MEMORANDUM ON

ORGANIZING THE TRANSITION

A Tentative Check-List for
The Weeks Between Election and Inaugural

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1. The problem of another "Hundred Days"

One hears talk all over town about "another Hundred Days" once Kennedy is in the White House. If this means an impression to be made on Congressmen, bureaucrats, press, public, foreign governments, the analogy is apt. Nothing would help the new Administration more than such a first impression of energy, direction, action, and accomplishment. Creating that impression and sustaining it become a prime objective for the months after Inauguration Day. Since an impression of the Roosevelt sort feeds on reality, and could not be sustained by mere "public relations," establishing conditions that will foster real accomplishment becomes a prime objective for the brief transition period before Inauguration Day.

But the "Hundred Days" analogy can also be taken -- and is being taken -- as an expectation of fulfilment for every sort of legislative promise in the Platform and the campaign. Everybody tends to think of his pet pledge as the priority accomplishment for Kennedy's first three months. Yet that timing only brings us to the Easter Recess of the First Session of a modern Congress!

These legislative wants are hard to square with a convincing demonstration of energy and accomplishment. "Another Hundred Days" as an impression of effectiveness is threatened by the promissory notes read into that analogy.

In terms of legislative action, the analogy to 1933 is not apt. Roosevelt then did not take office until March. He had four months to organize the take-over. Congress was adjourned when he entered the White House, and was not due to assemble until December. It met in special session after his inauguration, on his call. It met, moreover, to deal with a devastating domestic crisis that was seen and felt by citizens, in their own lives, all

across the country. Foreign relations, meanwhile, raised virtually no issues that could not be ignored or postponed. And Roosevelt had the patronage (old style) to dole out at a time when jobs of any sort were highly valued. What is the analogy with 1961?

In 1948, when Truman was re-elected, there also was much talk of "another Hundred Days." But when he was sworn in a second time, Congress had been in session for three weeks, organized, bills introduced, committees working. No sharply-felt, widely perceived crisis faced the country. Instead, in all the realms of cold war and of welfare undertakings -- most of them unknown in 1933 -- government agencies and private groups pressed diverse legislative claims, citing campaign promises as their authority and jostling each other in the rush to take advantage of Truman's "honeymoon." Weeks before inaugural, the groups concerned had gained commitments from Congressional leaders (whether they committed Truman, or he, them, is in dispute) for early floor fights on FEPC and on repeal of Taft-Hartley. By the time those fights had failed, the "honeymoon" was over and the Session far advanced with little else done. In legislative terms, it is 1949, not 1933, that offers an analogy -- and warnings -- for 1961.

Unlike Truman, Kennedy may come into office in the midst of some sharp, overt international emergency, or in the train of a sharp economic slump. It is at least as possible, however, that January 1961 will be a time of many incipient crises but no "crisis." So was 1949.

It follows that, for the transition period between election and inaugural, the guide-lines ought to be: Postpone whatever is postponable in the mechanics of Administration-building. Put off the novelties that have not been thought through. Concentrate upon the things that are immediately relevant to showing

real effectiveness on and after January 20. And in the doing of those things, keep this objective uppermost. It is the key objective for the weeks after November 8.

The things that cannot be postponed are enumerated below. They are roughly in the order in which it seems desirable to deal with them, starting November 9.

2. Organizing for a first message to Congress.

The most important task in the transition is the working out of strategy and tactics for an exploitation of the "honeymoon" ahead. This means decisions on the substance, timing, publicity, and priority of legislative proposals to Congress. It means decisions of the same sort on discretionary executive actions. It means decisions on relationships between projected proposals and actions. It means weighing short-range gains against long-range troubles, political and other. It means judging what should be done in the President's name, and what should not, and how to enforce the distinction. It also means evaluating fiscal implications of proposals and of actions, both, and making some immediate decisions on taxation and the budget.

