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Nixon Didn't Like Advice From Science Aides, 2 Say

By Stuart Auerbach
Washington Post Staff Writer

NEW YORK, Jan. 27 — Two aides in the Nixon White House acknowledged for the first time today that the former President abolished the job of White House science adviser because he didn't like the advice he was getting that opposed pet projects of the administration.

When the White House Office of Science and Technology was abolished two years ago, Nixon aides denied that it was done in a fit of pique over advice, sometimes leaked publicly from White House scientists who opposed the Vietnam war, the supersonic transport plane, and the anti-ballistic missile system.

Instead, Nixon aides said at the time, President Nixon merely was trying to reduce what they called an overly large and clumsy executive staff.

But the last science adviser to Mr. Nixon—Edward E. David Jr. — told the American Association for the Advancement of Science annual meeting here today that the former President made his decision because he was annoyed that his scientific advisers had refused to follow his administration's line.

"There was definitely a falling out between the scientific community and the President. One thing you can do if you want to reform an institution is get rid of it," David said.

"The White House advisers to Mr. Nixon thought that the scientists were using science as a sledgehammer to grind their political axes," he continued.

His view was echoed by Clay T. Whitehead, former director of the Office of Telecommunications Policy in the Nixon White House and now a fellow at Harvard University.

Whitehead, who was involved in setting administration policy, said top aides to Nixon were angry because they felt the White House science advisers showed greater allegiance to their scientific colleagues than to the policies of the administration they worked for.

"What we need is people in the White House who are big enough to take scientific criticism and understand it," said Whitehead.

William D. Carey, a former assistant director of the Bureau of the Budget, said presidential disenchantment with

science advisers went back to Lyndon B. Johnson, "who ignored the scientific community."

The custom of having a White House science adviser started with President Eisenhower as part of a national reaction to the United States' scientific strength that followed the Soviet launching of

Sputnik, the first satellite to be shot into earth orbital space 1957.

Under pressure from scientific groups around the country, President Ford has promised to consider appointing a science adviser and has asked Vice President Rockefeller to study the question.