

Accountant Ponders Legal Action

By John Carmody

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TV Notes

Bethesda CPA Henry Buchanan, whose name cropped up on a CBS Evening News broadcast last week—along with a suggestion he had “laundered” 1971 Republican campaign contribution—said yesterday he hadn’t decided what, if any, legal action he’ll take against the network.

Despite a retraction of the item, read Friday night by Roger Mudd on the same program, Buchanan said yesterday his “personal and

professional reputation has been hurt” by the earlier broadcast on Tuesday night. He called the retraction only “partial” and said he’d wait until his attorney returned from the West Coast to make any decision.

Buchanan is the brother of key White House aide Patrick Buchanan, whose name was also included (apparently for identification purposes) in the same

item, which led off the broadcast by anchorman Walter Cronkite.

The administration Buchanan issued an angry statement Thursday charging Cronkite with maliciously slandering his brother, but cooled off Friday after learning of the death of Cronkite’s father in St. Joseph, Mo. Friday morning he called CBS correspondent Mike Wallace to pass on his expression of sympathy to Cronkite.

CBS’ retraction on Friday night pointed out that Henry Buchanan “was not handling contribution checks but checks issued by the Finance Committee to Re-elect the President.” The checks were placed in a regular account with Buchanan who drew either cash or checks against the account on request from the committee, according to CBS. “They were all very regular disbursements,” Buchanan said yesterday.

CBS qualified its statement Friday by pointing out the Nixon campaign staff would not comment, either on the money involved or the procedure, pending a federal court’s decision to open a sealed deposition given by Henry Buchanan in the matter.

Meanwhile, Pat Buchanan said yesterday that he hadn’t “made any judgment yet,” acknowledging that his “situation” as “a public figure is a lot weaker” than his brother’s with regard to libel law.

CBS says Cronkite will have no comment at least until after his return from covering the Skylab space shots. The commentator’s fa-

ther was buried over the weekend.

Maybe it was the familiarity, or the fact that no astronauts were aboard, or the cloud cover, but the three networks didn’t spend much time with Spacelab One yesterday afternoon.

NBC gave it 23 minutes in all, with John Chancellor hanging on until the laboratory went into orbit. CBS was on for 13 minutes and ABC stayed on for just 10.

ABC, incidentally, had an Air Force colonel who had been a POW during the moon shots on hand for his first look at a major blast-off. All Col. Jim Lamar could say was “Golly” and “It’s the most awe-inspiring thing I’ve ever seen in my life!”

Clay T. Whitehead, director of the Office of Telecommunications Policy, will be married Friday to Margaret Mahon, a congressional liaison officer in the office of the Secretary of Labor.

Miss Mahon is a native of Bowling Green, Va. The couple plan an outdoor wedding, according to an OTP spokesman, but details of the “strictly family affair” are not yet firm. It will be the second marriage for both.

Whitehead, incidentally, will be a “witness” on Wednesday, when “The Advocates” returns to town to film two more television debates for their weekly Public Broadcasting Service show.

He will appear for the years on the question of whether Congress should adopt the Nixon administration license renewal bill.

On Thursday night, “The Advocates” will film a debate on whether the nation should rely on private enterprise to save the railroads.