Not all of these decisions can be taken before January 20, but preparatory work needs to be far advanced by then: The issues should have been identified, the arguments defined, preliminary judgments entered well before Inauguration Day.

The way to get this work done is to organize its doing around Presidential action by a certain date. The way to gain an action and to set a deadline is to make plans for an early message to Congress. The Jackson Subcommittee has suggested a "Resources and Requirements Report," with foreign as well as domestic dimensions, to supplement the present Annual Messages on a regular

basis. Without commitment at this time to regularity, the idea might be taken as a starting point in planning the new President's first message.

The first thing to do is to make a plan, deciding tentatively on the timing and the scope of such a message. This provides a target for everybody who has ideas, views, concerns about the program objectives of the new regime.

The second thing to do is to establish "working groups" and get them moving with the message as their target -- both on things that should be asked of Congress and on things that could be pronounced done or underway administratively. The Nitze group, already in being, is a model; it might be enlarged or parallel groups established outside his sphere. Prominent persons whose views have been solicited can be drawn into groups or treated as competitors and dealt with individually.

The third thing to do is to get a "bird-dog" on the scene, putting somebody in charge of staff work on the message. This should be someone close to Kennedy, very much in his confidence and very much a "staff man" (but a tough-minded one). His job should be to see that all the working groups are working, the competitors competing, gaps filled, issues raised, arguments brought to focus, and the President-elect informed on who is doing what, with what, to whom. This is a full-time job, for the whole transition period and after. Its holder has to be much more than a draftsman; drafting is merely his hunting license; his hunting ground is foreign and domestic program, legislative and administrative. This is somewhat like Rosenman's work at message season in the Roosevelt White House, or like Clifford's and Murphy's in the Truman White House. But in many ways, it is a broader and rougher job than theirs; they worked in an established context; this man will not.

David Bell is suggestive of the sort of person needed.

3. Designating White House Aides.

After Election Day the President-elect will need a small personal staff to operate through the transition period and to take office with him. A few staff aides are immediately necessary; their names and jobs should be announced at once, so that importunate office-seekers, idea-peddlers, pressmen, legislators, diplomats, and cabinet-designees know who and what they are. These necessary jobs include:

1) A Press Secretary, whose work after inaugural will be so much like his work before that he should have the title at the outset. On November 9, Kennedy will be transformed in the eyes of Americans and foreign governments. He will no longer have the leeway of a "campaigner." His statements will be taken with the utmost seriousness. Everything said and done in public need be weighed as though he were already President.

2) An appointments aide, to guard the door and manage the daily schedule. Whether this person should be designated "Appointments Secretary" depends on whether he is meant to have autonomy, after inaugural, or to work as a subordinate of some other aide. If subordination is intended, hold off on the "Secretary" part of that title.

3) A "Number-one Boy," serving as a sort of first assistant on general operations, day by day. He could be called "Executive Assistant to the President-elect" and he could carry that title into the White House in lieu of Sherman Adams' title, "The Assistant to the President." It would be well to avoid reminders of Adams, not only for public relations but because, once in the White House, Kennedy may find that he needs several "number-one boys" for different aspects of the work; other things aside, Adams was a terrible bottleneck.

4) The message-and-program aide indicated above. If the man is a lawyer, and if Kennedy wants him around for comparable work in later months, he might be designated "Special Counsel" (FDR's invention for Rosenman). But he could just as well be called "Special Consultant" and his long-run status left in abeyance for the time being. What counts in the short run is his standing with the President-elect, not his title.

5) A personnel consultant (discussed below). Here again, it would be well to treat the job as ad hoc and avoid traditional White House titles for the time being.

6) A personal secretary who might remain just that after January 20, or who might carry higher status and more general duties afterwards, depending on the President's convenience and her capabilities. Meanwhile, it would be well not to dispose of any of the traditional titles one might ultimately want for her.

