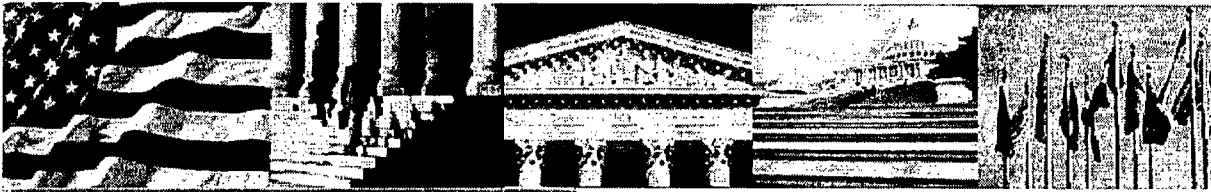


THE WHITE HOUSE

Domestic Policy Council Executive Order

[Help](#) [Site Map](#) [Text Only](#)

Go

President &
First LadyVice President &
Mrs. GoreRecord of
ProgressThe Briefing
RoomGateway to
GovernmentContacting the
White HouseWhite House
for KidsWhite House
HistoryWhite House
Tours

THE WHITE HOUSE
Office of the Press Secretary
For Immediate Release August 17, 1993
EXECUTIVE ORDER 12859

ESTABLISHMENT OF THE DOMESTIC POLICY COUNCIL

By the authority vested in me as President by the Constitution and the laws of the United States of America, including sections 105, 107, and 301 of title 3, United States Code, it is hereby ordered as follows:

Section 1. Establishment. There is established the Domestic Policy Council ("the Council").

Sec. 2. Membership. The Council shall comprise the:

- (a) President, who shall serve as a Chairman of the Council; -
- (b) Vice President; -
- (c) Secretary of Health and Human Services; -
- (d) Attorney General; -
- (e) Secretary of Labor; -
- (f) Secretary of Veterans Affairs;
- (g) Secretary of the Interior;
- (h) Secretary of Education; -
- (i) Secretary of Housing and Urban Development; -
- (j) Secretary of Agriculture;
- (k) Secretary of Transportation;
- (l) Secretary of Commerce;
- (m) Secretary of Energy;
- (n) Secretary of the Treasury; -
- (o) Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency;
- (p) Chair of the Council of Economic Advisers;
- (q) Director of the Office of Management and Budget; -
- (r) Assistant to the President for Economic Policy;
- (s) Assistant to the President for Domestic Policy;
- (t) Assistant to the President and Director of the Office of National Service;
- (u) Senior Advisor to the President for Policy Development;
- (v) Director, Office of National Drug Control Policy;
- (w) AIDS Policy Coordinator; and
- (x) Such other officials of Executive departments and agencies as the President may, from time to time, designate.

Sec. 3. Meeting of the Council. The President, or upon his direction, the

Assistant to the President for Domestic Policy ("the Assistant"), may convene meetings of the Council. The President shall preside over the meetings of the Council, provided that in his absence the Vice President, and in his absence the Assistant, will preside.

Sec. 4. Functions.

(a) The principal functions of the Council are:

(1) to coordinate the domestic policy-making process;
(2) to coordinate domestic policy advice to the President;
(3) to ensure that domestic policy decisions and programs are consistent with the President's stated goals, and to ensure that those goals are being effectively pursued; and (4) to monitor implementation of the President's domestic policy agenda. The Assistant may take such actions, including drafting a Charter, as may be necessary or appropriate to implement such functions.

(b) All executive departments and agencies, whether or not represented on the Council, shall coordinate domestic policy through the Council.

(c) In performing the foregoing functions, the Assistant will, when appropriate, work with the Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs and the Assistant to the President for Economic Policy.

Sec. 5. Administration.

(a) The Council may function through established or ad hoc committees, task forces or interagency groups.

(b) The Council shall have a staff to be headed by the Assistant to the President for Domestic Policy. The Council shall have such staff and other assistance as may be necessary to carry out the provisions of this order.

(c) All executive departments and agencies shall cooperate with the Council and provide such assistance, information, and advice to the Council as the Council may request, to the extent permitted by law.

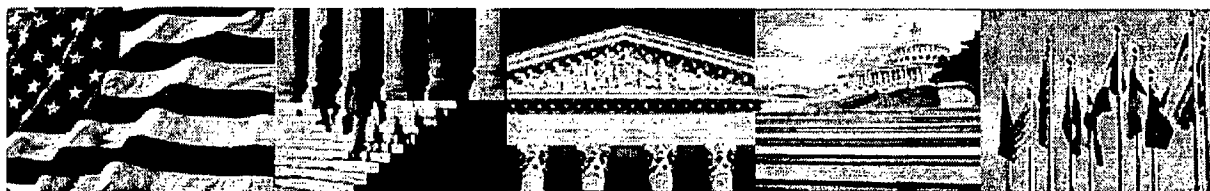
WILLIAM J. CLINTON
THE WHITE HOUSE
August 16, 1993
#

[President and First Lady](#) | [Vice President and Mrs. Gore](#)
[Record of Progress](#) | [The Briefing Room](#)
[Gateway to Government](#) | [Contacting the White House](#)
[White House for Kids](#) | [White House History](#)
[White House Tours](#) | [Help](#) | [Text Only](#)

[Privacy Statement](#)

[THE WHITE HOUSE](#)

About the DPC

[Help](#) [Site Map](#) [Text Only](#)
 [Go](#)
[President & First Lady](#)
[Vice President & Mrs. Gore](#)
[Record of Progress](#)
[The Briefing Room](#)
[Gateway to Government](#)
[Contacting the White House](#)
[White House for Kids](#)
[White House History](#)
[White House Tours](#)

Since 1993, the Domestic Policy Council (DPC) has helped develop and advance the Clinton-Gore Administration's domestic agenda on a host of issues: health care, education, crime, consumer protection, children and families, tobacco, and welfare reform. Over the past seven years, the DPC mission has included enacting the Brady bill, the assault weapons ban, and the President's program to fund 100,000 community police officers; the 1996 welfare reform law; the Administration's plan to expand children's health insurance; the Family and Medical Leave Act; the President's class size reduction plan and other efforts to invest more in schools and demand more from them; and numerous other initiatives. The DPC also has worked on a number of executive actions, ranging from consumer protection to gun safety to child support enforcement.

Currently, the DPC is working to provide an affordable Medicare prescription drug benefit for all beneficiaries; enact a strong, enforceable Patients' Bill of Rights; pass common-sense legislation to close the gun show loophole; improve teacher quality, expand pre-school and after-school, turn around low-performing schools, and help communities with school modernization and renovation; promote responsible fatherhood; and help give working families the resources they need to succeed.

[Domestic Policy Council](#)
[About the DPC](#)
[Executive Order](#)

President and First Lady	Vice President and Mrs. Gore
Record of Progress	The Briefing Room
Gateway to Government	Contacting the White House
White House for Kids	White House History
White House Tours	Help Text Only

[Privacy Statement](#)

Domestic Forum Can Sway a President

But Policy Council's Recommendations Carry No Automatic Weight

By Spencer Rich
Washington Post Staff Writer

Early in 1987, President Reagan met with his Domestic Policy Council on whether to add "catastrophic illness" insurance to the Medicare program.

For Secretary of Health and Human Services Otis R. Bowen, the chief advocate of adding such insurance to Medicare, the outlook for presidential endorsement seemed bleak. As Gary Bauer, former domestic policy adviser to Reagan, recalls, most Cabinet members and other senior officials of the White House Domestic Policy Council opposed Bowen's plan.

But, Bauer related, "The president was a man who could be moved by personal stories. Secretary Bowen's wife had suffered years of cancer. It almost broke them. He shared that with the president. I could tell by watching the president it had a very emotional effect on him; that sort of thing was given more weight than was pure budget-crunching."

At the time, Reagan kept his counsel. But later he endorsed the Bowen plan.

The deliberations on one of the most controversial pieces of legislation in recent years—"catastrophic" was enacted only to be repealed later because of protests against the premiums—underscore the strengths and weaknesses of the Domestic Policy Council: Its recommendations carry no automatic weight, and can be ignored, but it can also provide a forum for ideas that will spark the imagination of a president.

The council under President Bush has dealt, for example, with clean air and drugs. When it discussed the death-penalty-for-drug-kings policy announced early this year, "the law and order guys carried the day," said Attorney General Dick Thornburgh, the council chairman when Bush is absent.

Major topics expected to come up in the next year or so, Thornburgh said, are how to provide health insurance to all Americans, medical malpractice reform, protection of wetlands, global warming, education for persons of Hispanic origin, and a possible anti-poverty strategy.

During the policy debates, council meetings generally run along these lines, according to sources, who asked not to be identified.

In a recent meeting on medical malpractice, Assistant Attorney General Stuart Gerson provided a long list of options. Roger Porter, assistant to the president for economic and domestic policy, and Michael Boskin, chairman of the Coun-

cil of Economic Advisers, asked for detailed information on changes at the state level and the impact on insurance premiums. Gerson was asked to collect the data for a later session.

At another meeting, attended by the president, Thornburgh gave a briefing on white-collar crime and National Drug Policy Director William J. Bennett gave one on anti-drug efforts. The president, participating in "lively" fashion, made clear the anti-drug war is still a major White House priority.

The Domestic Policy Council traces its origins to President Nixon's Reorganization Plan No. 2 of 1970, though the structure has changed somewhat. Today the council, which handles general domestic and social issues, along with the Economic Policy Council and the National Security Council, is, as Bush put it last year, one of the "primary channels for advising the president on policy."

While the council takes a broad overview on issues, it is almost always working within the constraints of budget and political realities.

The president is chairman of the Domestic Policy Council, with Thornburgh designated as chairman pro tem. The president often misses sessions, since many are not decision meetings but more like "inter-agency think tank" gatherings where members focus their views and hear reports.

An official of one department described Thornburgh in the chair as a "good quick study, good at insisting that all be heard, crisp about moving things along, a good planner."

"I like the format," Thornburgh said in an interview. "I'm comfortable with it."

As governor of Pennsylvania, he ran similar state government councils. Before a meeting, he plows through the studies and position papers developed by the departments. "If I'm going to run a meeting I'd better know what's going on."

Aside from the attorney general, the council consists of the secretaries of Interior, Health and Human Services, Housing and Urban Development, Energy, Education, and Veterans Affairs; the administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency and the director of the Office of Management and Budget. Vice President Quayle and White House Chief of Staff John Sununu are members ex-officio.

If a member cannot attend, an undersecretary or deputy or other senior official can stand in. Other Cabinet members can also attend as well as White House officials.

A decision to study a subject sometimes is specifically aimed at developing a set of policy options for the president. The end product, sometimes after many meetings, is a "decision memorandum" laying out viable options with brief pros and cons and a space for the president to check off his decision.

At the bottom, Bauer said, there is usually a summary of sentiment. "The Attorney General supports Option 1; the Secretary of HHS supports Option 2. But this is not a vote, just an indication to the president of sentiment."

At other times, the council meets only to explore certain issues.

In the early stages of kicking ideas around or working toward a specific options paper for the president, sub-Cabinet "working groups" of assistant secretaries and agency heads do the initial work.

The council or its working groups often meet several times a week. For example, one official said, there recently have been meetings on crime and drugs, budget reform, minority education, malpractice and tort reform.

The council with Thornburgh in the chair recently discussed possible approaches to combat poverty but did not come up with a formal paper for the president. "The staff is still developing ideas and options—eventually we'll give him a package," said Thornburgh.

The council uses staff from the White House Office of Cabinet Affairs, headed by Edith "Ed" Holiday, the former Treasury general counsel who is now assistant to the president and secretary to the Cabinet. Three professional staff members under Holiday are assigned to the Domestic Policy Council: Richard Porter, Daniel Heimbach and John Schall.

However, Holiday can ask departments and agencies to help the council with research, statistics and expert advice. Usually, the "lead department" does much of the research and drafts the initial options. But after the council chews them over, the list may be redrafted, with Holiday's staff coordinating the final effort, to reflect council deliberations.

"All Cabinet members see the final decision memorandum to see that it is accurate and that the positions are properly stated," said an official.

While the council provides a formal structure for reaching policy judgments, it is important to remember that in the Executive Branch it is the president who is supreme.

came out of her mother's womb she had already had about more than a dozen bones break in her body.

Just a few years ago, anybody like that could never have grown up and had anything like a normal life. They just would have been helpless, just continually crumbling. Now, this girl has gone to the National Institutes of Health every 3 months for her entire life. And even though she's just 13 years old, if she were here talking to you, she would speak with the presence, the maturity, the command of someone more than twice her age. And she looks a little different because the bones in her skull have broken, the bones in her legs have broken, the bones in her back have broken. But she can walk and she can function and she can go to school. And even though she's only 4 feet tall and weighs only 60 pounds, she can function.

And she asked her father to take her to Iowa so she could help people in Iowa to fight the flood. And she went to Iowa and loaded sand in the sandbags, knowing that any one of those bags could have broken her leg above the knee, could have put her away for a year. She said, "I cannot live in a closet. This is something that's there. I want to live. I want to do my life. I want to do what other people do."

And I was so overcome by it, I brought the girl to see me, and then we just quietly arranged for her to be there when the Pope was there. I say that to make this point. I asked her why in the world she would have done that, why she would have risked literally breaking her body apart to be there with all these big, husky college kids fighting this flood. And she said, "Because I want to live. And it's there, and I have to go on. I have to do things."

If a child like that can do something like that, surely to goodness, we can stop wringing our hands and roll up our sleeves and solve this problem. And surely we can do it without the kind of rhetoric and air-filling bull that we hear so often in the Nation's Capital. We can do it.

I miss you. I miss this. I miss the way we make decisions. I miss the sort of heart and soul and fabric of life that was a part of every day when I got up and went to work in a State capital. Somehow we've got to bring

that back to Washington. Think about that little girl, and help us solve this health care problem.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:50 a.m. at the Tulsa Convention Center. In his remarks, he referred to John Motley, vice president, National Federation of Independent Business, and Gov. George S. Mickelson of South Dakota, who died April 20 in an airplane crash.

Executive Order 12859— Establishment of the Domestic Policy Council

August 16, 1993

By the authority vested in me as President by the Constitution and the laws of the United States of America, including sections 105, 107, and 301 of title 3, United States Code, it is hereby ordered as follows:

Section 1. Establishment. There is established the Domestic Policy Council ("the Council").

Sec. 2. Membership. The Council shall comprise the:

- (a) President, who shall serve as a Chairman of the Council;
- (b) Vice President;
- (c) Secretary of Health and Human Services;
- (d) Attorney General;
- (e) Secretary of Labor;
- (f) Secretary of Veterans Affairs;
- (g) Secretary of the Interior;
- (h) Secretary of Education;
- (i) Secretary of Housing and Urban Development;
- (j) Secretary of Agriculture;
- (k) Secretary of Transportation;
- (l) Secretary of Commerce;
- (m) Secretary of Energy;
- (n) Secretary of the Treasury;
- (o) Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency;
- (p) Chair of the Council of Economic Advisers;
- (q) Director of the Office of Management and Budget;
- (r) Assistant to the President for Economic Policy;

Se
dent
the I
sistan
cil.
meet
absen
sence
Se
tions
the c
coord
Presi
decis
the F
that
sued;
the P
Assist
drafti
appro
(b)
cies,
Coun
throug
(c)
the A
with t
tional
the Pr
Sec
may fi
comm
groups
(b)
headed
Dome
such st
essary
order.

- (s) Assistant to the President for Domestic Policy;
- (t) Assistant to the President and Director of the Office of National Service;
- (u) Senior Advisor to the President for Policy Development;
- (v) Director, Office of National Drug Control Policy;
- (w) AIDS Policy Coordinator; and
- (x) Such other officials of Executive departments and agencies as the President may, from time to time, designate.

Sec. 3. Meeting of the Council. The President, or upon his direction, the Assistant to the President for Domestic Policy ("the Assistant"), may convene meetings of the Council. The President shall preside over the meetings of the Council, provided that in his absence the Vice President, and in his absence the Assistant, will preside.

Sec. 4. Functions. (a) The principal functions of the Council are: (1) to coordinate the domestic policy-making process; (2) to coordinate domestic policy advice to the President; (3) to ensure that domestic policy decisions and programs are consistent with the President's stated goals, and to ensure that those goals are being effectively pursued; and (4) to monitor implementation of the President's domestic policy agenda. The Assistant may take such actions, including drafting a Charter, as may be necessary or appropriate to implement such functions.

(b) All executive departments and agencies, whether or not represented on the Council, shall coordinate domestic policy through the Council.

(c) In performing the foregoing functions, the Assistant will, when appropriate, work with the Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs and the Assistant to the President for Economic Policy.

Sec. 5. Administration. (a) The Council may function through established or ad hoc committees, task forces or interagency groups.

(b) The Council shall have a staff to be headed by the Assistant to the President for Domestic Policy. The Council shall have such staff and other assistance as may be necessary to carry out the provisions of this order.

(c) All executive departments and agencies shall cooperate with the Council and provide such assistance, information, and advice to the Council as the Council may request, to the extent permitted by law.

William J. Clinton

The White House,
August 16, 1993.

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 3:48 p.m., August 17, 1993]

NOTE: This Executive order was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on August 17, and it was published in the *Federal Register* on August 19.

Proclamation 6586—Women's Equality Day, 1993 August 18, 1993

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

On August 26, 1993, we celebrate the 73rd anniversary of the ratification of the Nineteenth Amendment to the Constitution. In declaring that the right to vote shall not be denied or abridged on account of sex, the Nineteenth Amendment guaranteed for women the most cherished prerogative of American citizenship.

Since America was founded, women have demonstrated an active interest in shaping the practice of democratic government. But it was not until the passage of the Nineteenth Amendment that women's myriad contributions to the social, cultural, and economic life of our Nation began to receive the full acknowledgment they deserved. As women's voices continue to gain strength in the political arena, female elected officials at every level of government bring crucial insight to the decision-making process.

The struggle for true equality among the sexes has not been limited to the public sphere. Broadening the franchise fundamentally changed our understanding of equal opportunity, helping to encourage shared responsibility in the home and personal growth in the work place. Today, more and more

ANALYTICAL PROBLEMS IN THE STUDY OF PRESIDENTIAL ADVICE: THE DOMESTIC COUNCIL STAFF IN FLUX

by

JOHN HELMER

The George Washington University

LOUIS MAISEL

Colby College

Introduction to the Problems

Were a President starting out anew, it is unlikely he would choose the particular configuration of staffs and units to assist and advise him which exists today in the Executive Office of the President (EOP).

He is bound to insist on a large budget office. He would almost certainly require a staff to help manage the day-to-day decision process in foreign and domestic policy. He would need a White House Office containing a number of personal aides close at hand, staffs for press and Congressional relations, and a range of operational support. He would probably want an economic policy adviser but not necessarily a Council of them. Beyond these, his choices for staffing would reflect his own particular substantive and operational priorities, as well as his organizational philosophy concerning what his Executive Office should or should not contain.

Of course, the President doesn't start with a clean slate. He inherits the Executive Office structure from his predecessors and his immediate needs for staff support generally bring him to fill most senior EOP positions before he has had an opportunity to review how much of the institutional vestige he wishes to retain.

This much is well-known; so too is the cumulative result—an almost unbroken process of adding new advisory units, new layers of staff to man them, and new roles and responsibilities for each of the President's advisors to perform. Analysis of the history of the EOP over the past three decades shows a consistent pattern of expansion. In budgetary terms the Executive Office has grown to over eight times its size in 1950. Man-

power has grown in the same period just from over 1,100 to over 1,700—an increase of more than 50 percent.

Predictably, the expansion of staff numbers, the creation of more EOP units and more small units, the delegation of decision-making authority, even the effect of periodic reorganizations have resulted in changes of both organizational shape and size. These factors have increased the amount of reporting upwards and sideways that is required in the preparation of papers for executive review. They have widened the networks of contacts that go into presidential staff work; they have exacerbated problems of role definition, boundaries of responsibility, and general coordination of advice.

These are widely acknowledged as general problems of the policy process in the Executive Office. What is not well understood is whether there is a cause-and-effect relationship between specific organizational patterns in the Executive Office and the outcomes of the policy process which the EOP is responsible for producing. And if there is such a relationship, the literature on the presidency is a mass of contradictions and doubts as to what that might be. Consider these examples.

1. *Bureaucratic expansion increases the complexity of decisions and disperses the power to make them.*

One trend already noted in the EOP is the proliferation of policy units, each with its own circumscribed area of responsibility for policy advice. The effect has been an increase in the number of people whose role potentially involves them in the review of policy papers. The more numerous papers for review

become, the more issues for decision are presented, and the more complex the decision process inevitably must be. It is a truism of modern organizational studies to say that the more complex this process becomes, the greater the uncertainty in predicting its outcomes, and the more variables that are required, analytically speaking, to plot and explain what the outcomes are. As Steinbruner (1973) noted in a recent study of national security policy-making, in these circumstances the effective power to make policy decisions is dispersed, the President's power not least of all. The measure of the President's power in decision-making is thus arguably the reciprocal of the complexity of the process.

2. Increasing delegation of presidential powers adds to the need for staff coordinating mechanisms.

The history of the Executive Office is in important part a process of increasing delegation of policy review and of decision-making powers from the President to his assistants in special policy areas or fields of responsibility. Each of these assistants or staff has in turn delegated more of his functions to subordinates.

Presidents have differed in the value they placed on delegation within their own office. Delegation has the advantage of increasing the span of control the Chief Executive can exercise over both people and policy issues, and this enhances the coverage of expertise, the adequacy or representation, and the range of feedback that are available for presidential decision-making. Studies of executive decision-making in business have suggested also that the influence of the chief executive is greater and more effective, the more he delegates functions to his subordinates (Leiberson and O'Connor 1972).

On the other hand, the more a chief executive delegates his authority, with a greater number of units and sub-units reporting back, the more difficult it becomes to coordinate his policy-making process (Rose 1977). Studies by Helmer of the evolution of the Executive Office (1977) illustrate that an increase in staffing an issue in one section of the EOP or within an Administration in general, is usually not balanced by a decline in staffing the same issue in other sections.

All staff like to be where the action is, even if only on the margins, and once there, they prove difficult to silence or remove. The result is that as new issues gain presidential priority, all units try to gain new resources to throw more staff into the policy process. Staff output increases exponentially and more staff time is consumed in processing and "coordinating" the flow of paper and inter-agency committee meetings that results.

3. Shortened tenure shortens organizational memory and narrows policy focus.

Senior staff tenure in the White House averages less than two years on the whole, it is longer in other EOP units but over time the trend has been for this to shorten in all units. Contrasting only the domestic policy staffs of the past three Administrations, and excluding staff unit heads, the following figures indicate average tenure:

Califano staff	24.4 months
Ehrlichman staff	34.5 -
Cannon staff	24.1 -

Short tenure means that organizational memory is short and staff contacts in government narrow. The lessons of experience are learned too late in the individual's tenure to benefit the decision-making process (cf. Heckscher 1977; et seq.). For staff with little experience, there is marginally greater effectiveness and influence to be gained in specialization of advisory roles and in concentration on short-term policy problems. Little insight and few resources are available for longer term policy work and staff planning.

4. The Ear versus the Eye of the President.

Presidents have differed in the extent to which they preferred oral briefings on issues rather than written memoranda. This is partly a matter of personality, partly of background, and partly of managerial style. There is a simple but important implication for the structure of the Executive Office: the size of the advisory staff will be roughly proportional to the volume of paper the President demands, and to the ratio of paper to talk at the Oval Office stage of policy decision. In order for the President to cut staff significantly, for example, he needs to consume

less paper; but consuming less paper is bound to require more time for talk. This is the marginal advantage of paper—that it commits less time and thereby leaves the President freer than otherwise to set his own deadlines and keep his own policy counsel.

5. Increasing hierarchy of staff reduces the options delivered to the top.

Another problem of the effect of organizational structure upon the executive policy-making process flows from the sizeable change in *shape* of the executive bureaucracy over the last two decades. In this instance, *shape* refers to the number of levels (civil service or General Schedule grades) at which staff are appointed, the average grade of different EOP units, and the span of control of supergrade staff over middle and low-grade subordinates in each executive unit.

To the extent that EOP units now have relatively more senior staff and more layers of staff than they used to have, policy papers are required to travel through more clearance points on their way upwards. What hierarchy of this kind can do is to reduce the detail of information, and the number of individual options or issues for decision that are transmitted to higher authority (Helmer 1975).

What studies of EOP decision-making reveal is that as the process becomes more complex for the President in the aggregate, each decision file itself becomes less complex as it heads towards the Oval Office. What the layers of staff do in short is to reduce argument of pros and cons, detail of agency submissions, and range of inter-agency options down to that limited number on which no further agency or staff agreement can be secured in advance. Perhaps this is what staff should do, but in acting thus they also create problems of isolation of the President which in the past have been serious in their implications.

6. Organizational Scale and the Effects of Competitiveness Among Advisers.

The competitiveness by means of which Presidents like Roosevelt and Truman sought to invigorate the advice they got and multiply their options, took place in an Executive Office which was a fraction of the present size and leaner (less top-heavy) in shape. In that context competitiveness might be re-

garded as healthy in the sense that it neither shifted the balance of presidential attention for too long from one policy area to another, nor diminished the range of his choice within each area.

In the much larger and more complex Executive Office of today, competitiveness among advisers can have several less beneficial effects. For in the process of decision-making, the larger and more specialized units can and do drive the smaller ones, not to mention the Cabinet agencies, out of the market in presidential attention. In the case of the last three presidents, attention has tended to be fixed almost exclusively and for long periods in single areas of policy.

EOP units can have these effects by generating more issues for decision, more detailed options, and a greater volume of paper than the President of the day can fairly absorb if each advisory unit had a nominally equal share of the President's time and stood in line to wait for it. With advantages of size and resources and using a variety of staffing tactics, some units can manipulate the rules of the game in executive decision-making and exercise disproportionate influence over the process as a result.

In the Ehrlichman period this was the case with the ascendancy of the Domestic Council staff in domestic policy as against the Cabinet agencies. In the Ford Administration it was true of the Economic Policy Board as against both domestic and foreign policy advisory units in many key policy areas. Increases in scale have thus fundamentally changed the consequences of staff competitiveness from what they were in Roosevelt's time.

Methodological Problems

Identifying a range of hypotheses like these is one thing; finding reliable tests for them is quite another.

At any selected point of time, for instance, it is difficult to gauge how far the decision-making process employed by a particular President follows the formal rules and division of responsibilities of the executive bureaucracy as this has been legislated or otherwise chartered to operate; how far this process deviates in order to follow the dictates, style or plans of an incumbent President prepared to improvise within the

existing structure; or alternatively, how far the process responds to the improvisations of many members of the Executive Office with the effect that no one, certainly not the President, is responsible for the shape it takes, nor is anyone especially competent at predicting or controlling its outcomes.

These difficulties are compounded over time, for no President uses the same staff units in the same way, and each of the modern Presidents since Roosevelt has made at least one, some more than one effort at formally reconstructing and reorganizing the Executive Office to suit his particular leadership or policy needs. The number of informal efforts to tinker with or fine tune the EOP are legion.

And yet the rhetoric of Executive Office reorganization has remained much the same over the years, and veteran White House advisors and staff write or talk of much the same problems of the policy-making process. A recent review of Executive Office reorganization plans since 1936 concluded that "there are no new ideas which today's reorganization teams have uncovered which those of the past have not clearly identified or experimented with."

In contrasting the policy processes of different presidents, this kind of conclusion creates something of a paradox. Either the dynamics of the executive bureaucracy and policy process have remained constant, while the outcomes have varied—a position which belies the evident expansion of the EOP and which in principle few students of bureaucracy would find credible. Or else neither policy process nor outcome has varied much from one Administration to the next—a view with which few observers of the modern presidency would agree.

In another study Helmer (1977) has analyzed the dynamics of the executive bureaucracy since 1950. This has identified the principal sources of growth and attempted to measure competitiveness and illustrate the rise and fall of staff units with the EOP. Related but classified studies by Helmer¹ of presidential decision-making have sought in part to assess the impact of bureaucratic structure on policy processes and outcomes as such.

An alternative approach to these problems is to monitor and analyze a single presidential

advisory unit over time, identifying the relationships between organizational structure and policy-making or advisory roles, as these evolved through one presidential term and from one administration to another. Earlier papers by Helmer (1975) and Maisel and Helmer (1976) have outlined a comparative study of domestic policy staffs in three quite different administrative frameworks—the United States (Domestic Council), Australia (Priorities Review Staff), and England (Central Policy Review Staff). The focus of the present paper is on the Domestic Council, and on what can be learned about presidential policy-making in general from the career—and a relatively short-lived one at that²—of a single staff advisory unit. What is likely to be learned depends of course on the types of data which are available and the perspective from which they are viewed. What the paper aims therefore to do is to contrast the interpretations of the Domestic Council and its performance in the executive advisory system which can be provided by two quite independent approaches (methodologically speaking) to the evidence.

In the first instance, the approach is primarily historical and the sources of data are the official documents of presidential administration, including some publicly released reports of the Domestic Council itself,³ comments of officials reported in the press, and material opinions obtained from a series of personal interviews which the authors conducted with members of the Ford Domestic Council staff and a number of their predecessors during 1976.

These interviews were structured in such a way as to provide in addition to personal judgements about staff roles, data on the pattern of staff interactions within the Domestic Council and between it and other units of the Executive Office and the Cabinet agencies; as well as information on the use of time by staff members, specialization and the degree of coordination of their own with other advisory work in the EOP. These data lend support to significantly different interpretations of the function and performance of this staff unit. Combined with other little-used measures of Executive Office organization, influence and power, the paper presents an alternative set of results that go some way to testing the hypotheses which have already

been mentioned, but at the same time cast some doubt on the reliability of the first set and the perspective from which it was derived.

The Evolution of the Domestic Council— One Perspective

The history of the Domestic Council needs to be viewed within a broader context of the growth of formalized Presidential advisory units.

As Richard Neustadt (1977), Patrick Anderson (1972), and many others have shown, Franklin Roosevelt and each of his successors have adapted the use of their White House staff assistants to suit their own decision-making styles. Roosevelt's "competitive" style of staff use contrasted markedly with Eisenhower's hierarchical style. Truman's staff worked in a manner somewhere between the two. Kennedy seems to have patterned his use of the White House Staff on the Roosevelt model. And nothing could have been more unstructured or more personal than the way in which Lyndon Johnson treated his White House staff (on Johnson see also Kearns 1976; Wayne, forthcoming; Maisel and Helmer, 1976).

None of these Presidents developed a coordinating mechanism for domestic policy to parallel the National Security Council for foreign policy. That step was left to Richard Nixon and the Ash Council.⁴

1. *The Ash Council and the Establishment of the Domestic Council*

Soon after taking office, Richard Nixon asked Roy L. Ash, President of Litton Industries, to chair a Presidential Advisory Council on Executive Organization. The Council, which was commonly known by its chairman's name, met for slightly over a year, with the six members convening approximately once a month to work on the basis of papers prepared by the Council's staff. Eventually the Council produced thirteen memoranda, three of which have been publicly released.

The Council's recommendations led to Nixon's major effort to reorganize the government, abolishing seven departments, creating four new departments, reducing the power of many independent agencies. These proposals were never given serious consideration by the Congress. Nixon attempted to

accomplish some of their ends without Congressional action, by creating the essence of a Super Cabinet among his top advisors, but this plan too was short-lived, its demise hastened by the Watergate scandal.

The Ash Council was more successful, however in having its plans for the Executive Office of the President instituted. The Council's plan called for adding management functions to the Bureau of the Budget, renaming it the Office of Management and Budget, and creating a domestic policy coordinating unit within the White House, the Domestic Council.

The Domestic Council was to be chaired by the President and to have as its other members the Vice President and the Cabinet Secretaries with responsibility for domestic programs. In theory, the Cabinet officers were to play a major role. According to Murray Comarow, the Executive Director of the Ash Council:

We also concurred with the accurate charges that the Cabinet was being cut out. What do you do? Create something which employs the Cabinet members more than they have been and give the people making the decisions some institutional basis from which to work . . . We wanted the staff of the Domestic Council to be very small.⁵

As Kessel (1975:20) points out, however, President Nixon gave the Domestic Council very broad responsibilities and the formal members were already busy men; "When busy men are given new responsibilities, it is well to inquire about the staff that is going to carry out these tasks." In point of fact, the Council itself met infrequently from the start, so that in most cases references to the Domestic Council are in fact references to the staff unit set up under the Council to serve the President directly.

Almost from the beginning, John Ehrlichman was sensitive to the problems of the decision-making process in the Nixon White House. During the early days of 1969, when Daniel Patrick Moynihan and Arthur Burns were the President's principal domestic advisors and frequently presented him with conflicting views, Ehrlichman was a fairly minor staff man. By the time the Ash Council was in full operation, late in 1969, Ehrlich-

man saw its importance, both for the President and for himself:

The Ash Council became our great white hope for solving all of the administrative problems we were having. I had a number of sessions with Comarow and with Rouse and with the whole group. I was lobbying the President at the same time I was lobbying the Ash Council and I would say I had a fairly high level of success. I was not trying to tailor a suit of clothes to fit me, but it certainly was something I was comfortable with.⁵

2. *The Nixon Council*

Ehrlichman was appointed the Domestic Council's first Executive Director. He chose Kenneth Cole as his deputy and they eventually appointed six assistants, each of whom, in turn, had a small staff. This model fitted Ehrlichman's style, but it was not what the Ash Council had in mind. Comarow commented:

The Domestic Council was working to a degree under John Ehrlichman, but from its earliest days it took off in a direction I did not intend. It was not 180 degrees off, but 45 degrees. We saw emphasis on the Domestic Council as a mechanism within which the fragmented Cabinet system could function on problems which cut across departmental lines. Even under Ehrlichman it took the form of John Smith in charge of these areas. Jim Jones in charge of those.⁵

John Smith, Jim Jones, "faceless assistants ordering Cabinet Secretaries around"—Kessel (1975) and especially Richard Nathan (1975: Ch. 3) point out that Nixon lost faith in his Cabinet early in the first term. As a result, they have argued, power soon flowed from the Cabinet Secretaries to the White House, even more so that it had in the days when Joseph Califano dominated Cabinet members in the name of Lyndon Johnson. Ehrlichman and his Domestic Council staff became the instrument exercising much of this power. According to both observers (Bonafede 1975) and former officials (Ehrlichman 1975; Ehrlichman and Moynihan in interview⁵), Nixon came to rely on Ehrlichman for domestic policy advice because he provided

him with order and options instead of the more indeterminate situation in which the President received advice from two domestic counselors of fundamentally different ideological persuasions, one purportedly liberal, the other conservative. The President relied on Ehrlichman because he needed and wanted to delegate responsibility for domestic policy decisions. Nixon felt more concerned with foreign policy and concentrated his own efforts in that area. Ehrlichman noted in interview that there were periods of the Vietnam War when he hardly saw the President at all. In this situation, Nixon preferred a domestic advisor who would give him one viewpoint on which to act, not two which required further study and staff review before action was possible.

Kenneth Cole summarized the role of the Ehrlichman Domestic Council in this way:

Nixon needed not only a domestic adviser but also a formal organization with formal procedures with a good idea of where it was going. I don't think that in the years 1971-1973 any better organization could have been put together and could have functioned. The people were superb. The work got done, notwithstanding the barbs about the "faceless assistants telling Cabinet officers what to do," and the ultimate test is the legislation which got passed.

We knew what was going on. The President knew. Legislation got drafted and passed. Everyone knew what the President stood for. I think relying on a powerful staff within the White House is the only good way to do it in a government organized as poorly as it is, even if it is somewhat insulting to the intelligence of the Cabinet.⁵

The heady days did not last long. The series of events collectively known as Watergate first slowed down and eventually brought an end to any semblance of normal decision-making. Top presidential advisors, John Ehrlichman among them, focused principally on the defence of Richard Nixon and then on their own defence. Ehrlichman gave up formal control of the Domestic Council as the second term began, four months before his resignation. As an effective staff institution the Council's reputation

was irretrievably lost as Ehrlichman and two assistant directors of the Council, Morgan and Krogh, were indicated for Watergate-related offenses.

The last year of the Nixon Administration was not a time for legislative initiatives. After Ehrlichman's resignation, first Melvin Laird and then Kenneth Cole served as the President's key domestic advisor and as Executive Director of the Council, and instead of directing the domestic policy of the Administration, the Domestic Council "became just another service unit in the presidential establishment" (Bonafede, 1975: 1689).

3. *The Ford Council*

Cole stayed on to help with the Ford transition, but within a few months he too resigned. James M. Cannon, whose career in government service had been closely connected with Vice President Rockefeller, succeeded Cole. Richard J. Dunham, state budget director in New York when Rockefeller was Governor, and James Cavanaugh, a holdover from the Nixon staff, was each named Deputy Director of the Council staff. The appointments of Cannon and Dunham followed a widely publicized power struggle within the White House (Bonafede 1975; Leamer 1977; Osborne 1975). Chief of staff Donald Rumsfeld had wanted President Ford to name Phillip E. Areeda, then serving as a Counsel to the President, as head of the domestic advisory unit. The President decided, however, that he would give the Vice President primary responsibility for running it. In doing so, Ford is said to have intended to revitalize the Domestic Council and to broaden the substantive authority of Rockefeller. As a consequence, President Ford felt it appropriate that the Council's leadership be comprised of people in whom the Vice President had confidence.

The decision to involve Rockefeller directly in the day-to-day running of the Domestic Council had important consequences for the influence of that unit throughout the Ford Presidency (Moe 1976). For a variety of reasons this decision insured that the Council would not approach the position of influence it held under Nixon and Ehrlichman.

First, there is the important question of presidential access and an advisor's relation-

ship with the President. When interviewed on this topic, Kenneth Cole commented on the differences between his relationship with Nixon and Ehrlichman's.

The whole organization was strongest when John Ehrlichman was running it, as he was closest to the President. During my tenure I didn't have the relationship with the President that John did... that made a big difference.⁵

Access to the President is not guarantee of influence. Ehrlichman had both; Cannon had the first but not the second. In fact, because he travelled so much with Ford, Cannon had constant access to the President, but unlike Ehrlichman, he shared it more and he could not count on the same staff loyalties below him. What confronted him instead was an overlap or conflict of loyalties among staff picked up over at least three changes of the Council leadership.

To observers the loss of influence was Cannon's fault. To one, a fault that stemmed from a weakness of will and personality:

Cannon is recognized as hardworking, competent executive. Yet after almost a year, there is little evidence that he has taken firm control of the Domestic Council or given it a special institutional identity. Nor is his personal input visible (Bonafede 1975: 1691).

To another, Kenneth Cole again, this was an example of poor bureaucratic strategy.

The process and the organization are different (now). Basically we tried to plot a year ahead. What was the situation with crops? How do you get prepared for the worst alternative? What laws are about to expire? What substantive things are happening and what should be done about them? We held daily meetings to assure that everyone knew what everyone else was doing. Was there any overlap? You could get more objective views that way. We tried to give a team feeling and you cannot be part of a team unless you know what the other players are doing. Cannon has stripped the organization of organization. We had four to five key players and then staff under them. Cannon has made everyone equal with specific and narrow

portfolios. We tried to stay on top of what was going on, to stay ahead of the Cabinet, etc. They don't try to do that as much either.⁵

This points up the importance of staff cohesion. The staff of the Council was shaped by the decision to name Rockefeller as the Council's leader. As reported in an earlier paper (Maisel and Helmer, 1976:9-10), the Ford staff was comprised of three distinct groups by origin of recruitment. Cannon and Dunham brought with them a group of five others whose political experience had been in association with Rockefeller. Cavanaugh was one of five holdovers from the Nixon Administration. Others could be deemed more clearly Ford appointments, though none of them had any prior political connection with the President. While there were no open conflicts among these groups, cohesion of the kind reported by the Ehrlichman staff (Gilson 1976; Kessel 1975; Waldmann 1976) was not evident either.

Even this tripartite staff never really stabilized with personnel turnover and short tenures producing an instability that has been cited as another factor leading to a weakening of the Council's position. A number of changes during the Ford Administration are worthy of note in this respect. By late 1975 Rockefeller asked to be relieved of day-to-day responsibility for the Council. This followed his decision not to run for Vice President in 1976. Even before that time, Dunham had resigned to accept an appointment to the Federal Power Commission. According to one staff member at the time, Rockefeller's withdrawal "cut the legs off Cannon." Cavanaugh appeared to fare much better, staying on as a Deputy Director of the Council although he too moved responsibilities away from the Council somewhat, assisting Richard Cheney, the President's Chief of staff during the campaign for reelection.

In the spring of 1976 Arthur Quern, who played a key role in coordinating Domestic Council input to the 1976 State of the Union Address, was named to succeed Dunham as Deputy Director. He was placed in charge of Planning and Policy. According to his own testimony, Quern felt that by that time morale on the Domestic Council staff was

low as it was "an organization without influence." In an effort to revive morale and promote staff unity, Quern decided to retain his office in the Old Executive Office Building where the staff could have constant access to him, rather than moving to the office in the West Wing to which he was entitled but where he was more inaccessible. Others on the Council staff left for appointive positions elsewhere in the Executive Branch; in the case of Todd Hullin, as an Assistant Secretary of Defense. Fairly rapid turnover and shuffling of positions—producing an average tenure for Council staff by December 1976 of just over two years—might very well account for the inexperience by which observers have characterized both the Council staff and its leadership (Moe 1976:266). According to one official quoted by Wayne (forthcoming:262):

Once it's clear that the guy who runs the Domestic Council doesn't have the clout or doesn't know how to use it, it filters down. Everybody understands it. So decisions get made and associate directors of the Domestic Council are not consulted; meetings are set up and they are not included.

