

# TELEVISION

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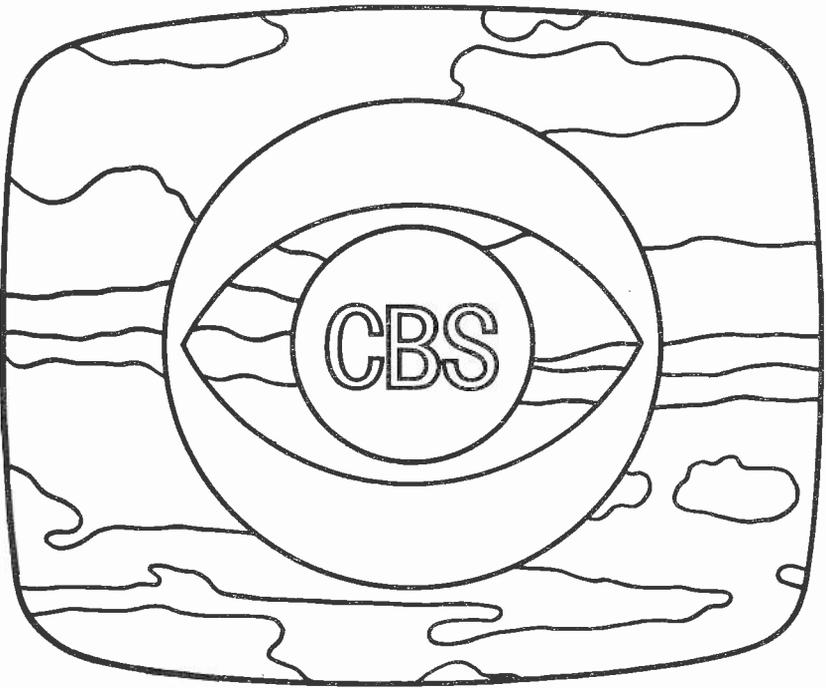
# QUARTERLY

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THE JOURNAL OF THE  
NATIONAL ACADEMY OF  
TELEVISION ARTS  
AND SCIENCES

Published by The National Academy  
of Television Arts and Sciences with  
the cooperation of the Television and  
Radio Department, Newhouse Commu-  
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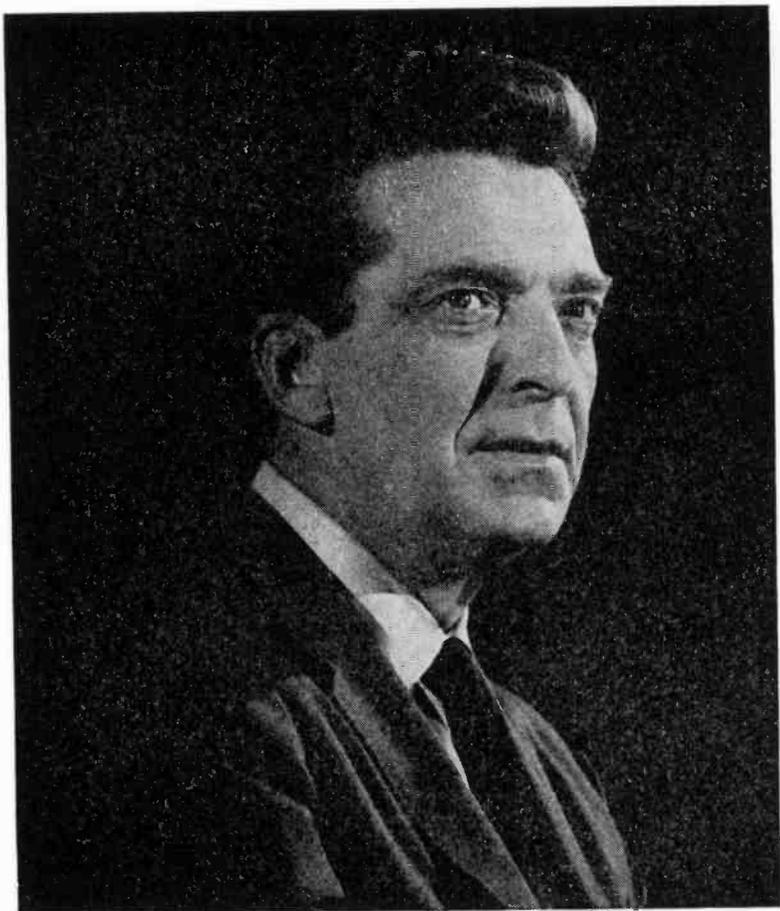
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## CONTENTS