These six should suffice as a nucleus to move into the White House, January 20, where they will find the Executive Clerk and his career assistants on the job for routine paper processing. Additional aides will certainly be needed for ad hoc trouble-shooting before inaugural; still more so afterwards. But until the needs are felt to be both clear and continuing, and until the men have been tried on the job, there is no reason to announce their designation as permanent members of the White House staff. Nor is there reason to give them traditional White House titles.

A President's needs for personal staff, and the relations among staff are bound to be different in many ways from a Senator's, or even from a Presidential candidate's. But this President's needs and staff relations will also differ from Eisenhower's. Many of the needs and many of the differences cannot be

fully understood, or met, until they have been experienced. They cannot be experienced until after January 20. The period before Inauguration Day is thus a time for caution.

In designating personal staff, two rules of thumb are indicated:

First, appoint men only to jobs for which the President-elect, himself, feels an immediate and continuing need, a need he has defined in his own mind, and can at once define for them. If the need is immediate but not continuing, offer a "consultantship," or put the man in a department and borrow him back.

Second, give appointees titles that square with the jobs to be done and choose no titles without thinking of their bureaucratic connotations in the outgoing regime. A title may attract a lot of "customary" business that the President-elect wants handled somewhere else, or not at all, or on which he prefers experimentation. A title also may connote a ranking in the staff that he does not intend.

If these rules of thumb are followed, most of Eisenhower's current staff positions will fall into abeyance on January 20. There is nothing wrong with that.

4. Designating Science and Security Aides.

Two of the positions in Eisenhower's White House present special problems:

1) The Science Adviser. This post, created after Sputnik, is highly valued in the scientific community which would be disturbed if it were not filled by early December. But before it is filled, a special effort should be made to think through the sort of work for which a man is wanted, and hence the sort of man. Thought will expose some hidden difficulties.

2) The Special Assistant for National Security Affairs. There will be no outside pressure for filling this post and NSC can operate without it,

for a time at least (see #17 below). But if, for reasons of his own, the President-elect wants to make an appointment, both the title and the duties should be considered, in advance, with particular regard for the intended role of the Secretary of State, vis-a-vis NSC.

5. Designating Executive Office Aides.

Soon after November 8, the President-elect will have use for a principal assistant, at one remove from personal aides, who can backstop the White House in coping with programming and administrative problems from Inauguration Day on. If he is to be of maximum assistance from the start, the job to give him is the Budget Directorship. With an early designation as Budget Director, he could be very useful before January 20, moving in tandem with the message aide and the working groups suggested above, to keep track of issues that cannot be settled by message time, or considered in message terms. (He could also be a temporary hitching post for miscellaneous career staffs in second-level jobs now housed inside the White House, which ought to be moved out of there and examined at leisure.)

This Budget Director-designate should be conceived as someone capable of broad-gauged, general-purpose service to the President, picking up the staff work that personal aides cannot give time to on a continuing basis. James Rowe and Paul Nitze are suggestive, in their different ways, of the breadth and talent required.

This person need not be the budget liaison man before inauguration (see #11 below). Sitting in on Eisenhower's budget-making is the job for a reliable assistant with high capability as a reporter.

Besides the Budget Director, there are three top appointive officials in the Executive Office: The Chairman of the Council of Economic Advisers,

the Director of the Office of Civilian Defense Mobilization, and the Executive Secretary of NSC. With respect to these:

1) The Chairmanship of CEA need not be filled in a hurry. Undoubtedly, there needs to be an ad hoc working group, of Nitze's present sort, as part of the program preparation sketched in item #1, above. But with this established and working, one can take time to decide what use one wants to make of CEA and how it is to fit with other staff machinery, before designating its chairman. These organizational decisions should come first because they have a bearing on what sort of man is wanted in the job. Kenneth Galbraith, Paul Samuelson and Edward Mason, for example, are suggestive of three very different kinds of staff service. Which kind of service is wanted?