To another, a subordinate of Cannon's, it was clear that "Jim Cannon did not become the key figure on domestic policy because he was either disinclined to use the resources available, or unable to, or both." To a third, also a Council staff member, Cannon's failings were mostly personal—he was too timid, he spent too much of his and the staff's time editing and redrafting memoranda, he lost his temper too easily and lost track of the paper flow in and out of his own office.

4. *Evolution of Formal Roles*

Before the staff unit was established in mid-1970, according to Patrick Moynihan, there had been a very active system of working groups at the Cabinet officer-level, generally focussed on areas of special concern or program initiative, in which the President himself was an active participant. Supporting these committees was Moynihan's staff, known as the Urban Affairs Council staff and the National Goals Research Staff, which together numbered less than twenty.

The operation of Cabinet working groups did not immediately change with the formation of the Domestic Council. The formal members met as a Council thirteen times in 1970, and in smaller ad-hoc groups more frequently. The focus was on a set of some fifteen priority issues which had "evolved during the summer of 1970 through informal analysis and through canvassing of the staff, the cabinet members, and a few outside advisers, and were finally given presidential approval in a meeting at Camp David" (Waldman 1976:263). The issues included environment, law enforcement, urban development, welfare reform and revenue sharing.

The original assignment of roles and responsibilities among the staff followed these priorities: work by the staff on the 1971 State of the Union address aimed at formulating administration programs in these terms.

According to one of the participants, the staff structure had three basic "components" —a "front office" consisting of Ehrlichman, his deputy and a staff assistant; the assistant directors, each of whom was responsible for a priority issue and was designated as a "project manager" for program development in that and related areas; and thirdly, a "planning staff" which had "general duties with presidential messages, the budget, and other issues which did not fit the project manager style" (Waldmann 1976:263).

The development of the Nixon administration's legislative program remained formally the job of Cabinet committees but practically speaking the work of developing (as well as excluding) options was done by working groups consisting of Assistant Secretary-level staff, OMB officials and the assistant directors of the Domestic Council.

The last of these played the pivotal role, coordinating the meetings and finalizing the decision memoranda. According to Nathan, the staff working on revenue sharing plans in 1971 deliberately excluded close Cabinet-level involvement until after the plans were fully formed (Nathan 1975:48). According to Epstein, the role of Egil Krogh, the assistant director in charge of drug abuse policy, was to screen out conflicting viewpoints and facts which deserved (as Epstein saw it) fuller consideration (Epstein 1975:99). In interview Ehrlichman has said that the amount

of Domestic Council direction varied from issue to issue, and there was no set rule about inclusion or exclusion of participants in the working groups:

On the energy thing, for example, the guy from the CIA was a spy, but he knew more about the realities of the thing than any Ambassador, and we pulled a guy out of Texas who was a geologist and then there was an Assistant Secretary and even (sic) a Cabinet Secretary. Richardson was personally at every meeting on F(amily) A(ssistant) P(lan) . . .

A great many of these groups were set up on open questions and it was the Assistant Director's job to get what there was to get from the people at the meeting. But there were times when Nixon wanted to go in some direction and ramrodded these. Most of the Assistant Directors could ramrod in that situation as well.⁵

In these respects, the Nixon Domestic Council was not the innovation that many thought of it. Special task forces for program development had characterized the operation of the domestic policy staff under Califano, during the Johnson Administration. Nor was the successor group under Cannon too different in the same respect. A number of task forces were set up within the Ford Domestic Council. Of these, one of the most visible (Moe 1976:267) was the Domestic Council Review Group on Regulatory Reform, an inter-agency group of about a dozen which functioned as "catalyst, coordinator, and monitor of the various aspects of the executive branch's efforts to review all regulatory policies" (*Ibid.*, 268). Other task forces focussed on drug abuse policy, illegal aliens, and welfare reform.

At the outset, the Cannon unit was organized in two parts, reflecting the division between longer-term planning of priorities and administration initiatives ("legislation packages") on the one hand, and short-term operations or daily presidential support on the other. According to Cannon,

We took a group of outsiders with consultant money to deal with long-range issues. As you might imagine, the immediate problems tend to drive out the long-range. There have to be places to do

both. They interact. We consciously set up a structure to provide for both immediate and long-term. As an illustration, look at the question of the future status of Puerto Rico. We've had a group working on that since last October.⁵

For both the planning and operations divisions, the staff of the Council were assigned special areas, which were broad and issue-oriented to start off with but became fixed in terms of departmental assignments as time progressed. When Dunham, who had been the Deputy Director in charge of the long-range division, left the White House, the bifurcated structure was abandoned, and the planning role taken over by Quern as the associate director in charge of preparing the State of the Union address.

In terms of roles and responsibilities it is difficult to see the difference between the Domestic Council under Ehrlichman and that under its successors. To be sure, the policy initiatives which were proposed between 1970 and 1972 were somewhat different from those developed during the Ford term, but they scarcely justify the sharp contrasts already reported in the assessments of the two staff groups.

5. Task Forces

Originally as we have said, one of the conceptions behind the Domestic Council plan was that it would be an umbrella organization for several inter-agency policy groups operating at the Cabinet level. Task forces would arise as there was need for them and then self-destruct.

According to Comarow, the executive director of the Ash Council,

We wanted the agencies with the biggest interest to head up the task force. The head of the agency was to be head of the task force. Other agency people would be members. We would have an independent staff from the White House working with the task forces. They were not there because they were smarter, but they weren't advocates either. They were there to give it their best shot. The danger was that the system could be perverted and become too political . . . We were after systematic objective consideration of social issues.⁶

There was a difference in emphasis here from the Johnson Administration's use of task forces. For one thing, Johnson regularly geared them into the Fall drafting of the annual legislative program, so that the reports became the basis for White House, Bureau of the Budget, and agency work on specific program proposals and the State of the Union package. In the second place, Johnson used the task forces to engineer legislative support by coopting key congressional leaders in the task force deliberations. Certainly outsiders were invited to participate in post-Johnson task forces but the congressional involvement ended with Nixon. Ehrlichman, for example, expressly ordered his staff to avoid contact with Congressional Democrats and to maintain it only with the Republican minority. Neither they nor their staff, however, were involved in the working groups.

The difference between the Ehrlichman working groups and the Cannon review groups which succeeded them was in the first place that the sources of policy initiative were more firmly located in the agencies with the result that inter-agency review at the Domestic Council level carried tactically less weight. Cabinet secretaries could afford setbacks and even defeats at the review group stage and still win on appeal to the President. Consensus was much harder to achieve than under Ehrlichman because the sanctions against holdouts which he exercised were no longer in force.

Secondly, Cannon initiated fewer review groups, which ran for much longer periods. Early in 1976 there had been four—on social assistance programs, regulatory reform, drug abuse, and environmental problems, plus the special consulting group on the status of Puerto Rico. Of these only one, the Domestic Council Drug Abuse Task Force, had completed its work and released a report by 1976. This one is a useful indicator of the administrative style and the achievement of the Cannon staff.

In style the *White Paper on Drug Abuse*, as the report was titled, was a notable success. The review group was headed by Richard Parsons, a 27-year old attorney and former aide to Rockefeller in New York. He chaired a committee of 19 agency representatives which included Raymond Shafer, a counselor to the Vice President who had previously

headed the abortive National Commission on Marijuana which had been totally ignored by the Nixon Administration. This group of officials in turn led 87 lesser officials, who divided into 2 sub-groups, who in turn called in 34 outside advisers and 7 organized lobbies. Altogether this was something of a record in bureaucratic size, representing more people in total than the White Paper has pages. To have produced a document then that would be acceptable in that bureaucratic zoo was a virtuoso achievement for which the unknown and relatively inexperienced DC staff member should have been recognized. In a sense he was. Released in October, the report was endorsed by President Ford after Christmas in terms that promised to put the recommendations into effect. Exactly which of these and how was never specified.

In substance the White Paper was opaque. On the one hand, it broke new ground in bureaucratic procedure by admitting that there were no known means by which government could hope to make prohibition effective by eliminating illegal drug use. It also urged a shift in enforcement priorities towards greater effort on narcotic drugs and less on marijuana. On the other hand, in spite of emphasis on "liaison," "coordination," and "integration"—the White Paper recommended setting up more than a dozen new bureaucratic committees for these purposes—the review group was unable to heal the long-standing split between the US Customs Service (Treasury) and other federal agencies over control of intelligence operations and responsibilities for border enforcement and smuggling. The Customs officials insisted on adding their own rider to the report.

Oddly enough, as the task force was so closely connected with the Vice President, it failed to take any account of the impact of the tough legal measures enacted in New York by Rockefeller as governor in 1973. Other studies for the Department of Justice were showing by mid-1975 that the Rockefeller approach was failing badly in most respects, except to make more work for the courts. Indices of heroin use had failed to respond to the deterrent effect of the new laws and began in fact to edge up after a relatively stable period in 1972-74. Also notwithstanding the new sentencing rules,

the number of offenders released on probation increased after the legislation came into effect, instead of falling as it was supposed to do.

In May 1976 when the President finally sent his legislative proposal on drug policy to Congress, there were no additional indications that the New York lessons had been absorbed, and few signs that the Domestic Council report had in the end been persuasive. Ford's rhetorical emphasis was on bigger and better enforcement, tougher sentencing provisions on the New York model, and no sign of weakening on marijuana. On the key bureaucratic issue of centralized control versus every agency for itself, Ford had a Cabinet committee to propose for the centralizers, and a major expansion of powers of search and seizure for the Customs Service.

To be sure, this is not the first piece of White House staff work to have been ignored, but it almost certainly has been one of the most expensive Domestic Council operations in its history. Like the *Interim Report on Illegal Aliens*, which was released at the very end of 1976—too late for the Ford Administration to implement its proposals—both have been followed by equally extensive staff work in the new Administration—drug abuse policy work by the Office of Drug Abuse Policy under Carter assistant, Peter Bourne, and the aliens issue by a new Cabinet Committee and Ann Gutierrez of the Carter Domestic Council staff.

What then can be said about the effectiveness of the Domestic Council review group under Cannon as compared with those under Cole or Ehrlichman, or for that matter, Califano before them? Cole said, it will be recalled from an earlier quotation, that in his administration the Council was better organized "to plot a year ahead" and that Cannon had "stripped the organization of organization." His staff failed to "stay on top of what was going on, to stay ahead of the Cabinet."

On the other hand, observers of the Cole staff have noted that at that time the formal, Cabinet-level members of the Council became more active, albeit in *ad hoc* working groups, and that at the staff level, the agencies were more influential on task forces, and the Office of Management and Budget more

powerful in handling the central clearance of legislation (Moe 1975:7). If the reorganization announced by the President in January 1973 was designed to enhance the policy role of the "super Cabinet"—the Secretaries of Agriculture, HEW and HUD, who, together with Ehrlichman, were promoted to the rank of Counsellor—it also steadily aimed at reducing the role of the Domestic Council in program oversight and the coordination of interdepartmental initiatives. As Nixon announced:

Counsellors Butz, Weinberger and Lynn, with the support of the committees they will head, will be able to provide much of the advice and supervision for which the Presidents in the past (sic) have had to turn to domestic policy establishments within the White House. The Counsellors will also be able to resolve with their colleagues at the Secretarial level many interdepartmental issues which have heretofore required arbitration by the President or his staff (US President 1973).

This hardly squares with Cole's more expansive opinion of the Council's role, and it suggests that, whatever his successor's weaknesses might have been as already discussed, the formal charter within which Cannon's Council and staff had to operate was already initiated by administrative and procedural changes introduced before Nixon left office.

Could Cannon have done any better? And what in this instance would "better" have consisted of?

The consensus of historical judgment so far is that under Ehrlichman the Domestic Council was more powerful than it has become since. Waldmann, who worked for Ehrlichman, tried to explain this in more detail by saying that the staff,

Succeeded to a degree never before attempted in gaining centralized political control over the Executive Branch of the President. It experimented with a variety of techniques in developing policy, including top-level consultants, presidential commissions, inter-agency working groups and task forces. It attempted to maintain a consistency in policy across department

and agency lines in important priority issue areas (Waldmann 1976:266).

But neither the second nor the third of these achievements represents any innovation in Executive office politics, and without the evidence of the Council staff memoranda, there is no reason for thinking that the staff was any more effective in its advice to the President than those which preceded or those which have followed it.

What can be said to sum up the historical record is relatively simple. Once effective policy initiative is delegated to the agencies, then inter-agency review committees at the Council level are an expensive waste of time and money. They are opportunities for the bureaucrats to stall, snow or intimidate the White House. If on the other hand the White House retains the initiative and sanctions to keep it up, then task forces can be an effective way of identifying the potential opposition and mobilizing coalitions of forces against.

In the final analysis, the record of participants and observers comes down to a statement that the Domestic Council (staff) was more powerful between 1970 and 1973 than since because John Ehrlichman was powerful, and that power was based on the President's willingness to listen to him and give him the power (with H.R. Haldeman) to decide who else would be listened to. This was a power Ehrlichman passed on to his staff—they controlled access to the President and no one, not Cabinet officers even, could avoid that.

Does this, however, represent a successful attempt "at gaining centralized political control over the Executive Branch of the President," as Waldmann suggests? Conversely, does the Domestic Council staff under Cannon which had no such power and competed for access to the President along with a number of other White House and Cabinet agencies, represent a weakness in the advisory system, or even a failure of political control? From what perspective can weakness and strength, power or the lack of it, success and failure of the advisory system be judged? The President's? The advisors'? The Cabinet heads'?

It is the value of these questions, rather than of the answers that have so far been

suggested to them that this paper is intended to emphasize. But if the evidence adduced to date is as opaque and contradictory as it appears, what alternative is there?

A Quantitative Perspective on the Advisory System

1. Traffic analysis

Neat organization charts, lists of functions and efficiency audits can be misleading: so can the impression of officials themselves as to what exactly they are doing.

Staff performance is limited by the networks they maintain each day in their jobs. Networks develop in part according to the allocation of functions and the formal hierarchy within the Executive Office and White House. In part they combine, dissolve and recombine in response to the pressure of events and external demands for Administration action. In part they are based on patterns of patronage, alliance and protection and in part on where people are located, from the West Wing to the Old Executive Office Building, and across Lafayette Square to the New Executive Office Building, where they eat lunch, whom they are married to, and so on. These things can be either arbitrary or carefully planned, and White House staff will compete for network advantage in whatever way they can.

One method of assessing the Ford/Cannon operations is to compare the amounts of time spent by Council staff on parallel functions under Ehrlichman and then under Cannon.

Table 1 shows the results of a survey of 1972 and of our own survey in January, 1976.

Both staffs clearly had clarification of options as their top priority, but the Cannon group spent less time on this than the Ehrlichman group. Overall, the Cannon staff have distributed their time more evenly across all five functions while the Nixon staff concentrated more of their effort on options, priorities and backstopping, and less than Ford's staff on information-gathering and agency monitoring.

Backstopping the President took more staff time in 1976 than in 1972, although this function had been delegated to the second-string staff. This may reflect subtle differences in the nature of the activity. Under Ehrlichman backstopping meant passing directives to agency officials and reporting presidential views on policy points. It ultimately also meant trying to clear the communication channels and paper backlog which accumulated as the system became overloaded.

Under Cannon however, backstopping was much less policy-directed, but also more trivial. At its most serious it involved drafting veto messages, but more often than this according to interviews with staff, it has included catering arrangements for presidential functions, advance work, protocol and the like.

It should be noted that monitoring agencies was a more significant activity under Ford/Cannon than before. Ford delegated

Table 1
Mean Time Allocations of Domestic Council Staff Members

Activity	Time Use			
	Nixon-Ehrlichman*		Ford-Cannon	
	Leaders	Aides	Leaders	Aides
Clarifying options	4.00	3.31	3.45	3.25
Determining priorities	3.33	2.67	3.00	2.50
Backstopping the president	3.33	2.71	3.27	3.75
Collecting information	2.33	2.67	2.64	2.75
Monitoring agencies	2.00	2.75	3.09	2.75

KEY: Staff members were asked how much of their time was spent on each type of assignment. Scores were assigned as follows: 4 = "a great deal of time", 3 = "a fair amount", 2 = "not too much time", and 1 = "no time at all". Thus, the higher the score, the more mean time is spent on each function.

*Data from Kessell 1975.

more policy initiative to the agencies but watched them closer; Nixon ordered more but followed up less. This new monitoring was not perceived by the agencies to be as threatening as the Ehrlichman regime had been. Partly this reflected a certain amount of exaggeration by the agencies about the extent of the earlier Ehrlichman threat; partly also it reflected the agency view that Domestic Council monitoring was unlikely to carry more weight with the President in a policy conflict than the agency itself. Still, it is arguable that more active monitoring evident here by the Ford staff was at least as effective in achieving the political control or integration of Administration's policy positions as the Ehrlichman methods, referred to in the earlier section.

The way in which White House staff spend their time and whom they spend it with will naturally depend on presidential priorities for problem-solving and the politics of the problems themselves.

The deterioration of the economic condition of the country after Nixon left office and the demonstrable difference rates of unemployment and inflation make to presidential electoral popularity made certain that economic management and social welfare would preoccupy President Ford's attention. But never before in American experience had decision-making on economic policy been allocated to so many different EOP staff, and no where in modern government at large, not even in the communist states, have there been as many different agencies of central economic management as there were at the time in Washington.

To compare the amounts of time spent by the Ehrlichman and Cannon staffs on different issues will first of all indicate the way in which the priorities have been assigned from one Administration to the next.

What the table shows is that both economic management and social welfare have been the two most important areas of staff work, but predictably with the expansion of other economic policy staff in the White House, less of the Cannon staff's time has gone on this area than was the case under Ehrlichman. The drop in time spent on social welfare issues has been even greater.

On the other hand these declines were balanced by a 13 percent increase in effort

Table 2
Mean Time Allocations of Domestic Council
Staff Members by Issue Area

Issue	Time Use	
	Ehrlichman	Cannon
Economic management	2.89	2.63
Social welfare	3.32	2.81
Civil liberties	2.16	2.19
Natural resources	1.89	2.13
Agriculture	1.58	1.75
Labor relations	no data	1.56
Urban policy	no data	2.44
International policy	1.63	1.50

KEY: Staff members were asked how much of their time was spent on each type of assignment. Scores were assigned as follows: 4 = "a great deal of time", 3 = "a fair amount", 2 = "not too much time", and 1 = "no time at all". Thus, the higher the score, the more mean time is spent on each function.

on natural resources policy and 11 percent increase on agriculture—the first of these notwithstanding the creation of the new Energy Resources Council and lower-level EOP energy units.

If it were possible to use these data in an input-output analysis of bureaucratic expansion and productivity, what they suggest is that an increase in staffing an issue in one section of the Executive Office is usually not balanced by a decline in staffing the same issue in other sections. The result is that staff output goes on increasing exponentially and more staff time is consumed in processing and "coordinating" the flow of paper and committee meetings. But then the role of the Domestic Council staff was *inter alia*, as President Ford announced in February 1975, to do just this—"to coordinate the formulation of policy options in the domestic area for my consideration." The data thus appear to support the very broad hypothesis about the effect of delegation, mentioned in the Introduction, but do they support the interpretation that Cannon's unit was a success at coordination, or the interpretation it was a failure at formulation?

If unit members of the EOP can be assessed in terms of how much time they spend on what sort of problems with what other officials inside and outside the EOP, it becomes clear that the communication or

Table 3
Contact Networks of Cannon DC Staff with EOP*

Frequency of contact with**	EOP UNIT					
	OMB	CEA	ERC	EPB	NSC	CIEP
% Daily	75	13	6	6	0	0
% Weekly	7	20	7	33	20	13
% Monthly	8	17	8	42	8	17
% Infrequently	6	35	48	19	49	45

*Data exclude Cannon and Cavanaugh.

**Refers to face-to-face and telephone contacts.

traffic pattern of the EOP may be producing unnecessary *jams*—that is to say, too many functionally effective people converging on one location in the system. When this occurs, there may be no way of rating the relative power or influence of advisors or advisory units.

Look at the way in which contact actually occurred between the Cannon staff and other units of the EOP, with the White House and with Cabinet Secretaries and their staffs, as this can be measured from our survey of January, 1976.

In the first place, there is a significant overlap between Domestic Council and OMB and this absorbed far more of the daily contacts Council staff had than any other unit. Two main networks were operating daily—*sideways*, between DC staff and OMB staff in particular policy areas, and *upwards one level*, between DC staff and presidential personal assistants.

After these two in frequency was a net-

work of Cabinet Secretary or Secretary's staff contacts, and at about the same degree of frequency (but not shown in the tables) contacts with the assistant-secretary level of the agencies. Contact with the President personally was fairly uncommon, and with Cabinet Secretaries only slightly less so.

It is worth noting that 19 percent of daily contacts and 53 percent of the weekly ones were with economic policy advisers either in CEA or EPB. This is high when set beside the diminishing priority that economic policy had for the DC staff, but it serves to underline the problem that overlapping roles create.

We said before that traffic jams occur when too many functionally effective people converge on one location at the same level in the system. Economic policy appears to be one of them and the overlap between DC staff and OMB another. Natural resources and energy policy was probably a third.

It remains a problem to decide, however, when overlap represents valuable coordina-

Table 4
Contact Networks of Cannon DC Staff with WH and Cabinet*

Frequency of contact with**	UNIT						
	President	Pres. Pers. Staff	Counsel's office	Press office	Cong. Liaison	Cabinet Secretaries	Secretaries' staff
% Daily	0	69	25	0	13	6	38
% Weekly	13	19	6	13	19	31	38
% Monthly	44	13	0	0	13	31	6
% Infrequently	44	0	69	87	56	31	19

*Data exclude Cannon and Cavanaugh.

**Refers to face-to-face and telephone contacts.

tion of effort and when it becomes a competitive tangle that has to be unsnarled. One test for the Council staff may be whether it has been directly responsible for delivering assessment of priorities, clarification of options or the results of program analysis to the President himself. If not—and another unit has—then either the Council staff or else the other unit is ineffective in its role.

On this criterion, it is difficult to justify a DC staff member spending, say, 50 percent of his time on economic policy in conjunction with CEA or EPB when it is they and not the Council who will report directly to the President. It may have been tactically useful from the DC director's point of view to have his man watching the others and in a position to brief him before the Assistant for Economic Affairs or the Chairman of the CEA had their say with the President, but it is precisely this type of bureaucratic situation which makes assessments of power and influence difficult to make.

If the Ford Administration over-bureaucratized the formation of economic and energy policy with too many units interacting too often together on the same issues, stalling and blocking each other rather than facilitating presidential decisions, then who can blame the tangle on the weaknesses of the Council, let alone the impotence of its director? What a simple quantification of time use can do is to pinpoint where situations of this type occur; it isn't any more reliable than the opinions of the observers and participants reported earlier in determining whether the circumstances assisted or hobbled the advisory system.

Some Presidents have wanted advice in this fashion. For example, there is evidence to suggest that President Johnson used to both overload his staff and deliberately create the circumstances for jams, the more to exercise his own hand at running things, and the better to exact personal loyalty from each staff member. His was not the first executive advisory system nor will it be the last designed for maximizing loyalty to the President above all else.

Two final points about the staff networks that emerge from the tables. The first to be noted is the infrequency with which DC staff make contact with either the White House Press Office or Congressional Liaison.

It has been a commonplace of political observation in recent years to note the failure of the White House in its relations with the press and with Congress. The table merely points up where the channels of communication did not exist.

The last point is not so visible in the tables but is clear from the detailed interview material provided by each staff member. This is that the Cannon structure spent little time coordinating and monitoring its own activities. The more time the staff member spent on contacts outside the group, the harder it was for him/her to identify his/her interests with the group as such or with the group's chartered role. The need for recognition and promotion and the desire to feel effective were consequently expressed in an individualistic rather than a collective framework. Other data on recruitment help to substantiate this point. Ehrlichman whose selection principle was quite clear—"good brokers, seldom experts"⁵—created a staff that was dominated by lawyers, but also by people who had known each other or worked together before (particularly in the 1968 campaign) (Waldmann 1976; Gilson 1976:4). Cannon's staff on the other hand was evenly divided between lawyers and business administration graduates, but split three ways into Nixon holdovers, Rockefeller and Ford appointees; most of them were either from Washington, D.C., or from New York, but they had little experience functioning together. With the greater commitment of their time to monitoring programs and agencies, it is unremarkable that the staff developed individual agency perspectives and identifications with the networks on whom they depended for information and work.

Fragmentation like this makes for the Lone Ranger Syndrome—each staffer pursuing a policy line or tactic that is calculated to put as much distance and visibility between him/herself and the others involved in an issue as is worth risking; in the hope thereby of attracting the attention and reward of the DC Director and perhaps even the President.

Honest brokerage of sub-Cabinet level policy conflicts is not encouraged in this kind of atmosphere, and once agency officials realize it, they are bound to determine not to negotiate on their positions until they

have by-passed the Domestic Council and reached the top. The only power to stop them doing that—and thus power of the Domestic Council to enforce “coordination” or whatever viewpoint it had on issues—was thus the power of direct access to the President. The Domestic Council staff lost that with the fall of Ehrlichman, as we have already said.

2. *Measures of the internal dynamics of staff work.*

Two elements in particular are important—how the hierarchy operates to direct staff assignments and how staff relate to each other in performing them.

On paper the Ehrlichman, the Cole and the Cannon operations look alike—the assignments came from the Director, and when completed went back to him. According to Ehrlichman, however, he made little substantive change to the staff papers he received. In the Cannon case, the staff typically reported that Cannon returned memoranda for at least one rewrite, often more. This was a substantial waste of time and resources, and demoralizing for the staff.

The principal reasons for it can be found in the working relationships of the staff. Cannon may have ordered assignments but it was Cavanaugh's job (the Deputy Director) to see that they were carried out. A telephone log of staff calls in January, 1976 shows that Cavanaugh received three times more calls from the DC staff in a day than Cannon or anyone else on the staff. Cannon himself was often away travelling with the President and unavailable for staff discussions. He put distance between himself and the associate directors in other ways too.

Whereas Ehrlichman used to include at least one of his staff at a planning meeting each morning at 7 am, and then several of the staff at the 7:30 meeting with the senior White House staff, Cannon typically only had Cavanaugh to the first meeting (at 7:30—the Ford White House was slower to wake up than the Nixon one used to be), and went alone to the senior staff conference at 8.

Cavanaugh, the Deputy Director, was not the only person other staff consulted while working on assignments. Tables 5 and 6 illustrate how communication and influence was channelled among the staff in November

1972 (Ehrlichman) and January 1976 (Cannon).

What is evident in both cases is the operation of an informal hierarchy beside the formal one. Now in practice they may complement each other or alternatively work at cross-purposes and against each other. In the Cannon case, complicated as it was by the recruitment of staff from three different political camps, the role of the second Deputy, Arthur Quern, a Rockefeller appointee, was as crucial as Cavanaugh's, a Nixon holdover. He not only served as an alternate point of clearance, but was a more valued source of briefing and general job orientation to the staff than either Cavanaugh or Cannon.

Now overlapping authority like this is a condition of executive staffing systems that a number of observers of Democratic Administrations have regarded as a prerequisite of the President's need to know as much as he can. Schlesinger on Roosevelt and Neustadt on Truman both emphasize the value to the President of an atmosphere of “creative feuding.”

Of course, their judgments are *retrospective* ones and ones that cannot be separated from their overall view of Roosevelt and Truman as *successful* administrations. Nixon's initial judgement was not too different but subsequently the experiment with Moynihan and Burns in what was called “adverse advocacy” changed his mind. As there is much difference of opinion about the success or otherwise of the Johnson Administration, so there are those who regard the factionalism of the staff as responsible for the good and those who blame it for the bad.

In design terms of course, it is not as if a president has much choice—there will always be competitiveness among the staff, and this can harden into factions or cliques. This is going to appear quantitatively in the communication patterns and influence matrices, but is not necessarily thereby an indicator of poor performance.

So what is poor performance? For this two criteria can be suggested: one is that the dynamics of staff work should reflect a spread of contact and cross-reference within the group that indicates widespread respect and an absence of pockets of isolation. Secondly, influence patterns should complement the

Table 5
Influence Matrix for Domestic Council Staff November 1972

	Arc	Bri	Com	Dan	Fil	Fre	Ful	Gea	Gru	Ham	Jen	Leg	Mill	Nor	Phi	Red	Sch	Tut	Web	Total Sent
Archer	-	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
Bailey	1	-	0	1	1	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	5
Compton	0	0	-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Daniels	0	0	0	-	1	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	5
Flint	0	0	0	0	-	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Frederick	1	0	0	1	1	-	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4
Fuller	0	0	0	1	0	1	-	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3
Gearert	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	-	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
Gruer	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	-	1	1	1	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	7
Hampton	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Jensen	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	-	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	4
Leggett	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	-	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	3
Miller	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	-	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
Norris	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	-	1	0	0	0	0	3
Phillips	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	-	0	0	0	0	1
Redren	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	-	0	0	0	2
Schmidt	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	-	0	0	1
Tuttle	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	-	0	2
Weber	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	-	0
Total Received	3	1	0	3	8	3	1	2	12	1	3	3	2	1	3	0	2	0	0	

Note: Data are from responses to the question, "Which persons do you spend most time with getting your work done?"

Row entries denote channels through which messages are sent; column entries denote channels through which messages are received.

The names are pseudonyms for the Ehrlichman staff and exclude both Ehrlichman and Cole. Table published in John N. Kessel, *The Domestic Presidency* (Duxbury Press 1975), p. 37.

formal assignment of power and responsibility, and reinforce it. It will be recalled from the last section that according to the testimony of the participants and of observers, the Cannon staff was much less cohesive than the Ehrlichman and Cole units, and if common recruitment, common backgrounds, turnover rates and regular intragroup meetings are the evidence we have to go on, then indeed this judgment appears correct.

On the other hand, considering the data of Tables 5 and 6, it is not apparently evident that in their daily operations there was a great deal of difference in communication pattern between the Ehrlichman (1972) group studied by Kessel and the Cannon group studied by us.

To be sure, the data are not exactly comparable. The questions asked, from which the matrices have been assembled, are not identical; the time of the year and hence the nature of the staff work were not the same; and in Kessel's case, interaction of the

staff with both Ehrlichman and his deputy at the time, Cole, has not been recorded. Notwithstanding, it is noteworthy that in the Ehrlichman group there were four staff members (21 percent) who received no communication from the rest of the group, including two who neither received nor initiated any contact within the group. One additional staffer, "Hampton," reported only one contact sent and one received. The findings for the Cannon staff reveal no staff without any contact, and only two (14 percent)—Hullin (who left the Council twelve weeks after the measurement was taken) and Humphreys—whose contact within the group was minimal. On the first criterion then the comparison between the two staffs fail to justify some of the conclusions we have already reported.

On the second criterion—the issue of complementarity between formal power within the unit and informal influence—it is possible to confirm the earlier finding that Cannon's subordinates initiated little contact with

Table 6

Influence Matrix for Domestic Council Staff January 1976

	Can	Cav	Joh	Par	Lea	May	Del	Lis	Que	McC	Men	Hul	Sch	Hop	Hum	Mas	Rya	Mye	Total Sent
Cannon*	-																		
Cavanaugh*	-																		
Johnston																			
Parsons	1	0	1	-	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	5
Leach	0	1	0	0	-	1	1	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	5
May	0	0	0	0	0	-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Delaney	0	0	0	1	0	0	-	1	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	6
Lissy	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	-	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	5
Quern	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
McConahey	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
Hendricks	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
Hullin	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	-	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Schleede	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	-	0	0	0	1	0	2
Hope*																			
Humphreys	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	-	0	0	0	1
Massengals	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	-	0	0	3
Ryan	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	-	0	0
Myer	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	-	3
Total Received	2	7	2	3	0	2	2	1	4	3	2	0	1	2	0	2	2	1	

Note: Data are from responses to the question, "With whom did you speak personally on work you're involved in (yesterday)?"

Row entries denote channels through which messages are sent; column entries denote channels through which messages are received.

The asterisk (*) signifies that no details were provided on this question.

him in the course of their work, but turned instead to Cavanaugh (19 percent of all contacts sent by staff) and to Quern (11 percent).

Without the inclusion of Ehrlichman and Cole in Table 5, it is impossible to make a comparison on this measure; however, within what remains of the 1972 staff two individuals stand out as the focus of a good deal of informal interaction, "Gruber" (25 percent) and "Flint" (17 percent).

For all the incompleteness of these data, they illustrate nevertheless the potential which exists for quantitative measurement of the performance of the presidential advisory system. More specifically the data support the general point we made at the outset. This was that by varying the perspective and the methodology of the analysis of the Executive Office, we would generate different and contradictory interpretations of what goes on and why.

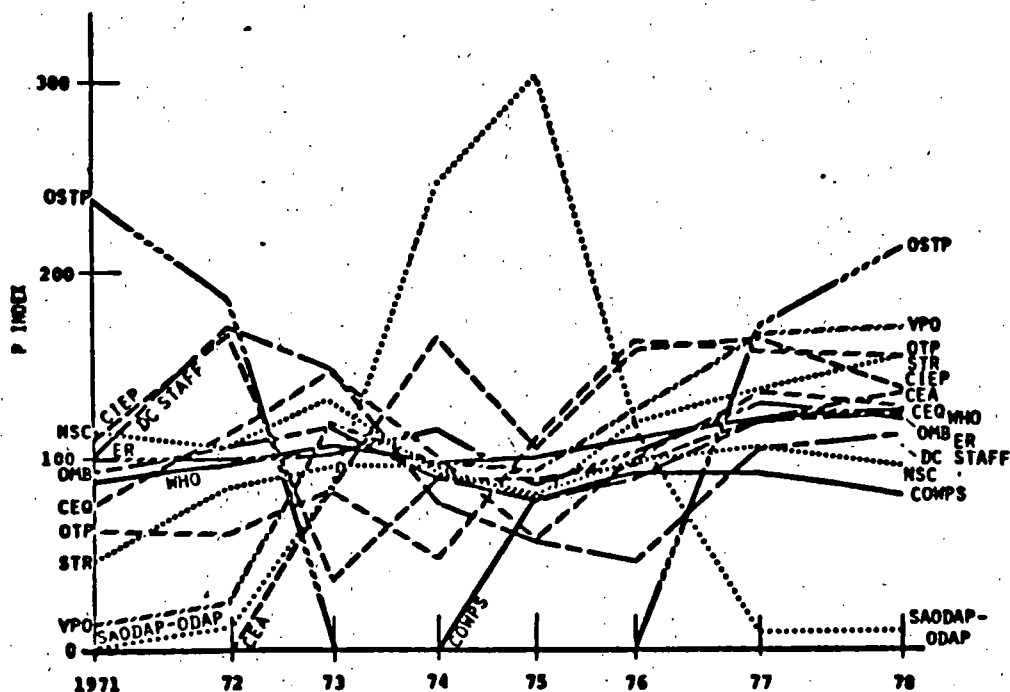
3. Competition Within the Executive Office

The participants and observers may differ on their interpretation of the internal dynamics of Council staff work, but what of the almost unanimous finding by observers that the Council steadily declined in power and influence within the broader presidential advisory system?

In order to assess the process of competition as such, and to isolate the points in time at which EOP units achieved a marked acceleration in their rate of growth or just the opposite, a simple measure has been developed, called the Prosperity Score (or P index for short, Helmer 1976).

This is an index which illustrates the extent to which each unit's budgetary outlay for each year is more prosperous (greater) than or less prosperous (smaller) than its average level throughout the period. At 100 the index illustrates that for the year a unit's

Figure 1
Change in the Prosperity of EOP Unit Budgets (constant 1972 dollars)
1971-1978



annual outlay is equal to its average budgetary level over the whole period. Below 100, the index shows that unit outlays have fallen below the average; above 100, a rise above the average. By comparing the indices of several EOP units taken together, as shown in Figure 1, a simple comparison can be made of how units managed to become more or less prosperous at any selected point of time. To put the results in another light, the measure identifies the key points when units experienced *sharp changes* either up or down in their outlays.

Among the most stable of EOP units, there are also some of the oldest—the White House Office, OMB, NSC and CEA. These all hover close to the 100 mark throughout the period, which indicates little change in strength or power, for these organizations, at least as measured in budgetary terms, from year to year, through two Administrations and into a third, and relative to one another.

The most visible indication from Figure 1 points to the rise and fall of the Special Action Office for Drug Abuse Prevention and

President Nixon's commitment to initiatives in the drug policy field. The greater part of the SAODAP program was in the form of grants, both to other executive agencies for research and program development in their special areas of drug abuse control, and also to agencies, contractors and researchers outside the Federal Government. The P Index in this case being sensitive only to dollar outlays, can scarcely be said to measure the influence of SAODAP as a presidential advisor; in other cases it does.

A second case of dramatic rise and fall—although in reverse order to SAODAP—involves the Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP). Because the Nixon Administration decided to abolish the operation of the science advisor at the EOP level and delegate the unit's functions to the National Science Foundation, there was a marked decline after 1972. With the Ford and then the Carter Administration's commitment to reinstate the unit, the Figure reflects the rapid take off that has resulted.

A third case of broad rise and fall is the

Council on International Economic Policy, which experienced a fairly dramatic rise in budgetary prosperity until 1975, and has since then had a precarious existence.

The figure also illustrates several instances of more modest prosperity so far unaffected by reversals or declines in budgetary fortune. The Vice President's Office is one of the few units to have maintained almost unbroken increasing prosperity from its take-off in 1972-73. The Council on Wage and Price Stability (COWPS) is more short-lived (created in 1974) but has also improved its position steadily. In the second case, however, the picture can be misleading. For COWPS, which began in 1974 with a small \$1.0M budget, was the successor to the very much more expensive and powerful wage and price control agency called the Cost of Living Council (CLC). The original CLC was established as a Cabinet-level committee on August 15, 1971, with the Secretary of the Treasury as chairman, to supervise President Nixon's 90-day wage and price freeze. It changed as the Nixon policy changed through Phases I to III, becoming by 1973 a unit of over 900 people with outlays of over \$26M. Although in most respects comparable to other EOP units, the CLC was never shown in the EOP budget, but was included instead as among the Funds Appropriated to the President—Economic Stabilization Activities.

Contrasting the patterns over time of each of the units, it is worth observing the reversals that have occurred in the relative positions of the NSC, DC, CEA and the Office of Special Representative on Trade Negotiations. In the case of the NSC, it is evident that during Nixon-Kissinger period the unit was more prosperous than it would become in the Ford-Kissinger period or the first year of Brzezinski's leadership; relative to the other advisory units, it was also ahead of its own average outlay. The course of the Domestic Council runs somewhat parallel to the NSC, although its prosperity is more variable over the length of the period. There is no mistaking the decline which has been pointed to by others, but it is important to notice that in the first place this begins with the 1977 budget, a full year before the staff cuts and reorganization were announced in January 1973, and before Ehrlichman left office. The decline continued after that, but

this was parallel to budgetary declines for a large number of other Executive Office units as well.

In examining the Figure for evidence of points of change, it is clear that the period of major Nixon initiatives—the expansion of the drug abuse program in SAODAP and of the wage and price control program under CLC—also saw a marked narrowing of budgetary prosperity for the remainder of the EOP units. Fiscal 1974 and 1975, as the Watergate investigations intensified and as Congressional opposition to the activities of White House staff reached their peak, were the two years in which the budgetary outcomes for almost all EOP units reflect a general downward trend—the exceptions were CEQ, which was a Congressional initiative forced on the President, OMB, CIEP and SAODAP. The convergence of lines also reflects the fact that relative to one another EOP units received less support or preference from the President.

Relative position by the last of the Ford budgets (1976) is the key—and at that time it is clear that the DC had sunk to the bottom of the rank order. This is notwithstanding the fact that in personnel terms its size had grown with the Ford takeover and then stabilized at around 40 full-time permanent personnel—less than it had been in 1971 under Ehrlichman but more than when Cole was in command.

What had eclipsed the Council was almost the full range of economic policy units—CEA, COWPS, CIEP, and STR—as well as the Vice-President's Office itself, which under Rockefeller reached an all-time high in staffing and executive appropriations.

In broad outline then we are able to confirm the decline in influence that has been reported already. But far from supporting the personality-oriented accounts that pin the explanation to Jim Cannon, these data suggest a more far-reaching structural change was responsible, which shifted the focus of policy advice within the Executive Office to economic issues.

This phenomenon showed up before in our analysis of time distributions (Table 2), but as then the evidence shows not the sharp change in Council staff performance that has been alleged, but rather a new climate of competition in which its recommendations

to the President competed with those of others on a more equal basis. From the perspective of the President at the time, this development may have actually enhanced the effectiveness of the advisory system rather than detracted from it. As to how the Cannon staff performed on economic policy, as compared, say, with the Cole or Ehrlichman staffs, this is a topic which cannot be treated without a more extensive outline of changes in the policy environment within which the EOP advisors had to operate and to which they had perforce to respond, both as crisis managers and as longer-term planners. This cannot be pursued here but is in other publications (Helmer 1977; Helmer and Maisel, forthcoming).