### ARTICLES

TV in the Political Campaign <i>Tom Wicker, Kenneth P. O'Donnell, Rowland Evans</i>	13
The Great Debates <i>Howard K. Smith, Stanley Kelley, Jr.</i>	27
Section 315: The Prospects <i>E. William Henry, Charles E. Goodell, Julian Goodman, Leon Brooks, John de J. Pemberton, Jr.</i>	33
The High Costs of TV Campaigns <i>Herbert E. Alexander, Stimson Bullitt, Hyman H. Goldin</i>	47
Dialogue <i>Lou Hazam, John Secondari</i>	67

### DEPARTMENTS

Comment	79
Books in Review	82
Looking Ahead	87

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## TV AND THE POLITICAL INSTITUTION

Any communications system must be described in relation to how it reflects and advances, or hinders or subverts, the ideals and policies of the major institutions that set the course and shape the destiny of a society.

In our democracy there are four such institutions: government, education, commerce, and that complex of agencies entrusted with the fulfillment of man's creative and spiritual needs—chiefly the arts and religion. Within these four broad and interlocking means by which men grasp a sense of the past and the directions of the future are evolved the principles, values and programs of action for a truly free society.

Yet none of these institutions may proceed toward mankind's "sweet fruition of an earthly crown" without the consensus of a whole society—without universality of social discourse.

Democratic consensus is sought through communication. We are obliged, therefore, to designate those communicative systems which are "public" in terms of the degree to which they can effect this consensus. The greater their reach, the more widespread their influence, and the more immediate their impact on a citizenry, the more they may be considered *public* communication systems.

It is no longer arguable that the sight-sound-motion media of this century determine the quality of modern life. They communicate the aims and purposes of our institutions in dynamic ways. They interpret and articulate our aspirations and our discontents. They appeal most strongly to the senses, and have power to dramatize, sensationalize, and simplify the messages of our institutions.

Because they minimize the rational structures of language, they tend to reduce the importance of the human act by failing to define its social meaning.

Traditionally, the political consensus sought by government has been a prime function of the printed press. But although the non-print public media frequently communicate in fictional terms, and seemingly do not correspond to the functions of the press, it is dangerous to deny their reportorial role. The relevance of broadcasting, especially in regard to controversial national issues, has long been noted. All of television and radio makes a substantive contribution to the transmission and interpretation of governmental need and necessity, as well as to the initiation of required democratic dialogues.

The whole view of the influence of the electronic media upon political man and his political institutions may never be attained, but it is incumbent upon us to begin to define those new frameworks and dilemmas which television has introduced into the political process.

On October 13-14, 1965, the Fair Campaign Practices Committee held its first conference to consider the problem of politics and television. A distinguished gathering of informed and involved citizens met at the Shoreham Hotel in Washington, D.C. to devote its attention to matters old and new in this area. The deliberations of this group constitute the major content of this, the first issue of *Television Quarterly's* fifth volume.

THE NATIONAL CONFERENCE ON  
BROADCASTING AND ELECTION CAMPAIGNS\*

PARTICIPANTS

(in order of their contribution to this issue)

*Tom Wicker* — Chief, Washington Bureau, New York Times

*Kenneth P. O'Donnell* — Former Special Assistant to Presidents  
Kennedy and Johnson

*Rowland Evans* — Nationally Syndicated Columnist, New York  
Herald Tribune

*Howard K. Smith* — Commentator, ABC News

*Stanley Kelley, Jr., Ph.D.* — Professor of Politics, Princeton University

*The Honorable E. William Henry* — Chairman, Federal  
Communications Commission

*The Honorable Charles E. Goodell* — Representative from New  
York, U. S. Congress

*Julian Goodman* — Senior Executive Officer, Administration, NBC

*Leon Brooks* — Vice-President and General Counsel, CBS, Inc.

