

VIP

Second Thoughts

By Maxine Cheshire

CBS correspondent Dan Rather, never a favorite at the White House, is now having second thoughts about a break-in which took place at his Georgetown house just two months before the Watergate burglary.

Rather is asking District of Columbia police to reopen their investigation into the incident, which occurred on April 9, 1972.

Rather was supposed to be away that weekend. So were his wife and their two children. Rather was assigned to cover President Nixon in Key Biscayne, Fla., and had made arrangements with the White House to have his family accompany him.

At the last minute, one of the children became ill and Mrs. Rather decided to keep them home. Rather himself went to Florida, but news was slow and he returned to Washington on Saturday night, ahead of other White House correspondents.

In the early hours of Sunday morning, the Rathers were awakened by a burglar or burglars. Lights had been burning downstairs, but suddenly the whole house was plunged into darkness. Light switches wouldn't work. Neither would the telephones.

Rather routed the prowlers with a shotgun while his wife slipped outside to summon police.

According to the report of officers who answered the call, the Rathers' lights were made inoperative by removal of fuses from the fuse box. A telephone extension downstairs was taken off the hook.

The burglars had worn gloves and there were no fingerprints.

The intruders ignored Mrs. Rather's purse, which contained \$200 in cash, and went straight to the basement and rifled Rather's files.

Although Rather had frequently incurred the wrath of Nixon aides, he did not suggest to police at the time that his files would have little interest for the average house-breaker. Now he is having second thoughts.

The Nixon administration, prior to the break-in last summer, had frequently been at odds with Rather over his coverage of the presidency. White House dissatisfaction finally reached the point where a "critical" complaint about his "objectivity" was registered with CBS.

Potpourri

Sen. Edward M. (Ted) Kennedy's sister and brother-in-law, Jean and Steve Smith, have returned to Bridgehampton for the month. Amanda Burden, Mrs. M- the same