2) The Directorship of OCDM should be left vacant and filled, after January 20, by the senior careerist on an "acting" basis. OCDM now combined mutually incompatible, poorly performed functions. What should be done with these functions needs a lot of thought and exploration. The end result might be abolition of OCDM. Meanwhile, caution counsels no director.

3) The Executive Secretaryship of NSC has been filled since 1949 by James Lay, who acts as a careerist, neutral "secretary." There is no reason why he should not be kept on at least until Kennedy gets familiar with and decides what he wants to do with NSC and its subordinate machinery. Before inaugural, however, and immediately thereafter, Lay will need an ad hoc contact point with the incoming Administration. This could be the Nitze working group, or the Budget Director-designate, or the Security Assistant (if any), or the prospective Secretary of State, depending mostly on the role envisaged for the Secretary (see #6 below).

6. Designating Cabinet Officers.

There is no operating reason why Cabinet officers and heads of major agencies need be designated immediately after election. With "working groups" established and key staff aides appointed (as suggested in items 2-5 above) one does not need Cabinet officers in order to get moving toward a fast start after January 20. Indeed, there is advantage in holding off on most Cabinet appointments until staff and working groups are launched; Cabinet members then would have a framework to fit into and could not wander off on their own. As a rule of thumb: defer Cabinet and major agency designations until early December.

A possible exception is the Secretaryship of State. The Jackson Subcommittee favors using the Secretary not just as a department head but as a principal assistant in the whole sphere of national security policy. If the President-elect intends to take this line, the Secretary should be the first Cabinet member appointed, and his role as an assistant underlined by putting him in charge of Nitze's working group. On the other hand, some of the persons now competing for the Secretaryship might not want that role, or could not sustain it. This also argues for early announcement, so that alternatives could be arranged promptly. Still another reason for early announcement is the competition. After election, it may be hard for working groups to work effectively in the national security sphere while the job is still open.

A second possible exception is the Cabinet post, if any, where the present incumbent would be retained as a gesture of bi-partisanship. Nothing of the sort may be contemplated. But if it is, then obviously the sooner it were done the better.

With these exceptions, Cabinet designations could be left until early December. But they should not come much later. This leaves only about

five weeks (including Christmas) for the men to wind up present obligations, get briefed on new ones, and contribute (if they can) to program preparation. In the interest of a fast start, briefing is the main thing. Working groups and Presidential aides can carry program preparation before January 20; Cabinet designees should concentrate on learning all they can about the workings, staffs, and budgets of their agencies. Five weeks is little enough time for that.

In choosing Cabinet officers (and heads of major agencies), the President-elect will naturally consider the usual criteria of geographic, party, and interest-group "representativeness." Three additional criteria are worth bearing in mind:

First is competitive balance among major differences in policy outlook, on which Kennedy does not choose to make up his mind for all time. This is a very tricky and important problem in "representativeness." If the President-elect wants both "conservative" and "liberal" advice on economic management, for example, and wants the competition to come out where he can see it and judge it, he needs to choose strong-minded competitors and he needs to put them in positions of roughly equal institutional power, so that neither wins the contest at a bureaucratic level too far down for the President to judge it. For example, if the Treasury (a powerful post) were given to a "conservative," it would not suffice to put his competition on the Presidential staff; at least two Cabinet competitors would be needed in addition.

Second is the chance for useful reorientation of a department's role with a change in its Secretary's traditional orientation. The Eisenhower Administration, for example, has had an industrial relations specialist as Secretary of Labor, instead of the traditional union president or politician avowedly

representing "labor's voice in the Cabinet." As a result, Mitchell has been able to act for the Administration in labor disputes and to keep a supervisory eye on "independent" labor relations agencies to a far greater degree than his predecessors. For the unions -- to say nothing of management -- were never content with "labor's voice" when they wanted to deal seriously with the Administration. An Arthur Goldberg is the only sort of "unionist" who could sustain and broaden this reorientation; otherwise, reversion to traditional selection risks the new usefulness of this department. Other examples could be offered: Treasury, for one, has often been a drag on State and Defense, in part because of the traditional orientation of its Secretary. A Lovett, or a Harriman, (or a David Rockefeller!), who both meets the tradition and transcends it, could make a substantial difference in the future.