*John de J. Pemberton, Jr.* — Executive Director, American Civil  
Liberties Union

*Herbert E. Alexander, Ph.D.* — Director, Citizens Research Foundation

*Stimson Bullitt* — President, King Broadcasting Company

*Hyman H. Goldin* — Executive Associate, Carnegie Commission on  
Educational Television

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\**Television Quarterly* is indebted to Editorial Board-member HERMAN W. LAND, a broadcasting consultant, who not only gathered speeches and transcripts of discussions and general commentary into the following series of articles, but also prepared the introductory notes. Special appreciation is also extended to each of the participants and to BRUCE FELKNOR, Executive Director of the FCPC, for their kind cooperation.

## THE FALL MADNESS

An autumn madness lies ahead for television, for this is an election year. The tempers of victory-driven candidates will shorten with the campaign, advertisers will find their time preëminent, viewers will object to replacement of beloved stars with dull political personalities; and in the middle of it all, the FCC will attempt to exercise wisdom and issue edicts—in time—under guidelines of a Communications Act which do not quite seem to satisfy anyone.

The industry may anticipate renewed discussion of such perennials as Section 315 and the Fairness Doctrine, the High Cost of Television, the Great Debates and Why Can't We Have Them Again, and the baneful or beneficial Impact of the medium. As usual, the discussion will be joined by just about everyone who has access to media, for these are concerns which are shared by virtually all segments of the intellectual community.

Indeed, there appears to be widespread acceptance by now of television's central role in American life. It was clearly evident in the deliberations of the National Conference on Broadcasting and Election Campaigns, held under the auspices of the Fair Campaign Practices Committee. As the excerpts that follow indicate, there is growing agreement that the medium's impact and pervasiveness are serious social concerns, that the cost question needs facing, and that Section 315 may require modification, if not repeal.

The issues are more blurred than in the past; simple nostrums are seen as obviously inadequate in a complex and intricate structure of network, affiliate, independent station, and group operations living in a volatile economic environment of large and small markets, amid a welter of electromagnetic signals that go their way in disregard of political boundaries.

Important as current discussion is, already there are signs that it may be lagging behind the development of the medium itself. While industry and political practitioners grapple with the difficult day-to-day problems of living together, many far from solution still, the conditions for future problems even more challenging are being created by the pressures of technology and economics. We are moving into a time of proliferating stations and new media relationships, stimulated by the FCC and an expanding economy. UHF, CATV, color, and the portable set are among the factors working to change the television industry we know. The computer and advanced market research are assisting the development of the art of political marketing to a level of sophistication hardly dreamed of a few years back. As the skills of public persuasion are refined, the questions of social and ethical morality implicit in their use will move to the forefront of discussion.

*Herman W. Land*

*For of all those matters in which organization is important, the direction of television in a political campaign in modern America is incomparably the most important. Here is where the audience is; here is where the greatest part of all money is spent; here is where creative artistry and practical commercialism must join to support the candidate's thrust.*

THEODORE H. WHITE

*The Making of the President: 1964*

# TV IN THE POLITICAL CAMPAIGN

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TOM WICKER  
KENNETH P. O'DONNELL  
ROWLAND EVANS

---

If ever one questioned the dominant campaign role of television, the following statements from people who have lived in the midst of the fray should settle doubts once and for all. Two of the observers are journalists, TOM WICKER of the *New York Times* and ROWLAND EVANS of the *New York Herald Tribune*; one, KENNETH P. O'DONNELL, has been special assistant to Presidents Kennedy and Johnson. All agree the medium offers unparalleled opportunities for spreading the word quickly and with effectiveness; all agree, too, that it has its limits.

TOM WICKER

It seems to me that this monstrous thing that has been unleashed in the last couple of decades has several characteristics that are having profound importance in politics.

The first characteristic is the tremendous impact and drama that come through from a well-conceived and well-conducted political broadcast. The prime example, of course, is the famous series of Presidential debates in 1960.

The next is the national character of this impact. It is obvious that the most, and the best, political broadcasting is done on the national networks, and my impression is that most viewers pay more attention to network political broadcasts than they do to local political broadcasts.

The third characteristic which is obvious to all is the enormous

cost of political broadcasting. The Gore Committee reported that about \$4.7 million was spent by both parties on radio and television broadcasting in 1956, and even with more free time available—and more sophisticated use of that time—it has been reported that over \$3 million was spent on the national contests alone in 1960.

