

President's Power Move

By Rowland Evans and Robert Novak

WASHINGTON — Concealed in the forests of Camp David, President Nixon is quietly but stubbornly designing a radically new federal bureaucracy which will centralize power inside the White House to a degree never before attempted.

Many details await final presidential determination, but the intent of the drastic reorganization has now become inescapably clear: to devise lines of power and authority which will centralize all decision-making in the White House to about the same extent that Henry Kissinger now controls every aspect of foreign policy.

IN BLUEPRINT FORM is a proposal to create four or five new Kissinger-type master bureaucrats working directly under the President. They would exercise fully as much control over their old-line departments as Kissinger now exercises over the State Department through the National Security Council (NSC).

What this means is that Mr. Nixon intends to take direct control of the sprawling and often immovable bureaucracy into his own hands, operating through his new master bureaucrats.

What is not wide open is Mr. Nixon's intention to use Kissinger's extraordinarily effective NSC operation as the prototype for gaining real White House control over the huge domestic agencies and make them more responsive to his own personal command. One predictable result of this: a further decline in the Cabinet, a process started under President Kennedy and ac-

celerated under Mr. Nixon.

The President complains to intimates that he does not have the time or inclination to deal directly with the 11 members of his Cabinet.

Thus, the new blueprint fits Mr. Nixon's well-known distaste for dealing directly with officials outside the White House, making the White House Oval Office off-limits to mere Cabinet members.

A March 1971 reorganization plan would have taken seven of the present 11 Cabinet-level departments and regrouped them into four conglomerate departments dealing with human resources, natural resources, economic affairs and community development. Only the State, Defense, Justice and Treasury departments would have survived, reducing cabinet-level departments to eight.

Some such functional regrouping is still a key part of the President's second term reorganization plans. With or without congressional consent, say White House aides, Mr. Nixon feels he can accomplish the purpose of his March 1971 plan.

THAT WOULD ABOLISH the Domestic Council, created with high hopes in 1970 under John Ehrlichman, Mr. Nixon's top domestic policy adviser. Ehrlichman himself concedes to intimates that the council has been an abysmal failure.

The new plan being worked over at Camp David would split the council into manageable units, each of them under one Kissinger-type master bureaucrat.