Third is the effect on long-run organizational objectives -- and options -- inherent in the personalities and interests of particular appointees. The case of CEA has already been mentioned; so have the cases of State, the Security Assistant, and the Science Adviser. Another example is the Budget Bureau. One more cost-accountant in the place would finish it off as a useful source of staff work for the President. Especially in the sphere of national security, the personalities and interests of initial appointees at State, Defense, Budget, and Treasury will go far to decide what can and cannot be done thereafter by way of improving "national policy machinery."

7. Organizing for Appointments below Cabinet Rank.

This is an area in which the President-elect and his whole staff could easily get bogged down at no profit to themselves. For self-protection, three things should be done soon after Election Day:

First, an able, sensitive "personnel consultant" should be attached to the staff of the President-elect. This man should be an identified Democrat, known to have the confidence of both Kennedy and the National Committee Chairman. Again, James Rowe's name is suggestive; in a rather different way, so is James Perkins'. He should be designated as the clearing house for proposals on new Presidential appointees, gripes against incumbents, shifts of personnel in Schedule C. He should master the schedule of expiring and new appointments, both Republican and Democratic, and be prepared with recommendations as these occur. He should master Schedule C on a government-wide basis, and be prepared with recommendations for replacements from within the career service, as appropriate.

Second, Roger Jones, the present Chairman of the Civil Service Commission, should be designated for reappointment as Chairman, and requested to backstop this consultant, give him staff assistance (and do the detail work). Jones is a Republican appointee. One may not want to keep him on as Chairman very long. Since the term of the other Republican member expires in February, a new man could be brought in and subsequently made Chairman. But the advantage of having Jones at work as a backstopper, with a vote of confidence sufficient for the transition period, outweighs anything that could be gained from his removal in the short run.

Third, word should be passed to incoming department and agency heads that they will make nothing but trouble for themselves and the Administration by unselective replacements or massive importations of persons at Assistant Secretary level and below. Changes should be made selectively and at leisure, using the guide line, "Know who your replacement is before you make a change."

It is no accident that in 1953 the two most effective officers in the first weeks after Inauguration Day were Dodge at Budget and Humphrey at Treasury. These were the two agencies where there was no "purging" and where inherited staffs were told they would be treated as reliable until they turned out otherwise. Humphrey and Dodge were immediately effective because they immediately had staffs at work behind them. For a Kennedy Administration with the "Hundred Days" problem to lick, the lesson is obvious.

8. Reassuring the Bureaucracy.

If one means to take the three steps suggested in #7 above, one ought to get a maximum of credit for them from the bureaucracy. This calls for an early public statement to the effect that government careerists are a national resource and will be treated as such by the new regime. The reality of that intention will be demonstrated as those steps are taken. It will be demonstrated further if the working groups suggested in #1 above begin, informally, to draw upon the expertise of selected bureaucrats long before Inauguration Day.

The more career officials can look forward to January 20 with hopeful, interested, even excited anticipation, the better the new Administration will be served in the weeks after. To instill negative anticipation is to cut off one's own nose to spite one's face. That was the effect in 1953.

9. Consulting with the Legislative Leadership.

From Election Day on, several things should be kept in mond:

1) The Vice-President-elect will be looking for work.

2) In 1949, the new Senate leader was chosen by the Democrats just before Congress met, with the proviso that Barkley keep the post until January 20. Is this precedent to be followed in 1961?

3) Congress meets two weeks before inaugural; the Committee Chairmen -- the same faces as before -- will be looking for the "customary" laundry-list of Presidential proposals in every sphere; in 1949, that custom helped to dissipate Truman's honeymoon. They also will be thinking about going into business for themselves; some of them will be doing it. Finally, they will be touchily awaiting signs of recognition from the President-elect.