Finally, I think we have to consider demands made upon the cast of characters by television. These range from the very smallest detail to matters of immense importance. On the one hand, at routine news conferences reporters are often asked to stand up to ask their questions. Now that may seem a small matter, but what it represents, as everyone knows, is an accommodation to the television camera. It doesn't make any great difference, but it is an accommodation, and from that low level the accommodations creep upward in scale and importance.

We might consider the fact that many candidates for office now appear before the public in cosmetics. Again, make-up may not seem important, but it does begin to lend a tinge of falsity to the process. In this connection we might recall some observations made by Richard Nixon in his book, *Six Crises*. In a discussion of his preparations for the second debate in 1960, he wrote that he had not been at best advantage in the first debate, and he said he knew there were three things which he had to convey in the second. One was knowledge of his subject, the second was confidence in himself, and the third was that he "had to be sincere." I would submit to you that when a man goes before the cameras with the determination to be sincere, the last thing he's going to be is sincere!

Now, considering these things that are inherent in the nature of political broadcasting, I think our politics have been altered or shaped or influenced in a number of ways.

Obviously, television in the campaign raises out of all proportion the dangers that are inherent in political fund-raising. More money is simply demanded, and when more money is demanded it has to be raised. And since it has to be raised, the dangers in the process obviously are going to be even greater than they have been.

Secondly, television puts greater emphasis on, and it rewards in higher proportion, something that is not intrinsically related to political questions and political issues, and that is the production and merchandising of talent.

Anyone who saw the 1964 half-hour broadcast of Senator Goldwater chatting with former President Eisenhower on his farm at Gettysburg, and compared that—an expensive, time-consuming and carefully planned sort of thing—to the very brief spot the Democrats ran showing the hands of an unseen man tearing up a social security card, will understand that the one spot had immensely more impact than the half-hour program. Yet, in either case, there wasn't much political knowledge conveyed. The merchandising and the production were what counted.

I have read that Mr. Ronald Reagan of California, who is apparently content to continue his acting career, is being “re-modeled” by an advertising and public relations agency there. He will come out of a long seclusion as a sort of two-tone sports job. He's tailored, he's painted, and he's produced for the camera. I'm not opposed to Ronald Reagan at all. I know very little about him. But I find this process, whether it's for a Democrat or a Republican, basically offensive.

I think it should next be pointed out that because of all this there has been an almost immeasurable increase in the public's interest in, and knowledgeability about, candidates and races. This is due not only to the broadcasts of candidates themselves, but to the extremely widespread and costly efforts of television in news and public affairs programming. During a Presidential campaign, for instance, if the air is not saturated, it is certainly dripping with politics—with issues, speeches and faces. All of this has lifted the level of American interest in politics. And this has been particularly so in every case where a television debate—something on the order of the 1960 Presidential debates—was conducted in a campaign. Before and after such debates the level of public interest rose.

Obviously a debate in itself makes for high drama. It's a public clash between men, and it personalizes and concentrates the intrinsic clash which is the race for office. And incidentally, it has created a whole new type of issue in American politics. If one man ducks out in a debate the other man goes through the whole campaign charging him with not being “willing to debate the issues.”

The next point to be observed is that television can actually shape the content, the outcome, and the nature of a campaign. Let me cite a couple of examples.

The New Hampshire primary of 1964 was the first of that year. It was, for all intents and purposes, the opening of the Presidential

campaign. Because it was, the television cameras in particular (and newspapers to some extent, but without the same impact) saturated the New Hampshire primary. My impression is that Senator Goldwater was not prepared for this. I don't mean "prepared" in the way of having facts—he wasn't prepared for what it would do to him, for how he would have to respond, and the pressures that would be on him. As a result, Goldwater never escaped, in my opinion, from the first impression he made upon the general American public in the New Hampshire primary. That is when the social security issue was pinned on him. That is when the nuclear bomb issue was pinned on him. That is when the war-monger issue was pinned on him. He never got out from under this. The first exposure in New Hampshire shaped the whole campaign, and I predict that this is going to happen time and time again in the future.