NOTES

1. As a member of the President's Reorganization Project, Helmer was responsible for designing and with others carrying out studies of presidential and Executive Office decision-making during the first six months of the Carter Administration. The results are contained in President's Reorganization Project, *Executive Office of the President Reorganization*, Final Report, v. 2, Decision Analysis Report, Washington, DC: Office of Management and Budget, June 1977 (classified).
2. The Domestic Council, which was initiated by President Nixon in July, 1970, has been proposed for abolition by President Carter in his Reorganization Plan No. 1, submitted to Congress in July, 1977.
3. Compared to the parallel domestic policy advisory units of other governments which we have studied (Helmer and Maisel, forthcoming), the Domestic Council has released very few public documents or reports. The Library of Congress lists four for the Nixon-Ehrlichman period: *The History of Revenue Sharing* (27pp), 1971, *Reform and Renewal for the Seventies* (no pagination), 1971, *Workfare: Reforming the Welfare System* (12pp), 1971; and *Report on National Growth* (no pagination), 1972. During the Ford Administration, two Domestic Council reports were published. These were *White Paper on Drug Abuse* (116pp), 1975, and *Preliminary Report of the Domestic Council Committee on Illegal Aliens* (281pp), 1976. The last two cannot be regarded as having been written by Domestic Council staff; in fact, both were the products of very large inter-agency task forces detailed to work on special topics under the general supervision of an Assistant Secretary-level committee in the drug policy case, and of a Cabinet-level committee in the aliens policy case. The role of the Domestic Council staff in both instances was primarily that of coordinating the large volume of paper that was produced and integrating it for final review and approval by the supervising committees. The Ford publications were nevertheless substantial contributions to the policy analysis and debate within the Administration

on these issues; the Nixon documents referred to were not of this kind. They were drafted primarily to explain and defend policies or objectives already decided on by the Administration.

4. It should be noted that others had suggested such a coordinating unit before the Ash Council. Then Governor Nelson Rockefeller aired the idea as early as 1958 and Vice President Humphrey used this idea as a campaign theme in 1968.
5. This and similarly footnoted quotations are from interviews conducted by one or both of the authors during the winter and spring of 1975.

REFERENCES

- Anderson, Patrick, 1972: *The President's Men*; New York: Harper and Row.
- Bonafede, Dom, 1975: "White House Report: The Domestic Council tries to match early promise," *National Journal*, December 13; 1687-96.
- Ehrlichman, John, 1975: "How it all began . . .," *National Journal*, December 13; 1690-91.
- Epstein, Edward Jay, 1975: "The Krogh File—The Politics of Law and Order," *The Public Interest*, 39 (Spring); 99-124.
- Fenno, Richard, 1955: *The President's Cabinet*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Gilson, Larry, 1976: "Background on the Domestic Council," Washington: unpublished memo.
- Heclo, Hugh, 1977: *A Government of Strangers, Executive Politics in Washington*; Washington: The Brookings Institution.
- Helmer, John, 1975: "The Sociology of High-Level Advisory Functions in Government," *Melbourne Journal of Politics*, 7; 35-46.
- , 1976: "Equality and the Performance of Social Democracy," Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Sociological Association of Australia and New Zealand, Melbourne, Australia.
- , 1977: *The Evolution of the Executive Office of the President*, Washington, D.C., Office of Management and Budget, *Executive Office of the President Reorganization*, Final Report, volume 4.
- and Maisel, Louis, forthcoming: *The Politics of Advice*, Beverly Hills: Sage.
- Kearns, Doris, 1976: *Lyndon Johnson and the American Dream*, New York: Harper and Row.
- Kessel, John H., 1975: *The Domestic Presidency: Decision-Making in the White House*, North Scituate: Duxbury Press.
- Leamer, Laurence, 1977: "Playing for Keeps: The Long Distance Race of Donald Rumsfeld," *The Washingtonian* 12, 5, February; 92-107.
- Leiberson, Stanley and O'Connor, James F., 1972: "Leadership and Organizational Performance: A Study of Large Corporations," *American Sociological Review*, 37, 2 (April); 117-30.
- Maisel, Louis and Helmer, John, 1976: "High-Level Domestic Advising: The Domestic Council in the Ford Administration," Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Southern Political Science Association, Atlanta.
- Mansfield, Harvey, 1969: "Federal Executive Reorganization: Thirty Years of Experience," *Public Administration Review*, 7 (July-August).
- Moe, Ronald C., 1975: "Membership and Authority of the Domestic Council," Memorandum from the Congressional Research Service, 1976.

_____, 1976: "The Domestic Council in Perspective," *The Bureaucrat*, 5, 3 (October): 251-72.

Neustadt, Richard, 1977: *Presidential Power*, New York: John Wiley (third edition).

Osborne, John, 1975: "More About Rocky," *New Republic*, February 1, 13-14.

Rose, Richard, "The President: A Chief But Not An Executive," *Presidential Studies Quarterly*, 7, 1 (Winter): 5-20.

Steinbruner, John, 1973: *The Cybernetic Theory*

of Decision; Princeton: Princeton University Press.

United States President 1973: "Redirecting Executive Branch Management," *Weekly Compilation of Presidential Documents* (January 8).

Wayne, Stephen J., forthcoming: *The Legislative Presidency*; New York: John Wiley.

Waldmann, Raymond J., 1976: "The Domestic Council: Innovation in Presidential Government," *Public Administration Review*, 36 (May-June): 260-68.

Council, July 19; Sidney Shapiro and Thomas McGarity, authors of *Workers at Risk: The Failed Promise of the Occupational Safety and Health Administration*, July 20; and American Association of Occupational Health Nurses, July 26. □

Government Operations

CLINTON SIGNS EXECUTIVE ORDER CREATING DOMESTIC POLICY COUNCIL

President Clinton Aug. 17 formally established a Domestic Policy Council to coordinate the administration's domestic policy-making functions.

In an executive order (number not assigned), Clinton noted that the council will include 23 administration officials, plus other officials from other executive departments and agencies as needed.

The president will serve as chairman and will preside over council meetings. Vice President Al Gore will preside over meetings in the president's absence, as will Assistant to the President for Domestic Policy Carol Rasco when the vice president is absent. According to a copy of the executive order, the president or, under his direction, the assistant to the president for domestic policy may convene meetings of the council.

According to the president, the council will perform four major functions, including coordination of the administration's domestic policy-making process, coordination of domestic policy advice channeled to the president, ensuring that domestic policy decisions and programs are consistent with the president's stated goals and that those goals are being pursued effectively, and monitoring implementation of the president's domestic policy agenda.

"All executive departments and agencies, whether or not represented on the council, shall coordinate domestic policy through the council," the president stated in his Aug. 17 order.

He added, "All executive departments and agencies shall cooperate with the council and provide such assistance, information, and advice to the the council as the council may request, to the extent permitted by law."

In addition to the president, members of the Domestic Policy Council include: the vice president; secretary of health and human services; the attorney general; secretary of labor; secretary of veterans affairs; secretary of the interior; secretary of education; secretary of housing and urban development; secretary of agriculture; secretary of transportation; secretary of commerce; secretary of the treasury; the administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency; chair of the president's Council of Economic Advisers; director of the Office of Management and Budget; assistant to the president for economic policy; assistant to the president for domestic policy; assistant to the president and director of the Office of National Service; the senior adviser to the president for policy development; the director of the Office of National Drug Control Policy; the AIDS policy coordinator; and other officials as appointed.

Clinton said the council will have a staff headed by the assistant to the president for domestic policy. When appropriate, the president's domestic policy adviser will work with the assistant to the president for national security affairs and the assistant to the president for economic policy. The president's national security adviser is Anthony Lake, and his assistant for economic policy is Robert Rubin. □

Securities

SEC SEEKS COMMENTS ON NET CAPITAL RULE, 'READY MARKET' TERMS, FOREIGN SECURITIES

The Securities and Exchange Commission issued a concept release seeking comment on a number of questions regarding the treatment of foreign equity securities under the net capital rule's "ready market" provisions (Release No. 34-32748, 8/16/93).

Until comments are received and the commission determines whether proposed rulemaking or other action is appropriate, the commission authorized the Division of Market Regulation to issue a no-action letter as to relief to be accorded foreign equity securities under the ready market provision.

Assets Deducted

According to the commission, the net capital rule—Rule 15c3-1 under the 1934 Securities Exchange Act—sets minimum financial standards for broker-dealers. It is designed to ensure that broker-dealers maintain sufficient liquid assets to allow them to satisfy their liabilities promptly and to protect them against potential market risks.

To compute net capital for purposes of the rule, a "broker-dealer deducts from net worth ... assets not readily convertible into cash ... and certain percentage deductions related to the securities and commodity positions it carries," the SEC explained. The "ready market" provisions require that a broker-dealer take a 100 percent deduction for securities it holds for which there is no "ready market" as defined in the rule.

Ready Market

The SEC noted the "ready market," is defined to include a "recognized established securities market" in which certain conditions—such as pricing and settlement conditions—exist. For domestic equity securities, the net capital rule has recognized as liquid securities that are traded on U.S. exchanges or on the National Association of Securities Dealers' Automated Quotation System. Certain other securities that are traded over-the-counter also are considered liquid where the broker-dealer can demonstrate that there are independent market makers for the security who quote the securities in an inter-dealer network.

In 1975, the commission explained, the division "issued an interpretive letter deeming a 'ready market' to exist in certain circumstances. Specifically, as described in that letter, only foreign equity securities

Can the national security affairs assistant work all his eight arms at once? If he independently proposes courses of action to the president, can he objectively assess those same recommendations? If he so closely controls the filters of national security information to the president, will he, as a protagonist of a certain viewpoint, wield those filters with neutrality? The answer in both cases is likely to be no.

A president's initial protection, accordingly, is to select a security assistant who is long on experience but short on advocacy, who faithfully reflects the president's policy priorities, while being objective enough to put even them to the test of Security Council review. In that very review is the president's backup protection against ill-considered or improper action, that is, through insisting on a process of free debate among the concerned Cabinet officers—a debate arising out of shared information.

For the national security assistant, and for the president, the first arm of the eight, therefore—process management—is the most important one of all.

CHAPTER 8

"To Summarize and Analyze ... Refine the Conflicting Views": The Domestic Policy Staff

[Shortly before inauguration Nixon] exhorted his Cabinet to work hard, seize their departments from the dastardly bureaucracies. . . . The President made it sound as if he intended to give his Cabinet full freedom to run their departments without White House interference. At the time, that might have been Nixon's real intention.

—JOHN EHRLICHMAN

[Kennedy] could not afford to accept, without seeking an independent judgment, the products and proposals of departmental advisers whose responsibilities did not require them to look, as he and his staff looked, at

the government and its programs as a whole. He required a personal staff, therefore—one that represented *his* personal ways, means and purposes—to summarize and analyze those products and proposals for him, to refine the conflicting views of various agencies, to define the issues which he had to decide, to help place his personal imprint upon them, to make certain that practical political facts were never overlooked, and to enable him to make his decisions on the full range of *his* considerations and constituencies, which no Cabinet member shared.

—THEODORE SORENSEN

The assistant for national security affairs has a twin: the assistant to the president for domestic policy.

Pulling from the domestic cabinet departments their individual strands of policy preferences and weaving them into patterns of advice for the president are also White House tasks with a long history. What is this experience? What tasks do domestic policy staffs perform?

The Truman assistants (principally Clark Clifford, Charles Murphy, and their aides) concentrated on the messages being sent to Congress, since, as for every president, "messages, speeches, Executive Orders, and the like are not merely vehicles for *expressing* policy, they are devices for getting policy *decided*."¹ Murphy "held the acknowledged staff lead on preparation of all the formal documents which expressed, explained, or defended the President's major policies and programs—foreign and domestic, executive

The purpose of part II is to aim a floodlight at the major staff offices of the modern presidency and to illumine why each of these responsibilities has been given its home in the White House. The twenty are here introduced.

Policy and Political Staff Functions

1. The assistant for national security affairs helps the president interlink the largest of his Executive Branch communities: the worldwide diplomatic/military/intelligence/overseas information/foreign economic complex. Other areas such as science, space, and agriculture are often a part of the network. Within this complex, and facing the present-day world, the president can tolerate no wild-card moves; coordination, and especially presidential initiatives, are tightly held at the White House.
2. The domestic policy staff—by whatever name—is the counterpart of the security assistant for the president's policy initiatives at home. Because there are more Cabinet links in this network, policy orchestration is more difficult and White House leadership is even harder to maintain.
3. The counsel to the president is the lawyer for the White House. If the president's dog needs a license, his speech needs a legal check, executive privilege needs reaffirmation, an enrolled bill needs a review, a citizen needs a pardon, or SALT negotiators need advice, the counsel can be everywhere.
4. The legislative affairs staff is the president's link to the Congress, the informal two-way bridge that connects those formal, constitutional separates. Both houses and both parties tread that pathway, and every square inch of policy ground is within the legislative playing field.
5. The press officers are the authorized on-the-record spokespersons for the president; other staffers speak only at their signal. President and press are the best of enemies, and the press secretary is always in the middle of that tension. A skeptical White House press corps, several hundred strong, lurks outside his door.
6. The Communications Office (in some White Houses an umbrella staff over the Press, Public Liaison, and Speechwriting offices) is the lens that focuses the haze of White House activities into a beam of attention. It directs the theater called the White House, helping to keep the president in the starring role.
7. The speechwriters' pens become the president's voice—and the president's voice is potentially a unifying force in a cacophonous nation. World leaders and peoples listen, too. From "Rose Garden rubbish" to the

State of the Union address, the speechwriters aim at eloquence with accuracy.

8. The public liaison staff is the entrance foyer to the presidency for the leadership of the nineteen thousand national organizations that knock at White House gates. The Business Roundtable is in that throng; lobbyists for civil rights and the handicapped are there as well. All need (and can distribute) information, deserve a hearing, and carry crucial weight in the Congress. Some of their views merit the president's own attention.
9. The president has four years—1,461 days—to make his mark on history. Endless thousands of requesters will vie for those twelve thousand-odd weekday hours. To which will he accede? Will he fill those hours with significant achievements or mere activities? The Scheduling Office helps him balance and choose.
10. The intergovernmental affairs staff is another two-way path into and out of the not-so-enchanted forest of 22,802 state, local, and tribal governments. Governors, mayors, and tribal chairmen, partners in the American federal system, are friendly or hostile denizens; presidential policy initiatives require their support.
11. As head of his party, the president has obligations to its one national and fifty state organizations, to numerous political action committees and to hundreds of local volunteer groups. He also has reciprocal debts and credits with his party's elected officials. The Political Affairs Office helps him keep the ledgers, is an ombudsman for those on the plus side. When the president runs for reelection, his real campaign headquarters is there in the White House.
12. A new president can make nearly twenty-seven hundred Executive and Judicial Branch presidential appointments. His own reputation will ride on the quality of these men and women, fifteen hundred of whom will be subject to scrutiny and confirmation by the Senate. The president will, in addition, want to oversee the choice of some or all of the twenty-three hundred full-time noncareer jobholders appointed by his Cabinet and agency heads. Filtering the candidates, balancing the pluses and minuses, the Presidential Personnel Office prepares for his decisions.
13. If only for security reasons, the practice of impromptu public appearances has disappeared from the president's life. While his hours in the White House may afford him some flexibility, any visits outside those eighteen acres demand extraordinary preparations. Planning a presidential trip means dealing with dozens of local hosts, each of whom has his or her own agenda for the chief executive's time. The Advance Office keeps the president's priorities in the forefront.

White House Report/Domestic Council tries to match early promise

by Dom Bonafede

On or shortly before Dec. 24, President Ford will receive the last of a series of policy proposals from his Domestic Council staff that will form the nucleus of his 1976 legislative program.

The submission of the recommendations, cutting across the nation's social and economic fabric, will be unheralded and routinely handled, yet once acted upon they could have a dramatic effect on the lives of every American.

Drafted on plain bond paper of three or four pages and marked "Memorandum For: The President," the proposals represent almost a year's study and review by the Domestic Council members and staff, by numerous government officials, representatives of outside interest groups and area specialists. Conceived with an eye toward the national economy, budget limitations and the prevailing political climate, they synthesize the President's social philosophy. Ultimately, their acceptance—or rejection—could go a long way towards charting the course of the Ford Administration and determining the President's political future.

Muted expectations: The fruits of the Domestic Council's work will be disclosed in Ford's State of the Union message, outlining his policy agenda for the coming year. Domestic Council officials infer that while there will not be any bold, costly, initiatives forthcoming, there will be some new,

if unsurprising, proposals. Their words, however, are laced with caution against high expectations.

"Any series of proposals will be tuned to utilizing existing dollars," said James H. Cavanaugh, the Domestic Council's deputy director. He said there would be a phasing out of some programs, the institution of others and the consolidation of still others. "It will not be simply a cutting back of existing programs," he said. "But neither will there be any Great Society package."

Commenting on the Administration's approach to national issues, John G. Veneman, counselor to the Vice President, said, "The distinction between now and six years ago is that then, the solution for every problem was more money. Today, there is a lot more caution. Most people in the policy process are less confident of their proposed solutions."

One step: In essence, the drafting of the President's "decision papers" by the Domestic Council staff is one step in a long, tedious governmental process. As part of the presidential advisory system, it blends all available government resources at the beginning of a long process into what emerges eventually as policies and programs.

Accordingly, the over-all role of the Domestic Council is to bring a sense of order to a disorderly process—more specifically, to define national problems and propose a range of solutions for the President's guidance. The

effectiveness, however, of the Domestic Council—indeed, even its objectives—has been a subject of much debate in government and academic quarters since the agency was established by President Nixon July 1, 1970, under Reorganization Plan No. 2 of that year.

Checkered past: Since then, the Domestic Council has had three executive directors, it has undergone several internal evolutions, its responsibilities alternately have been expanded or contracted, its organizational structure repeatedly has been revised and its influence has fluctuated from one extreme to another.

Few government agencies have had such an erratic, controversial and misunderstood existence as the Domestic Council in such a brief period of time.

Yet, even its critics concede that the Domestic Council serves a necessary function and that the President needs an institutional arm to sort out the advice and recommendations of competing agencies, particularly in an era of complex issues that cross departmental lines and directly bear on the public sector—as, for example, problems involving energy and environment or crime and changing social attitudes.

Question of performance: At issue is less the concept than whether the Domestic Council's performance has matched its promise.

Murray Camarow, formerly executive director of the Advisory Council on Executive Organization, which pro-

1687

12/13/75
NATIONAL
JOURNAL
©1975



Ford meets with (from left) Cheney, Cannon, Quern, Veneman and Rockefeller in the Oval Office

posed the formation of the Domestic Council, observed, "In its early years, the Domestic Council was ill-used: it became an independent force we didn't intend it to be. Now, it is no longer being abused as such. But it is not functioning as designed. It is still sputtering."

Kenneth R. Cole Jr., executive director of the Domestic Council during a period from 1973 to early 1975 that overlapped the Nixon and Ford Administrations, said, "The President needs help to make decisions and it is extremely useful to him to have diverse views and different approaches. The Domestic Council's value in that respect cannot be overestimated."

Other factors: The formation of the President's domestic program, however, is affected by factors other than the mechanism that shapes and refines those programs, namely the current economic situation, the political climate and contemporary social conditions.

In Ford's case, they involve: limited available resources, his relations with Congress and the political atmosphere of an election year, and a philosophy which, in effect, reverses the social policies of recent Administrations.

Turbulent years

Although the Domestic Council is a relatively new sibling among the executive office agencies that comprise the President's official family, the concept hardly is new.

All modern Presidents have attempted to integrate their domestic policy advice, which for the most part was transmitted through countless channels in an ad hoc fashion. One of the earliest experiments at organizing the presidential advisory apparatus was Herbert Hoover's Committee on Social Trends, which sought to assess social conditions in the country.

Later, President Franklin D. Roosevelt created the National Emergency Council and then the National Resources Planning Board. In 1959 President Eisenhower established the Commission on National Goals. Each of these groups was envisioned as an advisory and planning mechanism to assist the President in carrying out domestic policy.

Failed expectations: Yet, none fully lived up to its expectations for a variety of reasons: the rivalry between agencies, the quality and ambiguity of advice relayed to the President, the lack of a political base, the distrust

manifested by Cabinet officers and Members of Congress, the preference of some Presidents, such as Franklin Roosevelt, for individual counsel rather than institutional advice, internal disagreements that converted advocates into adversaries and the inevitable clash between planners and budget officials.

Political scientist Thomas E. Cronin has noted, "What works for one President may not work for another. Even the best of formal arrangements guarantees very little, for just as the most unlikely sources often provide the most profitable advice, so also the most systematic advisory apparatus may fail to provide a President usable advice when he needs it. Too, there is always a limit to the amount of advice a President can put to good use. Too much advice can sometimes paralyze."

"As a politician, a President must constantly be engaged in bargaining and compromising—in the art of making the difficult and desirable possible—and as such he is forced to act as an incrementalist, a pragmatist and experimenter. Advice about what ought to be can always be a useful ally, but seldom can it be accepted as the only course of action."

Camarow recalled that the Advisory Council on Executive Organization, which was headed by industrialist Roy L. Ash, found that domestic policy recommendations would be sent to the President from a sponsoring agency with an advocate's brief. "This would be bounced to another agency and of course they wouldn't like it, so they would write their own advocate's brief. Pretty soon, these would be piled up like a seven- or eight-layer cake. They were not looking from the President's position but from their own bias, nor did they take into account the total public interest."

Nixon style: President Nixon wanted lines of information leading to the Oval Office to be few in number, clearly designated and uncluttered, both to avoid the confusion inherent in past procedures and to conform to his individual working habits. Hence, he embraced the Domestic Council concept eagerly. (*For a report on the early days of the council by its first executive director, John D. Ehrlichman, see box, pp. 1690-91.*)

In a message to Congress March 12, 1970, in which he proposed establishing the Domestic Council and restructuring the Bureau of the Budget into the Office of Management and Budget

(OMB), Nixon noted, "There does not now exist an organized, institutionally staffed group charged with advising the President on the total range of domestic policy." The Domestic Council, he said, would fill that need and further be charged "with integrating the various aspects of domestic policy into a consistent whole."

The reorganization, he added, "will not only improve the staff resources available to the President, but will also strengthen the advisory roles of those members of the Cabinet principally concerned with domestic affairs." As it turned out, Nixon was only half correct—the influence of the domestic departments was not strengthened, but diminished.

Initial concern: Basically, the Domestic Council replaced Nixon's Urban Affairs Council and was patterned on the National Security Council model. In addition to its formal members—each of the Cabinet Secretaries with the exception of those at State and Defense and any other members the President may designate—it has a permanent, institutional staff, all of whose members are politically appointed. Fear that the staff would dominate the Domestic Council operations and stand as a shield between the federal agencies and the President soon was expressed.

Rep. Chet Holifield, D-Calif., then chairman of the House Government Operations Committee, maintained that the presidential agency "sets up a council of political appointees, who, in effect, are doing the work, making the policy determinations and setting the priorities which heretofore had been made by the various Cabinet departments and the Bureau of the Budget." Holifield also objected to the lack of accountability that would cloak the staff members protectively.

It was apparent that Nixon relied considerably more on Ehrlichman and the Domestic Council staff than on his Cabinet for the initiation and implementation of domestic policy. The Domestic Council's Cabinet members only rarely convened as a body. Task force committees that included Cabinet officers were run mostly by a Domestic Council staff aide. Above all, there was little doubt that John D. Ehrlichman was President Nixon's lead man in domestic affairs.

Confusion over the respective roles of the Domestic Council's Cabinet members and the agency's staff recently prompted an associate director to

refer to the council's public image as being based on "fiction."

New model: Undaunted by criticism from outside the Administration and disaffection from within, President Nixon further tightened his executive authority, while claiming decentralization.

Fortified by what he interpreted as a new popular mandate following his 1972 reelection, he created what became known as the "supercabinet" or consular system.

Essentially, it consisted of two tiers at the top of the White House hierarchy. On the top rung were five presidential assistants, each with a special area of responsibility: H. R. Haldeman, White House staff; Henry A. Kissinger, foreign affairs; Treasury Secretary George P. Shultz, economic affairs; Roy L. Ash, budget and executive management; and Ehrlichman, domestic affairs.

Directly below Ehrlichman were three Cabinet Secretaries who had been given the additional title of counselor to the President and were responsible for coordinating inter-agency matters in broadly-defined operational areas of domestic concern: HEW Secretary Caspar W. Weinberger, human resources; Agriculture Secretary Earl L. Butz, natural resources; and HUD Secretary James T. Lynn, community development.

Presumably, Nixon, intent on consolidating his hold on the federal bureaucracy, made the move because Congress refused to act on his proposal to merge "seven outmoded, constituency-oriented departments" into "four streamlined, goal-oriented departments."

Watergate impact: The counselor structure, however, never got off the ground; it was disbanded after about four months when Ehrlichman and Haldeman resigned April 30, 1973, in connection with charges growing out of the Watergate scandal.

To a large degree, identification with Watergate and the Nixon White House cast a shadow over the Domestic Council, the reflection of which endures to this day. Three former prominent council officials have been convicted in cases related to the scandal—Ehrlichman, Edward L. Morgan and Egil Krogh Jr. Ehrlichman currently is appealing his conviction.

Meanwhile, some former members of the Ash Council, in an effort to prove that the establishment of the Domestic Council was not part of a

'The distinction between now and six years ago is that then, the solution for every problem was more money. Today, there is a lot more caution. Most people in the policy process are less confident of their proposed solutions.'

—John G. Veneman,
counselor to the
Vice President



plot to enhance the President's power, have sought the release of the study group's papers, reports and memoranda, only selective portions of which have been publicly disclosed.

The appeal was made to Donald Rumsfeld shortly before the former White House chief of staff was named Defense Secretary Nov. 3. Rumsfeld reportedly replied he would look into the merits of the request.

Current status

By underscoring Vice President Nelson A. Rockefeller's role as operational supervisor of the Domestic Council, President Ford reaffirmed his decision to restore the agency to its former prominence.

Following Ehrlichman's resignation, his deputy, Cole, succeeded him as executive director of the Domestic Council. This was during the height of the Watergate scandal and the drive to impeach President Nixon, altogether a difficult time for the promotion of substantive legislation.

Today, however, Cole disputes statements that the Domestic Council virtually fell into disuse during that period and points to the adoption of legislation involving the extension of revenue sharing, the transfer of highway funds for mass transportation, a new elementary and secondary education bill and the 1974 Housing and Community Development Bill, signed by Ford shortly after he became President.

Time of travail: Nevertheless, it was a time of travail and transition for the Domestic Council: its staff was re-

duced from a maximum of about 79 members to 30. It was less of a political force. No longer did it dictate to the federal departments and agencies. From June 1973 to January 1974, former Defense Secretary (1969-73) Melvin R. Laird served as assistant to the President for domestic affairs while monitoring Domestic Council activities. Cole perceived his role as it was theoretically presented—as an "honest broker" between the White House and the executive departments.

Once a powerfully pervasive instrument in White House domestic policy affairs, the Domestic Council became just another service unit in the presidential establishment.

Ford announcement: On Feb. 13, 1975, shortly after Cole's departure from the White House, President Ford announced that he had decided to "redefine and broaden the function and responsibility of my Domestic Council." He reported Rockefeller would serve as vice chairman of the council (the President himself serves as chairman) and that two of Rockefeller's associates would be put in charge of the agency, James M. Cannon as executive director, and Richard L. Dunham as the council's deputy director.

Actually, the appointment of Rockefeller as vice chairman of the Domestic Council was not unprecedented—both Spiro T. Agnew and Ford had previously been given the title, if only in an honorary sense. The difference now was that the Vice President would be actively involved in the Domestic Council's operations.

Toll exacted: Despite the celebration that accompanied the Rockefeller announcement and the appointment of Cannon and Dunham, the incident exacted its toll.

What was only suspected then is acknowledged openly now by Domestic Council officials: Rumsfeld, then Ford's chief of staff, strongly opposed putting the Domestic Council under the province of Rockefeller and his associates. Rumsfeld backed Philip E. Areeda, a counsel to the President, for the post of executive director, but was overruled by Ford. Shortly afterwards, Areeda quit his White House job to teach at Harvard.

Rumsfeld lost that battle, but a residue of bitterness lingered between the Rumsfeld and Rockefeller forces.

Also, the appointment of Dunham, former New York state budget director, as deputy director, at the same level and with the same title as Cavanaugh, did not please many White House aides. A former HEW deputy assistant secretary and a member of the Domestic Council staff since 1971, Cavanaugh was well liked and respected by his colleagues and considered a probable choice to succeed Cole.

As it turned out, Dunham's tenure at the Domestic Council was very brief: he left after a few months to accept an appointment as chairman of the Federal Power Commission.

Triad: The infusion of Rockefeller forces added a new ingredient to the Domestic Council staff structure. Under the present setup, the agency is an admixture of Nixon holdovers, such as Cavanaugh and associate directors Warren K. Hendriks Jr., Tod R. Hullin and James H. Falk; Rockefeller associates, such as Cannon and associate directors Richard D. Parsons, Arthur F. Quern and George W. Humphreys; and new Ford appointees, including associate directors Paul C. Leach, David H. Lissy and Stephen G. McConahey.

Currently on the council's payroll as consultants are Judith R. Hope, daughter of comedian Bob Hope, and Sam Halper, a former *Time* magazine correspondent who concentrates on the Puerto Rican statehood issue.

Tenuous network: Such a conglomeration of diverse political ancestries is conducive to creating divided loyalties and cautious relationships. The tenuous network is hardly strengthened by a line of command in which Cannon, longtime aide, legislative

How It All Began . . .

The following was written by John D. Ehrlichman, former assistant to President Nixon for domestic affairs and the first executive director of the Domestic Council, at the request of National Journal. Ehrlichman resigned his White House post in April 1973 because of allegations connected with the Watergate affair. He subsequently was convicted of charges growing out of the Daniel Ellsberg burglary and the Watergate cover-up. He is appealing the convictions.

The Domestic Council's genesis dates from Richard Nixon's experience with the National Security Council (NSC) in the Eisenhower Administration (1953-1961) and an unsatisfactory experiment with "adverse advocacy" during his early months as President.

Following his election in 1968, President-elect Nixon decided he wanted diversity and healthy controversy among his domestic policy advisers. He assumed they would present their views in an orderly manner and then discreetly retire to await the President's decision.

Nixon, however, underestimated the political passions of his counselors, notably Henry A. Kissinger, his assistant for national security affairs, and his two principal domestic policy aides, Arthur F. Burns and Daniel P. Moynihan.

At the outset, President Nixon felt that Kissinger brought him an orderly and well-arranged flow of contrasting advice from the State Department, the Pentagon, the intelligence agencies and the NSC staff. Although strained through the fine screen of Kissinger's sense of priorities, Nixon considered the information to be balanced and clearly presented.

In contrast, his domestic policy advice was patently ideological. Burns was a conservative of strong personality and convictions, with years of experience in advising President Eisenhower. Moynihan, a liberal, was equally strong and effective.

Both knew how to enlist the help of departments, agencies and outside experts on one side of a policy dispute. There were times when each sought to make sure that he was "the last man to talk to the President."

This created an unstructured advisory process, with Burns pressuring the President from the right and Moynihan from the left.

Search for machinery: Consequently,

Nixon began to yearn for a domestic policy apparatus equivalent to the orderly NSC process he had known as Vice President. In April 1969, he established the Advisory Council on Executive Organization, headed by Roy L. Ash, with instructions to devise a decision-making system that would harness the fervor of his domestic policy advocates and inflict less wear and tear on the President.

At the same time, Nixon erected temporary defensive procedures which required Burns and Moynihan to channel their enthusiasms through a designated third party on major issues, such as welfare reform. The pulling and tugging would continue, but someone else would get stretched, principally myself (which is why I can tie my shoes to this day without bending over).

In the course of their work, Ash Council members interviewed dozens of former and incumbent White House officials, management consultants and other specialists. Their subsequent recommendations adapted NSC procedures to domestic affairs, while recognizing the latter's relationship to the budgetary process.

Above all, two things were evident: that the proposed Domestic Council



EHRLICHMAN

... By a Man Who Was There

was tailored to Nixon's style of operating, and that it was necessary to have clearly defined and cordial relations between the staffs of the Domestic Council and the reconstructed Bureau of the Budget, renamed the Office of Management and Budget (OMB).

Yet, from the beginning there were Cabinet members who did not understand that the Domestic Council design was cut to fit the President.

At an Ash Council meeting with Cabinet officials and agency heads in the White House Blue Room, some Cabinet officers with domestic responsibilities vigorously protested that the proposed machinery would shut them off from direct access to the President on policy questions.

Vice President Agnew rose and surprised everyone by siding with the protestors. He, too, argued that the design interposed staff between the President and his Cabinet. At this point, Ash was rescued by former Texas Gov. John B. Connally, a council member, who took over the meeting. In a virtuoso performance reflecting a mastery of practical politics, he explained, exhorted, placated and ultimately prevailed. Essentially, he told the Vice President and the Cabinet members that this was the way the President wanted to work and intended to work, that the issue had been decided by the President and that it was not open to debate.

Council created: Once the Domestic Council was established in July 1970, its Cabinet members seldom met as a body. The work was done in subcommittees of three or four Cabinet officers or their sub-Cabinet representatives. Most of the planning, however, was assigned to staff committees headed by a White House aide and composed of personnel from OMB and those agencies concerned with the issue under discussion. Their sessions sometimes included participants from outside the government and hence were particularly constructive.

Over-all, the entire process was dedicated to amassing all the relevant facts on an assigned policy issue and submitting to the President a wide range of decision alternatives. Generally, the memoranda included the personal opinion of the council members, labeled as such.

Plenary sessions of the council were rare because Nixon preferred to work from written reports.

One of the most persistent and difficult aspects of staff management was the refusal of a few Cabinet officers to believe that the President actually did not want to hear their oral arguments on policy disputes. Occasionally, these unrequited debaters would publicly charge that an opportunity to present their views had been denied them by an over-protective staff. In point of fact, the staff had a converse problem: frequently, it was hard to meet congressional and other deadlines because work was bottlenecked in the office of some Cabinet Secretary.

At times, the staff would persuade the President, against his desire and judgment, to see a Cabinet officer and listen to his oral presentation. Now that we know that these sessions were tape-recorded, historians will be in a position to judge whether they were worth the time of the President, the Secretary and countless bureaucrats who prepared the Secretary's briefing papers. Obviously, I did not attend all such sessions, but I do not recall any in which a new fact or argument was offered.

Regarding OMB-Domestic Council relations, the directors of the two agencies must work to ensure cordial cooperation between their staffs. It should be clear that on domestic policy issues, OMB recommendations to the President must be funneled through the Domestic Council, along with those from other departments and agencies. Similarly, in budget matters, the Domestic Council should submit its views in line with OMB procedures.

Backchanneling to the President by either side could erode the fragile relationship between OMB and the Domestic Council.

If the Domestic Council has had a measure of success in the last six years, it is because the incumbent Presidents have found its work balanced and reliable. That is to the credit of a small and expert staff whose names are seldom heard outside the White House.

representative and special assistant to Rockefeller, reports to Ford, even as he maintains his loyal relationship with the Vice President.

Still another anomaly involves Veneman, former HEW undersecretary, who joined the Domestic Council earlier in 1975 to conduct analytical studies of social assistance programs. Veneman, however, was additionally put in charge of the Domestic Council's regional forums, staged in six U.S. cities from Oct. 21 to Dec. 9 as a grass roots educational and promotional device.

Domestic Council spokesmen are at pains to explain why Veneman was taken away from his policy studies to orchestrate the forums. One aide said the selection of Veneman as forums director was "almost accidental; he was the only one of stature who could attract people to participate in the forums."

Cannon: The unknown factor—and perhaps the most mysterious element in the Domestic Council's operation—is Cannon's leadership ability.

Cannon is recognized as a hard-working, competent executive. Yet, after almost a year, there is little evidence that he has taken firm control of the Domestic Council or given it a special institutional identity. Nor is his personal imprint visible. At least part of that is due to the exaggerated efforts by Cannon and other "Rockefeller men" to maintain a low profile during the early months of their appointments so as to not appear to be flaunting their ties with the Vice President and the mystique of the Rockefeller name.

As the highest-ranking Rockefeller associate on Ford's staff, Cannon particularly was handicapped since he was compelled to walk a thin line between loyalty to the President and the Vice President. His professional loyalty obviously belonged to Ford, but his personal loyalty lay with Rockefeller. As proof of the latter, during his confirmation hearings Rockefeller testified that in January 1974 he gave Cannon a gift of \$40,000 "out of friendship and respect."

In response, Cannon contends he can serve two masters judiciously since his obligations to each are different.

Perceptions: Associates generally speak of Cannon in reserved tones.

According to one experienced Domestic Council official, "It has taken awhile for Cannon to get oriented. He doesn't have the ear of the President

WHITE HOUSE

Public Forum on Domestic Policy



A Domestic Council road show: Kent Frizzell (second from left), Frank G. Zarb, F. David Mathews, John G. Veneman, Nelson A. Rockefeller, an unidentified aide and John T. Dunlop appear at a Denver forum

as Ehrlichman and Cole did. And the staff is given a lot of authority. . . . He is so close to the Vice President he is pulled two ways. Conflicts do occur."

A colleague who has known and worked with Cannon for several years said, "He is extremely careful of who he sees and what he says. He is careful to maintain the appropriate posture, even the appearance of an appropriate posture."

Another viewpoint was offered by James E. Connor, secretary to the Cabinet and White House staff administrator, who said, "Cannon has clearly been able to do what the President wants done in the domestic policy area."

Operations

In his move to rejuvenate the Domestic Council, Ford said he considered the agency an integral part of the presidential advisory system and wanted it to "continue as one of the substantive policy offices within the White House."

He said he was redefining and broadening the functions of the council to include the responsibility to assess national needs and identify alternative

ways of meeting them, provide policy advice, recommend and coordinate the allocation of resources for national priorities, maintain a continuous review of programs and propose necessary reforms.

For the most part, the Ford mandate virtually was the same as the one spelled out by Nixon in 1970.

Departures: The major departure under Ford was the appointment of his Vice President as the active overseer of the agency in fact as well as name. This duty was hailed as the first time in history that a Vice President had been given jurisdiction over a substantive policy-operational area.

A second departure involved a renewed emphasis on long-range planning by the council.

Accompanied by high hopes, the Rockefeller group moved into their new positions in March. Cannon, in line with his go-slow policy, requested the Cabinet-level agencies to suggest new ideas, all of which subsequently were compiled in thick black books. He promptly announced that the Domestic Council would divide its functions between short-term operations, which would focus on day-to-day deci-

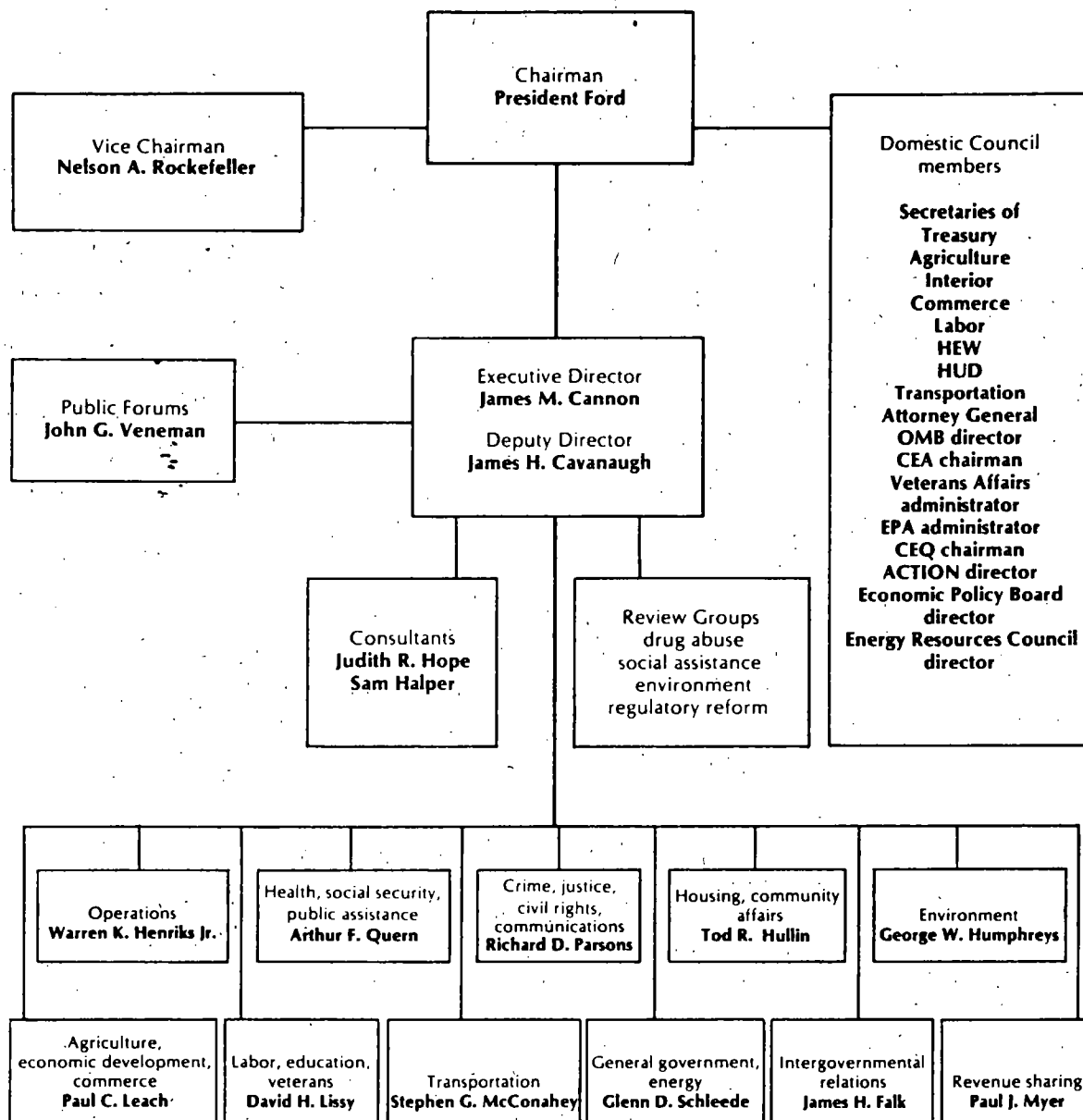
sions facing the President, and long-range reviews, which would be concerned with studies of major issues as potential legislative proposals.

