

White House Maps New Media Attack

By Rowland Evans and Robert Novak

WASHINGTON — Sentiment is building within the White House staff for a partial resumption of the abandoned anti-media campaign with CBS news as a special target.

This stems from bitter White House resentment over the nationally televised exposes by CBS of alleged windfalls for giant grain companies in the U.S.-Soviet wheat deal and charges of Nixon campaign espionage and sabotage growing out of the Watergate scandal.

Bitterly disappointed by the poor Republican showing below the presidential level, key presidential aides — with questionable logic — blame CBS. While concluding some merit in the network's wheat deal expose, they claim CBS did a hatchet job on the Watergate affair.

These same aides are not nearly so exercised over the Washington Post's much more exhaustive investigative reporting of Watergate. The reason: TV-wise Nixon men believe the prime time CBS programs had far more national impact.

Hence, they want the anti-media campaign resumed with the sights on CBS — perhaps not with a resumption of Vice President Agnew's rhetoric but with the far more menacing threat of government action against news program content.

This resumes an internal struggle within the White House over media policy. Two former newsmen on the White House staff — Ken Clawson (ex-Washington Post) and John Scali (ex-ABC) last summer talked Nixon into calling off the anti-media campaign in his own best political interests. Some White House aides never fully accepted that policy shift and now want to reverse it.

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