

Magruder's Memo on How to 'Get the Media'

Washington

During a one-month period in the fall of 1969, President Nixon made 21 separate requests to his top aides to take action to counter what the President saw as unfavorable news coverage, according to a memorandum made public last night by Senator Lowell P. Weicker Jr. (Rep-Conn.).

by Jeb S. Magruder, then a White House assistant, to H. R. Haldeman, who was the presidential chief of staff, complained that "shotgunning the media" was not effective.

It suggested that the administration could better "get the media" if it used such tactics as harassment by the Internal Revenue Ser-

The memorandum, written

Back Page, Col. 5

From Page 1

vice and the antitrust division of the Justice Department.

REQUESTS

Attached to the memorandum was a log of the President's requests between the middle of September and the middle of October, 1969.

The material was disclosed by Weicker, a member of the Senate Watergate committee, on Martin Agronsky's "Evening Edition," a television program on an educational network.

The memorandum was given to the Watergate committee by Magruder.

Weicker said last night there was "no way to know if Haldeman acted on the memo" but that "it shows the type of thinking that was going on at the White House."

Some of the requests by the President, according to the log, were broad-based, such as an instruction to Herbert G. Klein, the White House communications director, to "take appropriate action to counter biased TV coverage of the administration over the summer."

Other entries in the log suggested action against a

particular reporter. For instance, Mr. Nixon asked Peter M. Flanigan, then a top assistant, to "take action to counter" a report by Dan Rather, a Columbia Broadcasting System commentator, that General Lewis B. Hershey, director of Selective Service, was being dismissed because of antiwar protests.

In some cases, the President sought to promote his activities. He asked Klein to generate letters to Newsweek "mentioning the President's tremendous reception in Miss and (at) last Sat. Miami Dolphin football game."

In other requests, Mr. Nixon tried to use the press to attack political opponents. For example, he asked Klein to "have the Chicago Tribune hit Senator (Charles H.) Percy hard on his ties with the peace group."

During the month covered by the log the President asked that complaints about coverage be registered with the three commercial television networks, Time, Newsweek, Life and columnist Jack Anderson.

In no case was any specific action against reporters, magazines or networks suggested.

Magruder wrote in his memorandum that he believed that "double or triple" the number of the President's requests concerning the media were made by others in the White House.

In the memorandum, entitled "The Shotgun Versus the rifle," Magruder, who pleaded guilty last summer to obstruction of justice in the Watergate case, said that "this continual daily attempt to get the media" was "very unfruitful and wasteful of our time."

Magruder suggested that "a major impact" could be made in the following ways:

- By having the Federal Communications Commission begin "an official monitoring system" to prove bias on the part of the networks.

- By threatening antitrust action against various news organizations.

- By threatening an IRS investigation of "the various organizations that we are most concerned about."

- By providing favorable newsmen with exclusive information.

- By conducting "major letter-writing efforts through the Republican National Committee.

New York Times