Dunham was to be in charge of the long-range reviews, which presumably—although this was never acknowledged—would draw on the work of the Rockefeller-sponsored National Commission on Critical Choices for America. When Dunham left, the assignment was given to Quern, another Rockefeller associate, who also is charged with pulling together material from the Domestic Council's proposals for inclusion in Ford's upcoming State of the Union message.

Organizational changes: Gradually, Cannon overhauled the council's staff structure into a more elaborate organization.

Under Ehrlichman, the structure consisted principally of the executive director and five associate directors with specific area responsibilities. The Cannon model entails an organizational flow which, headed by the executive director, includes an operational director (Cavanaugh), 10 area associate directors and two special divisions covering the public forums and the long-

Domestic Council



The Other Policy Maker

When President Nixon created the Domestic Council and the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) in 1970, he said: "The Domestic Council will be primarily concerned with *what* we do; the Office of Management and Budget will be primarily concerned with *how* we do it, and *how well* we do it."

But the relationship has not worked out that way in practice. OMB and the Domestic Council have been equal partners—in fact, sometimes OMB has been more than equal—in helping Nixon and then President Ford develop policy. On the other hand, OMB has had the field of policy implementation to itself within the Executive Office of the President.

OMB has tremendous advantages over the Domestic Council in size and experience. It has a staff of about 600, compared with slightly more than 30 at the Domestic Council, that can be marshaled to provide detailed policy advice on any issue that comes along.

Many of OMB's staff members have experience dating back to the Budget Bureau, OMB's predecessor. On the other hand, no one was on the Domestic Council staff before 1970, and many staff members were recruited only when James M. Cannon became the Domestic Council's director early in 1975.

Allen Schick, a senior specialist in American government for the Congressional Research Service, said George P. Shultz, OMB's first director, made sure OMB preserved "a substantial role in program and policy making."

"Even more significantly," Schick told the Princeton University Conference on Advising the President on Oct. 31, "the Domestic Council never was able to attain the institutional competence and intelligence of OMB. It could get OMB to do staff work for it, but the Domestic Council was not able to carve out an independent role for itself."

Budget preparation: As it always has, the Domestic Council is continuing to play a role in the formulation by OMB of the President's annual budget proposal. OMB director James T. Lynn said the Domestic Council is represented at the meetings at which each department and agency presents its budget request to OMB.

Cannon attends the sessions at which Lynn shows Ford each department or agency's request and OMB's recommendation, which usually is for a spending cut. Cannon's role is to advise the President whether to accept OMB's position or that of the department or agency.

Policy formulation: Most of the contact between OMB and the Domestic Council occurs during the formulation of Administration policy on domestic issues that may or may not have budgetary implications.

An OMB spokesman said OMB and the Domestic Council currently are represented on study groups working on regulatory reform, drugs, social assistance and energy. In addition, he said, OMB and Domestic Council staff members are working together to develop policy in a wide range of other issues.

Paul H. O'Neill, OMB's deputy director, said in an interview that relations between OMB and the Domestic Council have been excellent since Cannon became Domestic Council director. "The relationship is much more informal than in earlier times. It's very easy going," said O'Neill, a veteran of eight years at the Budget Bureau and OMB.

O'Neill said that under past regimes at the Domestic Council, the staffs of OMB and the council tended to work independently of each other as they helped develop presidential policy. Since Cannon's arrival, he said, OMB and council staff more frequently have been working jointly.

The Domestic Council still is not able to delve into all aspects of domestic policy as deeply as the larger OMB, O'Neill said. But he added that the Domestic Council's involvement can be just as deep as OMB's when the council is selective about what it does. As an example, he cited the contribution of Richard D. Parsons, a Domestic Council associate director, to the drug enforcement study issued by the White House in November.

—Joel Havemann

range review groups, which focus on social assistance programs, regulatory reform, drug abuse and environmental problems.

In a major change, Cannon has abolished the task force committees, whose memberships included Cabinet Secretaries or their surrogates. It was through the task force committees that the departmental input was felt most effectively. While the review groups were viewed as a substitute, they are considerably fewer in number and they exert less influence on the White House decision-making process.

Partial success: Notwithstanding the upgrading of the Domestic Council, the changes have produced only partial success.

Domestic Council officials report that the long-range planning effort has been diluted by the extraordinary amount of energy and time—more than 60 per cent—they must expend on daily assignments. These include the preparation of briefing papers for the President, drafting decision memos, replying to policy questions from inside and outside the government, attending conferences, answering correspondence and serving as liaison with Governors and mayors.

Council aides loosely categorize short-term issues as those looking ahead to 1980 and long-range issues as those that project to the year 2000. "For example," said Cavanaugh, "there is the problem of social security financing. What will be the effect on the future soundness of the system by the year 2000 if the present program is continued as it is?"

Daily workload: "There has been more day-to-day activity than they anticipated and a lot more short-range problems the President has to address himself to than he had envisioned," commented a council executive.

Another said, "The council staff is not the end-all and be-all. We are just 16 or so guys trying to keep our heads above water. We don't have the horses to be as creative as people think we are, and we spent an inordinate amount of time on day-to-day requests."

A third Domestic Council staff member remarked, "Long-range thinking is always going on but it's not very sexy. You look the farthest the earliest, then settle back to dealing with immediate problems and interests."

OMB relationship: Domestic Council staff members agree that the agency's

relationship with the OMB has improved perceptibly during the Ford Administration. Ideally, the two agencies work in tandem, the Domestic Council concentrating on policy and planning, the OMB on budgetary procedures and seeing that policy is carried out. In practice, however, their activities often overlap, and the two agencies confront each other as competitors rather than collaborators. (See box, p. 1694.)

could just as well have been Jim Cannon—but it wasn't," he said.

Issues

Implicit in the design of the Administration's domestic agenda is Ford's economic and political philosophy, hence the conservative strain that runs through his legislative program, free market policy, attacks against "big government" and regulatory reform drive.

'Long-range thinking is always going on but it's not very sexy. You look the farthest the earliest, then settle back to dealing with immediate problems and interests.'

—Domestic Council staff member

A Nixon holdover recalled, "There were personality problems between Ehrlichman and Roy Ash when he was OMB director. Whenever Ash met with the President, he insisted that the Domestic Council not be represented."

Now, in Cavanaugh's opinion, "cooperation couldn't be better."

Others, however, are less sanguine about the Domestic Council-OMB relationship.

"We treat the OMB as any Cabinet unit," said a Domestic Council associate director. "They have a biased view and see everything as a budget issue. That is essential to the President, but it is only one view and should not be dominant."

According to a colleague, "The rivalry does not exist as it did before. Yet, I would be deluding myself if I thought I could compete with the OMB's program analyses. If I have a point to make, I make it. But I don't see myself as a competitor. I don't have the resources; if I did, I might be more contentious."

Another Domestic Council official said, "OMB really determines long-range policy because they control the numbers. A program's merit cannot be weighed with dollars. It's the nature of the game, but sometimes they just cut out dollars, usually on the basis of what they know least about."

He noted pointedly that OMB director James Lynn accompanied Ford on his recent China trip. "It

In numerous speeches, Ford has underlined his determination to stem what he has referred to as the "tidal wave" of federal spending on social programs. He reinforced his position by declaring a moratorium on new and costly programs except in the energy and defense areas, and proposing a \$395 billion spending ceiling for next year. Already setting a record pace for presidential vetoes, Ford repeatedly has vowed to use his constitutional authority "again and again and again" to discourage proliferation of new social programs.

Clues: These actions provide substantial clues to the spirit and form of the Domestic Council proposals being relayed to Ford. OMB director Lynn has indicated that a \$395 budget ceiling would restrict expenditures on a wide range of assistance programs, including social security, medicare and medicaid, food stamps, veterans benefits, aid to dependent children and child nutrition projects.

While these developments give the Administration a negative aspect, White House aides are confident there exists a reservoir of national sentiment in favor of less government intervention and bureaucratic red tape.

Ideas and programs: Domestic Council officials contend that the lack of new, innovative programs does not mean that the President will not offer any fresh ideas and reforms to improve assistance programs and hold down costs. Mostly, however, they

will center on the consolidation and reconstruction of present programs.

"New ideas do not necessarily mean new programs," observed Andrew M. Rouse, assistant director of the Ash Council, "but they can make what you have work better."

Council aides suggest that Ford's 1975 programs moratorium does not apply to 1976, but are reluctant to state that he will lift the ban.

"If there are any new programs, there will have to be cuts elsewhere," said an associate director.

Major concerns: During Ford's presidency, the Domestic Council has devoted its attention chiefly to several issues: airline and commercial trucking regulatory reform, control of drug abuse, an energy package, urban mass transit aid, consumer activities, general revenue sharing extension, a national anti-crime proposal, the 1975 Emergency Housing Act, predator (coyote) control, the Railroad Revitalization Act, cable television, an uranium enrichment plan and the 1975 Federal Highway Act.

Ford already has acted on some of these issues but may restate his position with some refinements while converting others into policy proposals. For instance, he sent Congress an anti-crime message in June that included controversial provisions for mandatory jail terms for repeated offenders. Congress failed to act on the Ford plan, but Domestic Council spokesmen say a new version is likely to be presented.

Also, a Domestic Council white paper on drug abuse probably will be recycled as a legislative proposal.

Ford's recommendations on deregulating the airline industry and the trucking and bus industries generally are opposed by the affected industries and may have to be resubmitted. Similarly, Ford's multi-agency consumer plan, his food stamp reform proposal, railroad assistance plan and revenue sharing reenactment plan have all run into trouble.

Forecasts: Assessments and comments made by Domestic Council spokesmen regarding other major policy issues are:

- Busing to achieve quality education—"Would not expect anything definitive in the State of the Union on busing."

- Civil rights—"The Administration's record here is abominable, and hopefully the President will have something to say on it."

• **Welfare reform**—"There could be something new, perhaps some form of consolidation, but no decision has been made yet. President told staff he would look at any new proposals."

• **National health insurance**—"No change of any comprehensive plan."

• **Categorical grant programs**—"Under review."

• **Housing and community development**—"Don't foresee any new initiatives in the area."

• **No-fault automobile insurance**—"No action planned on this. President believes it is the states' responsibility."

• **Illegal aliens**—"The government is floundering on this problem, it's not new but it is difficult to resolve, since there isn't much you can do about it."

• **Right of privacy**—"There will possibly be something on the nature of government information policies and their impact on people's lives."

Health issue: One of the most perplexing policy problems before Ford and the Domestic Council is the health issue. The President urged enactment of a national health insurance plan shortly after taking office but has since pulled away from it because of the exorbitant costs involved.

Veneman said that health care and its relation to government contrasts with other issues since it will require more, not less governmental involvement. Such involvement would necessarily be both financial and regulatory. "If you are going to control costs, then there is a need for some kind of government structure," Veneman said.

He noted the government itself has contributed greatly to massive health cost increases with the creation of medicare and medicaid. Furthermore, as the nation's largest purchaser of personal health services, it has been unable to translate this leverage into controlling costs.

In this connection, HEW's office of planning and evaluation told Secretary F. David Mathews in a briefing paper: "The capacity of the federal government at the present time to control the rate of increase in medical costs is extremely limited."

Thus, Ford is torn between his antipathy towards the imposition of more government regulations and increasing health costs that add significantly to his frustration in trying to hold down the federal budget.

Another point of concern involves the level of government intervention in regulating and administering a new

health care program. Ford previously has preferred that the state governments assume primary responsibility.

On the welfare issue, Veneman has gone outside the Domestic Council and called on several former colleagues who worked with him when Elliot L. Richardson was HEW Secretary. They included James Edwards, former deputy assistant HEW secretary for welfare legislation, and Richard Darman, former special assistant to Richardson.

Procedures: The decision papers transmitted to the President contain sections outlining the proposals, the alternatives, recommendations from various officials, the dollar impact and a summary. The President generally is acquainted with the basic issue before it is "floated" to him, but may not be aware of all the options and the arguments for and against the proposals.

To keep abreast of the myriad Domestic Council projects, Hendriks, who serves as Cavanaugh's assistant for operations, has a computer at his disposal that tracks all of the proposals, marks their progress and notes their deadlines.

Before the reports reach the President's desk, they are channeled from Cannon to Richard B. Cheney, the new White House chief of staff, and his assistant, James Connor. They may return any of the decision papers that they believe are not adequately informative for Ford's guidance.

Unmeasured influence: It has become almost axiomatic for the White House chief of staff and the Domestic Council executive director to profess that they are neutral agents who have little impact on the decision-making process.

Yet, while it may be difficult to measure, their influence is exerted in private discussions with the President, in their personal and professional relationship with Administration officials and in their administrative control over their staffs. And as Ehrlichman once said, "There is no such thing as a completely sanitized presentation. You have to ask yourself at all times, is it sufficiently 'unweighed' to give the President a fair shot at it. If he asks me for my opinion, I'll give it to him."

Outlook

After almost a year under Cannon's stewardship, the Domestic Council still is undergoing organizational and procedural changes in a continual effort to fulfill the President's needs.

Appropriation sought: A White House request for a \$1.5-million supplemental appropriation to increase the size of the Domestic Council staff has encountered stiff resistance on Capitol Hill. Agency officials realistically expect that Congress will approve only an estimated \$350,000.

At present, the council staff numbers about 30 permanent employees, eight or nine detailees and a few consultants. More than half of these are professionals. The public forums section lists more than 25 on its rolls, including clerical workers, many of whom are on loan from other federal agencies.

Rockefeller: Although Domestic Council officials insist there is no sign of it yet, Rockefeller's withdrawal as a potential running mate to Ford in the 1976 election is almost certain to have an effect on the agency.

"It is not a problem at this time," said a Rockefeller aide with the Domestic Council. "Personally, I would be sad to see it. If the situation were to deteriorate, things could be less than harmonious around here. Cannon would be the guy on the point."

Notwithstanding the publicity surrounding Rockefeller's Domestic Council role, he has had only a nominal influence on the agency's proceedings. Largely, this is attributable to his virtual confinement to the council's long-range planning efforts and to the time he must spend presiding over the Senate, attending to other vice presidential duties and participating in ceremonial events.

His contribution to the Domestic Council may be measured in public relations terms. This was evident especially during the Domestic Council regional forums, where he was almost always the featured attraction.

Time element: Behind the rush to funnel decision papers to the President is the pressure of time. Ford will have only about three weeks from the Domestic Council's Dec. 24 deadline to the delivery of his State of the Union message sometime around Jan. 15. After that, he also must submit his fiscal 1977 budget and his annual economic report.

As Ford observed in his Nov. 26 press conference, "Between now and Feb. 24, I've a fairly busy schedule. I'm going to be preparing the State of the Union message; I'll be putting together the federal budget and in the meantime, I'll be signing or vetoing a lot of legislation. . . ."

The Domestic Council: Innovation In Presidential Government

Raymond J. Waldmann, *U.S. Department of State*

In the shock, confusion, anger, and sorrow of the two years since Watergate, we have, as a nation, humbly looked for answers. We ask how to build institutions and processes which will prevent a recurrence of similar disasters. The reputations of the President, his Cabinet members, and advisers have plummeted and any constructive contributions they may have made seem destined to be interred with the remains of their dwindling fortunes. The political excesses, enemy lists, "national security" break-ins, illegal campaign funding and wiretaps will encourage many to reject any innovations associated with the Nixon White House.

Yet there is something to be salvaged from the wreckage. The first Nixon Administration was a time of change and experimentation in foreign and domestic affairs. While there were few institutional reforms in foreign affairs, in domestic affairs the changes were both in process and in policy, and they were intertwined.

The key institutional innovation in domestic affairs during the first Nixon Administration was the Domestic Council. This new organization operated for two and a half years during Nixon's first term at a high level of effectiveness. Its objective was to shape the President's domestic programs and policies. It was President Nixon's instrument, created to give him control over domestic policy.

The Domestic Council and its director, John Ehrlichman, acted for the President in a range of difficult, time-consuming, and treacherous policy

■ The Domestic Council was an innovation of President Nixon's first term designed to assist in managing domestic affairs. The Council on Executive Management (the Ash Council) recognized the need to give the President the tools necessary to exercise policy control over the functions of the Executive Branch. The Domestic Council was created along with the new Office of Management and Budget to fulfill that task. Domestic Council staff members exercised broad and significant authority over "presidential priority" issues, encompassing a wide range of legislative, budgetary, personnel, and policy decisions. The Council has proved to be a useful instrument for planning and managing government action, and should assist future Presidents in domestic policy planning.

areas. It dealt with difficult issues, with strong, often contending forces and with personalities who had little to gain from cooperation with the Administration. The Domestic Council was designed to cope with these problems. We must ask first why this innovation in government was achieved at this time, then explore its activities and accomplishments before judging its validity as an institution of the presidency.

Why Nixon in 1970?

Commentators have long noticed the need for policy planning assistance and advice at the White

The author is grateful to his colleagues on the Domestic Council staff, Edwin L. Harper, Steve Gamble, Vicki Keller, Peter Michel, and Roy Morey for their comments and criticism. The views expressed remain those of the author.

Raymond J. Waldmann is Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Economic and Business Affairs. He served as staff assistant to the President on the Domestic Council from November 1970 to February 1973, following six years with the management consulting firm of Arthur D. Little. He holds degrees in engineering and humanities from MIT and law from Harvard University.

House. Why was the Nixon Administration the first to institutionalize and define the relationships by establishing the Domestic Council? Perhaps more important to ask, was the change real or only formal? After all, every President has his advisers who, having no official operating responsibilities, and with or without congressional confirmation, help define presidential domestic policy. In recent years presidential assistants on the government payroll have even been identified as domestic affairs advisers. Roosevelt had his brain trust, Truman his "kitchen cabinet," Eisenhower his Adams, Kennedy his Sorensen and his brother Robert, and Johnson his great Society architects, Moyers and Califano.¹

What these previous arrangements lacked was continuity, clear assignments of responsibility, ways of planning and reviewing actions, mechanisms for follow-through — in fact, all of the desirable characteristics of an organization. When the Nixon men, many of whom were new to Washington, surveyed the scene and compared it with their previous experience in private life, they were appalled. How could anything function as "disorganized" as the White House they inherited? Clearly some system, some form of organization, was necessary. How else could anyone handle efficiently and expertly the enormous number and variety of issues coming before the President?

There were other reasons, not unique, but perhaps more influential, for reforming the domestic policy-making process. The first year and a half of the Nixon Administration had showed the need for some forum with recognized legitimacy short of the Oval Office to resolve disputes. Every issue just could *not* go to the President. Powerful advocates always want to take their case to the head man, but decision making on the basis of unanalyzed advocacy is unsatisfactory in a complex government.²

Advocacy within government takes many forms. The cabinet secretaries, the agency heads, and the senior bureaucrats, whether political appointees or not, represent many points of view, not always those of the President. They present programs and proposals for presidential approval. They push their budget requests. They drop political hot potatoes on the White House doorstep. They bring political interests and even their own constituencies with them into the government and expect White House accommodation.

Every senator or congressman worth his salt usually has at least one pet project, one specific

interest to advocate. It may be having a new Veterans Administration Hospital for the district, getting a Department of Agriculture waiver to import breed stock, increasing a sugar quota for a friendly country, changing the depletion allowance (up or down), forestalling the closure of a military base, or any of a million other possibilities. A presidential endorsement can be used by a congressman to increase his leverage with fellow congressmen and bureaucrats and to impress his constituents back home. In return, the congressman can use his only real stock in trade, his vote in committee or on the floor. Within a network of such commitments, continuously changing, presidential government proceeds. For a President to maintain some consistency, some integrity of policy, in the face of these pressures is difficult under the best of circumstances; with the other party firmly in control of Congress — it may be impossible.

The President must also deal with various interest groups, public and private. He must deal with unions, professional associations, industry groups, local and state government groups, the thousand and one associations, corporations, and public interest groups maintaining offices in Washington solely and specifically for the purpose of influencing government policy. They quite unabashedly advocate their views without any attempt or necessity to balance the interests or to adopt a broader perspective. Of course, the better spokesmen couch their advocacy in line with administration policy. But the counter-arguments may be slighted, the political benefits exaggerated, the costs minimized.

Lastly, the President must deal with his own "political" constituents, primarily his party enthusiasts. The Nixon Administration also capitalized on the feeling that large segments of the American population, the silent majority, did not speak out, were not represented, and were badly served by the existing interest groups.³ The President's silent majority may or may not be adequately represented by any of the other advocates seeking the President's ear, but it attracted his attention.

Getting things done in Washington is difficult for any Administration, of course. Why were the reforms in domestic policy making undertaken by the Nixon Administration? The Nixon Administration may have taken these steps because of the backgrounds of the President's closest advisers. They were not politicians, by and large, com-

mitted to the existing processes of Washington. They were truly "organization" men from industry, advertising, consulting, and the law. They were willing to undertake change. They were largely young men and women who were risking change, improving government, modernizing its processes, and bringing to it the management techniques of the private sector. They reflected the President's often-stated ambition to reform government, not just change its policies.

As a first step, the President established the Advisory Council on Executive Management under Roy Ash, then head of Litton Industries (and later Director of the Office of Management and Budget). The Ash Council, as it came to be known, studied ways to improve management in the Executive Branch, and its recommendations formed the basis for several major administration proposals.⁴ Its perhaps most important recommendation was the creation of the Office of Management and Budget and the Domestic Council.⁵

The Office of Management and Budget was to be built on the existing Bureau of the Budget. The BOB had been the principal arm of the President for policy formulation through the budget process ever since it was created during President Harding's Administration. For decades it has had the most professional, dedicated, and responsive staff; therefore it has been the most valuable of the agencies of government from the President's point of view. It was a firm rock on which to build. It was to take on new duties to oversee the management of federal departments and programs, and build up a staff capacity to do so. Its influence has grown with the new staff, the additional duties, and the higher political prestige accorded to its Director.

As a counterpart to this superb instrument for carrying out the presidential will, the Ash Council recommended and the President accepted the establishment of a totally new institution, the Domestic Council. The Domestic Council was to develop policy, to say *what* would be done — the OMB *how* it would be done. Its model from foreign affairs was the National Security Council and its staff. It subsumed two earlier attempts of the Nixon Administration at domestic policy coordination, the urban and rural affairs councils, whose scope had been too limited and whose charters were even inconsistent. It was to attempt to solve many of the problems perceived by the Administration in the first year and a half. In sum, it was a bold new direction in presidential policy analysis.

What Was the Domestic Council?

As a subgroup of the Cabinet, the Domestic Council is chaired by the President; it is comprised of the Vice President, the Secretaries of Agriculture, Commerce, HEW, HUD, Interior, Labor, Transportation, and Treasury, the Attorney General, the Directors of OMB and ACTION, the Chairmen of the Council of Economic Advisers and the Council on Environmental Quality, the Administrators of VA and EPA, and various presidential advisers. In practice, during the first two years of its existence, it met rather frequently for such an unwieldy group; in fact a Domestic Council meeting was often reported as a full Cabinet meeting since the memberships were almost the same. Because of this large size, ad hoc subgroups of the Council were established as needed to deal with specific issues of more limited interest. For example, Secretary Romney chaired a group of cabinet-level officers on urban development. Even less formal working relationships were continually being established, all under the aegis of the Domestic Council.

The executive order establishing the Council was necessarily and purposefully vague in describing the functions, duties, and responsibilities of the Council and its staff.⁶ Methods and processes as well as interfaces with other organizations and agencies would have to be worked out. There was no limit to the scope or depth of the Council's interests and activities, just as there was none for the President.

The Council's work was supported by a staff directed during the Nixon's first term by John Ehrlichman. It was never very large, comprising at its height no more than 35 professionals with an equal number of support staff.⁷ Many of the staff members were with John Ehrlichman during his entire tenure as Director and even before, during the 1968 campaign. The staff formed a young, rather homogenous group, stable in composition with a very low turnover (when compared with other executive offices); the original five assistant directors were still on the staff two and a half years later. Each assistant director was in turn assisted by a small staff of three or four.

In spite of its newness as an institution, and the youth of its staff, the Domestic Council started with a bang. John Ehrlichman had been appointed the President's assistant for domestic affairs, paralleling the appointment held by Henry Kissinger. Within the White House power structure, this only

confirmed the stature he had been gaining during the first year and a half as the mediator of disputes others could not settle. With this appointment he had no immediate rivals for policy control on the White House staff.⁸

The staff working for Mr. Ehrlichman shared his status with the President. This status was indicated in various ways important in Washington, such as office space in the White House west wing and on the White House side of the first floor of the adjacent Old Executive Office Building (not to be confused with the New Executive Office Building to which various other Executive Office staffers were banished to accommodate the Domestic Council staff), White House mess, limousine, and parking privileges. The Domestic Council had arrived and, in case other agencies or offices had their doubts, it intended to exercise its prerogatives to the fullest.⁹ In the field of domestic policy, it was evident from these symbols of power that the Council and its staff enjoyed the President's support.

The issues with which the Council and its staff dealt in the first term reflected presidential priorities and perspectives. These priorities were never set in a very formal way, but rather evolved during the summer of 1970 through informal analysis and through canvassing of the staff, the cabinet members, and a few outside advisers, and were finally given presidential approval in a meeting at Camp David. These issues formed the basis for the first-term activities of the Domestic Council.¹⁰

These priority areas such as environment, law enforcement, urban development, welfare reform, revenue sharing, and so on, were not well-defined or immutable. What they did represent, however, was something that no other process could have provided — an expression of presidential political priorities and therefore issues to which he was willing to commit resources. The resources at his command are varied and enormous. They include his time and effort, the energies of his cabinet and the federal government, the federal budget, and his ability to exert public leadership. No purely analytical process could have the same degree of political commitment behind it, and that is where most proposals for a "domestic policy think tank" divorced from the political environment of the White House lose touch with reality. A domestic program must deal with real issues, but it must also have behind it the political muscle to achieve it.

Once the priority areas were defined, the staff

organization could take shape. The Domestic Council staff could be described as having three components — "the front office" consisting of John D. Ehrlichman, his deputy, and his staff assistant; the assistant directors acting as project managers, each dealing with a few key issues; and the planning staff providing general support and coordination. Most of the staff could perhaps best be described as "project managers," managing these high-priority domestic programs, although no single description or process fits all cases. Each of the assistant directors of the Domestic Council was responsible for two or three issues. For example, one assistant director, John Whitaker, later Under Secretary of the Interior, handled the environment, agriculture, energy, and rural development. He was, perhaps optimistically, expected to deal with every aspect of these issues regardless of what departments might be involved or what resources were being used.

One of the assistant directors, Edwin Harper, had overall planning and coordination responsibilities in addition to specific responsibility for the area of revenue sharing. He was assisted by a staff drawn from management consulting and academia. This staff had general duties with presidential messages, the budget, and other issues which did not fit the project manager style.

Thus during the summer and fall of 1970 the Domestic Council began to take shape. It received the backing of the Ash Council whose recommendations had been accepted by the President. John Ehrlichman recognized this new institution as the vehicle to solidify his power base within the White House and to fend off other claimants. The Executive Order outlined its role. Ehrlichman began to consolidate and then attract the professional staff he would need to deal with the other White House offices and the many advocates of policy. Finally, the Council had presidential support for the priority issues, and began to flesh out the program to deal with them.

What Did It Do?

A general outline of the activities of the Council and its staff may be described, recognizing many variations existed on the theme. Three different types of activities were key — development of plans for dealing with the issues, implementation or follow-through on the plans, and, finally, analysis and communication of the results. This ordering implies a more rigid logic than was

ever realized in practice, where such distinctions are not always drawn.

Planning

The first step of planning would normally be handled by the assistant director in conjunction with other White House offices, the appropriate officials of the OMB and of the agencies involved, and with any appropriate interest groups outside the Executive Office. For instance, when Assistant Director Egil Krogh headed the effort to develop the drug abuse program, various consultant studies were commissioned and interdepartmental groups of the more than 15 agencies involved were formed to review proposals. In a few cases, such as population control and school finance, presidential commissions were established and their reports formed the basis for administration programs.¹¹

One of the significant parts of planning was to act as a conduit and processor of proposals coming to the White House. The Council staff would articulate the options, the "pros and cons," the recommendations of both departmental and Executive Office staff, and add its own comments. The Council thus facilitated presidential decision making, but also earned enmity by interfering with proposals from others (including Cabinet offices), particularly those for the State of the Union.

The most important planning document establishing the President's program is the State of the Union Address.¹² In many cases the final decisions by the President on a "plan" would be taken in the drafting of the State of the Union Message, and on specific messages to Congress on the budget or legislative proposals. These contain the general outlines of a presidential initiative (often fleshed out later by legislative proposals). The assistant director of the Domestic Council was expected to work with the White House speech writers to produce these documents, and they formed an important part of the domestic staff work product. Final approval rested with the President's speech writer Ray Price, John Ehrlichman, and ultimately with the President.

Messages to Congress would be accompanied by factual material explaining the program in more detail and often by necessary legislative proposals. New programs requiring legislation would be proposed; in the environment area, for instance, over 30 different bills were offered at various stages of the first term to put flesh on the plan's skeleton. Programs already authorized would be redirected through the budget process and through the

agency head to achieve goals in the plan. Other steps would be taken to put the plan into action.

Follow-Through

The second step could generally be described as follow-through. Once the proposals were made, the job of seeing them put into practice would begin. For legislation, this means working with Congress on specific legislative language, often over the course of years. The White House congressional liaison office and the legislative offices of the agencies provided support, but often decisions on tactics and final compromises rested with the Domestic Council staff. The Domestic Council staff could and did speak for the President in relaying his wishes to the departments, to OMB, and to other parts of the Executive Office.

New legislation was difficult to secure from a Democratic Congress, however, and thus the preferred mode of making proposals was through administrative change by presidential Executive Order, budget decision, or agency head directive. In these cases, the Domestic Council and its staff would develop an agreed or approved plan which the staff member would follow closely to make sure the most difficult situations, involving working within legislation, perhaps revising standing instructions and procedures, could be dealt with. Sometimes the role of the Cabinet officer as presidential appointee was pitted against his role as head of an organization with its own objectives. Nowhere was this conflict more obvious than in the annual OMB Budget review, in which the Domestic Council staff participated as presidential "representatives," bringing to the OMB table a "political" perspective.¹³

This second part of the process in many cases degenerated to firefighting. Whenever a problem with Congress, OMB, or the bureaucracy arose, no matter the source of the problem (i.e., letter to the President, presidential meeting, congressional inquiry, or departmental referral), it would usually fall to the Domestic Council staff to handle.¹⁴

Firefighting often involves personnel problems. Before key appointments were made requiring White House approval, they were cleared with the Domestic Council staff. Problems within departments with particular assignments or duties were sometimes brought to the White House, often to be reviewed by the Domestic Council staff. This often involved political pressures from various corners, sometimes requiring tough decisions when one can make one friend and many enemies. It is

apparent, however, that no matter how distasteful the thought to some, such pressures exist and are indispensable in building an administration responsive to the President.

Results

The third part of the process could be described as analysis and communication of results. One must remember that the Domestic Council was and, as of this writing, still is an integral part of the Executive Office, designed to serve the President and to help carry out his mandate. Part of that service was overtly political in the best sense of the word, attempting to meet public needs and priorities articulated by the President.

It was seen by its creators as an instrument to make government work after years of promises without performance. The President defined his program as the "New Federalism" — reducing the influence of the federal government in people's lives. This took many forms such as the support of state and local government, the simplification of federal processes and grants, the turning of welfare and health programs away from federal dictation to federal cash payments, and the reduction of federal planning control over local decisions in all domestic fields. Program changes were attempted in ways designed to keep the benefits flowing to those who need them, but not to others.

In order to demonstrate that this mandate was being fulfilled, progress had to be communicated through speeches, public relations, and the media. Members of the Domestic Council — i.e., the Cabinet members — are the principal public spokesmen, but the staff also assisted. The Domestic Council staff prepared speeches, press materials, assisted in and sometimes conducted White House press briefings, and discussed programs with interviewers and reporters. But the most important communications tool the Domestic Council staff could use was the President himself. Almost every speech and public appearance had some Domestic Council staff participation.¹⁵

The Domestic Council staff's involvement in the substantive aspects of presidential events naturally led to some involvement in the 1972 campaign. Most of the Domestic Council staff had no association with the campaign effort, being prevented by the restrictions placed on federal employees by the Hatch Act. Where it was possible that some individual Domestic Council staff member might perform services which were "political" in the sense which the regular White House staff is

"political," he was also appointed an assistant or deputy assistant to the President on the White House staff. The Domestic Council staff during the campaign period centered its efforts on developing the presidential program and communicating the results of the first term.¹⁶

Another function the staff fulfilled during this period was the analysis of polls and political information for the purpose of determining reactions to the President's domestic policies and new issues and problems requiring attention. The volume of polling information from public and private sources at most times is vast, but during a campaign it becomes a torrent. Local polls, national polls, issue polls, straw votes for local, national, and of course presidential races all tell something about the national needs, but the results need to be analyzed to tell the full story.

To guide the President's second term, the Domestic Council staff produced a long-range planning document to analyze priorities and problems. The long-range planning document was a much less political document than the party platform developed by the platform committee headed by Congressman John Rhodes. There were similarities in specifics since both reflected the prevailing philosophy of the President and the Administration's priorities during the first term.¹⁷

This review attempts to paint a broad picture of Domestic Council activities. Within this picture details varied; one of John Ehrlichman's characteristics was that he gave scope to his subordinates to develop their own approaches and solutions to problems, asking only to have final review and sign-off for himself or the President. He was able to attract a vigorous staff with strong views, individual initiative, a passion for accomplishment, and a strong dislike for excuses and red tape. These personalities made the Council staff a dynamic organization with a few parallels in government.

How Well Did It Do?

It now remains to offer a preliminary evaluation of the Domestic Council as it operated during its heyday — the last two years of President Nixon's first term.¹⁸ Its staff and functions were cut back and its scope necessarily reduced at the beginning of President Nixon's second term with first, the successful election behind it, and second, the decline of the power of the Watergate White House. But during the last two years of the first

term, the Domestic Council was firmly in substantive control of domestic policy. John Ehrlichman was a name to be reckoned with in the federal government and the Domestic Council staff exercised enormous power in Washington.

The first problem the Council had to overcome was the novelty of such far-reaching presidential control over the federal establishment. Never before, not even in the first two years of the Nixon Administration, was tight centralized control attempted from the White House over the operations of the domestic agencies. Budget control had, of course, existed in previous Administrations, but never such dramatically direct control existed over policy, appointments, programs, and even access to the President. While much was done to minimize this reason for the Council's existence, it must be admitted that this was one of the primary objectives — to gain policy control of the domestic agencies. And it succeeded to a remarkable degree.

The men and women chosen for the Council staff to exercise this control had to cope with a second problem. By and large, they were young, vigorous, and intelligent, but they were new to Washington.¹⁹ No matter how much this fact was stressed as a "plus" as bringing fresh views and methods, it nevertheless meant problems. No one had experience in dealing with federal policy, no one knew the history. No one had personal relationships with the important congressional leaders. No one knew panjandrum of the bureaucracy, the many unsung "J. Edgar Hoovers" who really run the government. No one carried on the GOP tradition or even much cared for those who did. On this score, the Council was not uniformly successful, and it posed problems throughout the first term.

Inexperience in Washington led to distrust of existing Washington institutions and methods — which were, after all, what the Administration had come to Washington to change. While press relations were never very good, they deteriorated as an undeclared war was conducted between the Administration and the Washington press corps.²⁰

A similar attitude prevailed with respect to Congress, but at least the importance of consultation in advance of the introduction of major legislation was recognized. But here the partisan disadvantage was keenly felt — one could normally only consult with Republican minority members of the important committees. Democratic mem-

bers and leadership were not disposed to favor Administration proposals. Rather than suffer the doubts and make the necessary compromises, it was often deemed more important to have legislative proposals consistent with the President's philosophy. Some went so far as to say bluntly that it was more important to have an issue than the legislation, and this attitude infected the process of dealing with Congress.

In spite of these problems, the Domestic Council achieved a remarkable place in domestic affairs. It succeeded to a degree never before attempted in gaining centralized political control over the Executive Branch for the President. It experimented with a variety of techniques in developing policy, including top-level consultants, presidential commission, interagency working groups and task forces. It attempted to maintain a consistency in policy across department and agency lines in important priority issue areas.

The Council and its staff produced a massive number of legislative proposals involving the environment, drug abuse, programs for the elderly, land use planning, District of Columbia affairs, revenue sharing for transportation, community development, education, and general government support, to name a few. It produced the substantive parts of several State of the Union addresses, over 50 messages to Congress, and untold numbers of speeches and campaign addresses. It gave form and substance to "New Federalism" and defined the Nixon approach to domestic affairs. With OMB it coordinated domestic budget policy assuring that Administration objectives were translated into dollar proposals to Congress. It kept information, analysis, and proposals flowing into the Oval Office and reactions, decisions, and presidential priorities flowing out to the agencies.

For the first time, the Executive Office had in the Domestic Council and its companion, the Office of Management and Budget, a domestic policy mechanism that worked, and this is not a bad test of any governmental institution. The Domestic Council served the President well. Other Presidents will undoubtedly modify it to suit their own personalities and staffs, but it is unlikely that any President will find that he can do without some similar planning, coordinating, and clearing device. Domestic policy is too diverse, too important, and too complex to be handled in any other way.

