

News Council to Press Nixon on TV Criticism

By Austin C. Wehrwein

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RACINE, Wis., Dec. 11—The National News Council, after a two-day meeting here, has decided to push for a bill of particulars from the White House on President Nixon's Oct. 26 news conference charge of "outrageous, vicious and distorted" reporting by the television networks.

The council said its efforts since October to get specific set of examples have been rebuffed despite two telegrams, six telephone calls and separate single meetings between Press Secretary Ron Ziegler and Ken Clawson, Deputy director of communications, on the one side and William B. Arthur, council executive director, and his assistant, Ned Schnurman.

Arthur and Schnurman said they will suggest six areas, starting with the coverage of the bombing of North Vietnam last Dec. 18. The reports quoted Hanoi Radio, and Mr. Nixon objected that he was called a "tyrant" and a "dictator."

Arthur said he had "gleaned" the six sensitive areas from the meeting with Ziegler and an earlier meeting on Nov. 6 with Clawson, plus statements by Clawson to The Washington Post and The New York Times.

Others on the council list are a Walter Cronkite interview with former Watergate special prosecutor Archibald Cox during which there was a reference to a disavowed Nixon trust fund; other references to the Cox ouster the White House disliked; figures used last fall on Mr. Nixon's finances; implications that the military alert at the outset of the Middle East war was a ploy to divert attention from Watergate, and references to the ITT settlement that made the White House unhappy.

Arthur will offer Ziegler abstracts of TV news shows made by the Vanderbilt University Media Center to expedite selection of specifics.

The exact format for the study is as yet unclear, although public hearings, which may be televised, are a possibility.

Today's session at the Johnson Foundation Conference Center near Racine was devoted mainly to a joint informal meeting with the Minnesota Press Council.

One issue was whether any of the meeting should be closed to the press. The National Council's sessions here were closed, but reporters were briefed afterwards.