

Nixon Goal: Friendlier Regulators

By Jack Anderson

Two years ago, President Nixon set up a special office in the White House to coordinate telecommunications policy. This caused quiet apprehension that the President intended to exercise more personal control over radio-television matters.

Such a thought, a spokesman assured us, was the last thing on the President's mind. We have obtained a fascinating memo, however, which suggests otherwise.

The memo, intended for the eyes only of a few advertising executives, indicates that the President would like to stack the regulatory agencies with people who will go along with his telecommunications policies.

Specifically, he would like to replace Federal Trade Commission Chairman Miles Kirkpatrick, Federal Communications Commission Chairman Dean Burch and Federal Communications Commission Commissioner Nicholas Johnson with appointees more on the White House wave length, according to the memo.

This would increase the President's influence upon the radio-television industry.

FCC Shakeup?

The memo was written by Alan Katzenstein, one of the managers of the Needham, Harper and Steers advertising agency in New York City. His memo, summarizing conversa-

tions in Washington on July 27, refers to Brian Lamb of the White House telecommunications staff as saying that:

The President and his staff are unhappy with appointees who appear to support and promote measures that would upset the existing free-enterprise and marketing system.

Lamb twice made the point that great care will be taken in selecting replacements when vacancies occur in the regulatory agencies, implying especially Kirkpatrick, Burch and Nick Johnson, the memo says.

Lamb characterized Burch as "unpredictable in actions and in the way he will vote," according to the memo. Johnson, on the other hand, "predictably takes the opposing side."

The memo suggests that the newest FCC commissioner, Richard Wiley, might replace Chairman Dean Burch. Wiley is described as "clearly a favorite of the administration and will be considered for the next opening of the chairmanship."

Katzenstein acknowledged to us that the memo was authentic. Lamb also confirmed that he had talked to Katzenstein on July 27. But both men insisted the memo, while covering the correct subject matter, over-stated Lamb's remarks.

"I can't speak for the President," Lamb told us. "I made this clear to Katzenstein."

Katzenstein, after receiving

a call from Lamb, also partly repudiated the memo. "I don't think I can stand up in court under oath and say this is what the gentleman said. These were merely my impressions a day later," Katzenstein asserted.

Paper Avalanche

An avalanche of government forms has overwhelmed the Selective Service system's new acting director, Byron Pepitone.

Not long after he took over the agency from Dr. Curtis Tarr three months ago, the hapless Pepitone found himself bogged down in paperwork.

He was a victim of the bureaucracy's penchant for collecting forms. The filling and filing of forms, you see, occupies a lot of bureaucrats who draw good money from the taxpayers for their efforts.

But Selective Service headquarters got more forms than it could handle after instructing local boards last January to send in computerized copies of draft classification forms.

Headquarters was snowed under with these forms—4.5 million of them by official estimate. Grudgingly, the top brass concluded their computer couldn't handle the deluge, so they processed only forms for 18- and 19-year-olds.

This meant that 2.6 million forms—all neatly typed and submitted by the local boards—had to be thrown away. Many local employees had

worked overtime to type these complicated forms only to have national headquarters pay their employees overtime to destroy them.

Cost to the taxpayers: an estimated \$30,000 in needless mailing and computer time alone.

Footnote: When we first called Pepitone about our findings, he denied the boondoggle. "We may have destroyed some forms improperly filled out, but certainly their numbers are not in the millions," he said. But within 24 hours, Ken Coffey, a spokesman for Pepitone, called back and admitted sheepishly that we were right, "We had just too many forms," he said.

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