Nixon's White House Staff: Heyday of the Planners?

Last September, President Nixon's staff laid before him what is described as the most complete study of federal budget and program choices ever assembled for White House consideration. For the first time, according to Administration officials, a President could weigh, in real budget dollars, the "trade-offs" between alternative defense postures and new domestic programs over a 5-year span. If so inclined, he could ask his advisers how much a new nuclear-powered aircraft carrier would cost him in terms of funds to clean up the environment, or to improve delivery of health care, or to aid the poor.

Ambitious as it was, that 5-year survey of federal budget strategies seems almost modest compared with another White House staff effort now getting under way. The National Goals Research Staff, established last July, is charged with looking 30 years into the future, forecasting potential developments, and devising a series of national objectives and alternative strategies for achieving them, in such fields as science, technology, urban planning, social services, economic policy, and the disciplines of the humanities.

All recent Presidents have been interested, like Nixon, in their "options." But according to officials of the present and of former Administrations, Nixon has placed a greater stress on long-range study of alternatives than any previous occupant of the oval office. "It is time we addressed ourselves, consciously and systematically, to the question of what kind of a nation we want to be as we begin our third century. We can no longer afford to approach the longer-range future haphazardly," said the President on 13 July last year when he announced the establishment of the National Goals project. Also, in the much nearer term, Nixon wants to bring about changes that require careful planning. He "is making a determined effort to reform the functions of Government in a fundamental way," explains an aide, putting emphasis on better "delivery mechanisms" for social services and paying more attention to the way various government programs affect each other and also affect nonfederal activities.

Nixon's approach requires an unprecedented amount of planning and analytical work at the White House level. Close aides, perhaps recalling the President's 1968 campaign attack on the Democrats' "cult of planners" associated with Defense Secretary Robert S. McNamara, explain that his appetite for analysis of options reflects a very "lawyerly" approach to problems. But one or two steps below the President himself, the White House staff speaks a language bristling with the jargon of the "systems" approach which McNamara raised to a prominent place in defense planning.

Describing the Administration's effort to develop new policies in such fields as the environment and urban affairs, the staff speak of the importance of recognizing and analyzing "systematic relationships." "There is no option to that if you are serious about effectiveness," one official recently explained. In this Administration an interagency committee dealing with a specific major domestic problem, like delivery of health care, is known as a "project team," headed by a "project manager" who is usually a member of the White House staff. The new terminology is borrowed from the systems-oriented aerospace industry.

In his approach to foreign and defense policy the President is also "a terrific audience for long-range analysis," according to Ivan Selin, a planning expert who recently resigned as Assistant Secretary of Defense for Systems Analysis and who was previously an important McNamara aide.

The basic political drive behind all this planning activity is Nixon's need to fashion a distinctive and creative Administration after 8 years of Republican exile from power. The rhetoric of his State of the Union and "State of the World" speeches, as he enters his second year, suggests that his ambition is to mold the politics of the next 20 or 30 years, as Franklin D. Roosevelt set the context for domestic policies for the last 35 years, or as Harry S Truman defined the basic foreign policies of the last two decades. In search of this goal, the President has organized his staff to supply him with the widest range of possible choices. This allows him and his political advisers to mold a distinctive program that will, they believe, help them to create and consolidate a new Republican majority.

Since almost all business is conducted on paper, and the papers are drawn up by the White House staff, there is little opportunity for special pleading by powerful interest groups in the bureaucracy (for instance, the Joint Chiefs of Staff or the educators). The system has the additional advantage of helping the White House to counteract any tendencies toward sabotage that might exist among bureaucrats with Democratic loyalties, by giving the President and his staff the critical levers of policy control.

Learning from the Whiz Kids

In the heat of the 1968 campaign Nixon also promised to "root out the 'whiz kid' approach" to defense policy making. Taking the promise in the Pentagon context alone, Nixon's public relations men can probably claim it has been met. The Pentagon office of Systems Analysis has lost its former dominant position in defense planning and budgeting, and the new head of the office, Gardiner Tucker, at 44 is well past the "whiz kid" age (Selin is 32) (*Science*, 13 February).