By way of further example, Mr. Nixon once said in a private conversation that he believed that if Goldwater ever had a chance to win the general election after having gotten the nomination, he lost it on the night of his acceptance speech. There was tremendous interest—millions of people watching—at that moment when he had the greatest opportunity to bind up the wounds of the party. Either by design or by oversight, he reopened them with his remarks about extremism, and by reading out of the party those who he said did not agree with him. Here was a specific instance of how the whole shape of events can be influenced by one dramatic and climactic episode on TV.

Having been in Washington throughout the period, I believe that the single most successful moment of President Johnson's tenure in office came within the first five days, when he addressed the Congress on Wednesday after having become President on Friday. I don't think that he could ever have recovered from a bad performance at that time. At that point he made the necessary presentation of himself to the public with the necessary words.

The next thing I would call to attention is that television tends to soften what we laughingly refer to as "the issues" in a campaign. TV puts tremendous emphasis on blurring over the hard questions of choice between two courses. Few people, after all, sitting in their living rooms with the children around them—and with the opportunity to switch the channel and get *Man from U.N.C.L.E.*—are going to listen to serious discussion for a half-hour on the international monetary problem, on civil rights, or other complex issues.

Beyond that, television reaches all shades of opinion simultaneously. You can't address yourself just to liberals or conservatives or to Democrats. You're addressing yourself to anybody that turns on the set. Therefore, while you may make a very hard and pointed speech on one issue which may attract a lot of Democrats, there may be many more Republicans watching, or vice versa. So you have to soften your tone somewhat. Television, I think, demands less in the way of reasoned analysis and discussion of issues. TV demands punchlines, slogans and impressions that the candidate can put across.

In this connection, if you read the 1960 debates—read them in text today—it is difficult to say that either candidate really won on the basis of the issues. I have heard it said by people who heard those debates, particularly the first debate, on radio rather than saw them on television, that they thought it came out about even.

Finally, I would make two more points that are perhaps the most important. Television came along at about that time in our history when there began to be a massive shift in our population from the farms and out of the cities and into the suburbs. And I think that the conjunction of that shift and television has helped to weaken if not erase party loyalties. For this reason I do not subscribe to the thesis that Democrats move to the suburbs and become Republicans. Rather, people who move to the suburbs take their political tendencies with them.

Once in the suburbs, however, it's much more difficult to stimulate that tendency toward party loyalty of one kind. Voters have escaped the ward captain, the city club, and the social pressures that Republicans might find in small towns and on farms. Suburbanites—lacking this polarity of city on the one hand and farm on the other—become much more open to party switches, to taking independent stands, and to voting for "the man."

Since TV does reach members of both parties simultaneously, and since it does tend to blur issues and put emphasis on men and on generalities, these patterns have moved together. In the past 15 years emphasis has been taken off the polarity of our party system. People are not so sharply Democrat or sharply Republican as they once were.

Since national coverage is the best and the widest with TV, even those living out in the small towns and far from Washington have developed more interest in, and know more about, national politics and national candidates than they do about local politics

and local candidates. They have developed, in my view, a more personal sense of participation in national politics, in Presidential campaigns, and in the activities of the President than they have in their local candidate for Congress or for the state legislature.

I raise the question whether this may not be a key factor in what seems to be the increasing American acceptance of a large and powerful centralized government in Washington. Television brings government into the home. The people participating in government are personally, immediately and constantly in the living room. This is not true of the members of legislatures and city councils.

Finally, I want to make the point that the voracious demands of television must not be allowed to reach the fundamental institutions of our politics. I find it regrettable, for instance, that the national nominating convention is being written off by many people as an anachronism, as a bore, as too long and unnecessary. I don't agree with that at all. In my own view, the national nominating convention is something like the grass in the prairies. It grew out of the United States, and what it's all about. It is a part of the way our parties have developed and our federal system and the great ethnic divisions of the country, as well as the great geographic divisions. I think that the national convention is something that is as natural in our system as the Presidency itself.

