

News to Him

Av Westin will return to ABC News as a vice president and executive producer of the ABC Evening News, ABC announced yesterday. Westin was in charge of ABC's documentaries from 1973 to 1975, developing the acclaimed "Close-Up" series, and he also took an earlier turn at producing the Evening News. But he's been away from ABC for 18 months.

His appointment makes him the second new ABC News vice president within a week, following announcement of Sander Vanocur's new position as vice president in charge of special reporting units. It's part of new ABC News chief Rooney Arledge's overhaul of his domain. Westin replaces Evening News producer, Robert Siegenthaler, who now gets "new and important responsibilities within other sections of ABC News," says the network.

If you're wondering how this affects the makeup of the Evening News anchor team, you're not going to find

out from Westin, at least for a while. He says he has known both Harry Reasoner and Barbara Walters for years and believes he can work well with both of them. . .

Stone Walls

"Washington: Behind Closed Doors," the ABC miniseries derived from John Ehrlichman's novel "The Company," has been given a slot at the doorstep of the fall season. It will run Sept. 6-11 (that's Tuesday through Sunday), airing from 9 to 11 p.m. each night. ABC no doubt hopes that viewers' sets will be locked permanently into ABC stations during "Washington" and stay there.

Meanwhile, Ehrlichman himself will be behind closed doors at the federal

prison camp in Safford, Ariz., during the broadcast. Safford's out in the boonies, and the reception might not be the best. But then "Washington" doesn't have much to do with the original book anyway, or so it's said. Rumors have it that Ehrlichman received a six-figure payment for the television rights to "The Company."

Jason Robards Jr., John Houseman and Cliff Robertson are the stars of "Washington," a lightly fictionalized account of the Nixon administration. . .