Notes

1. See *The President's Men* by Patrick Anderson for a discussion of the roles played by these and other important advisers.
2. During the first year and a half, while things were settling down, domestic policy was suffering from the disputes between Arthur Burns and Daniel Moynihan, among others. These strong personalities had very definite interests and views. They vied with others for the presidential mandates, compounding rather than easing the problems posed by advocacy within the White House. These disputes over domestic policy are described in *Nixon in the White House: The Frustration of Power*, by Rowland Evans, Jr., and Robert D. Novak.
3. It involved, in essence, creating interest groups to which the Administration had some commitment. Various ethnic groups were resurrected; the non-eastern press was courted; citizens' committees were established; outsiders of various types were brought into the political system — remember the housewives from Detroit with their petitions supporting the President on the war, abortion, amnesty, and the issues of the day? These home-grown advocates had to be served; and without too much violence to the presidential program, the Washington process, or the budget.
4. It proposed the reorganization of seven of the executive departments into four major departments of economic affairs, human resources, natural resources, and community development. It reviewed many of the federal program areas crossing departmental lines to suggest management and coordination improvements.
5. Reorganization Plan No. 2 of March 12, 1970, established the Domestic Council and reorganized the Bureau of the Budget. It followed the recommendation of the President's Advisory Council on Executive Organization, appointed by President Nixon on April 5, 1969.
6. The specific functions assigned to the Domestic Council were to: (1) receive and develop information necessary for assessing national domestic needs and defining national domestic goals, and develop for the President alternative proposals for reaching those goals; (2) collaborate with the Office of Management and Budget and others in the determination of national domestic priorities for the allocation of available resources; (3) collaborate with the Office of Management and Budget and others to assure a continuing review of ongoing programs from the standpoint of their relative contributions to national goals as compared with their use of available resources; and (4) provide policy advice to the President on domestic issues.
7. During the first four years of its existence the total staff of the Domestic Council never exceeded 60, including secretaries and support staff. From its inception to June 15, 1973, the total number of staff who had served on the Domestic Council was 105. Its budget averaged less than \$2 million per year.
8. The struggles of the first year and a half for domestic policy supremacy are described well in Evans and Novak, but those struggles were largely over by the time the Domestic Council was formally established. In that sense the Executive Order merely confirmed the power relationships that had been previously developed, in part because of the tight control over the Executive Office exercised by H.R. Haldeman, John Ehrlichman, and others.
9. Of course, insofar as the Council was filling a vacuum, there was little conflict with existing institutions and offices, but this was not true in all cases. The new OMB needed the direction on policy matters that the Council and its staff could provide. The Council of Economic Advisers would not find its role altered, and both the CEA and the Office of Science and Technology would find the Domestic Council an effective channel for forwarding their own ideas. The various White House offices dealing with the press, interest groups, political constituents, and the Congress now had an authoritative decision maker and source of information, policy, and data. There was little or no contact with the National Security Council and its staff, and when later the Council on International Economic Policy was created, liaison was established to ensure coordination. Conflicts could and would develop over issues affecting more than one office and as power relations changed.
10. It is important to note that this process of issue identification was not explicitly related to budget categories or any other taxonomy. The list of some 15 issues was not developed through any specially commissioned systematic studies, although it relied on many varied sources including opinion polls. It was not subject to widespread public comment, or even to public awareness.
11. While documents called "plans" were only infrequently produced, nonetheless a plan evolved from a series of internal memoranda, departmental proposals and studies, staff analyses, consultant reports, and so on. No particular format or process was required, and the process was obviously dependent on what subjects were being considered.
12. Two State of the Union Messages were produced during the last two years of the first term under John Ehrlichman, and they differed in style and content. The 1971 address concentrated on six great goals — prosperity through the full employment budget, health care reform, strengthening local government through revenue sharing, Executive Branch reorganization, welfare reform, and environmental improvement. These goals gave structure to the efforts of the staff, and major projects were established to carry them out. The second address given in January 1972 covered the waterfront; it came in two parts, a general part read by the President to the Congress, and an encyclopedic compendium of Administration programs and legislative proposals in all phases of domestic policy. Which approach is more successful is a matter of taste, but the 1972 style was of course influenced by the need to establish policy beachheads on as many domestic policy fronts as possible looking

- forward to a political campaign.
13. This was the author's particular responsibility with the FY 74 Budget, and it involved attending all Director's review sessions, preparing budget briefing memos for John Ehrlichman, and giving general guidance to OMB senior officials.
 14. These matters were often discussed at the daily staff meeting attended by senior Domestic Council, OMB congressional liaison, and other White House staff; these meetings served as the clearinghouse for major and minor matters and insured coordination within the Executive Office. They were first chaired by George Schultz and later by John Ehrlichman. The division of responsibilities among the staff members on these more random issues would follow the more structured division of priority issues, so that, for instance, the assistant director dealing with the environment would also handle issues involving Interior. There is probably no single ideal way to organize Executive Office agencies with governmentwide responsibilities; OMB has tended to shift to programs rather than agency categories, but the shift back and forth must continue as long as departments with overlapping responsibilities submit discreet budgets. While jurisdictional disputes between agencies demanded staff time, few jurisdictional problems arose within the Domestic Council staff, and when they did, they were usually quickly settled.
 15. Meetings and conferences were held in the Oval Office with the President to emphasize the need for new legislation, the need for support on a particular program change, or the importance of group support on an issue. Public speeches of various kinds are required of a President. Presidential visits to hospitals, new research centers, new parks, and other sites were arranged, and provided opportunities for stressing presidential objectives. And signings of new legislation consistent with the President's program were highlighted. The most spectacular of the various signing ceremonies was held in Philadelphia at Independence Hall when the President signed the \$5 billion revenue sharing bill for which his Administration had worked for two years. The opportunity was used for a major demonstration of Administration support for state and local government in general, symbolized by the participation of five mayors and governors in the ceremony. These visible signs of presidential involvement were of course carefully planned with all the other elements of the White House. Hundreds of events were proposed from various sources including Domestic Council and White House staff members for each event the President participated in. Even when the Domestic Council staff did not make the original proposal it would be brought into the planning of the event to prepare for substantive issues which might arise.
 16. Presidential speeches, during the campaign period, were very few in number, but they were prepared with Domestic Council inputs going to the speech writers as they always had been. Fact sheets and briefing materials on domestic policy, economic policy, and even national security policy were produced or coordinated by the Domestic Council staff. In fact, during the President's travels, when fast-breaking developments might require a quick response from Washington, the staff was often required to prepare factual materials to be forwarded to the presidential plane.
 17. Partly as a result of these efforts by the Domestic Council staff, the President's program was accepted by the electorate, and there were no false steps in the area of domestic policy. On the merits, there was no contest for the vote; this makes the folly of Watergate and the excesses of the campaign all the more discouraging since they were so obviously unnecessary.
 18. The Council is still in existence and performing the same functions under President Ford. It received support from President Ford's transition team which recommended maintaining a strong staff function, apart from OMB, to deal with domestic affairs.
 19. It is interesting to note the contagiousness of Potomac fever, however. Ken Cole remained as Director after John Ehrlichman's resignation and is now completing his sixth year on the White House staff. John Whitaker and Egil Krogh, with John Ehrlichman from the beginning of the Domestic Council, stayed in the Administration as Under Secretaries of the Departments of Interior and Transportation, respectively. Ed Morgan, another assistant director, became Assistant Secretary of the Treasury. John Evans became executive assistant to the Secretary of Commerce and Lewis Engman was appointed Chairman of the Federal Trade Commission. Only Ed Harper among the original assistant directors returned to private employment in 1973 after the election.
 20. Secrecy became a necessity, since it was felt any idea or initiative taken in its partly developed form could and would be used to discredit, in some undefined way, the Administration's policies. Ideas were not tested in public nor even with the press before they were announced. Programs were announced full blown and therefore too late for the subtle unannounced changes which make things go in Washington. Similarly, very few members of the Cabinet or White House staff developed the technique of dealing with the press perfected by Mr. Kissinger while he was still on the White House staff. The results showed in the cursory and almost universally adverse treatment of the Administration's domestic program by the Washington press corps.

UNIVERSITY MICROFILMS
SERIALS ACQUISITION
300 N. ZEEB RD.
ANN ARBOR, MI 48106

Public Administration Review

paar

NO. 3

MAY/JUNE 1976

Articles on

Public Administration as a Profession: Problems and Prospects /253/

The Domestic Council: Innovation in Presidential Government /260/

An Ideology of Citizen Participation: The Metropolitan Seattle Transit Case Study /269/

Efficiency and Effectiveness in Big-City Police Departments /278/

Images of Bureaucracy: A Tri-Ethnic Consideration /287/

The "Quality of Life" and Social Indicators Research /297/

Other features

From the Professional Stream - Watergate in Retrospect: The Forgotten Agenda /306/ Spirit of '76 /310/

Developments in Public Administration /315/

Book Reviews - Spatial Implications of Public Policy /322/ In Quest of the Manpower Grail: Politics, Planning, and Pluralism /327/

Book Notes and Notices /333/

Reports and Documents /337/

Communications /339/

The Domestic Council: Innovation In Presidential Government

Raymond J. Waldmann, *U.S. Department of State*

In the shock, confusion, anger, and sorrow of the two years since Watergate, we have, as a nation, humbly looked for answers. We ask how to build institutions and processes which will prevent a recurrence of similar disasters. The reputations of the President, his Cabinet members, and advisers have plummeted and any constructive contributions they may have made seem destined to be interred with the remains of their dwindling fortunes. The political excesses, enemy lists, "national security" break-ins, illegal campaign funding and wiretaps will encourage many to reject any innovations associated with the Nixon White House.

Yet there is something to be salvaged from the wreckage. The first Nixon Administration was a time of change and experimentation in foreign and domestic affairs. While there were few institutional reforms in foreign affairs, in domestic affairs the changes were both in process and in policy, and they were intertwined.

The key institutional innovation in domestic affairs during the first Nixon Administration was the Domestic Council. This new organization operated for two and a half years during Nixon's first term at a high level of effectiveness. Its objective was to shape the President's domestic programs and policies. It was President Nixon's instrument, created to give him control over domestic policy.

The Domestic Council and its director, John Ehrlichman, acted for the President in a range of difficult, time-consuming, and treacherous policy

The author is grateful to his colleagues on the Domestic Council staff, Edwin L. Harper, Steve Gamble, Vicki Keller, Peter Michel, and Roy Morey for their comments and criticism. The views expressed remain those of the author.

The Domestic Council was an innovation of President Nixon's first term designed to assist in managing domestic affairs. The Council on Executive Management (the Ash Council) recognized the need to give the President the tools necessary to exercise policy control over the functions of the Executive Branch. The Domestic Council was created along with the new Office of Management and Budget to fulfill that task. Domestic Council staff members exercised broad and significant authority over "presidential priority" issues, encompassing a wide range of legislative, budgetary, personnel, and policy decisions. The Council has proved to be a useful instrument for planning and managing government action, and should assist future Presidents in domestic policy planning.

areas. It dealt with difficult issues, with strong, often contending forces and with personalities who had little to gain from cooperation with the Administration. The Domestic Council was designed to cope with these problems. We must ask first why this innovation in government was achieved at this time, then explore its activities and accomplishments before judging its validity as an institution of the presidency.

Why Nixon in 1970?

Commentators have long noticed the need for policy planning assistance and advice at the White

Raymond J. Waldmann is Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Economic and Business Affairs. He served as staff assistant to the President on the Domestic Council from November 1970 to February 1973, following six years with the management consulting firm of Arthur D. Little. He holds degrees in engineering and humanities from MIT and law from Harvard University.

House. Why was the Nixon Administration the first to institutionalize and define the relationships by establishing the Domestic Council? Perhaps more important to ask, was the change real or only formal? After all, every President has his advisers who, having no official operating responsibilities, and with or without congressional confirmation, help define presidential domestic policy. In recent year presidential assistants on the government payroll have even been identified as domestic affairs advisers. Roosevelt had his brain trust, Truman his "kitchen cabinet," Eisenhower his Adams, Kennedy his Sorensen and his brother Robert, and Johnson his great Society architects, Moyers and Califano.¹

What these previous arrangements lacked was continuity, clear assignments of responsibility, ways of planning and reviewing actions, mechanisms for follow-through — in fact, all of the desirable characteristics of an organization. When the Nixon men, many of whom were new to Washington, surveyed the scene and compared it with their previous experience in private life, they were appalled. How could anything function as "disorganized" as the White House they inherited? Clearly some system, some form of organization, was necessary. How else could anyone handle efficiently and expertly the enormous number and variety of issues coming before the President?

There were other reasons, not unique, but perhaps more influential, for reforming the domestic policy-making process. The first year and a half of the Nixon Administration had showed the need for some forum with recognized legitimacy short of the Oval Office to resolve disputes. Every issue just could not go to the President. Powerful advocates always want to take their case to the head man, but decision making on the basis of unanalyzed advocacy is unsatisfactory in a complex government.²

Advocacy within government takes many forms. The cabinet secretaries, the agency heads, and the senior bureaucrats, whether political appointees or not, represent many points of view, not always those of the President. They present programs and proposals for presidential approval. They push their budget requests. They drop political hot potatoes on the White House doorstep. They bring political interests and even their own constituencies with them into the government and expect White House accommodation.

Every senator or congressman worth his salt usually has at least one pet project, one specific

interest to advocate. It may be having a new Veterans Administration Hospital for the district, getting a Department of Agriculture waiver to import breed stock, increasing a sugar quota for a friendly country, changing the depletion allowance (up or down), forestalling the closure of a military base, or any of a million other possibilities. A presidential endorsement can be used by a congressman to increase his leverage with fellow congressmen and bureaucrats and to impress his constituents back home. In return, the congressman can use his only real stock in trade, his vote in committee or on the floor. Within a network of such commitments, continuously changing, presidential government proceeds. For a President to maintain some consistency, some integrity of policy, in the face of these pressures is difficult under the best of circumstances; with the other party firmly in control of Congress — it may be impossible.

The President must also deal with various interest groups, public and private. He must deal with unions, professional associations, industry groups, local and state government groups, the thousand and one associations, corporations, and public interest groups maintaining offices in Washington solely and specifically for the purpose of influencing government policy. They quite unabashedly advocate their views without any attempt or necessity to balance the interests or to adopt a broader perspective. Of course, the better spokesmen couch their advocacy in line with administration policy. But the counter-arguments may be slighted, the political benefits exaggerated, the costs minimized.

Lastly, the President must deal with his own "political" constituents, primarily his party enthusiasts. The Nixon Administration also capitalized on the feeling that large segments of the American population, the silent majority, did not speak out, were not represented, and were badly served by the existing interest groups.³ The President's silent majority may or may not be adequately represented by any of the other advocates seeking the President's ear, but it attracted his attention.

Getting things done in Washington is difficult for any Administration, of course. Why were the reforms in domestic policy making undertaken by the Nixon Administration? The Nixon Administration may have taken these steps because of the backgrounds of the President's closest advisers. They were not politicians, by and large, com-

mitted to the existing processes of Washington. They were truly "organization" men from industry, advertising, consulting, and the law. They were willing to undertake change. They were largely young men and women who were risking change, improving government, modernizing its processes, and bringing to it the management techniques of the private sector. They reflected the President's often-stated ambition to reform government, not just change its policies.

As a first step, the President established the Advisory Council on Executive Management under Roy Ash, then head of Litton Industries (and later Director of the Office of Management and Budget). The Ash Council, as it came to be known, studied ways to improve management in the Executive Branch, and its recommendations formed the basis for several major administration proposals.⁴ Its perhaps most important recommendation was the creation of the Office of Management and Budget and the Domestic Council.⁵

The Office of Management and Budget was to be built on the existing Bureau of the Budget. The BOB had been the principal arm of the President for policy formulation through the budget process ever since it was created during President Harding's Administration. For decades it has had the most professional, dedicated, and responsive staff; therefore it has been the most valuable of the agencies of government from the President's point of view. It was a firm rock on which to build. It was to take on new duties to oversee the management of federal departments and programs, and build up a staff capacity to do so. Its influence has grown with the new staff, the additional duties, and the higher political prestige accorded to its Director.

As a counterpart to this superb instrument for carrying out the presidential will, the Ash Council recommended and the President accepted the establishment of a totally new institution, the Domestic Council. The Domestic Council was to develop policy, to say *what* would be done — the OMB *how* it would be done. Its model from foreign affairs was the National Security Council and its staff. It subsumed two earlier attempts of the Nixon Administration at domestic policy coordination, the urban and rural affairs councils, whose scope had been too limited and whose charters were even inconsistent. It was to attempt to solve many of the problems perceived by the Administration in the first year and a half. In sum, it was a bold new direction in presidential policy analysis.

What Was the Domestic Council?

As a subgroup of the Cabinet, the Domestic Council is chaired by the President; it is comprised of the Vice President, the Secretaries of Agriculture, Commerce, HEW, HUD, Interior, Labor, Transportation, and Treasury, the Attorney General, the Directors of OMB and ACTION, the Chairmen of the Council of Economic Advisers, and the Council on Environmental Quality, the Administrators of VA and EPA, and various presidential advisers. In practice, during the first two years of its existence, it met rather frequently for such an unwieldy group; in fact a Domestic Council meeting was often reported as a full Cabinet meeting since the memberships were almost the same. Because of this large size, ad hoc subgroups of the Council were established as needed to deal with specific issues of more limited interest. For example, Secretary Romney chaired a group of cabinet-level officers on urban development. Even less formal working relationships were continually being established, all under the aegis of the Domestic Council.

The executive order establishing the Council was necessarily and purposefully vague in describing the functions, duties, and responsibilities of the Council and its staff.⁶ Methods and processes as well as interfaces with other organizations and agencies would have to be worked out. There was no limit to the scope or depth of the Council's interests and activities, just as there was none for the President.

The Council's work was supported by a staff directed during the Nixon's first term by John Ehrlichman. It was never very large, comprising at its height no more than 35 professionals with an equal number of support staff.⁷ Many of the staff members were with John Ehrlichman during his entire tenure as Director and even before, during the 1968 campaign. The staff formed a young, rather homogenous group, stable in composition with a very low turnover (when compared with other executive offices); the original five assistant directors were still on the staff two and a half years later. Each assistant director was in turn assisted by a small staff of three or four.

In spite of its newness as an institution, and the youth of its staff, the Domestic Council started with a bang. John Ehrlichman had been appointed the President's assistant for domestic affairs, paralleling the appointment held by Henry Kissinger. Within the White House power structure, this only

confirmed the stature he had been gaining during the first year and a half as the mediator of disputes others could not settle. With this appointment he had no immediate rivals for policy control on the White House staff.⁸

The staff working for Mr. Ehrlichman shared his status with the President. This status was indicated in various ways important in Washington, such as office space in the White House west wing and on the White House side of the first floor of the adjacent Old Executive Office Building (not to be confused with the New Executive Office Building to which various other Executive Office staffers were banished to accommodate the Domestic Council staff), White House mess, limousine, and parking privileges. The Domestic Council had arrived and, in case other agencies or offices had their doubts, it intended to exercise its prerogatives to the fullest.⁹ In the field of domestic policy, it was evident from these symbols of power that the Council and its staff enjoyed the President's support.

The issues with which the Council and its staff dealt in the first term reflected presidential priorities and perspectives. These priorities were never set in a very formal way, but rather evolved during the summer of 1970 through informal analysis and through canvassing of the staff, the cabinet members, and a few outside advisers, and were finally given presidential approval in a meeting at Camp David. These issues formed the basis for the first-term activities of the Domestic Council.¹⁰

These priority areas such as environment, law enforcement, urban development, welfare reform, revenue sharing, and so on, were not well-defined or immutable. What they did represent, however, was something that no other process could have provided — an expression of presidential political priorities and therefore issues to which he was willing to commit resources. The resources at his command are varied and enormous. They include his time and effort, the energies of his cabinet and the federal government, the federal budget, and his ability to exert public leadership. No purely analytical process could have the same degree of political commitment behind it, and that is where most proposals for a "domestic policy think tank" divorced from the political environment of the White House lose touch with reality. A domestic program must deal with real issues, but it must also have behind it the political muscle to achieve it.

Once the priority areas were defined, the staff

organization could take shape. The Domestic Council staff could be described as having three components — "the front office" consisting of John D. Ehrlichman, his deputy, and his staff assistant; the assistant directors acting as project managers, each dealing with a few key issues; and the planning staff providing general support and coordination. Most of the staff could perhaps best be described as "project managers," managing these high-priority domestic programs, although no single description or process fits all cases. Each of the assistant directors of the Domestic Council was responsible for two or three issues. For example, one assistant director, John Whitaker, later Under Secretary of the Interior, handled the environment, agriculture, energy, and rural development. He was, perhaps optimistically, expected to deal with every aspect of these issues regardless of what departments might be involved or what resources were being used.

One of the assistant directors, Edwin Harper, had overall planning and coordination responsibilities in addition to specific responsibility for the area of revenue sharing. He was assisted by a staff drawn from management consulting and academia. This staff had general duties with presidential messages, the budget, and other issues which did not fit the project manager style.

Thus during the summer and fall of 1970 the Domestic Council began to take shape. It received the backing of the Ash Council whose recommendations had been accepted by the President. John Ehrlichman recognized this new institution as the vehicle to solidify his power base within the White House and to fend off other claimants. The Executive Order outlined its role. Ehrlichman began to consolidate and then attract the professional staff he would need to deal with the other White House offices and the many advocates of policy. Finally, the Council had presidential support for the priority issues, and began to flesh out the program to deal with them.

What Did It Do?

A general outline of the activities of the Council and its staff may be described, recognizing many variations existed on the theme. Three different types of activities were key — development of plans for dealing with the issues, implementation or follow-through on the plans, and, finally, analysis and communication of the results. This ordering implies a more rigid logic than was

ever realized in practice, where such distinctions are not always drawn.

Planning

The first step of planning would normally be handed by the assistant director in conjunction with other White House offices, the appropriate officials of the OMB and of the agencies involved, and with any appropriate interest groups outside the Executive Office. For instance, when Assistant Director Egil Krogh headed the effort to develop the drug abuse program, various consultant studies were commissioned and interdepartmental groups of the more than 15 agencies involved were formed to review proposals. In a few cases, such as population control and school finance, presidential commissions were established and their reports formed the basis for administration programs.¹ One of the significant parts of planning was to act as a conduit and processor of proposals coming to the White House. The Council staff would articulate the options, the "pros and cons," the recommendations of both departmental and Executive Office staff, and add its own comments. The Council thus facilitated presidential decision making, but also earned enmity by interfering with proposals from others (including Cabinet offices), particularly those for the State of the Union. The most important planning document establishing the President's program is the State of the Union Address.² In many cases the final decisions by the President on a "plan" would be taken in the drafting of the State of the Union Message, and on specific messages to Congress on the budget or legislative proposals. These contain the general outlines of a presidential initiative (often fleshed out later by legislative proposals). The assistant director of the Domestic Council was expected to work with the White House speech writers to produce these documents, and they formed an important part of the domestic staff work product. Final approval rested with the President's speech writer Ray Price, John Ehrlichman, and ultimately with the President. Messages to Congress would be accompanied by factual material explaining the program in more detail and often by necessary legislative proposals. New programs requiring legislation would be proposed, in the environmental area, for instance, over 30 different bills were offered at various stages of the first term to put flesh on the plan's skeleton. Programs already authorized would be redirected through the budget process and through the

agency head to achieve goals in the plan. Other steps would be taken to put the plan into action.

Follow-Through

The second step could generally be described as follow-through. Once the proposals were made, the job of seeing them put into practice would begin. For legislation, this means working with Congress on specific legislative language, often over the course of years. The White House congressional liaison office and the legislative offices of the agencies provided support, but often decisions on tactics and final compromises rested with the Domestic Council staff. The Domestic Council staff could and did speak for the President in relating his wishes to the departments, to OMB, and to other parts of the Executive Office. New legislation was difficult to secure from a Democratic Congress, however, and thus the preferred mode of making proposals was through administrative change by presidential Executive Order, budget decision, or agency head directive. In these cases, the Domestic Council and its staff would develop an agreed or approved plan which the staff member would follow closely to make sure the most difficult situations, involving working within legislation, perhaps revising standing instructions and procedures, could be dealt with. Sometimes the role of the Cabinet officer as presidential appointee was pitted against his role as head of an organization with its own objectives. Nowhere was this conflict more obvious than in the annual OMB Budget review, in which the Domestic Council staff participated as presidential "representatives," bringing to the OMB table a "political" perspective.³ This second part of the process in many cases degenerated to firefighting. Whenever a problem with Congress, OMB, or the bureaucracy arose, no matter the source of the problem (i.e., letter to the President, presidential meeting, congressional inquiry, or departmental referral), it would usually fall to the Domestic Council staff to handle.⁴ Firefighting often involves personnel problems. Before key appointments were made requiring White House approval, they were cleared with the Domestic Council staff. Problems within departments with particular assignments or duties were sometimes brought to the White House, often to be reviewed by the Domestic Council staff. This often involved political pressures from various corners, sometimes requiring tough decisions when one can make one friend and many enemies. It is

apparent, however, that no matter how distasteful the thought to some, such pressures exist and are indispensable in building an administration responsive to the President.

Results

The third part of the process could be described as analysis and communication of results. One must remember that the Domestic Council was and, as of this writing, still is an integral part of the Executive Office, designed to serve the President and to help carry out his mandate. Part of that service was overtly political in the best sense of the word, attempting to meet public needs and priorities articulated by the President.

It was seen by its creators as an instrument to make government work after years of promises without performance. The President defined his program as the "New Federalism" — reducing the influence of the federal government in people's lives. This took many forms such as the support of state and local government, the simplification of federal processes and grants, the turning of welfare and health programs away from federal dictation to federal cash payments, and the reduction of federal planning control over local decisions in all domestic fields. Program changes were attempted in ways designed to keep the benefits flowing to those who need them, but not to others.

In order to demonstrate that this mandate was being fulfilled, progress had to be communicated through speeches, public relations, and the media. Members of the Domestic Council — i.e., the Cabinet members — are the principal public spokesmen, but the staff also assisted. The Domestic Council staff prepared speeches, press materials, assisted in and sometimes conducted White House press briefings, and discussed programs with interviewers and reporters. But the most important communications tool the Domestic Council staff could use was the President himself. Almost every speech and public appearance had some Domestic Council staff participation.¹⁵

The Domestic Council staff's involvement in the substantive aspects of presidential events naturally led to some involvement in the 1972 campaign. Most of the Domestic Council staff had no association with the campaign effort, being prevented by the restrictions placed on federal employees by the Hatch Act. Where it was possible that some individual Domestic Council staff member might perform services which were "political" in the sense which the regular White House staff is

"political," he was also appointed an assistant or deputy assistant to the President on the White House staff. The Domestic Council staff during the campaign period centered its efforts on developing the presidential program and communicating the results of the first term.¹⁶

Another function the staff fulfilled during this period was the analysis of polls and political information for the purpose of determining reactions to the President's domestic policies and new issues and problems requiring attention. The volume of polling information from public and private sources at most times is vast, but during a campaign it becomes a torrent. Local polls, national polls, issue polls, straw votes for local, national, and of course presidential races all tell something about the national needs, but the results need to be analyzed to tell the full story.

To guide the President's second term, the Domestic Council staff produced a long-range planning document to analyze priorities and problems. The long-range planning document was a much less political document than the party platform developed by the platform committee headed by Congressman John Rhodes. There were similarities in specifics since both reflected the prevailing philosophy of the President and the Administration's priorities during the first term.¹⁷

This review attempts to paint a broad picture of Domestic Council activities. Within this picture details varied; one of John Ehrlichman's characteristics was that he gave scope to his subordinates to develop their own approaches and solutions to problems, asking only to have final review and sign-off for himself or the President. He was able to attract a vigorous staff with strong views, individual initiative, a passion for accomplishment, and a strong dislike for excuses and red tape. These personalities made the Council staff a dynamic organization with a few parallels in government.

How Well Did It Do?

It now remains to offer a preliminary evaluation of the Domestic Council as it operated during its heyday — the last two years of President Nixon's first term.¹⁸ Its staff and functions were cut back and its scope necessarily reduced at the beginning of President Nixon's second term with first, the successful election behind it, and second, the decline of the power of the Watergate White House. But during the last two years of the first

term, the Domestic Council was firmly in substantive control of domestic policy. John Ehrlichman was a name to be reckoned with in the federal government and the Domestic Council staff exercised enormous power in Washington.

The first problem the Council had to overcome was the novelty of such far-reaching presidential control over the federal establishment. Never before, not even in the first two years of the Nixon Administration, was tight centralized control attempted from the White House over the operations of the domestic agencies. Budget control had, of course, existed in previous Administrations, but never such dramatically direct control existed over policy, appointments, programs, and even access to the President. While much was done to minimize this reason for the Council's existence, it must be admitted that this was one of the primary objectives — to gain policy control of the domestic agencies. And it succeeded to a remarkable degree.

The men and women chosen for the Council staff to exercise this control had to cope with a second problem. By and large, they were young, vigorous, and intelligent, but they were new to Washington.¹⁹ No matter how much this fact was stressed as a "plus" as bringing fresh views and methods, it nevertheless meant problems. No one had experience in dealing with federal policy, no one knew the history. No one had personal relationships with the important congressional leaders. No one knew panjandrum of the bureaucracy, the many unsung "J. Edgar Hoovers" who really run the government. No one carried on the GOP tradition or even much cared for those who did. On this score, the Council was not uniformly successful, and it posed problems throughout the first term.

Inexperience in Washington led to distrust of existing Washington institutions and methods — which were, after all, what the Administration had come to Washington to change. While press relations were never very good, they deteriorated as an undeclared war was conducted between the Administration and the Washington press corps.²⁰

A similar attitude prevailed with respect to Congress, but at least the importance of consultation in advance of the introduction of major legislation was recognized. But here the partisan disadvantage was keenly felt — one could normally only consult with Republican minority members of the important committees. Democratic mem-

bers and leadership were not disposed to favor Administration proposals. Rather than suffer the doubts and make the necessary compromises, it was often deemed more important to have legislative proposals consistent with the President's philosophy. Some went so far as to say bluntly that it was more important to have an issue than the legislation, and this attitude infected the process of dealing with Congress.

In spite of these problems, the Domestic Council achieved a remarkable place in domestic affairs. It succeeded to a degree never before attempted in gaining centralized political control over the Executive Branch for the President. It experimented with a variety of techniques in developing policy, including top-level consultants, presidential commission, interagency working groups and task forces. It attempted to maintain a consistency in policy across department and agency lines in important priority issue areas.

The Council and its staff produced a massive number of legislative proposals involving the environment, drug abuse, programs for the elderly, land use planning, District of Columbia affairs, revenue sharing for transportation, community development, education, and general government support, to name a few. It produced the substantive parts of several State of the Union addresses, over 50 messages to Congress, and untold numbers of speeches and campaign addresses. It gave form and substance to "New Federalism" and defined the Nixon approach to domestic affairs. With OMB it coordinated domestic budget policy assuring that Administration objectives were translated into dollar proposals to Congress. It kept information, analysis, and proposals flowing into the Oval Office and reactions, decisions, and presidential priorities flowing out to the agencies.

For the first time, the Executive Office had in the Domestic Council and its companion, the Office of Management and Budget, a domestic policy mechanism that worked, and this is not a bad test of any governmental institution. The Domestic Council served the President well. Other Presidents will undoubtedly modify it to suit their own personalities and staffs, but it is unlikely that any President will find that he can do without some similar planning, coordinating, and clearing device. Domestic policy is too diverse, too important, and too complex to be handled in any other way.

Notes

1. See *The President's Men* by Patrick Anderson for a discussion of the roles played by these and other important advisers.
2. During the first year and a half, while things were settling down, domestic policy was suffering from the disputes between Arthur Burns and Daniel Moynihan, among others. These strong personalities had very definite interests and views. They vied with others for the presidential mandates, compounding rather than easing the problems posed by advocacy within the White House. These disputes over domestic policy are described in *Nixon in the White House: The Frustration of Power*, by Rowland Evans, Jr., and Robert D. Novak.
3. It involved, in essence, creating interest groups to which the Administration had some commitment. Various ethnic groups were resurrected; the non-eastern press was courted; citizens' committees were established; outsiders of various types were brought into the political system - remember the housewives from Detroit with their petitions supporting the President on the war, abortion, amnesty, and the issues of the day? These home-grown advocates had to be served; and without too much violence to the presidential program, the Washington process, or the budget.
4. It proposed the reorganization of seven of the executive departments into four major departments of economic affairs, human resources, natural resources, and community development. It reviewed many of the federal program areas crossing departmental lines to suggest management and coordination improvements.
5. Reorganization Plan No. 2 of March 12, 1970, established the Domestic Council and reorganized the Bureau of the Budget. It followed the recommendation of the President's Advisory Council on Executive Organization, appointed by President Nixon on April 5, 1969.
6. The specific functions assigned to the Domestic Council were to: (1) receive and develop information necessary for assessing national domestic needs and defining national domestic goals, and develop for the President alternative proposals for reaching those goals; (2) collaborate with the Office of Management and Budget and others in the determination of national domestic priorities for the allocation of available resources; (3) collaborate with the Office of Management and Budget and others to assure a continuing review of ongoing programs from the standpoint of their relative contributions to national goals as compared with their use of available resources; and (4) provide policy advice to the President on domestic issues.
7. During the first four years of its existence the total staff of the Domestic Council never exceeded 60, including secretaries and support staff. From its inception to June 15, 1973, the total number of staff who had served on the Domestic Council was 105. Its budget averaged less than \$2 million per year.
8. The struggles of the first year and a half for domestic policy supremacy are described well in Evans and Novak, but those struggles were largely over by the time the Domestic Council was formally established. In that sense the Executive Order merely confirmed the power relationships that had been previously developed, in part because of the tight control over the Executive Office exercised by H.R. Haldeman, John Ehrlichman, and others.
9. Of course, insofar as the Council was filling a vacuum, there was little conflict with existing institutions and offices, but this was not true in all cases. The new OMB needed the direction on policy matters that the Council and its staff could provide. The Council of Economic Advisers would not find its role altered, and both the CEA and the Office of Science and Technology would find the Domestic Council an effective channel for forwarding their own ideas. The various White House offices dealing with the press, interest groups, political constituents, and the Congress now had an authoritative decision maker and source of information, policy, and data. There was little or no contact with the National Security Council and its staff, and when later the Council on International Economic Policy was created, liaison was established to ensure coordination. Conflicts could and would develop over issues affecting more than one office and as power relations changed.
10. It is important to note that this process of issue identification was not explicitly related to budget categories or any other taxonomy. The list of some 15 issues was not developed through any specially commissioned systematic studies, although it relied on many varied sources including opinion polls. It was not subject to widespread public comment, or even to public awareness.
11. While documents called "plans" were only infrequently produced, nonetheless a plan evolved from a series of internal memoranda, departmental proposals and studies, staff analyses, consultant reports, and so on. No particular format or process was required, and the process was obviously dependent on what subjects were being considered.
12. Two State of the Union Messages were produced during the last two years of the first term under John Ehrlichman, and they differed in style and content. The 1971 address concentrated on six great goals - prosperity through the full employment budget, health care reform, strengthening local government through revenue sharing, Executive Branch reorganization, welfare reform, and environmental improvement. These goals gave structure to the efforts of the staff, and major projects were established to carry them out. The second address given in January 1972 covered the waterfront; it came in two parts, a general part read by the President to the Congress, and an encyclopedic compendium of Administration programs and legislative proposals in all phases of domestic policy. Which approach is more successful is a matter of taste, but the 1972 style was of course influenced by the need to establish policy beachheads on as many domestic policy fronts as possible looking

forward to a political campaign.

13. This was the author's particular responsibility with the FY 74 Budget, and it involved attending all Director's review sessions, preparing budget briefing memos for John Ehrlichman, and giving general guidance to OMB senior officials.
14. These matters were often discussed at the daily staff meeting attended by senior Domestic Council, OMB congressional liaison, and other White House staff; these meetings served as the clearinghouse for major and minor matters and insured coordination within the Executive Office. They were first chaired by George Schultz and later by John Ehrlichman. The division of responsibilities among the staff members on these more random issues would follow the more structured division of priority issues, so that, for instance, the assistant director dealing with the environment would also handle issues involving interior. There is probably no single ideal way to organize Executive Office agencies with governmentwide responsibilities; OMB has tended to shift to programs rather than agency categories, but the shift back and forth must continue as long as departments with overlapping responsibilities submit discreet budgets. While jurisdictional disputes between agencies demanded staff time, few jurisdictional problems arose within the Domestic Council staff, and when they did, they were usually quickly settled.
15. Meetings and conferences were held in the Oval Office with the President to emphasize the need for new legislation, the need for support on a particular program change, or the importance of group support on an issue. Public speeches of various kinds are required of a President. Presidential visits to hospitals, new research centers, new parks, and other sites were arranged, and provided opportunities for stressing presidential objectives. And signings of new legislation consistent with the President's program were highlighted. The most spectacular of the various signing ceremonies was held in Philadelphia at Independence Hall when the President signed the \$5 billion revenue sharing bill for which his Administration had worked for two years. The opportunity was used for a major demonstration of Administration support for state and local government in general, symbolized by the participation of five mayors and governors in the ceremony. These visible signs of presidential involvement were of course carefully planned with all the other elements of the White House. Hundreds of events were proposed from various sources including Domestic Council and White House staff members for each event the President participated in. Even when the Domestic Council staff did not make the original proposal it would be brought into the planning of the event to prepare for substantive issues which might arise.
16. Presidential speeches, during the campaign period, were very few in number, but they were prepared with Domestic Council inputs going to the speech writers as they always had been. Fact sheets and briefing materials on domestic policy, economic policy, and even national security policy were produced or coordinated by the Domestic Council staff. In fact, during the President's travels, when fast-breaking developments might require a quick response from Washington, the staff was often required to prepare factual materials to be forwarded to the presidential plane.
17. Partly as a result of these efforts by the Domestic Council staff, the President's program was accepted by the electorate, and there were no false steps in the area of domestic policy. On the merits, there was no contest for the vote; thus makes the folly of Watergate and the excesses of the campaign all the more discouraging since they were so obviously unnecessary.
18. The Council is still in existence and performing the same functions under President Ford. It received support from President Ford's transition team which recommended maintaining a strong staff function, apart from OMB, to deal with domestic affairs.
19. It is interesting to note the contagiousness of Potomac fever, however. Ken Cole remained as Director after John Ehrlichman's resignation and is now completing his sixth year on the White House staff. John Whitaker and Egil Krogh, with John Ehrlichman from the beginning of the Domestic Council, stayed in the Administration as Under Secretaries of the Departments of Interior and Transportation, respectively. Ed Morgan, another assistant director, became Assistant Secretary of the Treasury. John Evans became executive assistant to the Secretary of Commerce and Lewis Engman was appointed Chairman of the Federal Trade Commission. Only Ed Harper among the original assistant directors returned to private employment in 1973 after the election.
20. Secrecy became a necessity, since it was felt any idea or initiative taken in its partly developed form could and would be used to discredit, in some undefined way, the Administration's policies. Ideas were not tested in public nor even with the press before they were announced. Programs were announced full blown and therefore too late for the subtle un-announced changes which make things go in Washington. Similarly, very few members of the Cabinet or White House staff developed the technique of dealing with the press perfected by Mr. Kissinger while he was still on the White House staff. The results showed in the cursory and almost universally adverse treatment of the Administration's domestic program by the Washington press corps.

VA-UD DOMESTIC COUNCIL

P.D.1
VF

THE DOMESTIC COUNCIL IN PERSPECTIVE

RONALD C. MOE

In the six years the Domestic Council has been in existence, it has been the subject of a continuing debate over how it should be structured, to whom it should be responsible and responsive, and for what ends it should strive.¹ The *Government Manual* for 1975-1976 provides a formalistic description of the council's mission:

to formulate and coordinate domestic policy recommendations to the President. The Council assesses national needs and coordinates the establishment of national priorities; recommends integrated sets of policy choices; provides a rapid response to Presidential needs for policy advice on pressing domestic issues; and maintains a continuous review of ongoing programs from a policy standpoint.

While the Domestic Council, which currently consists of the president, vice-president, nine cabinet members, and eight additional key executive officers,² is part of the presidential advisory system, the council itself is not a critical element in that system. Indeed, it is the professional staff, and the participants in the ad hoc task forces (generally at the assistant secretary level) which, to most people, constitute the "Council" and to which the agencies in the executive branch must

accommodate at least a portion of their efforts and expectations.

Notwithstanding its inconstant existence, there are indications that the council has acquired a certain institutional permanence within the executive office. It does seem to perform tasks needful of performance and it does seem to do so in a manner which is consistent with the genius for survival within the presidential orbit.

GENESIS

John Ehrlichman, former Assistant to President Nixon for Domestic Affairs and the first Executive Director of the Domestic Council, described why the concept of a Domestic Council was appealing to President Nixon.

The Domestic Council's genesis dates from Richard Nixon's experience with the National Security Council (NSC) in the Eisenhower Administration (1953-1961) and an unsatisfactory experiment with "adverse advocacy" during his early months as President.

Following his election in 1968, President-elect Nixon decided he wanted diversity and healthy controversy among his domestic policy advisers. He assumed they would present their views in an orderly manner and then discreetly retire to await the President's decision.

Nixon, however, underestimated the political passions of his counselors, notably Henry A. Kissinger, his assistant for national security affairs, and his two principal domestic policy aides, Arthur F. Burns and Daniel P. Moynihan. [Ehrlichman, 1975: 1690-1691].

Initially, in 1968, Nixon had called for strong cabinet officers. He soon found, however, as had his predecessors, that the chiefs of departments are rapidly co-opted by the career program officers and tend to become ambassadors to the president for the departments rather than ambassadors from the president to the bureaucracy.

What with the strong personalities emerging within the White House structure and the increasing stridency of cabinet officers

the president yearned for order. The collective cabinet as well as the individual cabinet members were downgraded and the Urban Affairs Council, a cabinet level advisory committee under Daniel Moynihan, came into momentary ascendancy. As an institution for policy making, however, it suffered from the same deficiencies, in the president's view, as the cabinet and its time in the limelight was short.

The reasons for the demise of Cabinet-level meetings provide clues to what was happening to the role of the Cabinet secretary. Cabinet members invariably sought recognition at Urban Affairs Council meetings to plug their often costly proposals as yet unstaffed by the White House or the Budget Bureau. This put the President on the spot. He was either in the position of appearing to be unresponsive to major problems or faced the danger of being drawn into endorsing big new ventures without adequate study. The White House reaction was first to reduce the number and importance of these meetings, and second and, more important, to strengthen other decision systems that would allow adequate program and fiscal review of major new proposals in the domestic sector. [Nathan, 1975: 43-44]

What President Nixon really wanted was to have reports, preferably written, from individuals with a White House perspective. He was most interested in having the options spelled out with arguments pro and con. He was least interested in a system which put him face-to-face with the protagonists.

LEGISLATIVE HISTORY

The expansion of national responsibilities during the twentieth century has forced political leaders, administrators, and academicians alike to focus their attention on the organizational structure of the executive branch. If legislative mandates were to be implemented efficiently and effectively, there had to be a rational administrative structure at the disposal of a leader who could be held responsible for the performance of this system. The Constitution provides that the president is the chief executive officer of the nation, hence efforts to insure

reasonable administrative unity tended to center on the presidential institution. Virtually every president since Theodore Roosevelt has established a committee or commission to study the organization of the executive branch and to recommend ways and means to improve performance and accountability.³

In April 1969 the president established the President's Advisory Council on Executive Organization, known popularly as the Ash Council, after its chairman, Roy L. Ash. The principal mandate of the council was to provide the intellectual rationale and specific recommendations to reorganize most of the executive branch into fewer, but larger, institutional units along functional lines.⁴

During the period when the Ash Council was meeting, 1969 and 1970, the White House staff emerged as the dominant force within the presidential advisory system. Aware of this fact and in agreement with the trend, the Ash Council recommended to the president that he submit a reorganization plan to Congress which would establish a Domestic Council and reconstitute the Bureau of the Budget, changing its name to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), and assign the latter agency direct management responsibilities over the executive branch. There was, of course, some opposition to this proposal within the administration, principally from cabinet members. The president was firm in his commitment, however, and submitted a reorganization plan to Congress in early 1970.

It was within this historical context that President Nixon offered his recommendations:⁵

To provide the management tools and policy mechanism needed for the 1970's, I am today transmitting to the Congress Reorganization Plan No. 2 of 1970, prepared in accordance with Chapter 9 of Title 5 of the United States Code.

This plan draws not only on the work of the Ash Council itself, but also on the work of others that preceded—including the pioneering Brownlow Committee of 1936, the two Hoover Commissions, the Rockefeller Committee, and other Presidential task forces.

Essentially, the plan recognizes that two closely connected but basically separate functions both center in the President's office: policy determination and executive management. This involves (1) what government should do, and (2) how it goes about doing it.

My proposed reorganization creates a new entity to deal with each of these functions:

- It establishes a Domestic Council, to coordinate policy formulation in the domestic area. This Cabinet group would be provided with an institutional staff, and to a considerable degree would be a domestic counterpart to the National Security Council.
- It establishes an Office of Management and Budget, which would be the President's principal arm for the exercise of his managerial functions.

The Domestic Council will be primarily concerned with *what we do*; the Office of Management and Budget will be primarily concerned with *how we do it*, and *how well we do it*.