4) When Congress meets, the Senate liberals apparently intend another rules fight.

5) Congressional leaders will have to be consulted on, or at least informed of, the President-elect's immediate legislative plans. Their help will be needed in considering -- and above all in sustaining -- priorities. But consultation with whom, how above all, when? These questions will not necessarily look the same from the Executive side as from the Senate.

6) The first formal meeting with the legislative leaders, whether before or after Inauguration Day, will tend to set the form, tone, membership, and timing of future meetings. What purposes are these meetings to serve? Are they to be intimate sessions, a la FDR, or ambassadorial encounters, a la Eisenhower, with staffs present and minutes taken?

Each of these points needs thought and a formulated approach by the President-elect.

10. Giving Congress Agenda before the first message.

Hopefully, some non-controversial, simple, quick-action items could be introduced before Inauguration Day "on the President-elect's behalf," to "facilitate the work of the new Administration." Within reason, the more of these the better, and the wider their spread across committees the better. One such item might be renewal of reorganization powers. Another might be limited

exemption for the Secretary of State from the hiring restrictions of "Wristonization." Other items may be found on the list of expiring legislation that the Budget Bureau will have ready, as a matter of routine, right after election. Uncovering such items and appraising their suitability could be a side job for the message "bird-dog" and the working groups suggested in #2 above.

11. Establishing Liaison with the Eisenhower Administration.

There seems to be no need for "general" liaison and no point in assigning anyone to do that meaningless job. Presumably, Eisenhower will suggest a courtesy meeting and briefing, as Truman did in 1952, and will offer assistance toward a smooth transition. If he does not offer, he could be asked. Once the offer is made (or extorted) it should be used to establish several specific liaison arrangements. These include:

1) Access for the President-elect to all government intelligence sources and for the prospective Secretary of State to all the cable traffic he may want to see.

2) Arrangements with the FBI for prompt security clearance of appointees.

3) Access for a reliable associate of the prospective Budget Director to all aspects of the Budget Bureau's work in preparing the 1962 budget and in clearing legislation before January 20. This should be for the purpose of obtaining information, not participating in decisions.

4) Arrangements for use of Civil Service Commission staff and facilities, and for information on expiring appointments in the hands of the White House Executive Clerk.

5) Arrangements for consultation by incoming officials with their outgoing opposite numbers and with departmental staffs. No limitations should be accepted on the freedom to inquire and consult.

6) Arrangements for taking over White House offices and budget.

It may turn out that the international or economic situation requires more than a courtesy consultation between Eisenhower and Kennedy; if so, the situation should be met as it deserves, with the proviso that Kennedy need make none of Eisenhower's decisions or accept commitments carrying past January 20. This proviso cannot be a prohibition; the situation may be unprecedented.

The President-elect must be prepared for a variety of international complications before inaugural. What they might be and how to meet them could be studied now by the Nitze group.

12. Organizing for Reorganizing.

Not long after Election Day, it would be well to designate the members of the President's Advisory Committee on Government Organization. This is a three-man body created by Eisenhower as a part-time consultative group without staff of its own. Milton Eisenhower, Arthur Flemming, and Don Price are members. Price might be redesignated and the other two members drawn from among Kennedy appointees in other posts, or from academic circles. Whatever their other duties, all members should have government experience, a degree of detachment, strong sympathy for Kennedy, and be Democrats. Their task is to offer practical advice on a relatively intimate basis.

There are two reasons for designating this group early:

First, it is valuable to have a respectable place where Kennedy can refer -- and defer -- organizational proposals from the outgoing regime, from incoming Cabinet members, and from elsewhere, until and unless he has time and resources to deal with them. There will be quantities of such proposals.