Now it may be very true that all those favorite sons are a great bore to the home viewer, but all those favorite sons play an important part in the deliberations and results of a convention. It may have been true that in 1964 Senator Goldwater and his supporters put off the platform debate on Civil Rights until late in the evening, in the hope that the Eastern viewers would have gone to bed and wouldn't see it. That may be true, but isn't that a legitimate political move on the part of people who have the power to control something? The point is that while the convention may be a bore, and while it may go on too long, it's an intrinsic and useful part of the system. And if anybody's going to adapt, let TV adapt to the convention and not the convention to TV.

I would say also that however TV may change political tactics and strategy—no matter how it may influence the ways that people campaign—it isn't fundamentally going to change American politics. Nothing is going to change American politics until America itself changes because our political system seems to grow so naturally out of the kind of country this is.

What we're really talking about here is the way the face of politics is shaped and the way the skin of it may be stretched. But not the way the heart of it functions.

## KENNETH P. O'DONNELL

Attempting to adjust a candidate and a campaign to a new medium is a very difficult problem—one I don't think we have solved. In the 1964 campaign we did not get what we thought were maximum results. We did not arrive at the most economical and effective blending of a candidate and a medium.

Campaigning has been drastically altered by television. We have progressed from "speeches" at a rally through radio and now into a brand new medium which has upset, to a degree, the monopoly once shared by radio and newspapers. Now we must deal with the sight-and-sound interjection of a political figure into a medium which is available to all of the public. It is a change of major proportions, and we are still adapting to it.

Let me extend some specific examples of how TV has worked changes in the art of campaigning. In 1952 Adlai Stevenson was an unknown and rather obscure Governor of Illinois. Largely as the result of the influence of President Truman and the party operation, he was suddenly thrust into a national limelight as the Democratic nominee for the Presidency. Reluctantly, he accepted the nomination. I think that politicians and academicians alike, however, would accept him as one of the great public speakers of our time. And TV reflected him as a great orator, a sincere man, and an intellectual. He was a new type of politician, suddenly entering the lists. And just as suddenly he became a great national figure and ultimately a world figure. His dramatic appearance upon the political stage was through television, and without TV he would never have become so prominent.

In the same year—the same day, really—a distinguished Governor, perhaps the best in the history of Massachusetts, was a keynote speaker on television. And he destroyed himself, politically, because he did not understand the medium. He was not aware of the difference in acoustics. He was not aware of the type of picture he projected, the "image" (whether we like it or not) that he projected. Three months later he was defeated by 14,000 votes by then-Congressman Christian A. Herter.

Governor Stevenson, of course, had not been trained for TV, but he came through with the obvious sincerity that was his. We now have fears about "the image" and Hollywood movie-stars seeking office. But I think they're unfounded. The single exposure may have its effect, but as the years went by Stevenson continued to maintain the same high standards. Whether we voted for him or not, his intellectual integrity continued to be carried by television. Even those who would not vote for him would listen to Stevenson. They wanted to hear his ideas, his thoughts, and know what he could contribute to the dialogue of our intellectual community.

Party politics aside, Adlai Stevenson became a great American statesman. TV was a factor in his acceptance, and John Kennedy was to come along and harvest what Stevenson planted. Kennedy's rise was absolutely a triumph for television. In 1956 Kennedy, a reasonably obscure Senator, went to Chicago, where like dozens of other candidates (and primarily for home consumption) he was a talked-of candidate for the Vice-Presidency. But first he went on television to introduce the narrator to the convention. Then he nominated Adlai Stevenson—and suddenly he became a national figure. He could not, however, have maintained the stature of a national figure unless he continued to appear—day after day—for the next three years. On *Meet the Press*, on *Face the Nation*, on panel shows and interviews, he maintained his position within the framework of potential he had established at the convention. He continued to discuss issues on TV with an intellectual depth that people required, desired and demanded.

It is true that television thrusts people into prominence, but in order to remain there they must have the qualities of greatness. TV cannot manufacture them. It can only transmit what is there. It's too easy, I think, for politicians to blame TV or the press if things seem unfair. Generally speaking, it's still up to the candidate to attempt to "fit in" by himself. He must project the issues in a campaign in a way that people will find compelling. If he cannot, they will not watch him on television.

