President.

Domestic Council

At the same time, the President designated John D. Ehrlichman, his chief domestic affairs aide, as director of a new Domestic Council.

The two new bodies were recommended to the President in secret proposals from his Advisory Council on Executive Reorganization, headed by Roy L. Ash, the California industrialist.

The Ash Council's specific recommendations are still not known. Their confidentiality was illustrated last Aug. 20, when the President asked Mr. Ash to brief him orally so no memorandums would be left around the White House.

But it is plain that the central thrust of the recommendations parallels that of President Johnson's equally secret reorganization commission.

The time is long gone, the ASH group said in effect, when problems could be matched to a traditional Cabinet department. Issues such as pollution involve numerous agencies, which means that some higher authority must pull all the pieces together.

Mr. Ash is reported to have put the issue to the President in the form of four tasks: What do you want to do, how to do it, doing it and how well did it work?

The Ash group proposed that the Domestic Council deal with the first question: the area of



Associated Press

ADVISED ON AGENCIES: Roy L. Ash, head of a commission that recommended that President Nixon establish two new organizations.

policies and priorities. How to do it and doing it, particularly in interagency concerns such as pollution or urban affairs, would be done by the new management and budget agency.

In regard to the fourth task, the Ash group is reported to have been particularly critical. It said the Executive Office of the President had been handicapped by the absence of serious evaluation and recommended such a function for the new management agency.

President Nixon's willingness to act on this advice has won him praise from both parties. Last month, Joseph A. Califano Jr., chief domestic aide to President Johnson, testified in behalf of the basic Nixon reorganization plan.

"The pluses so far outweigh any minor deficiencies that the plan should be approved," he said.

'What the Executive Needs'

Ben W. Heineman, a Chicago corporation head, who directed President Johnson's secret reorganization study, said today: "This is very much what the executive department needs."

The White House has yet to disclose many details about how the two new bodies will work—particularly how they will relate to each other. A number of questions are being asked by students of governmental organization.

"I think George Shultz is first-rate," said a member of the Heineman study commission, asking anonymity, "but there really is a question about power here. Presidents are elected and Cabinet members

are confirmed by the Senate. But is it wise to put so much power in the hands of a super-Cabinet member who is neither elected by the public, confirmed by Congress, nor accountable to either?"

Another question involves potential rivalry between the two new bodies.

Collision Predicted

In the absence of information about how Mr. Shultz and Mr. Ehrlichman will relate to each other — "Those who can't stand ambiguity can't be creative here," Mr. Shultz said yesterday — executive office insiders predicted a collision between the two men.

"We hear Ehrlichman is going to have a staff of either 50 or 90 or 100. Why will there be two new bodies, each with big staffs?" one asked. "We'll have to see what happens the first time Ehrlichman tells Shultz, 'The President says he wants you to . . .'"

Yet another question was raised today by Richard E. Neustadt, a Harvard professor who is a renowned student of the Presidency.

"The Domestic Council is obviously too unwieldy to do much except soothe the Cabinet," he said. "Otherwise it is only a screen for the new staff. And yet there's something screwy about the staff."

The Heineman Commission, he noted, proposed a managerial staff headed by a director of the Executive Office of the President. Another policy development staff in the Budget Bureau was proposed.

The current plan "appears to do it upside down," Mr. Neustadt said.

"The managerial, coordinat-

ing staff will be in the Management and Budget Office. The planning staff is to be under Ehrlichman in the White House. And that doesn't seem to make much sense," he said.

Others discounted the prospect of conflict between the two new offices.

"Why should there be any?" asked a Budget Bureau aide, citing cordial relationships between White House staff members and the Budget Bureau in the past, notably between Mr. Califano and Charles Schultze, budget director in the Johnson Administration.

"Most probably," he said, "the relationships cannot be defined yet and will have to work themselves out in time."

In general, the Ash panel's

Advice on Power

recommendations accord with the views of study groups dating back to the Brownlow Commission of 1937-39, which proposed moving the Budget Bureau out of the Treasury Department and into the Executive Office of the President, to give the President enhanced managerial ability.

In 1946, the Office of War Mobilization and Reconversion advised President Truman to establish a permanent interagency management staff in the White House, but he demurred in the face of a Republican Congress.

Under the Eisenhower Administration, an advisory commission was established to find ways to lighten the burden on an ailing President. This body,

composed of Nelson A. Rockefeller, Milton S. Eisenhower, and Arthur S. Flemming, concluded that managerial problems were rapidly becoming too severe for any President. It also proposed an executive management body.

The 12-member Heineman Commission, which sent its report to President Johnson June 15, 1967, said, there should be six supersecretaries for such interagency categories as human resources and natural resources. It also proposed expansion of field operations, with high-ranking regional Federal executives reporting directly to the supersecretaries.

The proposals were so volatile, Mr. Califano said today, that action was deferred until after the 1968 election.