The establishment of the OMB as a successor organization to the Bureau of the Budget, with an expanded mandate, was rightly considered by Congress as the most important of the two elements of the plan and received the bulk of the attention and generated the most opposition.

The House Government Operations Committee, after considerable debate, recommended disapproval of the plan. Their reservations as to the establishment of the OMB were both substantive and procedural while their concern over the Domestic Council was solely procedural. They specifically objected to the method of appointment of the Executive Director of the Domestic Council as being contrary to provisions of the Reorganization Act of 1949 because in holding a dual status as presidential assistant and as executive director, he would be beyond accountability to Congress (U.S. Congress, House Committee on Government Operations, 1970). There was, however, little opposition expressed to the concept of a Domestic Council.

The debate in the House over the Reorganization Plan was largely nonpartisan. The final vote was 164 members favoring the motion to disapprove the plan while 193 members voted against disapproval. No resolution of disapproval was introduced in the Senate. Thus the Reorganization Plan became law.

INSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The establishment of the Domestic Council may be viewed, in some respects, as the culmination of a process which began during the late 1930s. The presidency, as an institutional unit within the executive branch, really has its beginnings with the recommendations of the President's Committee on Administrative Management (Brownlow Committee) in 1937 and the Executive Reorganization Act of 1939 which established the executive office of the president. Each of the presidents since that time have contributed to the growth and institutionalization of the office.⁶

The institutionalized presidency has been the subject of controversy from its inception. The debate, in its simplest form, finds one side arguing that the president must have substantial assistance from individuals who look at the world from his perspective and maintain a critical stance in their relations with the bureaucracy. The other side counters by saying that when a president places his confidence in a White House staff rather than the departments, he tends to become isolated by his "palace guard." These same two groups will likewise differ as to where the imaginative ideas are most likely to emerge.

The long-term institutional trend in the executive office appears to be toward both more functional channels of assistance for the president and greater degrees of organizational centralization. The functional assistance is largely from within the White House organization itself. That is, the president enjoys aid from a press office, legislative liaison team, scheduling office and speech writing staff, to list but a few. These units are principally concerned with policy.

It is in the larger executive office where the centralizing tendency is most evident. The National Security Council and the OMB have long been dominant in the national security and budgetary management fields respectively. One intent of the 1970 Reorganization Plan, then, was to fill the organizational leadership gap in domestic policy making with an institutional counterpart to these two bodies.⁷

Domestic policy planning and analysis has never been a strong point of White House performance (Wolanin, 1975: ch. 3). Not only has it been unusual for there to be interdepartmental cooperation and coordination on policy questions, but the executive office itself lacked a unit for sustained policy analysis and planning. Speaking of the situation during the last decade, Cronin (1974: 257-258) has commented:

Rarely, during the 1960's, did the White House engage in serious policy experimentation and planning. The political incentive system seemed, if anything, to propel energies in an opposite direction. Pass now, plan later! Presidents and congressional leaders were eager for fast results and rarely appreciated the often considerable need for more analysis, testing, and small scale pilot experiments. They felt they were elected not just to study and research policies, but to put them into operation.

With the establishment of the Domestic Council, President Nixon found that he could organize his work in such a way that the Domestic Council staff became the locus of much of the domestic policy decision-making. The growth of the council staff during the years 1970 through 1972 is evidence of the utility it was perceived to have at that time. By the end of 1972 the council had 66 persons on the staff divided into six substantive policy units each with an assistant director.

MODUS VIVENDI

The mandate of the Domestic Council was sweeping. It was expected to find social problems, analyze the options, present

legislative proposals, and evaluate the results. Since the scope of these responsibilities was beyond the resources and abilities of any small professional staff, there was little institutional stake in any particular policy field. The consequence was that the president was able to focus their attention on what he wanted done.

One scholar, John Kessel, recently completed a study of the council during the Nixon years and asked, among other things, what were the staff members doing with their time:

The answer is that the Domestic Council staff was most involved in decision-making, spending a fair amount of time on emergency activities, and least involved in gathering intelligence and monitoring the bureaucracy. When asked directly how they were spending their time, they ranked the activities from most time-consuming to time-consuming as follows: clarifying options among issues being presented for decision, backstopping the President by "fire-engine" chores when answers were needed in a hurry, determining priorities to govern the use of presently available resources, collecting information and developing long-range forecasts on national issues, and monitoring agency activity to be fully aware of the ways on-going programs were being administered. [Kessel, 1975: 84]

The method by which the Domestic Council staff organized itself and functioned tended to follow a pattern: Usually, a cabinet level committee was established for a general problem area, e.g., national energy, health care, environmental problems, drugs, government reorganization, military retirement benefits, national growth policy, revenue sharing, welfare reform, and model cities. In turn, a task force would be created composed of individuals at the assistant secretary, or lower, level to develop the data and present policy options to the Domestic Council committee, or to the president himself. A council staff member was usually the chairman of the task force. The full council rarely met. As Ken Cole, Ehrlichman's deputy and successor as executive director, explained in an interview: "You can't have a working session with 19 people. It just doesn't happen. In the course of the four years we have been in business we have had only about 15 full Council meetings and they have been primarily show-and-tell sessions" (Gray, 1974: 24).

The big moments for the Domestic Council staff were when the president would become excited about some concept or problem. A typical scenario would be that the president would read a report on a problem and decide that "something has to be done." When revenue sharing, for instance, was accepted as a basic aspect of decentralizing the decisions of government, it was up to the Domestic Council staff to "operationalize" the concept. Generally, a task force of personnel from agencies concerned with the problem, plus staffers from OMB, would meet to "get a feel for the problem" through "thought pieces" and discussion. Preliminary option papers would be written and interviews with key presidential aides, and even the president himself, would provide the necessary guidelines. Finally, a substantial memorandum would be assembled with the options clearly laid out with a short explanation as to the probable consequences of each decision. The president would take the volume with him for the weekend, make notations and return with a decision. If appropriate, he would request legislative proposals.

Kessel correctly observed that there were many variations in the style followed by the Domestic Council during the Nixon period.

The working group was not the only instrumentality the Domestic Council used to develop policy. There were times when events moved too rapidly to permit consultations and deliberations of this kind. There were also cases in which a single staff man worked informally. Often proposals were developed in departments before being forwarded to the White House. Still, the working group was a device that was used repeatedly, and it had two distinct advantages. By allowing the Domestic Council staff to draw on OMB and the agencies for other members, the permanent Domestic Council staff could be kept lean. There was less need to duplicate departmental expertise within the White House when the skills of OMB and agency personnel could be brought to bear by including them in working groups. Further, the working group tied key departmental actors to program development. They had a chance to indicate their preferences; they knew what the difficult policy questions were; they knew what choices ultimately had been made by the President. All this considerably enhanced the chances of departmental support of a program when it was ultimately adopted. [Kessel, 1975: 87-88]

It is appropriate to note also that not all policy-opinion memorandums for the president's eyes were being written by the Domestic Council staff. Other institutions were also being utilized and to some extent were competitors with the council. The Cost of Living Council, for example, was the principal staff unit through which planning was conducted as to how to "decontrol" the economy after the imposition of wage and price controls in 1971. More recently, since 1975, the Economic Policy Board has emerged as a major coordinating body as well as a source of presidential memorandums (Balz, 1976: 426-433).

President Nixon, like most of his predecessors, came to office without a comprehensive theory as to how he should manage the executive branch. Initially, he believed that the cabinet ought to be the primary tool to carry out his policies. Even before he unveiled his New Federalism, however, Nixon had become disillusioned with the cabinet as an institution. He became increasingly reliant on the White House and Domestic Council Staffs which constituted, in his view, a necessary "counter-bureaucracy." As the 1972 election approached, however, the president concluded that the liabilities of relying on the White House and Domestic Council staffs for policy implementation outweighed any benefits. The principal cause of his disaffection with the counter-bureaucracy approach was that it forced the White House to become increasingly involved in routine decisions. More and more administrators were bringing their problems to the White House and Domestic Council for resolution with the net result being a confirmation of the administrative theory that operations tend to drive out policy planning. Nathan (1975: 52) concluded: "In the final analysis, it was these difficulties that ultimately resulted in President Nixon's rejection in 1972 of the strong White House model for controlling the bureaucracy. Indeed, it is one of the ironies of the first term that the President eventually rejected the White House counter-bureaucracy approach because, instead of weakening the position of the bureaucracy, it tended to strengthen it."

In planning for his second term, Nixon reassessed the utility of his executive office structure and found it wanting. He had sought more presidential direction over the bureaucracy to advance his New Federalism and the results had been disappointing. The conclusion he reached was that he should attempt to achieve the organization goals set out by the Ash Council and presented in his 1971 executive branch reorganization proposals (OMB, 1972), but largely ignored by Congress, through administrative means rather than by legislation.

"THE ADMINISTRATIVE PRESIDENCY"

The status of the Domestic Council was to be substantially altered as a result of a presidential decision early in Nixon's second term. In a statement of January 5, 1973, the president outlined some fundamental changes in the executive office, most notably the elevation of three cabinet officers to the rank of counsellors (U.S. President, 1973: 5-10). The three cabinet officers involved were the secretaries of agriculture; health, education and welfare; and housing and urban development. As counsellors, these officers were to have responsibility, respectively, for the areas of natural resources, human resources, and community development. By this reorganization, the president hoped to achieve much of the policy coordination goals which had been present in his overall 1971 executive branch reorganization proposals. The media labeled this new White House structure as the "Super Cabinet," a name which stuck.

One consequence of this reorganization was that the role of the Domestic Council staff was substantially downgraded. As the president explained it:

Counsellors Butz, Weinberger, and Lynn, with the support of the committees, they will head, will be able to provide much of the advice and supervision for which the Presidents in the past have had to turn to domestic policy establishments within the White House. The Counsellors will also be able to resolve with their colleagues at the Secretarial level many interdepartmental issues which have heretofore required arbitration by the President or his staff.

One consequence of this reorganization of the Domestic Council is that it can be cut back by about 55 percent—from 66 people at present to 30 people when the new Cabinet/Staff structure is in place. [U.S. President, 1973: 9]

A second consequence of this reorganization was that John Ehrlichman was promoted to counsellor to the president. In his place, Ken Cole became executive director. At this time, also responsibility for intergovernmental relations between state and local governments and the White House was transferred out of the vice-president's office and given to the Domestic Council.⁸

One of the objectives of this "Super Cabinet" concept was to have three committees within the Domestic Council, based on the three subject areas of human resources, community development, and natural resources. Each of the committees would be chaired by a counsellor and consist of those department and agency heads having substantial responsibilities in these areas. In addition, task forces would be established by each committee according to policy issues. A council staff member would serve as secretary for each group formed and would draft task force and committee decision papers. The key word used at this time was "orchestrate." The role of the Domestic Council staff was to orchestrate the contributions of the various members of the committees and the policy task forces. In its new role the Domestic Council staff was expected to be smaller, less visible, and less available for political "fire-fighting."

The "Super Cabinet" was destined to be short-lived. The Watergate affair, the departure of Mr. Ehrlichman, and the resistance of other departments to being relegated to a "one-step removed" status combined to doom the "Super Cabinet." On May 10, 1973, two weeks after the resignations of Haldeman and Ehrlichman, President Nixon noted that he had abandoned the concept of a "Super Cabinet" and now sought to elevate the cabinet to a body where policy decisions could be made, if not collectively, at least on an individual basis with the approval of the president (Bonafede and Iglehart, 1973: 726-729). President Nixon's attempt to promote presidential

influence and direction over the bureaucracy, while simultaneously decreasing the size and power of the executive office, was doomed by Watergate.

FORD REVIEW COUNCIL ROLE

Gerald Ford was planning for the transition of power several months before Mr. Nixon announced his resignation (Naughton, 1974: 1). He had decided a team would be needed to guide the administration through the first days of the transition and develop longer-range plans. The team Ford chose to do the planning consisted of William Scranton, Donald Rumsfeld, Robert Marsh, Rogers Morton, and Clay Whitehead. The major thrust of the transition team's report to the president was that he should move quickly on key personnel changes and reduce the role of OMB vis-à-vis the several departments.

The Domestic Council had not escaped some taint from the Watergate affair. Three key council staff members, including Ehrlichman, were eventually convicted in cases related to the scandal. The question became: was the Domestic Council too closely associated with the unsavory aspects of the Watergate affair so as to permanently impair its usefulness?

The conclusion of the transition team and the president was that the Domestic Council had proven its worth and should be strengthened rather than dismantled. On February 13, 1975, President Ford, speaking in New York City to a Republican fund-raising dinner, announced he was naming Vice-President Rockefeller to be vice-chairman of the Domestic Council with a responsibility for overseeing domestic policy formulation and supervision of domestic programs. On the same day the president issued a memorandum increasing the membership of the council and assigning to it additional responsibilities (U.S. President, 1975: 191-192).

According to press reports, the decision to name Rockefeller was not without opposition from within the White House, principally from Donald Rumsfeld, the president's White House

staff coordinator (Kraft, 1975: B-7). Rockefeller moved quickly to name two of his aides, James Cannon and James Dunham, as executive director and deputy director respectively of the council.

RELATIONSHIP OF THE DOMESTIC COUNCIL
TO THE OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET

Reorganization Plan No. 2 of 1970 not only established the Domestic Council, but renamed and reoriented the Bureau of the Budget as well. The old bureau became the new Office of Management and Budget (OMB).⁹ This reorganization was designed to highlight and institutionalize the management functions of the agency. In concert with its traditional budgetary functions, the augmented managerial function was intended to make the OMB a formidable instrument in the president's continuing struggle for some degree of control over the federal bureaucracy (Stafford, 1974: 20-24; Malek, 1974: 23-28). President Nixon's declaration in 1970 that the Domestic Council would be primarily interested in *what* we do (planning) while the OMB would be primarily concerned with *how well* we are doing it (evaluation) did not prove, however, to be self-executing.

One impact of the Reorganization Plan No. 2 on the OMB was to further reduce its role in the proposing stage of the legislative process, a trend begun in the early 1960s (Gilmour, 1971: 150-158). A countervailing impact, however, was also discernible in that the new OMB seemed to have greater leverage vis-a-vis the federal agencies in the implementation period through the president's use of budget impoundment as a method to achieve administration policy objectives (Fisher, 1975: chs. 7, 8).

Watergate related events were to provide a resurgence in the OMB's role in the clearance process for major legislation simply because of the vacuum then existing at the White House and the Domestic Council (Haveman, 1973: 1589-1598). This resur-

gence was short-lived, however, as the unpublished report of President Ford's transition team advocated a reduction in the OMB presence and less reliance on budgetary procedures to enforce administration policy conformance (Broder, 1974: A-1).

In the Ford Administration the OMB has decreased its visibility, much to the relief of some of its professional staff who believe that less visibility also means less vulnerability (Heclo, 1975: 80-88). The agency appears to be concentrating more on management processes and results and appears satisfied with the role of clearing the more routine legislative proposals of agencies and leaving the major issues to the White House and Domestic Council staffs. To a substantial degree, then, there has evolved an informal division of labor and responsibility between the Domestic Council and the OMB which resembles, in its major aspects, the formal division planned by President Nixon in 1970.

THE ROCKEFELLER IMPRINT

The lean staff, 15 or so professionals, that Rockefeller was to inherit in his new capacity as working chief of the Domestic Council were already functioning in a daily relationship with the president's office. Their responsibilities were essentially operational. They provided many of the quick responses and memorandums which the White House office requires in order to function. Donald Rumsfeld, the president's chief aide, had integrated the council's work into the routine of the White House. Vice-President Rockefeller, however, took a much different view of the Domestic Council. From his perspective the council would be most useful to the president if it considered major mid-range problems which the president could use in fashioning a legislative program. He even envisioned some long-range projects similar to those assumed by the National Commission on Critical Choices which, after his resignation as governor of New York, he had created and funded.

In the contest over defining the goals for the Domestic Council, Rockefeller appeared to be the victor over Rumsfeld. Actually, a compromise had been struck with a "two-track" system being instituted. One portion of the council staff would support the president on daily issues while another portion would be involved in mid and long-range studies (Bonafed 1975: 449). Events, however, were to overtake theory as one reporter discovered during an interview with Richard Dunham, the council's deputy director:

Deputy Council Director Richard Dunham, another Rockefeller staffer, is supposed to be the man in charge of long-range thinking. But a brief visit to Mr. Dunham's office shows how hard it is to get any thinking done.

It is 12:15 in Dick Dunham's office, across the street from the White House. Among other things, Mr. Dunham is trying to think about ways to cut back the red tape, to improve food stamp and other social welfare programs. The problem is, other things keep getting in the way. Today he's been asked to prepare memos on no less than four problems of the day. The requests came in an hour and 15 minutes ago; his memos are needed by mid-afternoon.

The phone rings. "I'm about half-way through," Dick Dunham says. He scowls. "By 3 o'clock," the harried Mr. Dunham promises. "I'll give them to you by three o'clock." When last seen, Dick Dunham was bent over a memo. [Farney, 1975: 6]

One positive result of the Rockefeller leadership was that the Domestic Council staff was increased to 30 during 1975 with request in the FY 1977 budget for 40 positions. turnover of staff on the council has always been relatively high. Indeed soon after the reporter had interviewed the "harassed" Deputy Director Dunham, the latter gladly accepted an appointment as chairman of the Federal Power Commission. This appointment was actually in keeping with one of the major, unspoken purposes of the council, to provide a testing ground for talent to be later transferred to line agencies. The only constant in the situation of the Domestic Council in 1975 was the pressure on resources for daily operations rather than planning.

The Domestic Council was to go "public" through the activities of what were called its "Public Forums." During the months of October and November 1975 six forums on domestic policy were held in as many cities with each meeting being chaired by a cabinet member and supported by other officials, including the vice-president. The staff support to arrange the forums was supplied on-loan by other agencies. While vast numbers of local, state, and regional leaders appeared to speak their minds, the amount of favorable publicity derived from the meetings was minimal. The vice-president submitted a report on these forums to the president on December 15, 1975 (U.S. Executive Office of the President, Domestic Council, 1976).

Shortly after submitting his report on the forums, Rockefeller requested to be relieved of his responsibilities for operations of the council. The vice-president's low profile exit from the council, which followed an earlier decision to withdraw as a running mate for President Ford in 1976, was based principally on the fact that the Domestic Council took up too much of his time for too little return. In less than a year, then, the experiment to find a "useful" operational task for the vice-president was ended.

THE FUTURE

The departure of Rockefeller from active leadership of the council staff did not change a pattern of operations which had preceded him but which had become entrenched during his tenure. The concept of "task forces" organized along problem area lines had been found to be the most productive method of developing issues and policy options. There were a number of such task forces functioning at any one time with the membership being flexible and changing. A conscious effort was made to avoid locking-in a particular set of actors by listing participants in a presidential directive of some sort.

Possibly the most visible of the task forces has been the Domestic Council Review Group on Regulatory Reform

(DCRG) which meets with some regularity (Cohen, 1975: 1603-1606). The DCRG consists of approximately 12 economists, lawyers, and legislative experts from various executive office units and several departments. The number of participants varies depending on the issue under consideration. There has not been a consistent pattern followed in developing the various parts of what has been referred to as the president's "regulatory package."¹⁰ On some issues, agencies may take the lead while in other areas a unit within the executive office, such as the Council on Wage and Price Stability, will be the lead unit. The purposes of the DCRG, broadly speaking, are to be a catalyst, coordinator, and monitor of the various aspects of the executive branch's efforts to review all regulatory policies. While the DCRG is not an agency of the government and is somewhat amorphous as to its membership—insiders call it a "floating crap game"—it does possess certain institutional characteristics. For example, the DCRG held public hearings in December 1975 on the Robinson-Patman Act. In this instance, the Antitrust Division of the Department of Justice assumed the leadership for the exercise and provided the staff support for three days of public hearings.

The future of the Domestic Council is not certain. Another president may decide that its location, structure, and style do not fit his needs. But the fact that it has survived the transition from one president to another and that it was not destroyed by the revelation that several of its key staff were involved in Watergate suggests that it may have the qualities to endure.

Its very flexibility may be the key to durability. It should be recognized that the tendency to institutionalize certain activities is difficult to avoid. The council, for example, was given the responsibility for intergovernmental affairs, meaning top-level liaison between the White House and state and local leaders. Mitigating against these institutional tendencies, however, are such factors as the fact that the professional staff generally view their stay as short and intense. It is a proving ground for further advancement in the executive branch. The best staff are

politicians with a sense of how to integrate rather sophisticated policy options into a reasonably comprehensive and coherent legislative package. There will always be a need to meet daily presidential crises and the demands will always tend to fill up the available time. If the Domestic Council staff were to increase to 200, there would still be too much work to be done in a normal day.

The dream of a "think tank" which has the capacity and time to study issues and propose long-term policies will resurface from time to time, but will prove resistable. Probably, the council is too close to the White House to be a think tank. The time horizon for the White House is the next election and it will be difficult, if not impossible, to substantially alter this perspective.

Ultimately, the future of the Domestic Council will depend on the working style of the incumbent president. Both Presidents Nixon and Ford found the council and the staff a useful tool to assist them in getting options on complex issues through the bureaucracy to them in a manner that assisted their own decision-making. To a considerable degree, the council staff has been able to avoid being fragmented into groups which are really extensions of the personal staffs of key presidential aides. It has worked out a reasonably satisfactory relationship with the OMB and has been taken seriously by the departments and agencies. There have been some positive achievements, e.g., revenue sharing, regulatory legislation, in which the Domestic Council takes pride. Whether all this is enough to insure its place in the political firmament, only future presidents will determine.

NOTES

1. The Domestic Council was established in the Executive Office of the President pursuant to Reorganization Plan No. 2 of 1970, effective July 1, 1970. The duties of the council are prescribed by Executive Order 11541 of that date and

further elaborated upon by the President's Memorandum for Members of the Council (U.S. President, 1975).

2. The current membership of the council is delineated in the President's Memorandum for Members of the Council, issued February 13, 1975 (U.S. President, 1975: 191-192).

3. For a general discussion of executive reorganizations in the twentieth century, see Emmerich (1971).

4. Established on April 8, 1969, the Ash Council made a number of reorganization studies and submitted memoranda, with recommendations, to President Nixon. The president sent a message to Congress on March 25, 1971, proposing to abolish seven existing departments, along with designated agencies, and reassign all their functions to four new executive departments to be created by statute. The President's Departmental Reorganization Program was designed to supplement the Revenue Sharing Program and other aspects of the New Federalism. The Domestic Council proposal and the reconstituted Office of Management and Budget, then, are correctly viewed as part of a larger presidential strategy. For a discussion of executive reorganization in general and President Nixon's Departmental Reorganization proposals in particular, see U.S. Congress, House Committee on Government Operations (1972).

5. The president's message to the Congress transmitting Reorganization Plan No. 2 of 1970, implementing recommendations of the President's Advisory Council on Executive Organization (Ash Council) may be found in U.S. President (1970).

6. For a general commentary on the politics of executive branch organization, see Seidman (1975). The development of the Executive Office of the President is discussed in U.S. Congress, House Committee on Post Office and Civil Service (1972).

7. The idea of a Domestic Council was not entirely new. In an address delivered before the Town Hall luncheon, Los Angeles, July 11, 1968, then Vice-President Hubert Humphrey suggested that a "National Domestic Policy Council should be established to provide the same comprehensive, systematic, and reliable analyses of domestic problems which the National Security Council and its staff produce on foreign policy and national defense issues."

8. Established by EO 11455 of February 14, 1969, all functions of the Office of Intergovernmental Relations were transferred to the Domestic Council by EO 11690 on December 14, 1972.

9. For an insightful essay on the historical development of the Bureau of the Budget, see Shick (1970).

10. On May 13, 1976, President Ford forwarded to Congress a legislative proposal, largely fashioned by the DCRG, which would establish a joint timetable for the president and Congress to make comprehensive reviews and changes in federal regulatory activities. See U.S. President (1976).

REFERENCES

BALZ, D. J. (1976) "Juice and coffee and the GNP—the men who meet in the morning." *National Journal* (April).

- BONAFEDE, D. (1975) "Domestic council's role broadens." National Journal (March 22).
- and J. K. IGLEHART (1973) "End of the counsellor system enlarges policy-forming role of cabinet." National Journal (May).
- BRODER, D. S. (1974) "Ford urged to cut OMB policy role." Washington Post (August 23).
- COHEN, R. E. (1975) "White House task force turns its sights toward Congress." National Journal (November 22).
- CRONIN, T. E. (1974) "Presidents as chief executive," in Rexford G. Tugwell and Thomas E. Cronin (eds.) The Presidency Reappraised. New York: Praeger.
- EHRLICHMAN, J. D. (1975) "How it all began ... by a man who was there." National Journal (December 13).
- EMMERICH, H. (1971) Federal Reorganization and Administrative Management. University: Univ. of Alabama Press.
- FARNEY, D. (1975) "Rocky's harassed think tank." Wall Street Journal (August 25).
- FISHER, L. (1975) Presidential Spending Power. Princeton: Princeton Univ. Press.
- GILMOUR, R. S. (1971) "Central legislative clearance: a revised perspective." Public Administration Rev. 31 (March/April): 150-158.
- GRAY, R. T. (1974) "Little known 'brokers' behind presidential programs." Nation's Business (May).
- HAVEMAN, J. (1973) "OMB's legislative role is growing more powerful and more political." National Journal (October 27).
- HECLO, H. (1975) "OMB and the presidency—the problem of neutral competency." Public Interest (Winter).
- KESSEL, J. (1975) Domestic Presidency: Decision-Making in the White House. North Scituate, Mass.: Duxbury.
- KRAFT, J. (1975) "The emerging Rockefeller role." Washington Post (February 16).
- MALEK, F. V. (1974) "Managing for results in the federal government." Business Horizons (April): 23-28.
- NATHAN, R. (1975) The Plot that Failed: Nixon and the Administrative Presidency. New York: John Wiley.
- NAUGHTON, J. (1974) "The change in presidents: plans began months ago." New York Times (August 26).
- SEIDMAN, H. (1975) Politics, Position, and Power: The Dynamics of Federal Organization. New York: Oxford Univ. Press.
- SHICK, A. (1970) "The budget bureau that was: thoughts on the rise, decline, and future of a presidential agency." Law and Contemporary Problems 35 (Summer).
- STAFFORD, S. (1974) "'Political' OMB cuts agencies to size." Government Executive (August): 20-24.
- U.S. Congress, House Committee on Government Operations (1972) Executive Reorganization: A Summary Analysis. Report No. 92-922, Ninety-Second Congress, Second Session.
- (1970) Disapproving Reorganization Plan No. 2 of 1970. Report No. 91-1066, Ninety-First Congress, First Session.
- U.S. Congress, House Committee on Post Office and Civil Service (1972) A Report on the Growth of the Executive Office of the President: 1955-1973. Committee Print, Ninety-Second Congress, Second Session.

White House Control of Domestic Policy Making: The Reagan Years

Shirley Anne Warshaw, Gettysburg College

Since Richard Nixon, presidents have had the staff capability to manage domestic policy. With the creation of the Domestic Council in 1970, Nixon and his successors were able to use an in-house organizational structure to establish a domestic agenda and move that agenda through the policy process. Presidents have used the domestic policy office with varying degrees of success depending on their interactions with department personnel. Ronald Reagan, more than any other modern president, used the White House domestic policy staff to ensure departmental support for presidential policies. The White House Office of Policy Development worked closely with cabinet officers to constantly reinforce their support for and understanding of Reagan's key policy objectives. In addition, the White House controlled political personnel nominations to ensure ideological consistency with the Reagan agenda.

As the federal government has increased its role in society, the executive departments have each become responsible for thousands of programs and billions of dollars. The challenge to presidents in the modern presidency has been how to ensure that the myriad policies developed within the departments meet the programmatic and political goals of the administration.

That challenge has been met with a series of different strategies by recent presidents, each of which focused on using White House staff to influence or directly control the policy direction being taken within the departments. The focus of this article is the examination of the structure employed by Ronald Reagan to manage departmental policy making from the White House. I explore several questions: How different was this structure from ones used in previous administrations? How did the Reagan structure operate? and Are there parts of the Reagan structure that can or should be continued?

Continuing the Domestic Policy Office

The 1947 National Security Act institutionalized a White House structure for coordinating foreign policy, but domestic policy remained an enigma with no formal structure for coordinating or guiding the departments. The 1939 Reorganization Act provided a White House staff for presidents, but none had directly focused White House staff on managing domestic policy.

In 1969, Richard Nixon became the first president to develop a formal White House structure for coordinating the departments in the development of domestic policy initiatives. By executive order, Nixon established the Urban Affairs Council in January 1969, creating ten small working groups of cabinet officers. Yet, in spite of the efforts of its executive director, Daniel Patrick Moynihan, the Urban Affairs Council had a rather short life of only 11 months. Richard Nixon, dissatisfied with the policy initiatives continuing to emerge from the departments, abolished the Urban Affairs Council and created the Domestic Council, also through executive order ("Public Papers of the President," 1970). The Domestic Council was given broader control than the Urban Affairs Council over the departments in managing domestic initiatives and in controlling the proliferation of existing programs.

Every president — Richard Nixon has continued to have a White House — domestic policy office. Although Nixon and Ford referred to the unit as the Domestic Council, successive presidents changed the name. Carter referred to the unit as the Domestic Policy Group, Reagan and Bush called it the Office of Policy Development, and Clinton has again changed its name to the Domestic Policy Council. Although the names have been different, the goal of each president has been to create an internal structure that ensures that the political and programmatic objectives of the president are maintained throughout departmental policy making.

The Reagan Structure for Managing Domestic Policy Making

The experiences of Presidents Nixon, Ford, and Carter in managing domestic policy making from the White House were mixed. Each had created an office in the White House for domestic policy and had used that office with varying degrees of success in controlling departmental agendas. Reagan built on the experiences of his predecessors and continued the use of a White House structure for managing domestic policy making. The legacy of the Reagan years, however, is that the administration expanded the White House structure to include not only the domestic policy office but a network of interrelated White House offices to oversee departmental policy making. The White House exercised more control over domestic policy under Reagan than in any previous administration.¹

Reagan's White House network revolved around three key units within the White House: the Office of Policy Development that guided departmental initiatives; the White House personnel office that sought to expand the number of departmental political appointees and to ensure that those appointees were Reagan loyalists; and an internal clearance system that allowed White House staff to bargain departmental policies with Congress without departmental involvement. This multi-layered approach brought nearly all senior White House staff into oversight of departmental activities.

The Office of Policy Development

By the time Ronald Reagan moved into the Oval Office in January 1981, three presidents had established domestic policy offices within the White House. Although it was far from an institutionalized process, it was by now viewed as an integral part of the White House staff. Under the direction of former Nixon staffer Martin Anderson, the Office of Policy Development (OPD) was created within the Reagan White House to manage the administration's domestic policy initiatives. Anderson had been a key player throughout Reagan's presidential campaign as the architect of Reagan's economic platform and a stalwart supporter of the conservative agenda. As a former staff member to both Arthur Burns and John Ehrlichman in the Nixon White House, Anderson had a clear view of how the domestic policy unit should be framed.²

Anderson's first move was to change the name of Carter's

The structure that ensures that the political and programmatic objectives of the president are maintained throughout departmental policy making.

Domestic Policy Group to the Office of Policy Development to "serve notice that a new administration had taken over" (Kirschten, 1982). He then quickly moved to design an organizational relationship between the departments and the White House to ensure that department programs were in line with presidential goals and objectives. Anderson created a structure for policy development that involved constant interaction between the White House staff and senior department staff.

Proposals that were developed by the departments were guided not only by the White House staff directly but by material prepared by Anderson's office that detailed Reagan's positions on policy issues. Each cabinet officer was given this information, simply referred to as "the notebooks" because they were assembled in thick three-ringed binders. The notebooks outlined Reagan's statements from the 1980 campaign and the previous five years on a broad range of policy concepts (Anderson, 1993).³ Department staff were told to base all of their policy proposals on the objectives outlined within the notebooks.

James Miller, who followed David Stockman as Reagan's director of the Office of Management and Budget, commented that

Martin Anderson's books were the bibles. The president had a consistent ideology. The bibles provided a consistent framework and consistent ideas. I felt I could predict what Ronald Reagan would do in almost any circumstance from the statements in these notebooks (Miller, 1993).

In addition to the notebooks and other written material to guide the cabinet in policy issues, OPD staff created the cabinet council system. Small groups of cabinet officers were regularly brought into the White House to discuss administration goals and objectives and department initiatives.⁴ Five cabinet councils were created by executive order on February 26, 1981, dealing with economic affairs, commerce and trade, human resources, natural resources and the environment, and food and agriculture (White House, 1981). Two more councils were created in 1982: On January 29, 1982, the Cabinet Council for Legal Policy was formed, and on September 22, 1982, the Cabinet Council on Management and Administration was established.

Generally, cabinet officers served on three or four cabinet councils, with one member serving on six different councils. In addition to cabinet officers, three members of the White House staff (Ed Meese, Jim Baker, and Vice President George Bush) were added to the list of members of all of the councils. Only

Although *there was a significant reliance on the cabinet council system for policy development, the*

White House nevertheless acted alone in many instances.

one member of the cabinet, the Secretary of Education, sat on only one council.

Although the cabinet council structure was designed to afford the White House greater direct control over policy making, the structure also nurtured the relationships of cabinet officers among themselves. Because cabinet officers sat on several councils, they interacted frequently with most other members of the cabinet. Personal relationships were created, which helped to mitigate the turf battles that often dominate interdepartmental relationships. Cabinet officers worked together on interjurisdictional policy issues toward a common objective. Territorial fights were far less common in the Reagan administration than in the Carter administration, in large part because of the sense of shared mission fostered by the cabinet council structure. Such cabinet interaction was a key part of the cabinet council design, which endeavored to facilitate a team approach to policy making and to minimize attempts by individual departments to move independently.

The meeting schedule was also carefully structured by OPD. Meetings for the cabinet councils were held in the Roosevelt Room next to the Oval Office or in the Cabinet Room but were never held outside of the White House. The meeting time, place, and agenda were all carefully designed to be controlled by the White House. "The genius of the Cabinet Council system," according to Anderson, "was that councils were Cabinet level. You couldn't send substitutes, such as deputies, to the meetings.... What really made the whole thing work was that all meetings had to be in the White House. The White House controlled what time the meeting would take place, where the meeting occurred, and the agenda" (Anderson, 1993).

These meetings dealt with policy issues and, perhaps more importantly, fostered a shared vision for the administration among the cabinet officers. As one of the cabinet officers described the meetings,

Cabinet councils did work and they worked well. At each meeting we kind of hugged each other. The meetings were important because every one understood they were part of a team and were the president's representatives to the constituencies and not the other way around (Miller, 1993).

One of the more intangible rewards of the cabinet council system was the behind-the-scenes negotiations that often took place in the hallway outside of the Roosevelt Room just before a cabinet council meeting. Many issues were worked out quietly among the cabinet officers before they were brought up at the cabinet council meetings. For example, one of these issues was a pact that the Agriculture Department wanted to make with

Russia regarding long-term grain sales. Prior to one of the cabinet council meetings, Secretary of State George Shultz asked Agriculture Secretary John Block to wait a few months before completing the grain deal so that some sensitive arms negotiations could be completed. Block agreed and waited until Shultz gave him the green light to proceed (Block, 1993). As another cabinet officer noted, "It was the fact that the people got along so well that allowed the cabinet council system to be so successful" (Watt, 1993).

The policies emerging through the cabinet councils were carefully monitored by White House senior staff. Anderson met daily with the senior staff to review the policy proposals being prepared by each cabinet council working group. Five days per week at 7:30 a.m. the senior White House staff met in the Roosevelt Room to discuss major issues facing the administration, including those being addressed by the cabinet councils. (Senior staff included 15 to 20 people, such as Anderson, Meese, Baker, Gergen, Darman, the Congressional Liaison staff, and the press office staff.) After the senior staff meeting, Meese and the OPD staff adjourned to Meese's office to discuss policy issues evolving in the cabinet councils and the working groups. The decisions that finally emerged from the cabinet councils were decisions that had been guided and refined at every step in the process by the White House staff (Witherspoon, 1991; 178). Once a policy emerged from the cabinet councils, it emerged with the blessing of the White House.⁵

Although there was a significant reliance on the cabinet council system for policy development, the White House nevertheless acted alone in many instances. Issues that were politically volatile, crossed too many departmental lines, or simply required immediate attention were handled directly by the White House senior staff without cabinet council input, including such diverse issues as Social Security disability and hospice services (Ronald Reagan Library, 1983). Even a package of incentives to appease women's groups developed in 1983 by OPD was worked out directly with members of Congress and not with cabinet officers.⁶

A caveat with this analysis is that the White House, although successful in controlling most departmental policy initiatives, was not totally successful. For example, in 1987 Otis Bowen, Secretary of Health and Human Services, overcame strong White House opposition and succeeded in gaining passage of the Medicare Catastrophic Care Act. Similarly, Surgeon General Everett Koop often moved in directions at odds with White House staff. However, juxtaposed against the Nixon, Ford, and Carter administrations, the Reagan White House had far more success at controlling departmental policy initiatives and minimizing interdepartmental warfare.

Personnel Selection for Subcabinet Positions

The second component of Reagan's network for controlling departmental policy making involved personnel selection and management. Department policy making, as we have seen, had a significant amount of control from the White House through the cabinet council working groups. The White House also

controlled the subcabinet personnel involved in departmental policy making. Not only were cabinet officers chosen for their ideological commitment to the Reagan agenda but lower level staff were as well.⁷ The strata of political appointees below the cabinet were scrutinized for their ideological commitment to the Reagan agenda as thoroughly as the cabinet officers themselves. Rourke (1988; 1990) refers to this process as "presidentializing the bureaucracy."

Unlike Nixon and Carter, Reagan did not allow his cabinet officers singlehandedly to choose their deputies or any of the other political appointments in the departments.⁸ Pendleton James' White House personnel operation controlled departmental political jobs. All political positions, from deputy secretaries to personal secretaries, were controlled from the White House. Interviewed for the *Washington Post* in mid-1981, James said that "Nixon, like Carter, lost the appointments process. They lost control to the departments and the agencies. We have maintained control at the Oval Office" (*Washington Post*, 1981). Cabinet officers were discouraged from even recommending names to the White House (Watt, 1993; James, 1993).

There was a preoccupation by the Reagan staff that the career bureaucracy would actively oppose their agenda. They sought to place Reagan loyalists in management positions and not promote career staff. Where possible, the Reagan staff tried to add more layers of political appointees on top of career employees (Goodsell, 1994; 173). In a blueprint for action prepared for the Reagan administration prior to the inauguration, the Heritage Foundation warned the administration how powerful the bureaucracy was, which the Reagan White House took to heart:

The political executive who is promoting significant policy change within his department should not be surprised by career bureaucratic subordinates engaging in... covert inter-bureaucratic struggle to block his initiatives. Bureaucratic opponents will lobby vigorously against the proposed policy change to client groups, congressional committee staffs, and the press. The bureaucracy's resources for defending its viewpoint, leaking discrediting material, and mustering outside allies are such that it could be correctly called the "ultimate lobby" (Butler *et al.*, 1984; 491).

Throughout the first year, James cleared most, if not all, appointments with the Big Three, as he called the Baker, Deaver, Meese troika, and many appointments he cleared directly with Reagan. According to James, "I met with the president twice a week and with the Big Three at 5:00 p.m. every day of the first year" (Bonafede, 1987; 50). This continual oversight of personnel by senior staff and by the president himself reinforced the importance that the Reagan White House attached to controlling the bureaucracy.

Personnel selection was part of Reagan's grand design to minimize the career staff's influence over departmental policy decisions. Some cabinet officers balked at the directive and tried to bring in their own staff. For example, Caspar Weinberger tried to hire Frank Carlucci as his principal deputy. The

There was a preoccupation by the Reagan staff that the career bureaucracy would actively oppose their agenda. They sought to place Reagan loyalists in management positions and not promote career staff.

White House personnel operation refused to accept Carlucci, who had served as deputy director of the Central Intelligence Agency under Carter. The very mention of the Carter administration sent shivers up the spines of the personnel team. Weinberger eventually won, but Carlucci was one of the rare exceptions hired over the objection of the White House personnel operation.

Cabinet officers were given lists of names that were acceptable to the White House from which to choose their top staff. Most cabinet officers found that they could easily find acceptable people on the lists. However, some cabinet officers made separate deals with Pendleton James that allowed them to put their own people in place. Such a case was Secretary of the Interior James Watt, whose entire staff was handpicked by Watt. All of Watt's staff were former associates with whom he had previously worked and whom he knew shared the same agenda for the department (Watt, 1993). Cabinet secretaries were not completely discouraged from making recommendations to James for their subcabinet positions. As one cabinet officer noted, "If you were doing a good job and had a track record of picking good people, the White House personnel office approved your people" (Miller, 1993).

Most of the cabinet quietly accepted the Reagan demand for approval over their subcabinet appointments. Alexander Haig said of the process, "The names on this list, it was understood, were the ones with which Reagan was comfortable" (Haig, 1984; 64-65). At the top of the list for Deputy Secretary of State, the senior subcabinet position in the department, was Judge William P. Clark of the California Supreme Court, a long-time Reagan friend, but not deeply involved in foreign policy. Clark was subsequently named to the post, much to Haig's chagrin.

It is worth adding that the personnel operation shrewdly coupled loyalty to the Reagan agenda with federal management experience in their quest for departmental staff. Unlike Jimmy Carter, who pursued technical experts for managerial positions, Ronald Reagan pursued managers (Kirschstein, 1982).

