

New Policy on Newsmen

Washington

Attorney General Elliott L. Richardson has decided to require all Justice Department employees to obtain his approval before any reporter can be questioned, arrested or indicted for an offense arising from coverage of a news story, a spokesman said yesterday.

John W. Hushen, head of the Justice Department's public information office, predicted that "This new directive will quickly put an end to a problem which was

building a wall between the media and the administration."

He recalled that Richardson recently told the American Bar Association he was considering a directive "which would require his specific approval before a newsman could be questioned, arrested or indicted for any offense which the reporter is suspected of having committed relating to a news story."

Hushen mentioned two incidents which he said were "damaging to the relation-

ship between the media and the government." — they were the arrest last January of Les Whitten, a reporter for syndicated columnist Jack Anderson, who was carrying several boxes of records which had been stolen from the Bureau of Indian Affairs, and the arrest of Thomas Oliphant, a Boston Globe reporter who was taken into custody for riding in an airplane that dropped food and medicine into the Indian encampment at Wounded Knee, S.D.

United Press