

## Study Group Says Nixon Fails To Give Details on TV Charges

By LES BROWN

The National News Council said yesterday that the White House had failed to support with specific details President Nixon's charges against the television networks of "outrageous, vicious, distorted reporting." Mr. Nixon had made the charges at his news conference in Washington on Oct. 26, 1973.

The White House's lack of action was "seriously detrimental to the public interest," the council said. It added that in the absence of such details, which have been sought from the President and his staff over the last three months, it was unable to proceed with its evaluation of the charges. However, the 15-member body decided to continue its efforts to have President Nixon identify the specific broadcast items on which he based his charges.

The council was set up by the Twentieth Century Fund to investigate public grievance about national news reporting. In its first open meeting since its formation in April, 1973, Council released to the press a narrative of the attempts by William B. Arthur, its executive director, and Ned Schurman, associate director, to obtain the cooperation of the White House.

It said all three networks had agreed to furnish transcripts of any newscast if the President would specifically identify the stories he felt were instances of "outrageous, vicious, distorted reporting."

After an initial delay, it said, Ronald L. Ziegler, the President's press secretary, said the White House would cooperate if the council provided examples of what it wanted.

From their interview with Mr. Ziegler and other meetings with Kenneth W. Clawson, deputy director of the White House Office of Communications, Mr. Arthur and Mr. Schurman were able to identify six areas of news reporting on which Mr. Ziegler and Ms. Clawson "dwelled at some length." They were:

¶The reporting on Hanoi's charges of Presidential tyranny during the bombing period that began in December, 1972.

¶The reporting on the President's personal finances in the early fall of 1973.

¶Accusations that the Administration created the Middle East alert late last year to divert attention from Watergate.

¶Walter Cronkite's interview with Special Prosecutor Archibald Cox, after his dismissal, mentioning a trust fund for the President in spite of White House denials that such a fund exists, and other reporting about the alleged trust fund.

¶The reporting on the International Telephone and Telegraph Company, with alleged unfavorable references to the President.

¶The preponderance of "unfavorable" comments and interviews on network newscasts beginning on Oct. 22, following the ouster of Mr. Cox on Oct. 20.

### Abstracts Obtained

The Council secured abstracts of network newscasts and commentaries bearing on those topics from the television news archives at Vanderbilt University.

These were presented to Mr. Ziegler on Jan. 17 with the request that the White House specifically designate which of the newscasts were, in the President's opinion, outrageous, vicious or distorted.

Mr. Ziegler reportedly said his office would respond with an answer on how far it would go in providing the council the information it sought before the council's next scheduled meeting, on Jan. 28. That was yesterday, the council noted.