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**Fred Friendly Warns Networks
On Coverage of Impeachment**

By LES BROWN

Television will be putting itself on trial covering an impeachment trial of President Nixon, a former broadcast news executive has observed.

Fred W. Friendly, who was president of CBS News during the middle nineteen-sixties, warned that unless the networks subdued their competitive drives in covering the impeachment, television might "overwhelm the event" and interfere with due process.

Failure to avoid the pitfalls could "rekindle the ugly torch recently carried by Spiro Agnew," Mr. Friendly said Saturday in a commencement address for the Medill School of Journalism at Northwestern University in Evanston, Ill.

While advocating full access to the trial for television, Mr. Friendly contended that "the manner in which it conducts itself, and the public verdict on that performance, may be, in its way, as historic and decisive as the drama it is reporting from the floor of the Senate."

He added that the broadcast industry would "impeach itself" if it failed to resist rating boasts and other competitive claims while the trial was in progress.

Mr. Friendly, who is now a professor of journalism at Columbia University and a broad-

cast consultant to the Ford Foundation, made the following recommendations:

¶The networks should not station their anchormen in the House or Senate auditoriums, or use rear-screen projection to achieve that same effect, and the newsmen should not be so goaded by zealous production ambitions that they would intrude themselves "into a situation which will be traumatic enough for all."

¶There should be no editorial commentary or interpretive reporting while the gavel-to-gavel coverage is in progress.

¶Commercials would be an "unacceptable intrusion," even in the periods of honest interruptions in the proceedings. Commercials would "interfere with the public's right to know as much as if commercials interrupted evidence in a courtroom."

"In 1974, television's credential for admittance will be the justified claim that it can provide a reserve ticket for every American who wants a front-row seat in the spectators gallery," Mr. Friendly said. The citizen with such a seat is entitled to his privacy, even his solitude, without some well-meaning sightseeing guide or expert whispering in his ear."