

Government Carries On 'As Usual' Despite Temporary Loss Of Leader

By JOHN M. HIGHTOWER

WASHINGTON (AP)—The United States government went to work on a business-as-usual policy today despite the loss of President Eisenhower's active leadership for an indefinite period.

The National Security Council now becomes the most important policy-making agency in the government. A strong advisory group, it now affords the mechanism through which Vice President Nixon may act in some degree as a substitute president, and others can share problems which otherwise would be the President's.

To a lesser degree the Cabinet also provided a continuing body to carry on the administration's policies.

Assurances that the domestic and foreign policies and operations of the Eisenhower administration will go forward without a hitch came quickly yesterday from Nixon and three Cabinet secretaries—Dulles of State, Humphrey of Treasury and Benson of Agriculture.

Eisenhower retains the full powers of the presidency, but many of his responsibilities and much more of the work load that normally would be his can be delegated to others.

Even while recuperating from the heart attack which struck him Saturday, Eisenhower presumably could sign papers and make those decisions important enough to be brought to his attention.

At Denver, White House Press Secretary James C. Hagerity said the Justice Department has been asked to decide what powers may be delegated.

The Constitution provides that the vice president take over in case of the removal of the President, his death, resignation or "inability to discharge the powers and duties of office."

Only when a president has died has a vice president ever taken over, however. No president has ever retired while in office, although the possibility was discussed after President Woodrow Wilson suffered a stroke Oct. 2, 1919. He finished out the 17 months of his term and survived for three more years.

The three Cabinet members gave their assurances yesterday as they left Washington for Ottawa and economic and trade talks with Canadian officials.

Dulles told reporters that Eisenhower has "forged a team" of his top officials who know their respective tasks. This team, he said, can carry on with full effectiveness permitting "a ample time" for the President to recover without jeopardizing the nation.

He said he himself planned to continue with preparations for the Geneva Big Four foreign ministers' conference opening Oct. 27.

Humphrey, also emphasizing the team aspect, told newsmen, "You can count on the functions of the government continuing in the absence of the President due to illness the same as they would continue in any other temporary absence. . . . The same policies will be carried out in the same way."

Benson said there would be no change in agricultural programs.

Nixon, at his home here, said the administration team will carry out Eisenhower's "well-defined foreign and domestic policies," and added:

"I emphasize that both Cabinet meetings and National Security Council meetings will go ahead in the same way as if the President had not had his illness."

These assurances were designed not only to prevent the development of any feeling of alarm in this country but also to calm any fears of uncertainty in the rest of the world about America's future course.

They were carried extensively in overseas broadcasts of the Voice of America.

Eisenhower's illness has taken him out of action at a critical period in world affairs when the great problem of the Western Alliance is to design and carry through a series of adjustments to Russia's peace and good will offensive. For

much of the world Eisenhower is the symbol of peace-seeking Western policies in this respect.

The statute which created the security council eight years ago gave it six members — the Pres-

ident, the vice president, the secretary of state and defense, the foreign aid director and the

secretary of the Treasury. But in practice Eisenhower has broadened it to include other agencies and depart-

ments whose representatives are invited to discuss matters directly affecting their work.

The budget director and the secretary of the Treasury have become more or less regular participants in its meetings, and other leaders, both military and civilian, often attend.

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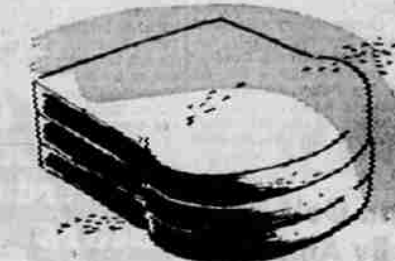
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