But in a broader context there has been a "technology transfer" from the Pentagon and associated institutions to the White House. The transfer has brought an unprecedented number of professionals trained in the social and physical sciences onto the various Presidential staffs. To take a limited sample, Laurence E. Lynn, Jr., 32, formerly a deputy assistant secretary of defense for systems analysis, with a Ph.D. from Yale in economics, is the principal aide on defense matters to Henry A. Kissinger, the President's assistant for national security. John Whitaker, 43, who holds a Ph.D. in geology from Johns Hopkins University, is the principal aide on questions of natural resources and the environment to John Ehrlichman, the President's assistant for domestic affairs. Whitaker (who served in the Nixon campaign) was with Litton Industries, a major aerospace firm, from 1958 to 1966. Clay T. Whitehead, 31, with a master's degree in electrical engineering and a doctorate in management, both from Massachusetts Institute of

Technology, is the White House staff specialist in telecommunications policy. Whitehead was at the Rand Corporation before joining the government. Charles Williams, 38, staff director of the National Goals Research Staff, is on loan from the National Science Foundation, where he was a specialist in science policy research. Williams was formerly a "systems planner" in the Department of the Army and did graduate work in public administration and political science at Stanford.

(The National Goals project itself is the result of a consultant's study headed by Anthony Wiener of Herman Kahn's Hudson Institute. Hudson, which might be regarded as a Rand "spin-off," is a policy research think tank specializing in defense and, more recently, in "futures" planning.)

The presiding genii of the planning functions at the White House are, of course, Daniel P. Moynihan for domestic matters and Henry Kissinger for defense and foreign policy. Kissinger's National Security Council (NSC) staff is a model of the new Nixon approach. With over 40 officials it is more than twice as large as the NSC staff that served Presidents Kennedy and Johnson. Starting with a basic core of "operating" officers (liaison men and day-to-day problem solvers) inherited from the last Administration, Kissinger added a number of "planners" (who work on long-range foreign policy issues) and "analysts" (who work mostly in the defense field under Lynn).

The Kissinger staff does for the President what the Pentagon office of Systems Analysis did for McNamara. It forces the bureaucracies to send up analytical studies of options rather than single policy recommendations. Kissinger and his staff define the framework within which the alternatives are set, not the often quarrelsome nobles of the Departments of State and Defense, the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and the Central Intelligence Agency.

The Kissinger staff guided a critical portion of last September's review of federal budget strategies. Within a day or two of taking office, Kissinger issued "National Security Study Memorandum (NSSM) 3," calling for a report to the National Security Council on the defense posture implication and domestic costs of different foreign policy stances. The description and pricing of various military budget alternatives was done mainly by Selin's office at

Authorization for Security Checks

A bill designed to tighten protection of defense facilities and research operations against sabotage and espionage has run into criticism in part because of the implications, for university scientists, of its security screening provisions.

The bill, which passed the House on 29 January, is the first major legislative product of the Internal Security Committee since it changed its name from House Un-American Activities Committee (HUAC). Called the Defense Facilities and Internal Security Bill, H.R. 14864 empowers the President to establish security arrangements governing employment in defense industries, access to vessels and waterfront facilities, and access to classified information released to industry.

The chief intention of the bill's sponsors is to provide specific congressional authorization for security clearance programs which have suffered a series of adverse Supreme Court decisions because they have been based primarily on Executive Orders.

The potential impact on university scientists was greatest in the bill's section on protection of classified information. When the bill reached the House floor, the inclusion of "educational institutions" in the definition of defense facilities was vigorously protested. Representative Louis Stokes (D–Ohio) pointed out in a dissenting view printed in the committee's report on the bill, "It is conceivable that a university, for example, might be designated as such a facility because its science department is under Government contract to provide 'important classified military projects.'. . . Students and faculty members who express their disagreement with the university's involvement in defense work could be barred from campus." Supporters of the bill denied that such an interpretation was intended and accepted an amendment which limits the bill's effect to "areas directly involved in classified" work.

In his dissenting view Stokes also objects to the bill's "vagueness" and "broadness" and asserts that its provisions are "capable of infinite expansion." On civil liberties grounds Stokes and others, including the American Civil Liberties Union, object to the breadth of investigatory powers embodied in the bill and to its administrative procedures.

In the universities there is a feeling that the government tends to "overclassify" research information and will continue to do so. And the universities which operate contract laboratories for the government are uncertain about the effects of the bill on faculty and students.

There also appears to be general concern about how the new law would be administered in the changing political and social atmosphere of the present. Since World War II, internal security laws have been implicitly aimed at countering the activities of the Soviet Union and what is called the "international Communist conspiracy." During the debate on the bill the mention of "extremists" made it clear that agents of foreign powers were not the only ones some members felt were potentially dangerous subversives. The bill's definition of a "subversive act" includes "any plan, policy recommendation, directive, tactic, or strategy of any Communist, Marxist-Leninist, revolutionary socialist, anarchist, nihilist, Nazi, Fascist or other organization which has as a purpose the destruction of the constitutional form of government of the United States by any means deemed necessary to that end including the unlawful use of force or violence."

Depending on how it might be interpreted and administered in an era when protest is taking on new dimensions, the law could have a decisive effect on the employment or prospects of employment of many people and an equally adverse impact on the careers of people who might be denied access to research information or research facilities.