Second, there may well be some things he will want thought through for early action after inaugural, using reorganization powers (if available) or

legislation. Several such reorganization possibilities exist; enough to keep an Advisory Committee busy from November.

13. Setting Ground Rules for Press Conferences.

The big "Press-Radio-TV," televised press conference is a recent innovation; it serves some purposes well; others badly. It does not accomplish some of the objectives served by the quite different institution of Roosevelt's time. Whether any changes should, or could be made is an open question. It is a question worth pursuing with responsible journalists like Reston. If changes are intended, they should be instituted at the outset; the first press conference after inaugural will set a pattern hard to break.

14. Installing the "shadow government" in Washington.

Very soon after Election Day, the President-elect will want to decide how fast and how formally -- and in what facilities at whose expense -- he wants his staff and Cabinet designees, and ad hoc working groups in Washington.

This automatically involves decision also on the timing of vacations and of reconnaissance trips abroad by Presidential designees, or by the President-elect. Shall they (or he) survey the free world? And when must they be back?

15. Preparing the Inaugural Address.

It would be well not to begin this too early, but instead to wait until the main lines of a first message -- that is to say of an initial program -- had emerged. The Inaugural Address has to be a tone-setter. It will help to have a notion of what is to follow, before spending much time on this introduction. It will also help to wait until one knows what international and economic conditions to expect by January 20.

15. Arranging the physical take-over.

A number of troublesome details will have to be attended to. Some of them

are unlikely to be settled without reference to the President-elect. These include:

1) Arranging White House office space and Executive Office building space.

2) Determining what physical changes (temporary partitions and the like) have been made in the White House offices and at Old State, and deciding what the Eisenhower people should be asked to undo before January 20. (This is more serious than it may seem.)

3) Deciding what personal facilities traditionally available for the President should be in readiness by January 20, and requesting that appropriate arrangements be made. These facilities include: automobiles, helicopters, planes, Shangri-La (now Camp David), two motor cruisers, and the yacht (in moth balls since 1953).

4) Deciding on arrangements for inauguration ceremony, inaugural parade, and inaugural balls. Arrangements include invitation lists and tickets. Would Kennedy rather dispense with some "festivities"?

17. Arranging initial Cabinet and NSC meetings.

Eisenhower surrounded these meetings with elaborate paper-work and preparatory consultations. Staffs have been created in each department to assist with preparations and follow-up. Also, Cabinet meetings now include more Presidential aides than department heads. Somewhat the same thing occurs in NSC meetings.

It is important that none of these procedures and arrangements continues, except as Kennedy specifically desires, after a chance to get his own feel for the uses of Cabinet and NSC. Yet, the first meetings of these bodies could automatically perpetuate all sorts of Eisenhower practices. Past procedures will be carried on by career staffs unless they are deliberately interrupted.

It would be well, therefore, to confine early Cabinet meetings to department heads of Cabinet rank, along with the President's Executive Assistant, and to have only such agenda as the President may choose in consultation with his personal staff. As for initial NSC meetings, it would be well to confine them to statutory members, perhaps adding the Budget Director and the Executive Assistant, while the NSC Secretary stuck to "secretarial" service, with agendas chosen by the President. (If either body were to take up issues involved in the first message, or in pending budget amendments, he would probably want his message "bird-dog" in attendance.)

18. Program development after Inauguration.

Presumably the first message will not have been completed, or all fights on it finished, by January 20. This will remain to be put into final form. As that is done, attention would shift to amending Eisenhower's budget, the next great action with a dead-line attached around which to organize Administration planning and decisions. At the same time, it will be desirable to get study groups working, in or out of government, on desirable projects and programs, administrative and legislative, which are not to be, or cannot be, acted upon immediately.

These three steps -- completing the first message, amending the budget, getting longer-range studies started -- will be major items of concern for the President's first weeks in office. They represent, really, a late stage in "transition."

Like everything before, this stage should be set in awareness of possible complications from abroad.