Some cabinet officers, however, were quite bitter about the degree of control that the White House exerted over personnel selection. Terrel Bell, Secretary of Education, rather bitterly described the process by saying that, given

the determination of Ed Meese and his White House aides to stack my department and my equally fervent resolve to prevent this, it is not difficult to fathom the reasons for the inordinate delays in consummating sub-

Yet in spite of often vigorous opposition to White House control of the personnel process, the White House pursued its goal of centralizing personnel decisions.

cabinet positions in ED.... How could I fight back?... I was on my own during the first months of 1981 (Bell, 1988: 43).

Yet in spite of often vigorous opposition to White House control of the personnel process, the White House pursued its goal of centralizing personnel decisions. While Terrel Bell and others complained about the system, they were essentially forced into complying with it. Presidential scholar Bradley Patterson summed up the process when he said, "The Presidential Personnel Office is thus part of the White House gateway, closing out those who don't measure up, beckoning in the select, doing the president's bidding to help him be chief executive in fact as well as in name" (Patterson, 1988: 258-259).

Personnel Management

Personnel selection was coupled with personnel management. Once in office, political appointees were briefed on administration goals and on budgeting, policy development, and other key areas. This task fell to Craig Fuller, the Assistant to the President for Cabinet Affairs, who designed a two-pronged approach to personnel management (Preston, 1984). Top-level presidential appointees met in small seminars of 20-25 with faculty from the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University on political and managerial strategies for both policy development and implementation (Pfiffner, 1988). All senior executive service (SES) officials participated in day-and-a-half seminars run by the Office of Personnel Management through the Federal Executive Institute.

Personnel management continued throughout the administration as subcabinet appointments were regularly brought together by Office of Management and Budget (OMB) staff to discuss policy issues in the Old Executive Office Building. The purpose of these meetings was twofold. On the one hand, the meetings served as minicabinet council meetings where interjurisdictional policy details could be further refined. On the other hand, and more important, they gave the White House another opportunity to reiterate the Reagan agenda and confirm that subcabinet officials understood that agenda. Subcabinet staff were constantly reinforced with the idea that they were an integral part of the Reagan team and that their mission was to reduce the number of departmental programs and the size of the departmental staff (Campbell, 1986: 266-267).

Legislative Strategy Group

The third component of Reagan's network for White House control of domestic policy making involved the legislative strategy group. Although the White House worked with the departments to develop policies which met Reagan's political and pro-

grammatic needs, these policies were not always acceptable to Congress. Traditionally, the congressional liaison in the White House worked with the departments to modify proposals that could not pass muster in Congress. This, of course, took time.

Time was of the essence to the Reagan White House. Their answer to the problem was to revamp the policies internally without going back to the departments and through the cabinet council system. James Baker headed a small group of senior White House staff known as the legislative strategy group that developed the most advantageous means of securing congressional support for administration programs.

The legislative strategy group was composed of OMB director David Stockman, Treasury Secretary Donald Regan, and senior staff members Meese and Baker. Baker also included from his staff congressional lobbyist Max Friedersdorf, public liaison Elizabeth Dole (later Secretary of Transportation), communications director David Gergen, and his chief lieutenant Richard Darman. Their role was to develop the most appropriate public relations and legislative strategy for cabinet-council-developed proposals. The effect of the legislative strategy group was to bring another layer of White House control into the policy-development process and to reduce the power of the departments in that process. Baker regularly dealt with Congress on policy issues without any input from the departments.

Office of Management and Budget

The Office of Management and Budget also played a major role in the development of the final product that went to Congress. As a member of every cabinet council, David Stockman's staff (and later James Miller's staff) was able to push options that cut programs and personnel. When the cabinet councils argued with OMB staff that certain programs simply could not be cut, Stockman overruled the councils. An example of the power that Stockman had over the departments was his decision to cut commodity price supports. The price supports had been developed through the cabinet council system and approved by Anderson's OPD staff, but Stockman wanted to see deeper cuts. Without consulting the cabinet council, or the Department of Agriculture, Stockman made further cuts and worked with the legislative strategy group to push the bill through Congress. Assistant Secretary of Agriculture for Economics, William G. Leshner, noted that the "Cabinet Council system broke down. Stockman and others had their ideas of what should be in a farm bill.... Much to our chagrin, that persuasion won out" (Kirschten, 1982).

Stockman was equally hard on individual cabinet officers. When departmental policies did not meet the administration's budget-cutting goals, Stockman met with the cabinet officers and reiterated Reagan's charge to cut the budget. In *Triumph of Politics*, Stockman (1986) writes,

We had brow-beaten the cabinet, one by one, into accepting the cuts.... We forced health research cuts on Dick Schweiker at HHS. We stifled Jack Block with soil conservation cuts at USDA. We shackled Ted Bell with a sweeping retrenchment at the Education Department (p. 123).

Some cabinet officers, such as Alexander Haig, felt that Stockman was interfering with policy decisions with the budget cuts that OMB recommended. Early in 1981, Haig declared that he was "mindful of the need for budgetary restraint," but he and "no one else was in charge of policy" (Stockman, 1986: 128). Yet in the end, OMB always won.

Stockman's role in the cabinet-White House relationship cannot be underestimated. Not only could Stockman overrule cabinet officers and effectively abrogate cabinet council decisions but he could make policy decisions without ever bringing them to the cabinet or cabinet council for debate. Perhaps the most significant example of his authority were the 1981 budget cuts. On February 18, 1981, Reagan went before a joint session of Congress to announce his "Program for Economic Recovery," which presented to Congress a list of program cuts, most of which Stockman had single-handedly made without consulting any of the departments (Campbell, 1986: 197-198).

Conclusion

Lou Cannon noted that "the modern presidency created by Franklin Roosevelt is of necessity a centralizing force" (Cannon, 1991: 184). More than any president in modern history, Ronald Reagan centralized the policy-making process. The White House became the center of policy development, management, and congressional implementation. Political personnel within the departments were cleared through the White House and their actions constantly monitored by the White House and the Executive Office of the President.

The legacy of the Reagan White House is that it built a system of control that the Nixon, Ford, and Carter administrations began but had not fully developed. Under Reagan, the system of controlling domestic policy development from the White House was finely tuned.

The Reagan White House was generally able to control the domestic cabinet officers from moving in directions that were politically and programmatically unacceptable to the president. By constantly meeting in small groups with the cabinet, White House staff were able to keep cabinet officers within the presidential orbit and minimize cooption. Departmental policy initiatives could be focused around the goals and objectives outlined by the White House.

In spite of a carefully crafted structure for managing domestic policy, certain policy initiatives were created by the departments and moved to fruition without White House support. It is virtually impossible to monitor the entire executive branch. However, the Reagan White House, particularly in the first term, developed a policy process that was more successful at controlling department policy initiatives than any of its recent predecessors.

The failure by the three previous administrations to manage

The *most important lesson learned for future administrations is that the White House can develop a workable structure to manage departmental domestic policy making.*

domestic policy from the White House stemmed from their inability to focus policy matters around relatively narrow issues and their failure to bring cabinet officers into discussions on the broader issues facing the administration. The Reagan White House succeeded in building a bridge between the White House and the departments that allowed input from cabinet officers into a broad array of policy issues. Cabinet officers considered themselves key players in the development of the administration's general policy initiatives. The White House, however, maintained control over issues that were either politically volatile or required rapid turn-over time.

Is there a lesson from the Reagan experience? Perhaps the most important lesson learned for future administrations is that the White House can develop a workable structure to manage departmental domestic policy making. Presidents Nixon, Ford, and Carter each built part of the frame for the structure which Reagan finally nailed together. The structure remains wobbly, however, for it was a structure that suited the Reagan agenda of cutting bureaucracy, privatizing programs, reducing federal regulations, and bringing down federal spending. It is unquestionably easier to foster strong relations between the cabinet and the White House if reducing programs rather than increasing programs is central to the agenda. If an administration seeks to increase programmatic activities, the battle over limited resources will dominate the relationship among cabinet officers. White House staff will be less successful in binding cabinet officers together when the administration's policy direction is broader and forces competition for funding.

The lesson, however, is not lost. Reagan changed the way the White House dealt with the departments by fostering the sense that policy development was a team operation between the cabinet officers and the White House. If future administrations build on this framework, regardless of policy orientation, they will enhance their success at keeping departmental priorities within the president's agenda.

♦ ♦ ♦

Shirley Anne Warshaw is an associate professor of political science at Gettysburg College. Her book *Powersharing: White House-Cabinet Relations in the Modern Presidency* is forthcoming by SUNY Press. Dr. Warshaw has edited several volumes on the presidency of Dwight D. Eisenhower, was director of the Eisenhower Symposium, and has written widely on organizational decision making within the White House.

Notes

1. Richard Nixon began a concerted effort late in his first term to gain control over departmental policy making by appointing loyalists to key departmental political positions. The events of Watergate cut this strategy short and curtailed White House control of the appointments process. Reagan initiated the same process at the outset of his administration and was able to appoint loyalists throughout the departments.
2. In early 1982, Anderson left the White House and returned to an academic post at Stanford University. He was replaced by Edwin L. Harper, a University of Virginia Ph.D. who had been David Stockman's deputy at OMB. In September of 1982, John A. Svahn replaced Ed Harper as director of the Office of Policy Development, becoming the third director in as many years. Svahn had recently moved from Social Security Commissioner (1981-82) to undersecretary of Health and Human Services.
3. Anderson had two staff members, Kevin Hopkins and Douglas Bandow, prepare a series of ten notebooks that established Reagan's policy positions for the previous five years. For an overview of this process, see Dick Kirschten, "Reagan Sings of Cabinet Government, and Anderson Leads the Chorus," *National Journal*, May 9, 1981, p. 827.
4. The Cabinet Council system was developed by Ed Meese and Caspar Weinberger during the transition process. Anderson worked with them to develop the process.
5. Peter Benda and Charles Levine (1988) observed that "the cabinet council system was designed to keep political executives focused on the Reagan agenda while insulating them from the permanent departmental bureaucracies" (p. 110). See also Pfiffner, (1987). Pfiffner notes that "issues were not to be brought up to the President on a bilateral basis, but that all issues were to be 'roundtabled' by discussing them at a cabinet meeting" (p. 62).
6. Because of an apparent gender gap in voting behavior, the Reagan White House wanted to shore up support from women and women's groups. OPD staff worked with Senate minority leader Robert Dole (R-Kan), Barber B. Conable, Jr. (R-NY), ranking member of the House Ways and Means Committee, and women in the House and Senate to develop a package of initiatives that included programs for dependent care tax credits, increases in the amount of money that nonworking spouses can contribute to an Individual Retirement Account, and pension equity proposals. See Kirschten (1983).
7. All political appointees within the departments were, as Dom Bonafede noted, "carefully selected politically acceptable personnel" (1987; 48).
8. Although neither Nixon nor Carter began their administrations giving their cabinet officers autonomy to choose lower level staff, both ultimately centralized personnel clearance for the departments in the White House. The use of a personnel clearance system was refined by the Reagan staff, but in fact had been used by both the Nixon and Carter staffs late in their terms. Nixon had Frederic Malek and Carter had Tim Kraft run centralized personnel systems. The Reagan staff, however, integrated personnel clearance into the entire structure of cabinet-White House relations from the outset of the administration.

References

- Anderson, Martin, 1993. Personal interview with author.
- Bell, Terrel, 1988. *The Thirteenth Man: A Reagan Cabinet Memoir*. New York: Free Press.
- Benda, Peter M. and Charles H. Levine, 1988. "Reagan and the Bureaucracy: The Request, the Promise, and the Legacy." *The Reagan Legacy*. Chatham, NJ: Chatham House Publishers.
- Block, John, 1993. Personal interview with author.
- Bonafede, Dom, 1987. "Presidential Appointments: The Human Dimension." In Calvin Mackenzie, ed., *The Insiders and Outsiders*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Buder, Stuart, Michael Sanera, and W. Bruce Weinrod, 1984. *Mandate for Leadership II*. Washington, DC: The Heritage Foundation.
- Campbell, Colin, 1986. *Managing the Presidency: Carter, Reagan, and the Search for Executive Harmony*. Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press.
- Cannon, Lou, 1991. *Reagan, The Role of a Lifetime*. New York: Simon and Schuster.
- Goodsell, Charles T., 1994. *The Case for Bureaucracy*, 3d ed. Chatham, NJ: Chatham House Publishers.
- Haig, Alexander, 1984. *Caveat*. New York: MacMillan Co.
- Kirschten, Dick, 1982. "Decision-Making in the White House: How Well Does It Serve the President?" *National Journal* (April 3), 588.
- , 1983 "Don't Look for Sparks to Fly from White House Domestic Policy Office." *National Journal* (December 11), p. 2567.
- Miller, James, 1993. Personal interview with author.
- Patterson, Bradley H., Jr., 1984. *The Ring of Power*. New York: Basic Books.
- Pfiffner, James, 1987. "Strangers in a Strange Land: Orienting New Presidential Appointees." In Calvin Mackenzie, ed., *The Insiders and Outsiders*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, p. 150.
- , 1988. *The Strategic Presidency*. Chicago, IL: The Dorsey Press, p. 62.
- Preston, Edward, 1984. "Developing Managers: Orientating Presidential Appointees, Why Do Some Top Level Officials Succeed and Enjoy While Others Fail and Leave Frustrated." *The Bureaucrat*, vol. 13, no. 3, (Fall), 40-44.
- "Public Papers of the President," March 12, 1970.
- Ronald Reagan Library, 1983. Ed Harper to Bob Carleson, Document #139239PD, folder Education 115900-140569, box 4 (May 26). White House Office of Records Management.
- Rourke, Francis, 1988. Paper presented at the American Political Science Meeting, 1988.
- , 1990. "Executive Responsiveness to Presidential Policies: The Reagan Presidency." *Congress and the Presidency* (Spring).
- Stockman, David, 1986. *Triumph of Politics*. New York: Avon Books.
- Washington Post, 1981. "Personnel Office Grinds Out Names of Toilers in Reagan Vineyard." (June 18), A13.
- Watt, James, 1993. Personal interview with author.
- White House, Office of the Press Secretary, 1981. (February 26, 1981), 1.
- Witherspoon, Patricia Dennis, 1991. *Within These Walls: A Study of Communication Between President and Their Staffs*. New York: Praeger Publishers.

White House Control of Domestic Policy Making: The Reagan Years

Shirley Anne Warshaw, Gettysburg College

Since Richard Nixon, presidents have had the staff capability to manage domestic policy. With the creation of the Domestic Council in 1970, Nixon and his successors were able to use an in-house organizational structure to establish a domestic agenda and move that agenda through the policy process. Presidents have used the domestic policy office with varying degrees of success depending on their interactions with department personnel. Ronald Reagan, more than any other modern president, used the White House domestic policy staff to ensure departmental support for presidential policies. The White House Office of Policy Development worked closely with cabinet officers to constantly reinforce their support for and understanding of Reagan's key policy objectives. In addition, the White House controlled political personnel nominations to ensure ideological consistency with the Reagan agenda.

As the federal government has increased its role in society, the executive departments have each become responsible for thousands of programs and billions of dollars. The challenge to presidents in the modern presidency has been how to ensure that the myriad policies developed within the departments meet the programmatic and political goals of the administration.

That challenge has been met with a series of different strategies by recent presidents, each of which focused on using White House staff to influence or directly control the policy direction being taken within the departments. The focus of this article is the examination of the structure employed by Ronald Reagan to manage departmental policy making from the White House. I explore several questions: How different was this structure from ones used in previous administrations? How did the Reagan structure operate? and Are there parts of the Reagan structure that can or should be continued?

Continuing the Domestic Policy Office

The 1947 National Security Act institutionalized a White House structure for coordinating foreign policy, but domestic policy remained an enigma with no formal structure for coordinating or guiding the departments. The 1939 Reorganization Act provided a White House staff for presidents, but none had directly focused White House staff on managing domestic policy.

In 1969, Richard Nixon became the first president to develop a formal White House structure for coordinating the departments in the development of domestic policy initiatives. By executive order, Nixon established the Urban Affairs Council in January 1969, creating ten small working groups of cabinet officers. Yet, in spite of the efforts of its executive director, Daniel Patrick Moynihan, the Urban Affairs Council had a rather short life of only 11 months. Richard Nixon, dissatisfied with the policy initiatives continuing to emerge from the departments, abolished the Urban Affairs Council and created the Domestic Council, also through executive order ("Public Papers of the President," 1970). The Domestic Council was given broader control than the Urban Affairs Council over the departments in managing domestic initiatives and in controlling the proliferation of existing programs.

Every president since Richard Nixon continued to have a White House-based domestic policy office. Although Nixon and Ford referred to the unit as the Domestic Council, successive presidents changed the name. Carter referred to the unit as the Domestic Policy Group, Reagan and Bush called it the Office of Policy Development, and Clinton has again changed its name to the Domestic Policy Council. Although the names have been different, the goal of each president has been to create an internal structure that ensures that the political and programmatic objectives of the president are maintained throughout departmental policy making.

The Reagan Structure for Managing Domestic Policy Making

The experiences of Presidents Nixon, Ford, and Carter in managing domestic policy making from the White House were mixed. Each had created an office in the White House for domestic policy and had used that office with varying degrees of success in controlling departmental agendas. Reagan built on the experiences of his predecessors and continued the use of a White House structure for managing domestic policy making. The legacy of the Reagan years, however, is that the administration expanded the White House structure to include not only the domestic policy office but a network of interrelated White House offices to oversee departmental policy making. The White House exercised more control over domestic policy under Reagan than in any previous administration.¹

Reagan's White House network revolved around three key units within the White House: the Office of Policy Development that guided departmental initiatives; the White House personnel office that sought to expand the number of departmental political appointees and to ensure that those appointees were Reagan loyalists; and an internal clearance system that allowed White House staff to bargain departmental policies with Congress without departmental involvement. This multi-layered approach brought nearly all senior White House staff into oversight of departmental activities.

The Office of Policy Development

By the time Ronald Reagan moved into the Oval Office in January 1981, three presidents had established domestic policy offices within the White House. Although it was far from an institutionalized process, it was by now viewed as an integral part of the White House staff. Under the direction of former Nixon staffer Martin Anderson, the Office of Policy Development (OPD) was created within the Reagan White House to manage the administration's domestic policy initiatives. Anderson had been a key player throughout Reagan's presidential campaign as the architect of Reagan's economic platform and a stalwart supporter of the conservative agenda. As a former staff member to both Arthur Burns and John Ehrlichman in the Nixon White House, Anderson had a clear view of how the domestic policy unit should be framed.²

Anderson's first move was to change the name of Carter's

The goal of each president has been to create an internal structure that ensures that the political and programmatic objectives of the president are maintained throughout departmental policy making.

Domestic Policy Group to the Office of Policy Development to "serve notice that a new administration had taken over" (Kirschten, 1982). He then quickly moved to design an organizational relationship between the departments and the White House to ensure that department programs were in line with presidential goals and objectives. Anderson created a structure for policy development that involved constant interaction between the White House staff and senior department staff.

Proposals that were developed by the departments were guided not only by the White House staff directly but by material prepared by Anderson's office that detailed Reagan's positions on policy issues. Each cabinet officer was given this information, simply referred to as "the notebooks" because they were assembled in thick three-ringed binders. The notebooks outlined Reagan's statements from the 1980 campaign and the previous five years on a broad range of policy concepts (Anderson, 1993).³ Department staff were told to base all of their policy proposals on the objectives outlined within the notebooks.

James Miller, who followed David Stockman as Reagan's director of the Office of Management and Budget, commented that

Martin Anderson's books were the bibles. The president had a consistent ideology. The bibles provided a consistent framework and consistent ideas. I felt I could predict what Ronald Reagan would do in almost any circumstance from the statements in these notebooks (Miller, 1993).

In addition to the notebooks and other written material to guide the cabinet in policy issues, OPD staff created the cabinet council system. Small groups of cabinet officers were regularly brought into the White House to discuss administration goals and objectives and department initiatives.⁴ Five cabinet councils were created by executive order on February 26, 1981, dealing with economic affairs, commerce and trade, human resources, natural resources and the environment, and food and agriculture (White House, 1981). Two more councils were created in 1982: On January 29, 1982, the Cabinet Council for Legal Policy was formed, and on September 22, 1982, the Cabinet Council on Management and Administration was established.

Generally, cabinet officers served on three or four cabinet councils, with one member serving on six different councils. In addition to cabinet officers, three members of the White House staff (Ed Meese, Jim Baker, and Vice President George Bush) were added to the list of members of all of the councils. Only

Although *there was a significant reliance on the cabinet council system for policy development, the*

White House nevertheless acted alone in many instances.

one member of the cabinet, the Secretary of Education, sat on only one council.

Although the cabinet council structure was designed to afford the White House greater direct control over policy making, the structure also nurtured the relationships of cabinet officers among themselves. Because cabinet officers sat on several councils, they interacted frequently with most other members of the cabinet. Personal relationships were created, which helped to mitigate the turf battles that often dominate interdepartmental relationships. Cabinet officers worked together on interjurisdictional policy issues toward a common objective. Territorial fights were far less common in the Reagan administration than in the Carter administration, in large part because of the sense of shared mission fostered by the cabinet council structure. Such cabinet interaction was a key part of the cabinet council design, which endeavored to facilitate a team approach to policy making and to minimize attempts by individual departments to move independently.

The meeting schedule was also carefully structured by OPD. Meetings for the cabinet councils were held in the Roosevelt Room next to the Oval Office or in the Cabinet Room but were never held outside of the White House. The meeting time, place, and agenda were all carefully designed to be controlled by the White House. "The genius of the Cabinet Council system," according to Anderson, "was that councils were Cabinet level. You couldn't send substitutes, such as deputies, to the meetings.... What really made the whole thing work was that all meetings had to be in the White House. The White House controlled what time the meeting would take place, where the meeting occurred, and the agenda" (Anderson, 1993).

These meetings dealt with policy issues and, perhaps more importantly, fostered a shared vision for the administration among the cabinet officers. As one of the cabinet officers described the meetings,

Cabinet councils did work and they worked well. At each meeting we kind of hugged each other. The meetings were important because every one understood they we were part of a team and were the president's representatives to the constituencies and not the other way around (Miller, 1993).

One of the more intangible rewards of the cabinet council system was the behind-the-scenes negotiations that often took place in the hallway outside of the Roosevelt Room just before a cabinet council meeting. Many issues were worked out quietly among the cabinet officers before they were brought up at the cabinet council meetings. For example, one of these issues was a pact that the Agriculture Department wanted to make with

Russia regarding long-term grain sales. Prior to one of the cabinet council meetings, Secretary of State George Shultz asked Agriculture Secretary John Block to wait a few months before completing the grain deal so that some sensitive arms negotiations could be completed. Block agreed and waited until Shultz gave him the green light to proceed (Block, 1993). As another cabinet officer noted, "It was the fact that the people got along so well that allowed the cabinet council system to be so successful" (Watt, 1993).

The policies emerging through the cabinet councils were carefully monitored by White House senior staff. Anderson met daily with the senior staff to review the policy proposals being prepared by each cabinet council working group. Five days per week at 7:30 a.m. the senior White House staff met in the Roosevelt Room to discuss major issues facing the administration, including those being addressed by the cabinet councils. (Senior staff included 15 to 20 people, such as Anderson, Meese, Baker, Gergen, Darman, the Congressional Liaison staff, and the press office staff.) After the senior staff meeting, Meese and the OPD staff adjourned to Meese's office to discuss policy issues evolving in the cabinet councils and the working groups. The decisions that finally emerged from the cabinet councils were decisions that had been guided and refined at every step in the process by the White House staff (Witherspoon, 1991; 178). Once a policy emerged from the cabinet councils, it emerged with the blessing of the White House.⁵

Although there was a significant reliance on the cabinet council system for policy development, the White House nevertheless acted alone in many instances. Issues that were politically volatile, crossed too many departmental lines, or simply required immediate attention were handled directly by the White House senior staff without cabinet council input, including such diverse issues as Social Security disability and hospice services (Ronald Reagan Library, 1983). Even a package of incentives to appease women's groups developed in 1983 by OPD was worked out directly with members of Congress and not with cabinet officers.⁶

A caveat with this analysis is that the White House, although successful in controlling most departmental policy initiatives, was not totally successful. For example, in 1987 Otis Bowen, Secretary of Health and Human Services, overcame strong White House opposition and succeeded in gaining passage of the Medicare Catastrophic Care Act. Similarly, Surgeon General Everett Koop often moved in directions at odds with White House staff. However, juxtaposed against the Nixon, Ford, and Carter administrations, the Reagan White House had far more success at controlling departmental policy initiatives and minimizing interdepartmental warfare.

Personnel Selection for Subcabinet Positions

The second component of Reagan's network for controlling departmental policy making involved personnel selection and management. Department policy making, as we have seen, had a significant amount of control from the White House through the cabinet council working groups. The White House also

controlled the subcabinet personnel involved in department policy making. Not only were cabinet officers chosen for their ideological commitment to the Reagan agenda but lower level staff were as well.⁷ The strata of political appointees below the cabinet were scrutinized for their ideological commitment to the Reagan agenda as thoroughly as the cabinet officers themselves. Rourke (1988; 1990) refers to this process as "presidentializing the bureaucracy."

Unlike Nixon and Carter, Reagan did not allow his cabinet officers singlehandedly to choose their deputies or any of the other political appointments in the departments.⁸ Pendleton James' White House personnel operation controlled departmental political jobs. All political positions, from deputy secretaries to personal secretaries, were controlled from the White House. Interviewed for the *Washington Post* in mid-1981, James said that "Nixon, like Carter, lost the appointments process. They lost control to the departments and the agencies. We have maintained control at the Oval Office" (*Washington Post*, 1981). Cabinet officers were discouraged from even recommending names to the White House (Watt, 1993; James, 1993).

There was a preoccupation by the Reagan staff that the career bureaucracy would actively oppose their agenda. They sought to place Reagan loyalists in management positions and not promote career staff. Where possible, the Reagan staff tried to add more layers of political appointees on top of career employees (Goodsell, 1994; 173). In a blueprint for action prepared for the Reagan administration prior to the inauguration, the Heritage Foundation warned the administration how powerful the bureaucracy was, which the Reagan White House took to heart:

The political executive who is promoting significant policy change within his department should not be surprised by career bureaucratic subordinates engaging in... covert inter-bureaucratic struggle to block his initiatives. Bureaucratic opponents will lobby vigorously against the proposed policy change to client groups, congressional committee staffs, and the press. The bureaucracy's resources for defending its viewpoint, leaking discrediting material, and mustering outside allies are such that it could be correctly called the "ultimate lobby" (Butler *et al.*, 1984; 491).

Throughout the first year, James cleared most, if not all, appointments with the Big Three, as he called the Baker, Deaver, Meese troika, and many appointments he cleared directly with Reagan. According to James, "I met with the president twice a week and with the Big Three at 5:00 p.m. every day of the first year" (Bonafede, 1987; 50). This continual oversight of personnel by senior staff and by the president himself reinforced the importance that the Reagan White House attached to controlling the bureaucracy.

Personnel selection was part of Reagan's grand design to minimize the career staff's influence over departmental policy decisions. Some cabinet officers balked at the directive and tried to bring in their own staff. For example, Caspar Weinberger tried to hire Frank Carlucci as his principal deputy. The

There was a preoccupation by the Reagan staff that the career bureaucracy would actively oppose their agenda. They sought to place Reagan loyalists in management positions and not promote career staff.

White House personnel operation refused to accept Carlucci, who had served as deputy director of the Central Intelligence Agency under Carter. The very mention of the Carter administration sent shivers up the spines of the personnel team. Weinberger eventually won, but Carlucci was one of the rare exceptions hired over the objection of the White House personnel operation.

Cabinet officers were given lists of names that were acceptable to the White House from which to choose their top staff. Most cabinet officers found that they could easily find acceptable people on the lists. However, some cabinet officers made separate deals with Pendleton James that allowed them to put their own people in place. Such a case was Secretary of the Interior James Watt, whose entire staff was handpicked by Watt. All of Watt's staff were former associates with whom he had previously worked and whom he knew shared the same agenda for the department (Watt, 1993). Cabinet secretaries were not completely discouraged from making recommendations to James for their subcabinet positions. As one cabinet officer noted, "If you were doing a good job and had a track record of picking good people, the White House personnel office approved your people" (Miller, 1993).

Most of the cabinet quietly accepted the Reagan demand for approval over their subcabinet appointments. Alexander Haig said of the process, "The names on this list, it was understood, were the ones with which Reagan was comfortable" (Haig, 1984; 64-65). At the top of the list for Deputy Secretary of State, the senior subcabinet position in the department, was Judge William P. Clark of the California Supreme Court, a long-time Reagan friend, but not deeply involved in foreign policy. Clark was subsequently named to the post, much to Haig's chagrin.

It is worth adding that the personnel operation shrewdly coupled loyalty to the Reagan agenda with federal management experience in their quest for departmental staff. Unlike Jimmy Carter, who pursued technical experts for managerial positions, Ronald Reagan pursued managers (Kirschten, 1982).

Some cabinet officers, however, were quite bitter about the degree of control that the White House exerted over personnel selection. Terrel Bell, Secretary of Education, rather bitterly described the process by saying that, given

the determination of Ed Meese and his White House aides to stack my department and my equally fervent resolve to prevent this, it is not difficult to fathom the reasons for the inordinate delays in consummating sub-

Yet *in spite of often vigorous opposition to White House control of the personnel process, the White House pursued its goal of centralizing personnel decisions.*

cabinet positions in ED.... How could I fight back?... I was on my own during the first months of 1981 (Bell, 1988; 43).

Yet in spite of often vigorous opposition to White House control of the personnel process, the White House pursued its goal of centralizing personnel decisions. While Terrel Bell and others complained about the system, they were essentially forced into complying with it. Presidential scholar Bradley Patterson summed up the process when he said, "The Presidential Personnel Office is thus part of the White House gateway, closing out those who don't measure up, beckoning in the select, doing the president's bidding to help him be chief executive in fact as well as in name" (Patterson, 1988; 258-259).

Personnel Management

Personnel selection was coupled with personnel management. Once in office, political appointees were briefed on administration goals and on budgeting, policy development, and other key areas. This task fell to Craig Fuller, the Assistant to the President for Cabinet Affairs, who designed a two-pronged approach to personnel management (Preston, 1984). Top-level presidential appointees met in small seminars of 20-25 with faculty from the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University on political and managerial strategies for both policy development and implementation (Pfiffner, 1988). All senior executive service (SES) officials participated in day-and-a-half seminars run by the Office of Personnel Management through the Federal Executive Institute.

Personnel management continued throughout the administration as subcabinet appointments were regularly brought together by Office of Management and Budget (OMB) staff to discuss policy issues in the Old Executive Office Building. The purpose of these meetings was twofold. On the one hand, the meetings served as minicabinet council meetings where inter-jurisdictional policy details could be further refined. On the other hand, and more important, they gave the White House another opportunity to reiterate the Reagan agenda and confirm that subcabinet officials understood that agenda. Subcabinet staff were constantly reinforced with the idea that they were an integral part of the Reagan team and that their mission was to reduce the number of departmental programs and the size of the departmental staff (Campbell, 1986; 266-267).

Legislative Strategy Group

The third component of Reagan's network for White House control of domestic policy making involved the legislative strategy group. Although the White House worked with the departments to develop policies which met Reagan's political and pro-

grammatic needs, these policies were not always acceptable to Congress. Traditionally, the congressional liaison in the White House worked with the departments to modify proposals that could not pass muster in Congress. This, of course, took time.

Time was of the essence to the Reagan White House. Their answer to the problem was to revamp the policies internally without going back to the departments and through the cabinet council system. James Baker headed a small group of senior White House staff known as the legislative strategy group that developed the most advantageous means of securing congressional support for administration programs.

The legislative strategy group was composed of OMB director David Stockman, Treasury Secretary Donald Regan, and senior staff members Meese and Baker. Baker also included from his staff congressional lobbyist Max Friedersdorf, public liaison Elizabeth Dole (later Secretary of Transportation), communications director David Gergen, and his chief lieutenant Richard Darman. Their role was to develop the most appropriate public relations and legislative strategy for cabinet-council-developed proposals. The effect of the legislative strategy group was to bring another layer of White House control into the policy-development process and to reduce the power of the departments in that process. Baker regularly dealt with Congress on policy issues without any input from the departments.

Office of Management and Budget

The Office of Management and Budget also played a major role in the development of the final product that went to Congress. As a member of every cabinet council, David Stockman's staff (and later James Miller's staff) was able to push options that cut programs and personnel. When the cabinet councils argued with OMB staff that certain programs simply could not be cut, Stockman overruled the councils. An example of the power that Stockman had over the departments was his decision to cut commodity price supports. The price supports had been developed through the cabinet council system and approved by Anderson's OPD staff, but Stockman wanted to see deeper cuts. Without consulting the cabinet council, or the Department of Agriculture, Stockman made further cuts and worked with the legislative strategy group to push the bill through Congress. Assistant Secretary of Agriculture for Economics, William G. Leshner, noted that the "Cabinet Council system broke down. Stockman and others had their ideas of what should be in a farm bill.... Much to our chagrin, that persuasion won out" (Kirschten, 1982).

Stockman was equally hard on individual cabinet officers. When departmental policies did not meet the administration's budget-cutting goals, Stockman met with the cabinet officers and reiterated Reagan's charge to cut the budget. In *Triumph of Politics*, Stockman (1986) writes,

We had brow-beaten the cabinet, one by one, into accepting the cuts.... We forced health research cuts on Dick Schweiker at HHS. We stifled Jack Block with soil conservation cuts at USDA. We shackled Ted Bell with a sweeping retrenchment at the Education Department (p. 123).

Some cabinet officers, such as Alexander Haig, felt Stockman was interfering with policy decisions with the budget cuts that OMB recommended. Early in 1981, Haig declared that he was "mindful of the need for budgetary restraint," but he and "no one else was in charge of policy" (Stockman, 1986: 128). Yet in the end, OMB always won.

Stockman's role in the cabinet-White House relationship cannot be underestimated. Not only could Stockman overrule cabinet officers and effectively abrogate cabinet council decisions but he could make policy decisions without ever bringing them to the cabinet or cabinet council for debate. Perhaps the most significant example of his authority were the 1981 budget cuts. On February 18, 1981, Reagan went before a joint session of Congress to announce his "Program for Economic Recovery," which presented to Congress a list of program cuts, most of which Stockman had single-handedly made without consulting any of the departments (Campbell, 1986: 197-198).

Conclusion

Lou Cannon noted that "the modern presidency created by Franklin Roosevelt is of necessity a centralizing force" (Cannon, 1991: 184). More than any president in modern history, Ronald Reagan centralized the policy-making process. The White House became the center of policy development, management, and congressional implementation. Political personnel within the departments were cleared through the White House and their actions constantly monitored by the White House and the Executive Office of the President.

The legacy of the Reagan White House is that it built a system of control that the Nixon, Ford, and Carter administrations began but had not fully developed. Under Reagan, the system of controlling domestic policy development from the White House was finely tuned.

The Reagan White House was generally able to control the domestic cabinet officers from moving in directions that were politically and programmatically unacceptable to the president. By constantly meeting in small groups with the cabinet, White House staff were able to keep cabinet officers within the presidential orbit and minimize cooption. Departmental policy initiatives could be focused around the goals and objectives outlined by the White House.

In spite of a carefully crafted structure for managing domestic policy, certain policy initiatives were created by the departments and moved to fruition without White House support. It is virtually impossible to monitor the entire executive branch. However, the Reagan White House, particularly in the first term, developed a policy process that was more successful at controlling department policy initiatives than any of its recent predecessors.

The failure by the three previous administrations to manage

The most important lesson learned for future administrations is that the White House can develop a workable structure to manage departmental domestic policy making.

domestic policy from the White House stemmed from their inability to focus policy matters around relatively narrow issues and their failure to bring cabinet officers into discussions on the broader issues facing the administration. The Reagan White House succeeded in building a bridge between the White House and the departments that allowed input from cabinet officers into a broad array of policy issues. Cabinet officers considered themselves key players in the development of the administration's general policy initiatives. The White House, however, maintained control over issues that were either politically volatile or required rapid turn-over time.

Is there a lesson from the Reagan experience? Perhaps the most important lesson learned for future administrations is that the White House can develop a workable structure to manage departmental domestic policy making. Presidents Nixon, Ford, and Carter each built part of the frame for the structure which Reagan finally nailed together. The structure remains wobbly, however, for it was a structure that suited the Reagan agenda of cutting bureaucracy, privatizing programs, reducing federal regulations, and bringing down federal spending. It is unquestionably easier to foster strong relations between the cabinet and the White House if reducing programs rather than increasing programs is central to the agenda. If an administration seeks to increase programmatic activities, the battle over limited resources will dominate the relationship among cabinet officers. White House staff will be less successful in binding cabinet officers together when the administration's policy direction is broader and forces competition for funding.

The lesson, however, is not lost. Reagan changed the way the White House dealt with the departments by fostering the sense that policy development was a team operation between the cabinet officers and the White House. If future administrations build on this framework, regardless of policy orientation, they will enhance their success at keeping departmental priorities within the president's agenda.

♦ ♦ ♦

Shirley Anne Warshaw is an associate professor of political science at Gettysburg College. Her book *Powersharing: White House-Cabinet Relations in the Modern Presidency* is forthcoming by SUNY Press. Dr. Warshaw has edited several volumes on the presidency of Dwight D. Eisenhower, was director of the Eisenhower Symposium, and has written widely on organizational decision making within the White House.

Notes

1. Richard Nixon began a concerted effort late in his first term to gain control over departmental policy making by appointing loyalists to key departmental political positions. The events of Watergate cut this strategy short and curtailed White House control of the appointments process. Reagan initiated the same process at the outset of his administration and was able to appoint loyalists throughout the departments.
2. In early 1982, Anderson left the White House and returned to an academic post at Stanford University. He was replaced by Edwin L. Harper, a University of Virginia Ph.D. who had been David Stockman's deputy at OMB. In September of 1982, John A. Svahn replaced Ed Harper as director of the Office of Policy Development, becoming the third director in as many years. Svahn had recently moved from Social Security Commissioner (1981-82) to undersecretary of Health and Human Services.
3. Anderson had two staff members, Kevin Hopkins and Douglas Bandow, prepare a series of ten notebooks that established Reagan's policy positions for the previous five years. For an overview of this process, see Dick Kirschten, "Reagan Sings of Cabinet Government, and Anderson Leads the Chorus," *National Journal*, May 9, 1981, p. 827.
4. The Cabinet Council system was developed by Ed Meese and Caspar Weinberger during the transition process. Anderson worked with them to develop the process.
5. Peter Benda and Charles Levine (1988) observed that "the cabinet council system was designed to keep political executives focused on the Reagan agenda while insulating them from the permanent departmental bureaucracies" (p. 110). See also Pfiffner, (1987). Pfiffner notes that "issues were not to be brought up to the President on a bilateral basis, but that all issues were to be 'roundtabled' by discussing them at a cabinet meeting" (p. 62).
6. Because of an apparent gender gap in voting behavior, the Reagan White House wanted to shore up support from women and women's groups. OPD staff worked with Senate minority leader Robert Dole (R-Kan), Barber B. Conable, Jr. (R-NY), ranking member of the House Ways and Means Committee, and women in the House and Senate to develop a package of initiatives that included programs for dependent care tax credits, increases in the amount of money that nonworking spouses can contribute to an Individual Retirement Account, and pension equity proposals. See Kirschten (1983).
7. All political appointees within the departments were, as Dom Bonafede noted, "carefully selected politically acceptable personnel" (1987; 48).
8. Although neither Nixon nor Carter began their administrations giving their cabinet officers autonomy to choose lower level staff, both ultimately centralized personnel clearance for the departments in the White House. The use of a personnel clearance system was refined by the Reagan staff, but in fact had been used by both the Nixon and Carter staffs late in their terms. Nixon had Frederic Malek and Carter had Tim Kraft run centralized personnel systems. The Reagan staff, however, integrated personnel clearance into the entire structure of cabinet-White House relations from the outset of the administration.

