

Reorganization Adviser

Roy Lawrence Ash

By JACK ROSENTHAL

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WASHINGTON, Jan. 22—Roy Lawrence Ash, says a former associate, ought to have a little man with a steno-pad constantly in tow, to collect the steady stream of proverbs that issue softly from his mouth. These "ashes" are not corny old sayings, but pithy, self-coined principles, such

as: "Organization is policy."
"To decentralize operations, centralize information."
"Reorganization is the permanent condition of a vigorous organization."

These are some of the same principles that Mr. Ash has now brought from a meteoric big business management career to the business of managing big government. They came out privately in a 427-page, blue-leather bound book of recommendations that President Nixon read at Camp David on Dec. 5.

Now, in far greater detail, many of the principles have come out in parts of Mr. Nixon's State of the Union Message tonight.

When the President called for the most extensive reorganization of the executive branch since 1789, he was acting in large measure on the contents of Mr. Ash's blue book.

It was a compilation of nearly two years of effort of a six-man body known formally as the President's Advisory Council on Executive Organization, but known to almost all simply as the Ash Council.

'Do It Yourself' Plan

Mr. Ash has, says Andrew M. Rouse, the council's chief of staff, carefully followed one of his own principles as chairman: "Do it yourself, delegate—or abrogate."

"Roy—and he's the kind of man you come to call Roy quickly—has felt a personal responsibility for everything we did, but he delegated with great skill."

Mr. Ash himself is quick to deflect credit. "The line about 'organization is policy' is not really original," he said in an interview today. It comes from Sigmund Freud, who said 'anatomy is destiny,' and Richard Goodwin, the assistant to President Johnson, who write, 'structure makes policy.' The fact is that they're right."

Likewise, he plays down his own role on the council and praises the work and varied expertise of his fellow members. They are Dean

George Baker of the Harvard Business School, John B. Connally Jr., Secretary of Treasury-designate; Frederick R. Kappel, chairman of the American Telephone and Telegraph Company; Richard M. Paget, New York management consultant; and Walter N. Thayer, New York communications executive.



Harris & Ewing

Quick to share praise

geles on Oct. 20, 1918, has five children and two grandchildren. He is generally taken to be much younger than his 52 years.

His hair is receding but is still blond. A six-footer, he remains a trim 170 pounds.

His career epitomizes the 19th century model of the self-made man. Too poor to go to college in the depression, he went to work in a bank. During the war, he was selected to join the Army Air Forces' famed Statistical Control Service, which bred a cadre of men who were to become famous, including Robert S. McNamara, the former Secretary of Defense.

After the war, despite his lack of a college degree, he was accepted by and graduated with highest honors from the Harvard Business School.

Start on Borrowed Funds

In 1953, he joined with another Air Force statistical unit alumnus Charles B. (Tex) Thornton in starting Litton Industries. With \$15 in borrowed money they built a vast conglomerate that now encompasses more than 100 companies whose products range from trading stamps to nuclear submarines to simulated diamonds.

Mr. Ash has been president of Litton since 1961, when he succeeded Mr. Thornton, who has remained chairman.

The two men work so easily together they regard themselves as interchangeable. "They're like two barbers," says Miss Jean Randall, Mr. Ash's secretary. "If one is busy, well you go sit down with the other one."

Since Mr. Ash was summoned to advise Mr. Nixon before the inauguration, he has spent five days a month or more on issues of government organization.

He is a Republican but, his friends say, in no sense ideological—"neither Ripon Society nor conservative, but absolutely an issue man, who goes to the facts."

"You couldn't ask for a better cross-section," a former staff member said today. "You've got the Boston Brahmin, the smooth Texas politician, the soul of Iowa, the expert consultant, and the New York-Eastern establishment."

And Mr. Ash? The former aide and other acquaintances are slower to characterize him.

Works With Intensity

He is, for one thing, brilliant, they all say. He is a man who is remarkably easy to work with because "he carefully defines the issues he thinks are important and then addresses them with great intensity," one staffer said.

The latter quality was made memorable to some at an early council meeting in Mr. Ash's antique-furnished Los Angeles office. The meeting lasted for 12 hours.

Mr. Ash, born in Los An-

The Ash Council dealt with facts covering more than the reorganization described by the President tonight. It also made proposals, largely adopted, for reorganization of the White House staff, Budget Bureau, regulatory agencies, and individual agencies.

Mr. Ash himself is probably most pleased with the White House report implemented last June. "He really provided the President with a theory of how his office ought to run," in the view of one staffer.

And what happens now that the fat's in the fire and the President's reorganizational proposals are open to intense Congressional questioning?

Mr. Ash won't try to predict and responds instead by suggesting that the fight ahead will provide a test of yet another Ash adage:

"Organize for results, not for best efforts."