The bill is now before the Senate Judiciary Committee's subcommittee on Internal Security, whose chairman is Senator James Eastland (D–Miss.). No date for hearings has been set.—JOHN WALSH

the Pentagon, building on studies it had launched in mid-1968 under the previous Administration. These budgets, which ranged from $50 billion a year to $120 billion, were fitted within a 5-year forecast of federal revenues by the Council of Economic Advisers and the Treasury Department. Budget Director Robert P. Mayo's staff calculated the fixed costs for the next 5 years of existing domestic programs. Then Mayo and Ehrlichman drew up a list of domestic programs that could be added or dropped to adjust to different levels of defense spending.

Ehrlichman, a lawyer and Nixon campaign aide, is Kissinger's nearest counterpart on the domestic side, with direct responsibility for "operating" and planning. But Moynihan, as counselor to the President, probably has the dominant voice among the staff in the design of domestic policy options. He often sits on the "project teams" dealing with the most important domestic issues. When he does, there is little question that he is "the most influential man there," according to Richard Nathan, the Assistant Director of the Budget for Human Resources. Moynihan, the father of Nixon's family assistance plan and the National Goals project, is the leading proselytizer at the White House of the "systems" approach to domestic policy.

(Nathan himself is quite influential in the design of the Administration's social programs, serving on a number of key project groups. A 34-year-old Harvard Ph.D. in political economy and government, he worked for New York Governor Nelson A. Rockefeller and more recently was a research associate at the Brookings Institution.)

The National Goals Research Staff, although small, remains the most ambitious of Moynihan's planning efforts. (Organizationally it reports to Leonard Garment, a lawyer who is one of Ehrlichman's deputies, but spiritually it responds to Moynihan.) "For the first time in history, we have an organization in government charged with responsibility for working out a fully synthesized view of future goals," said a staff member recently. "We're dealing in a context of *national* strategies, not merely in the context of the federal government, or of government *per se*." The staff was directed by the President to bring out a report by 4 July of this year, and annually thereafter, "setting forth some of the key choices open to us, and examining the consequences of these choices. It is my hope," he said, "that this report will then serve as a focus for the kind of lively widespread common discussion that deserves to go into decisions affecting our common future." In addition to Williams, the staff includes, or will include, members with professional backgrounds in the physical, life, and social sciences in operations research; in public administration; and in the humanities. Their task will be to devise, with outside help, a series of "social indicators"; to forecast the future in such fields as science, technology, the economy, and the nation's "human values"; to "formulate optional national strategies" in 10-, 20-, and 30-year contexts; to issue their reports; and, as goals are set through the political process, to devise "criteria" for judging "whether we are moving in the direction we wish to go," in the words of a staff member. "If we are 5 percent successful, I think we will have made a real contribution," Williams has remarked.—ANDREW HAMILTON

New Feminism: Potent Force in Birth-Control Policy

New York. Over the past 2 years a new feminist movement, one increasingly attractive to college women and to many younger academic and professional women, has been developing rapidly across the United States. Last week, in a 3-day workshop here on the "Impact of Fertility Limitation on Women's Life Career and Personality," it was apparent that the feminist point of view may become highly influential in the formulation of national policies on birth control.

The feminists are insisting that this issue be dealt with only as one aspect of the broader question of women's status and life styles. And given the growing national concern about reducing the birthrate, they obviously feel that their bargaining position is steadily improving—with good reason, for it is difficult to imagine an effective national family planning policy that is opposed by large numbers of articulate, militant women. Although the workshop here was a small meeting largely attended by persons not widely known even within their own professional fields, it was significant in that it brought academically oriented researchers together with action oriented feminists. In fact, by the third day of the workshop, the feminist point of view was clearly the dominant one.

Some 50 persons, all but about 10 of them women, took part in the workshop, most being social and behavioral scientists from colleges and universities or government. Other participants included several activist leaders of the women's liberation movement, a few of whom neatly fit the stereotype of a radical feminist by their dress (pants being *de rigeur*), their assertiveness, and their rhetoric. The principal organizer of the workshop was Esther Milner, a developmental psychologist and associate professor of education at Brooklyn College.

With the help of Margaret Mead, a vice president of the New York Academy of Sciences, Dr. Milner was able to have the workshop held under academy auspices and in the high-ceilinged, paneled rooms of the academy building off Central Park. However, the academy viewed the matter apprehensively and would not agree to the open conference which was first proposed; it insisted that, instead, the workshop be closed to all except invitees. Some "big name" academicians were invited, but most pleaded other commitments.

Dr. Mead herself presided over one workshop session. After hearing the participants complain long and bitterly over the sex discrimination imposed