

**The Federal Diary**

# Despite Cut, USIA Hires Nixon Aide



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Despite a hiring freeze inspired by a congressional budget cut, the U.S. Information Agency has brought former President Nixon's personal television consultant over from the White House for a \$32,000-a-year job in the Foreign Service.

USIA officials say that the hiring of Alvin Snyder, who had been assistant to White House Communications Director Kenneth Clawson, was in the works some time before the hiring freeze that was formally imposed last Monday, the first day Snyder reported for work.

At the USIA, Snyder goes into a newly created job that will make him assistant to Robert Scott, who heads the IMV section that, in USIA parlance, stands for Information-Motion Pictures-Television.

Snyder will be primarily concerned with television production, his specialty when he worked for CBS, and working on bicentennial documentaries for foreign audiences.

As a Foreign Service Limited

Reserve 2 employee, Snyder's appointment is supposed to be limited to no more than three years and at the same salary he got at the White House.

Employee groups at the USIA (about one-third of its 9,000 workers are here) have complained that the Snyder hiring seems directly counter to the agency's belt-tightening directives to them. The unit that hired him faces a budget cut of about \$300,000.

USIA officials reply that Snyder has "first rate credentials" as an award-winning newsman, and point out that his status is temporary. They say there was no pressure from the White House—which is disbanding the press operation set up under former President Nixon—to hire Snyder.

They say the new job was set up in the Foreign Service "limited" category because it is a special, short duration assignment and USIA, therefore, did not want to make it a competitive position either under the civil service or Foreign Service system.

The job offer was made some time ago, a USIA spokesman said, and has been in the mill long enough for Snyder to get a security clearance.

The decision to freeze hiring at USIA was not made, officials say, until sometime around Oct. 31. The new economy push results because Congress failed to approve a supplemental money request USIA had made, and this will mean cuts—in program and people—of around \$3 million to \$4 million below the present operating level.