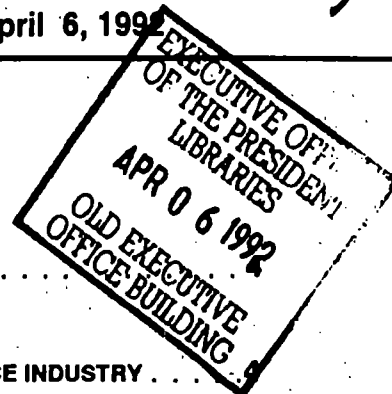
References

- Anderson, Martin, 1993. Personal interview with author.
- Bell, Terrel, 1988. *The Thirteenth Man: A Reagan Cabinet Memoir*. New York: Free Press.
- Benda, Peter M. and Charles H. Levine, 1988. "Reagan and the Bureaucracy: The Request, the Promise, and the Legacy." *The Reagan Legacy*. Chatham, NJ: Chatham House Publishers.
- Block, John, 1993. Personal interview with author.
- Bonafede, Dom, 1987. "Presidential Appointments: The Human Dimension." In Calvin Mackenzie, ed., *The Insiders and Outsiders*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Butler, Stuart, Michael S  nara, and W. Bruce Weinrod, 1984. *Mandate for Leadership II*. Washington, DC: The Heritage Foundation.
- Campbell, Colin, 1986. *Managing the Presidency: Carter, Reagan, and the Search for Executive Harmony*. Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press.
- Cannon, Lou, 1991. *Reagan, The Role of a Lifetime*. New York: Simon and Schuster.
- Goodsell, Charles T., 1994. *The Case for Bureaucracy*, 3d ed. Chatham, NJ: Chatham House Publishers.
- Haig, Alexander, 1984. *Caveat*. New York: MacMillan Co.
- Kirschten, Dick, 1982. "Decision-Making in the White House: How Well Does It Serve the President?" *National Journal* (April 3), 588.
- _____, 1983 "Don't Look for Sparks to Fly from White House Domestic Policy Office." *National Journal* (December 11), p. 2567.
- Miller, James, 1993. Personal interview with author.
- Patterson, Bradley H., Jr., 1984. *The Ring of Power*. New York: Basic Books.
- Pfiffner, James, 1987. "Strangers in a Strange Land: Orienting New Presidential Appointees." In Calvin Mackenzie, ed., *The Insiders and Outsiders*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, p. 150.
- _____, 1988. *The Strategic Presidency*. Chicago, IL: The Dorsey Press, p. 62.
- Preston, Edward, 1984. "Developing Managers: Orientating Presidential Appointees. Why Do Some Top Level Officials Succeed and Enjoy While Others Fail and Leave Frustrated." *The Bureaucrat*, vol. 13, no. 3, (Fall), 40-44.
- "Public Papers of the President," March 12, 1970.
- Ronald Reagan Library, 1983. Ed Harper to Bob Carleson, Document #139239PD, folder Education 115900-140569, box 4 (May 26). White House Office of Records Management.
- Rourke, Francis, 1988. Paper presented at the American Political Science Meeting, 1988.
- _____, 1990. "Executive Responsiveness to Presidential Policies: The Reagan Presidency." *Congress and the Presidency* (Spring).
- Stockman, David, 1986. *Triumph of Politics*. New York: Avon Books.
- Washington Post, 1981. "Personnel Office Grinds Out Names of Toilers in Reagan Vineyard." (June 18), A13.
- Watt, James, 1993. Personal interview with author.
- White House, Office of the Press Secretary, 1981. (February 26, 1981), 1.
- Witherspoon, Patricia Dennis, 1991. *Within These Walls: A Study of Communication Between Presidents and Their Staffs*. New York: Praeger Publishers.



Volume 13 Number 14

April 6, 1992



IN THIS ISSUE

RE-ORGANIZED DOMESTIC SHOP
FASHIONED AFTER NSC 1

BUSH, CLINTON LEAD
IN TV'S HUMOR RACE

COMMUNICATIONS WOES
CONTINUE TO PLAGUE WHITE HOUSE 2

BUSH HEALTH PLAN
SEEN TO HURT INSURANCE INDUSTRY

SLOW GOING REPLACING
NSC PUBLIC AFFAIRS STAFF 3

CARD USES HUMOR IN ADJUSTING
TO TRANSPORTATION POST 5

GOP PRO-CHOICE MOVEMENT
THREATENS TO DISRUPT CONVENTION 4

THOUGH HE REVEALED CLINTON'S FLAWS,
BROWN NOT LIKELY TO WIN N.Y. 6

RE-ORGANIZED DOMESTIC SHOP FASHIONED AFTER NSC

Chief of Staff **Sam Skinner**, Deputy Chief of Staff **Henson Moore**, and domestic policy czar **Clayton Yeutter** have reorganized the White House domestic policy staff and modeled it after the highly-structured National Security Council. Under the trio's plan, the Domestic Policy Council and the Economic Policy Council have been combined into the broader Policy Coordinating Group.

And, like the NSC, it is essentially run by a deputies committee. The committee, which includes the deputies of agencies, departments, and White House domestic policy organizations, is headed by **Roger Porter**. Under the NSC model, the deputies committee often takes control of a crisis and handles all the major decisions that don't need involvement from President Bush or Cabinet members, according to Yeutter. —

"It's a lot easier to get things done quicker in a deputies group at a sub-Cabinet level than at the Cabinet level," Yeutter said.

In addition to the deputies group, the domestic organization relies on 15 to 20 working groups responsible for developing new policies or handling inter-governmental disputes. Yeutter said the groups are charged with studying issues such as the Spotted Owl, trade, education reform, welfare reform, commerce and export promotion. Yeutter said the working groups are similar to NSC directorates.

Asked why the changes were made, he said, "we are not trying to overcome anything. We are trying to govern well."

In addition, the Policy Coordinating Group has set up a long-range schedule to plan one

WHI
articul

major speech and event a week. That plan was set up to provide more lead time for developing the President's speeches and make campaign events a bigger news draw.

Yeutter said it was also "to begin to lay out the President's vision for the second term."

The White House is making the plans, because Bush doesn't think he has to campaign until after the party conventions -- largely because GOP challenger **Pat Buchanan** has given up his fight.

COMMUNICATIONS WOES CONTINUE TO PLAGUE WHITE HOUSE

The communications problems choking the White House hit an all-time high last week, when senior Bush aides stumbled over how to handle two key Bush events -- one at the White House and the other on the road.

To the surprise of Administration officials and Bush-Quayle campaign aides, the White House scheduled a major speech in Philadelphia's Congress Hall on the same day the President planned to unveil his program to aid the Commonwealth of Independent States -- the former Soviet Union.

"I can't believe they are doing it," said one senior Administration official last Monday, two days before the White House press office made plans for the joint events.

Officials feared that one of the events would be lost in the coverage of the other. "They are both key events that we have been working on and they are going to ruin both," warned one Bush aide. By early Tuesday, however, the White House moved to separate the events and put them on different days. But it only got worse from there.

Instead of hosting a Rose Garden-type of event where Bush could announce the Russian aid plan and not have to face questions on other issues from reporters, the White House instead scheduled a press conference. And instead of having the event focus on the historic aid program, reporters turned it into a free-for-all.

"That took the luster off the whole announcement," complained one official.

But worse, said a senior Bush aide, the White House delayed the President's speech calling for congressional reform until Friday -- the "black hole" in the news business, because few homes watch Friday night news and Saturday newspapers are the lowest in circulation.

"We blew it," admitted an Administration official, who joined others in expressing disappointment with the handling of the Friday congressional reform speech.

The problems in dealing with the two Bush events last week highlight a continuing problem in the Administration over how to communicate the Bush campaign themes and how to make news. The confusion over the Philadelphia speech also put new focus on an internal White House battle over the Bush message. Administration officials said that the initial speech included a tough call for congressional reform. But several top Bush aides, including Chief of Staff **Sam Skinner**, put in orders to cut the harsh language.

"We are missing an opportunity to hit Congress and take advantage of all the problems they are facing. We are trying to show that a divided government doesn't work, but no one is

**A DOMESTIC POLICY OFFICE:
PRESIDENTIAL AGENCY IN SEARCH OF A ROLE**

Margaret Jane Wyszomirski, Rutgers University

INTRODUCTION

During the past fifty years, the presidential role in policy making has expanded both in terms of the president's range of policy responsibilities and the scope of his involvement in the policy process. This expansion has come to include all phases (Jones, 1977; Shull, 1979) of the process and not merely the explicitly executive function of implementation. As part of the Executive Office of the President (EOP), presidents have acquired a variety of institutional resources intended to assist them in their expanded policy activities and responsibilities. Since 1970, a domestic policy office has been one of these administrative resources.¹ Different presidents have called upon this office and its director (the presidential assistant for domestic affairs) to play different roles in the policy process. These roles reflect differing relational patterns between the president, the agency, and its director. This article will examine the different roles the domestic policy office has played in three different administrations.

THREE RELATIONAL PATTERNS

Principles of agency law provide the basis for identifying three distinctive relational patterns that pervade bureaucratic administration. These patterns can provide an analytical framework for the study of the interaction of presidents and other executive officials. The three patterns are those of (1) principal and agent; (2) master and servant; and (3) advisee and advisor. Each is distinguished by certain rights, responsibilities, duties, limitations, advantages, and liabilities.

An agent is one who is commissioned to transact business in the name of his principal. An agent is expected to perform loyally and competently, exercising whatever skills and discretion may be necessary to perform his charge. He must provide an account of his dealings. The principal is responsible for the actions and commitments that his agent makes pursuant to his commission. Depending upon the breadth of the commission, one can be a special or a general agent. The heads of the executive departments and agencies are the president's primary executive agents.

Servants or administrative staff perform operative, non-discretionary tasks under the direct (at least theoretically) supervision of the master. Servants assist their master but they cannot act for him. A master is responsible for the activities of his servants, even if these contradict or exceed his directions. Thus, the president as master becomes politically accountable for the conduct of his staff servants.

Advisors offer advice. They are selected for their special expertise or skill and are usually assigned specific, focused subjects for analysis and opinion. Advisors bear no responsibility for executing their recommendations. Advisees (in this case, the president) are under no obligation to accept or act upon advice that is tendered. Advisors may both inform presidential decision making and, by virtue of their expert reputations, help to legitimize policy decisions, once they have been made. On the other hand,

expert advice is not always useful or costless (Thomas, 1972; Laski, 1960; Lyons, 1971). Professional expectations and norms may cause some expert recommendations to be substantively accurate but politically infeasible and, therefore, of limited utility. Although presidents are free to reject advice, they sometimes do so at the risk of seeing the scorned advisor return to private life where he may become a potent critic of presidential policy. These drawbacks are not, however, inherent in the advisory relationship itself. Rather they derive from differences between advisee and advisor in matters of personality, ideology, or perspective.

The Executive Office of the President (EOP) was established to provide presidents with help — meaning administrative staff. The relationship between the president and this staff was intended to be that of master and servant. Yet within a decade it was evident that the president needed another kind of help: expert advice. Hence, Roosevelt's experiments with a brain trust and a war council were subsequently formalized as advisory councils — the Council of Economic Advisors (CEA) and the National Security Council (NSC).

Much of the subsequent growth of the EOP has involved the addition of more staff and different types of advice. The institutionalized presidency began to emerge and, as long as the components performed service or advisory roles, that development was perceived as legitimate by the public and by other institutions of government. This view rested on the assumption that staff and advisors did not expand the power or authority of the president but rather enhanced his ability to exercise that which he already held. Administrative staff were presumed to be dependent upon and directed by the president. Even if or when their actions exceeded the limits of service or were not at presidential direction, the responsibility for what the staff did remained with the president. Similarly, advisors could offer analysis and opinion, but the authority to make decisions and, hence, the responsibility for them was still the president's.

Within these limits, however, there was considerable flexibility since the EOP had been designed to accommodate variations in presidential styles and goals. Individual EOP units also proved to be quite adaptable. Administrative units might develop special skills or competencies and, therefore, assume advisory functions. Similarly, advisory units might acquire administrative duties. Presidents might choose to diminish or dispense with certain kinds of advice or service. A unit could shrink, atrophy, expand, or diversify. As policy needs waxed and waned, presidents experienced a variable need for advice. As circumstances changed, the need for service varied.

Customarily, political executives in the line agencies who were authorized to preside over policy implementation and were variably involved in the formulation, enactment, and evaluation stages of the policy process, were the president's agents. Thus, few provisions were made for agents to be formally established in the EOP. Occasionally, Congress might, with or without presidential concurrence, consider the existing bureaucratic machinery too slow, too awkward, or too fragmented to address a pressing need. If that happened, Congress could authorize a new executive agent and put it at the president's disposal as part of the EOP (e.g., The Office of Economic Opportunity). In their search for the presumptive powers of the managerial presidency, presidents have attempted informally to transform

servants or advisors into agents. Some have even succeeded, temporarily, in procuring such agents.

The roles that any given EOP unit play will depend in large part upon the differing needs of different presidents; upon the abilities of the personnel and directors of each unit; upon the mutual compatibility of president, director, and agency personnel; and upon the influence or authority of other competing or interacting bureaucratic entities. The succeeding three sections use these conditions to examine the role(s) of the domestic policy office under Presidents Nixon, Carter, and Reagan.

PRESIDENTIAL AGENT: THE NIXON DOMESTIC COUNCIL

Formally, the Domestic Council (DC) was a two-tiered organization established by Executive Order 11541, pursuant to Reorganization Plan #2 of 1970. It was originally created to preside over the domestic policy function as a counterpart of the NSC in the national security area and of the BOB/OMB in the budgetary management field (Moe, 1976).

Its first tier — the council — was chaired by the President. Its members included the vice president; the attorney general; the secretaries of the Departments of Treasury, Interior, Agriculture, Commerce, Labor, HEW, HUD, and Transportation; the chairman of the CEA; the director of the Office of Economic Opportunity; and the director and deputy director of OMB. An invitation to attend meetings or to otherwise participate in council activities could be extended to others as the need arose.

The second tier — the staff — was headed by an executive director who was a member of the senior White House staff, holding the title of assistant to the president for domestic affairs (John Ehrlichman). He was assisted by a deputy director in charge of day-to-day operations (Kenneth Cole) and six assistant directors, each of whom had responsibility for a cluster of policy topics. Each assistant director had, in turn, a small staff.

Initially, the Domestic Council had a small staff drawn from those of its predecessors, the Rural and Urban Affairs Councils, as well as from Ehrlichman's prior office as counsel. Between 1970 and 1973, the staff grew dramatically, increasing from fifteen to fifty-five, but, in 1974, the staff was nearly halved, dropping to only twenty-nine employees.² This reduction was one consequence of President Nixon's rejection of the White House counter-bureaucracy approach. Having reached the conclusion that White House personnel could not penetrate governmental operations deeply or systematically enough to control policy-setting and managerial processes in domestic affairs (Nathan, 1983), the President intended to streamline the Executive Office of the President (Cole, 1973). By the time this was accomplished, it also appeared to be a response to public and congressional concern over the arrogance of power among presidential staff as it was being revealed in the unfolding Watergate investigations.

The Nixon Domestic Council quickly acquired a reputation as the "principal locus of domestic decision-making" (Kessel, 1975). Yet during the six and a half years the agency existed in this form (1970-1977), the Council met only infrequently: six times in 1970, seven in 1971, five in 1972, twice in 1973, once in 1974, not at all in 1975, and perhaps once in 1976.³ Even these few meetings were apparently not forums for substantive policy debate. Rather they were, as Ehrlichman remarked, "largely show and tell."⁴

Operationally, the DC undertook most of its projects at the direction of the President. The staff (particularly Edwin Harper, assistant director for long-range planning and budget) would also try to anticipate issues the President would be dealing with in the near and far future. Following consultation with the council (or some portion of it), a Domestic Council committee would be formed, made up of the concerned departments and agencies of the executive branch. Each involved cabinet secretary would then assign a member of his department, generally an assistant secretary, to be his representative to the working group. Each working group was chaired by a member of the DC staff and included the designated representatives of the departments/agencies and personnel from other EOP units, notably top-level OMB staff (usually an assistant director or the relevant program associate director).

The working group would prepare a document describing the policy issue, presenting the relevant facts, advancing various options for action (or inaction), and analyzing the likely impact, political reception, and cost of each option. This would be presented to the Council or to a Council committee for reaction. Thereafter, it would be transmitted to the President by the executive director in the form of a written memorandum for his consideration and disposition. Formally, this process culminated in presidential policy decisions. The President, however, did not want to be bothered about many domestic issues, so he essentially delegated them to his assistant for domestic affairs (Ehrlichman, 1982). In practice, therefore, Ehrlichman became the President's *de facto* general agent for domestic policy.

Clearly, the domestic policy process was not concentrated at the cabinet council level. Indeed, the working group system served as an organizational mechanism for distancing, even isolating, cabinet members from the policy process. The council, as a whole, was used simply "for disseminating policy information," e.g., "The President has decided this . . . and here are the budgetary realities and the economic impact and all that." The segregation of cabinet officers effectively cast the members of the working groups as the operational arms of a counter-bureaucracy for policy implementation and evaluation. Presidential disinterest allowed Ehrlichman, as executive director of the Domestic Council, to exercise a significant role throughout the domestic policy process, ranging from formulation through enactment and implementation to evaluation.

In theory, the DC staff was given the role of administrative staff charged, primarily, with assisting in the coordination of domestic policy formulation and, secondarily, with contributing to policy advocacy, monitoring its implementation, and evaluating its effects. In practice, the Nixon DC staff assumed the role of general domestic agent for the President, complete with substantial policy discretion and *de facto* ability to direct and oversee the performance of department/agency executives. By presiding over the working groups, the DC assistant directors could (within the limits set by presidential preconceptions) determine the domestic policy agenda, adduce the facts, structure the options, and present the package to the President for final decision.

Control over implementation, oversight, and evaluation were, in large part, realized through OMB and sub-cabinet level departmental personnel. The DC staff and OMB were tightly coordinated and developed a highly

complementary working relationship. For example, Ehrlichman, Deputy DC Director Ken Cole, the assistant directors, and half a dozen top people from OMB met daily at 7:30am to coordinate efforts and exchange information. Top OMB staff were members of each Domestic Council working group and DC staff were invited to annual OMB budget review sessions with the departments and agencies (Waldmann, 1976). Oversight and evaluation of policy implementation were routinely carried out by OMB (Kessel, 1975). In some cases, however, the DC staff would get involved directly.

Control at this level was premised upon the loyalty and commitment of the personnel involved. Middle level staff at the Domestic Council (assistant directors), at OMB (assistant directors and program associate directors), and at the departments (assistant secretaries) were relatively young, of proven loyalty to the President, generalists, and often politically inexperienced. Ehrlichman recruited a staff that could organize, analyze, and "move quickly from one subject to another" and that, above all else, had the President's "confidence, whether (they) knew anything or not." Such a staff was both dependable and dependent upon presidential favor. During his second term, President Nixon intended to use such personnel to extend the reach of his bureaucratic control. "A deliberate strategy of colonization" was planned, wherein "super-loyalists" (some of whom had been DC assistant directors) were moved into the #2 and #3 spots "in a lot of departments to make sure that the new secretaries didn't marry the natives."

Although loyal, such a young, generalist, inexperienced policy staff also had its disadvantages. Such a staffing pattern gave rise to instances of misunderstandings with and distrust of others — Congress, the bureaucracy, the party, and the media. It also provided individual opportunities for unchecked over-zealousness and hubris. Its chief organizational consequence was to deprive the nascent domestic policy agency of legitimate expert credentials to act for or advise the President in a substantive policy area. In this sense, the composition of the DC staff was in marked contrast to the membership of the other two, more established councils of the EOP — the CEA and the NSC (Wyszomirski, 1982). The virtual exclusion of the cabinet, limited presidential interest, and the substantive weakness of the DC staff may have enhanced presidential control over domestic policy making, yet, paradoxically, also limited the effectiveness of that policy by isolating it from broader and more established sources of bureaucratic, political, and substantive support.

In December of 1972, Ehrlichman relinquished his domestic policy positions to become counsellor to the President. He resigned from the White House a few months later, a casualty of the Watergate scandals. Deputy Director Ken Cole was promoted and headed the DC staff into the Ford transition. In the spring of 1973, former cabinet member Melvin Laird was brought back into the administration as domestic affairs assistant, but his actual role was that of presidential emissary to Congress in the face of possible impeachment proceedings. With Laird as a distracted intermediary and the President preoccupied with Watergate and impeachment, Cole found it increasingly difficult to get action or even answers from the Oval Office. The council was moribund, its staff relegated to an ineffectual administrative role.

The DC established no stable role in the Ford administration. After months of delay and controversy over the appointment of Nelson Rockefeller-

ler as Vice President, the Domestic Council became part of an experiment in attempting to develop a policy role for the Vice President (Turner, 1982). The experiment failed. As a consequence of the close association that had developed between the DC staff and the Vice President, the agency became distanced from both the cabinet and the President. When President Ford rejected Rockefeller as a running mate for 1976, the DC staff lost the last vestiges of the influence and role it had had in the Nixon White House. Thus, when Jimmy Carter was inaugurated in 1977, he found little in the way of institutional legacy or even viable precedent concerning the use and operation of a presidential domestic policy agency.

PRESIDENTIAL ADVISOR: THE CARTER DOMESTIC POLICY STAFF

During the campaign, Jimmy Carter had promised, among other things, to reduce the size of government and to establish a more open style of governing. One of the ways he sought to address these promises was through governmental reorganization. The Domestic Council was one of the first agencies affected by reorganization.

Reorganization Plan #1 of 1977 included three provisions that changed the structure or functions of the Domestic Council. Most significantly, the cabinet-level tier of the Council was abolished. Consequently, the agency was redesignated as the Domestic Policy Staff (DPS). This had the advantages of eliminating a large, unwieldy, and ineffectual layer of bureaucracy while preserving a separate executive staff capability in domestic policy. In justifying these changes, the Carter administration emphasized the advisory role it envisioned for the new DPS. In 1977 testimony before congressional appropriations subcommittees, DPS Executive Director Stuart Eizenstat drew an implicit distinction between the DC staff and the DPS. He stressed that the DPS would "coordinat(e) the presentation of views to the President and not serv(e) as a barrier to presentation of advice from the Cabinet and other agencies" (Eizenstat, 1977). Furthermore, he projected that the DPS, unlike the DC staff, would "not get involved consciously and purposively in any implementation of policy" (Eizenstat, 1978). Official descriptions of the DPS focused on its analysis and advice functions as well as multi-phased policy coordination responsibilities that ranged from the formulation stage to strategic planning for legislative enactment.

Reorganization Plan #1 also abolished the Office of Telecommunications Policy (OTP) and the Office of Drug Abuse Policy (ODAP) while transferring their advisory functions to the DPS. This had the dual advantages of reducing the size of the EOP while integrating these two domestic issue areas into the general domestic policy process.

The size of the DPS hovered between forty and fifty, peaking slightly in the summer of 1978 (following the incorporation of OTP and ODAP functions) and in the autumn of 1980 (as domestic issues became the focus of the presidential campaign). Staff consisted of approximately equal proportions of professional and support personnel. Thus, the DPS was a somewhat leaner organization than the DC staff.

The agency was headed by Presidential Assistant for Domestic Affairs and Policy Stuart Eizenstat — a Georgia-born, Harvard-trained lawyer who had served as a LBJ speechwriter, as research director of the 1968 Humphrey campaign, and as issues director of the Carter presidential

campaign. He had two deputies: Bert Carp, who managed day-to-day affairs as Deputy Director of the DPS, and David Rubenstein, who acted as overall policy aide as deputy assistant for domestic affairs and policy. At the next level, approximately a dozen associate directors presided over issue areas such as government reorganization, energy and natural resources, or civil rights and justice. Each had a small staff of from one to four assistant directors.

Like the Nixon DC staff, Carter DPS staff members were young and generalists: most were in their thirties and many were lawyers. There were, however, important differences. Almost all of the DPS staffers had prior political experience — in campaigns (Carter's, as well as others), on Capitol Hill, or in the bureaucracy. For example, Deputy Director Bert Carp had been a HEW civil rights lawyer as well as legislative counsel to Senator Walter Mondale; Associate Director for Energy and Natural Resources Katherine Schirmer had worked both at EPA and as an aide to Senator Philip Hart. Such Washington experience was in contrast not only to the Nixon staff, but to the bulk of Carter's White House staff. Thus, the DPS and its director were capable of providing informed political and bureaucratic advice and assistance.

Since the number of associate directors was nearly twice that of the DC staff, this allowed each to acquire a better substantive grasp of the issues they were assigned. Furthermore, such on-the-job training was facilitated by the continuity of the senior DPS staff: Eizenstat and the two deputy directors remained throughout the Carter presidency and the average tenure among associate directors was nearly thirty months. Of the original eleven associate directors, five remained for a full four years, and at least two more left only to accept other positions with the administration (e.g., as associate director of OMB and as assistant secretary of transportation). Although the junior staff (assistant directors) were less stable, approximately half did remain for two or more years.

Operationally, the DPS worked through a system of inter-agency committees that bore a superficial resemblance to the council committees of the DC. Under the Carter Domestic Policy Review System, the agencies concerned in a policy issue would be brought together as a committee or task force. Although a member of the DPS staff (usually an associate director) was part of each committee, he did not always direct its operation. In each case a lead agency would be designated to spearhead policy formulation. The lead might be taken by a line agency, it might be assigned to a member of the Vice President's staff (e.g., VP chief of staff Richard Moe chaired a committee on hospital cost containment in 1979) (Bonafede, 1979a), or it might be assumed by a member of the DPS. On occasion, presidential assistant Eizenstat might even take on this task himself, as when he led the effort that put together Carter's comprehensive energy program.

The DPS was also involved in other inter-agency councils concerned primarily with implementation (e.g., on urban development programs headed by White House Assistant for Intergovernmental Affairs Jack Watson, Jr.) (Bonafede, 1978) or with legislative lobbying. In these cases, the DPS role was, as one staff member remarked, that of technical advisors (Light, 1979). Domestic assistant Eizenstat was also a key member of the Economic Policy Group. Thus, although the DPS was a participant in as wide a

range of issues and in nearly as many stages of the policy process as the DC staff had been, its role was quite different. It acted as an advisor and as a coordinating support arm, but not as the directing force throughout.

Stuart Eizenstat carefully cultivated the DPS's advisory role. In part, this was facilitated by his acceptance as an honest broker regarding the advice and opinions of others. In this capacity, Eizenstat had frequent, personal, and positive communications with cabinet members. When combined with his reputation as a man the President listened to, this made him someone cabinet officers strove to have as a policy ally.

Since information and advice from many sources was not only coordinated and presented, but also assessed by Eizenstat as he passed it on to the President, his brokerage function shaded into an advisory one. Although Eizenstat did not have expert credentials in the form of advanced specialized training and degrees (as did the national security and CEA advisors), he was, nevertheless, recognized as able, informed, and experienced in the broad range of domestic affairs. His campaign experience gave him breadth and exposure. His hardworking, low-profile style quickly earned him respect and distinction as one of the most competent members of the administration (Light, 1979). Similarly, the DPS staff gained an early reputation for being energetic, politically aware, and highly intelligent. They worked hard to acquire substantive competence in their issue areas, eventually earning a reputation as Eizenstat's whiz kids (Light, 1979). Thus, the DPS avoided the common pitfall of advisory units mentioned earlier since it functioned as a think tank (Bonafede, 1979) that offered advice and analysis which combined both subject matter knowledgeability and practical political calculation.

As a trusted member of the President's inner circle, Eizenstat had daily access to and notable influence with President Carter. This did not, however, guarantee that his advice was always accepted or that domestic policy advice and formulation were invariably channelled through him or his staff. His advice was rejected in several instances, e.g., on real wage insurance, the \$50 tax rebate, changes in the minimum wage, and cargo preferences. He was circumvented on occasion, e.g., by HEW Secretary Califano on a welfare funding issue, by Attorney General Bell on most Justice Department matters, and on the formulation of the administration's education proposals. That Eizenstat and the DPS did not invariably dominate the domestic policy process does not gainsay the fact that they exercised an important and effective influence in domestic affairs. Rather it demonstrates that they were advisors and not competitive counter-agents. Hence, as an advisor (and clearly an important one), Eizenstat won the acceptance of cabinet members, other executive personnel, and even members of Congress as an informed and honest spokesman to and for the President, as a potential policy ally, and as an honest broker of opinion and information.

PRESIDENTIAL SERVANT:

THE REAGAN OFFICE OF POLICY DEVELOPMENT

Soon after the Reagan administration assumed office, it too made changes in the domestic policy agency. Its redesignation of the Office of Policy Development (OPD) served notice that a new administration had taken over (Kirschten, 1981). It also allowed the agency to expand into

economic affairs (Gray, 1981), a subject that was central to the new administration's priorities, was compatible with the expertise of the new presidential assistant for policy (Martin Anderson), and had proven to be a concern of previous domestic policy offices.

As the OPD was constituted and directed during 1981-1982, it was passive, administrative, and relatively ineffectual. During its second year, a new director (Edwin Harper) made changes that, in light of his interactions with other executive officials, seem to indicate that important differences might be developing. Under both directors, however, the role and performance of the OPD reflected presidential style, the character of the office's personnel, and the organizational dynamics of the EOP.

President Reagan is ideologically committed to the notion of cabinet government and personally prefers to absorb information verbally. Thus, he has sought to develop a policy system in which department/agency heads are fully involved. Since his appointees were carefully screened for ideological consistency (Newland, 1983), he expected that these appointive executives could be depended upon to maintain their commitment to his program and philosophy.

To better use these agents, the department/agency heads have been organized into a cabinet council system consisting of five to six councils. Each council is chaired by the President or, in his absence, by the cabinet secretary designated as chairman pro tempore. Council meetings are regularly attended by cabinet members, the Vice President, and members of the senior White House staff. The director or deputy director of OMB and the chairman of the CEA also attend often. Meetings are held frequently (191 between February 1981 and mid-May 1982) (Newland, 1983) and presidential involvement is not unusual (President Reagan has presided at twenty-six of these council meetings).

Three EOP offices have been assigned a role in supporting the work of the cabinet councils. Approximately a quarter (ten to twelve members) of the OPD staff have been designated as executive secretaries and assistants to the councils. The Office of Cabinet Administration (OCA) assigns and tracks issues, and manages the flow of materials within and between councils. Although its small staff of five was extracted from OPD's personnel allocation, it reports directly to presidential counsellor Edwin Meese. Similarly, the Office of Planning and Evaluation (OPE), another small organization of four, reports to Meese and was staffed from OPD's personnel budget. OPE assists "in projecting strategic activities for the President, based on significant national, international, and political phenomena and conditions" (Newland 1983). Thus, the cabinet council and its supporting system have cast OPD in the role of administrative staff, although it shares that function with OCA and OPE.

OPD performed its administrative tasks at a distance from the President and in lackluster fashion. Although he had been Reagan's issue advisor during the 1980 campaign and seemed to act as the administration's ideological watchdog, presidential policy assistant Martin Anderson was not an inner circle confidant of the President. Unlike his predecessors in other administrations, Anderson did not have direct access to the President; instead, he reported through another member of the senior White House staff (Meese). Personally, Anderson acquired the reputation of being a passive, ineffectual manager "who lacked both the instinct and the inclination to

play the pragmatic bureaucratic game" (Kirschten, 1983). Apparently this reputation carried over to the OPD generally.

OPD's role was not, however, solely dependent upon the performance and position of the presidential assistant for policy development. Other organizational and political factors combined to allow the agency little opportunity to develop an advisory role. First, the staff of OPD had neither the credentials nor a stability conducive to the development of substantive expertise. Although Anderson had the broad issue experience and expert credentials, his ideological rigidity diminished the scope and utility of his advice. His staff was composed primarily of generalists who were veterans of Reagan's California statehouse but who were short on Washington experience. These were loosely organized into half a dozen, broadly-defined issue areas and individual staff members were considered generally interchangeable with respect to the issues on which they worked (Kirschten, 1981). Thus, many of the staff lacked policy expertise or Washington experience, and unlike the Carter DPS, they were deployed in a manner that allowed them little opportunity to cultivate substantive competence.

Furthermore, OPD was preempted from assuming either a substantive or a political advisory role in domestic affairs. Substantively, OMB Director David Stockman was not only a driving intellectual force in the administration (Kirschten, 1982a), but also a presidential confidant who directed significant bureaucratic resources that OPD could not begin to match. Political advice was coordinated by White House Chief of Staff James Baker through the legislative strategy group. Thus, with the cabinet council system operating, OPD was not needed as a presidential agent. The preeminence of OMB and of the legislative strategy group foreclosed OPD from either a substantive or a political advisory role. Given the character of much of its personnel, the agency could not even seriously compete for an advisory role. OPD was, therefore, assigned an administrative role, which it shared with other units, performed at one step removed from the president, and discharged with impressive anonymity.

In February of 1982, Anderson was replaced by Edwin Harper, the Deputy Director of OMB. Harper had a reputation as a non-ideological conservative (Newland, 1983) and as an experienced manager. He also had a Ph.D. in government and previous service on the Nixon DC staff as assistant director for budget and long-range planning. In his capacity as deputy director at OMB, Harper had become familiar with OPD, having worked closely with his old friend Martin Anderson during the first year of the Reagan presidency. Thus, it seemed that his appointment had potential for improving OPD's administrative performance through more effective and less ideological management.

Any prospect for developing an advisory role encountered problems regarding access to the President, the competence of the staff, and the potency of bureaucratic competition from other EOP units. Although Harper was not a presidential confidant, he was regarded as a Meese loyalist (Kirschten, 1982), and Meese, it was rumored, might be supportive of a more assertive OPD since he had lost jurisdiction over the other major policy agency, the NSC, when William Clark replaced Richard Allen as national security assistant. Thus, easier access or the support of Meese might be conducive to a closer presidential connection.

Secondly, Harper revised the OPD staff. The most notable change removed two Reaganite, California generalists from the higher levels of the staff hierarchy. Deputy Assistant and Director of the Policy Development Office Edwin Gray and Deputy Director Ronald Frankum were quickly eased out into other administration posts (at the Federal Home Loan Bank and the Office of Science and Technology Policy). Roger Porter (former executive secretary of President Ford's Economic Policy Board and then OPD executive secretary of the economic affairs cabinet council) was promoted to deputy assistant and director of the policy office. OPD special assistant Kevin Hopkins was moved into the new position of director of the Office of Policy Information. Changes among the assistant directors helped to recruit more individuals with Washington savvy into the middle staff level.

In terms of bureaucratic competition within the EOP, two developments were noteworthy. First, Harper was included as a member of Baker's legislative strategy group, thus providing him with the possibility of exercising some political advisory influence. Second, after the infamous Stockman interview in *Atlantic Monthly* and the cresting of budgetary affairs as the dominant administration focus, OMB no longer monopolized domestic policy as it once did. This provided more of an opportunity for OPD to develop a domestic policy advisory role. Meese now feels that OPD's main task is "to provide additional information when it is needed and to develop policy that isn't going to come out of some other source" (Kirschten, 1982). Deputy Policy Assistant Porter implied more substantive activity for OPD when he described the role of the office as being twofold: to serve as an honest broker in assuring that all views were fairly presented to the President and to control the quality of policy analysis" (Kirschten, 1982).

This two-pronged strategy of improving OPD's administrative performance while cultivating advisory functions seems to be continuing, despite the appointment of yet a third presidential assistant for policy development. In mid-September of 1983, John A. Svahn replaced Edwin Harper. Svahn has extensive experience as both a public administrator and as a policy management consultant. As former social security commissioner and undersecretary of Health and Human Services, Svahn is familiar with the policy and administrative issues involved in a major area of domestic policy. Furthermore, as a veteran of Reagan's California administration, who had also served on the 1980 transition team, Svahn seems to have an established, although not close, working relationship with the President. Thus, the appointment of Svahn may constitute a step toward strengthening and expanding the functions of OPD. With an experienced and managerially competent head who is familiar with the President, the office may be in a position to assume more advisory functions.

SUMMARY: THE ROLES OF A DOMESTIC POLICY AGENCY

At the outset, three possible roles were suggested for the EOP domestic policy office: that of agent, administrator, and advisor. Although these may be combined into a repertoire of roles, one role seems to emerge as the dominant one in each presidency. Whatever role the domestic policy office plays in any specific administration will depend upon a number of factors. Important among these are (1) the intimacy and ease of the relationship between the president and the White House domestic policy assis-

tant; (2) presidential preferences and practices regarding the dependability and utility of his cabinet and other line officers; (3) the character and quality of the skills of the domestic policy assistant and of the domestic policy staff; and (4) the existence and functions of other relevant EOP units.

What part the domestic policy agency will play in the policy process will differ according to the role in which it has been cast. The role of administrator, as seen in the Reagan presidency, is the most limited and the least influential. The OPD performs an operational coordinating function. This requires little in the way of specialized skills other than managerial competence. In these circumstances, considerable personnel instability can be tolerated since the director as well as the staff may be regarded as essentially replaceable parts. In this role, the policy influence of the presidential assistant for policy development and of his staff at OPD is minimal.

In contrast, the role of advisor, as seen in the Carter case, has the potential for greater scope and impact. To function successfully in an advisory capacity, the assistant for domestic affairs and the domestic policy staff must be knowledgeable, preferably about both policy substance and politics. Furthermore, the head of the unit must have the confidence of and access to the president. In an advisory role, the presidential assistant for domestic affairs and the DPS could exercise an important, but not necessarily a dominant, influence upon the agenda-setting, formulation, and enactment stages of the domestic policy process.

Finally, the role of the agent, as seen in the Nixon case, presents a paradox. John Ehrlichman and his Domestic Council staff exerted considerable control over a range of domestic policy issues as well as over the broad span of the policy process. Perhaps most controversially, in the role of agent, the domestic policy office has the potential to become involved in the implementation stage. In doing so, however, the office incurred such political and administrative opposition that the role could not be sustained.

An appreciation of the different roles the domestic policy office played and of the factors that have contributed to those role assignments facilitates comparative analysis. Furthermore, the use of roles as an analytical concept allows one to accurately distinguish phenomena that appear, at least superficially, similar. The variations revealed by such an analysis demonstrate many of the problems inherent in the possible institutionalization of a domestic policy office.

In a larger sense, the case of the domestic policy office illustrates problems and prospects relevant for other presidential agencies. Hence the distinction of roles and of the factors that determine the casting and performance of specific presidential agencies in particular roles in different presidencies enhances our understanding of the operation and impact of that discontinuous institution that is the modern presidency.

NOTES

1. The domestic policy agency has undergone a number of changes in name. From 1970 to 1977, it was known as the Domestic Council. In 1977 it became the Domestic Policy Staff. In 1981 it was again renamed as the Office of Policy Development. Thus, the discussion will use the appropriate name for each administration as the discussion proceeds.
2. Compiled from hearings of the Senate and House of Representatives, Subcommittee on Appropriations, Treasury, Postal Service, and General

- Government Appropriations, 91st Congress, 2nd Session through 93rd Congress, 2nd Session.
3. Compiled from hearings of the Senate and House of Representatives, Subcommittee on Appropriations, Treasury, Postal Service, and General Government Appropriations, 91st Congress, 2nd Session through 94th Congress, 2nd Session.
4. Interview with John Ehrlichman, 10 December 1981, New York. Unless otherwise indicated, quoted comments in the text section on the Nixon Domestic Council are attributable to Ehrlichman from this interview with the author.

REFERENCES

- Bonafede, Dom. 1978. "A New Job for Watson," National Journal 10: 17 (April 29): 680.
- Bonafede, Dom. 1979a. "Two-Part Harmony," National Journal 11: 5 (February 3): 189.
- Bonafede, Dom. 1979b. "Stuart Eizenstat — Carter's Right Hand Man," National Journal 11: 23 (June 9): 944-948.
- Clark, Timothy B. 1979. "The Power Vacuum Outside the Oval Office," National Journal 11: 8 (February 24): 296-300.
- Cole, Kenneth R. 1973. Testimony, US Congress, House of Representatives, Hearings of the Subcommittee on Appropriations, Treasury, Postal Service, and General Government Appropriations for Fiscal 1974, part 3, 93rd Congress, 1st Session.
- Ehrlichman, John. 1982. Witness to Power, The Nixon Years (New York: Simon and Schuster).
- Eizenstat, Stuart. 1977. Testimony, US Congress, Senate, Hearings of the Subcommittee on Appropriations, Treasury, Postal Service, and General Government Appropriations, part 1, 95th Congress, 1st Session.
- Eizenstat, Stuart. 1978. Testimony, US Congress, House of Representatives, Hearings of the Subcommittee on Appropriations, Treasury, Postal Service, and General Government Appropriations, part 3, 95th Congress, 2nd Session.
- Gray, Edwin. 1981. Interview with author, 10 June, Washington, DC.
- Jones, Charles O. 1977. An Introduction to the Study of Public Policy, 2nd edition (North Scituate, MA: Duxbury Press).
- Kessel, John H. 1975. The Domestic Presidency (North Scituate, MA: Duxbury Press).
- Kirschten, Dick. 1981. "Reagan Sings of Cabinet Government, and Anderson Leads the Chorus," National Journal 13: 19 (May 9): 824-827.
- Kirschten, Dick. 1982. "Decision Making in the White House: How Well Does It Serve the President?" National Journal 14: 14 (April 3): 584-589.
- Laski, Harold J. 1960. "The Limitations of Experts" in George B. deHuszar (ed.), The Intellectuals (Glencoe: The Free Press).
- Light, Larry. 1979. "White House Domestic Policy Staff Plays an Important Role in Formulating Legislation," Congressional Quarterly Weekly 37: 4 (October 6): 2199-2204.
- Lyons, G.M. 1971. "The President and His Experts," Annals 394 (March): 36-45.
- Moe, Ronald C. 1976. "The Domestic Council in Perspective," The Bureaucrat 5: 3 (October): 251-272.

- Nathan, Richard P. 1983. The Administrative Presidency (New York: John Wiley).
- Newland, Chester A. 1983. "The Reagan Presidency: Limited Government and Political Administration," Public Administration Review 43: 1 (January/February): 1-21.
- Shull, Steven A. 1979. Presidential Policy Making, An Analysis (Brunswick, OH: Kings Court Communications).
- Thomas, Norman C. 1972. "Presidential Advice and Information: Policy and Program Formulation" in Norman C. Thomas and Hans W. Baade (eds.), The Institutionalized Presidency (Dobbs Ferry, NY: Oceana Publications).
- Turner, Michael. 1982. The Vice President as Policy Maker (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press).
- Waldmann, Raymond J. 1976. "The Domestic Council: Innovation in Presidential Government," Public Administration Review 36: 3 (May/June): 260-268.
- Wyszomirski, Margaret Jane. 1981. "In the Service of the President: The Reagan EOP Takes Shape," paper presented at the American Political Science Association Annual Meeting, New York, September.
- Wyszomirski, Margaret Jane. 1982. "The De-Institutionalization of Presidential Staff Agencies," Public Administration Review 42: 5 (September/October): 448-458.