We would also do well, I think, to stress the fact that any Presidential candidate has a TV opportunity which is generally not given to gubernatorial candidates, Senators, or Congressmen. Lesser candidates are exposed to some degree in what are really paid advertisements by city councilors, aldermen, and people in their particular communities. But the President is allowed a single, specific opportunity for massive exposure at one moment at a convention. It is

then that he produces ideas and issues that interest the people, and it is up to him to impress upon the people the simple truth that he is the gentleman in whom they must place their confidence. Television gives him a vehicle, but it does not give him the weapon to elect himself.

The primary campaigns present a host of varying challenges in the area of proper TV usage. We learned a great deal in Kennedy's campaign. We went to the states of Wisconsin, West Virginia, Nebraska, Oregon, and Maryland; and in each instance we had to take different positions. In all of these campaigns we used advertising agencies only to purchase time. The issues, and what went into the candidate's presentations, were determined by Mr. Kennedy. A few of us who were with him would advise him, but he knew what the issues were in the state. He knew which would be most effective and he addressed himself to them.

The two most effective television political programs I've ever witnessed were planned in a period of five minutes. In West Virginia, the President, with Franklin D. Roosevelt, Jr., appeared in a fifteen-minute program which dealt with religion. This was the major issue, as we all recall, in West Virginia. It was never rehearsed, and without question, in the judgment of most people who saw it, that program was one of the most effective television presentations they had ever seen. We repeated it in Oregon, following the same format, with Congresswoman Edith Green. Both of these efforts, in our opinion, were the most effective we did. Once we began to campaign for the Presidency, it is my judgment that our television efforts—after being put in professional hands—rapidly deteriorated. The professionals don't really understand the issues, and they begin to ask the politician to tell them what issues they should be producing shows *for*. This reverses the nature of the strategy.

One of the major problems we face is adapting television to the campaign itself. On the campaign trail we would try to block out a TV plan while we were moving six and seven days in every week. TV put great demands on schedule planning, and on relationships between our needs and the needs of local forces. In a normal community the political leader does not want to rush into television. He wants the candidate to meet the local ward leaders, the mayor, the sheriff and others. To him, TV is an obstruction, and it's very difficult to blend all these forces into an effective unit.

I had hoped that at some point we would be able to think things

through and perhaps come to some agreement about what makes an effective television campaign. But things change so rapidly that we are into another campaign before we have been able to arrive at any conclusions. We do know, however, what major problems we face, and one of them is the great advantage which our media extend to an incumbent President. Obviously, the incumbent has the kind of access to the public media which is not available to the other candidate.

The first important revelation of this advantage came with the Suez Crisis in 1956. Governor Stevenson was running an effective campaign at the time, but those of us working for him did not feel he would be elected. We did think he was at least in a position to help our local campaign tickets despite an Eisenhower victory. We were working hard to assure that the tickets would not go down with him. In the middle of the campaign, however, the British, the French and the Israelis attacked the Suez Canal. General Eisenhower appeared on television as the Commander-in-Chief of the armies. In reality—and in the eyes of the electorate as well—he was the man whose responsibility it was to handle our military problems. As such, he dominated the news for two days. This was in late October. The election was nearly over, and there was no possible answer that the Governor could make. In 1964 the situation was reversed. The Russians changed leadership in October, and President Johnson went on television to explain what the change signified—what the possible future views of the Russian leadership might be. A week later the Chinese exploded an atomic weapon, and the President again went to the people, via TV, to explain its meaning.

Now the fellow who is not in office is bound to feel at a disadvantage in such cases. No one was really interested in Senator Goldwater's views on the change in Russian leadership, any more than they would have been in Stevenson's thoughts about Suez. This is a unique problem, and as one with an interest in the historical evolution of TV and politics, I know of no answer to it.

The other problem stems from TV's capacity to control, in a way, a candidate's statements. This may occur more in the minor offices. Here TV reporters use a somewhat different approach from the newspapers. The reporter can ask a question—with a microphone in his hand, and with a television camera on the candidate's face—on a very controversial issue. A candidate, for valid reasons, might not want to answer it at the time, but on TV he is always in

danger of appearing evasive. If he attempts to "duck" the issue, they keep pushing that microphone into his face. This is very difficult for candidates, and tends to put the television newscaster in a rather different position than a newspaper man. This problem, too, must be faced.

Despite these difficulties, I am not at all pessimistic about the role of TV in the political campaign. We are not on the brink of a political world in which the cheap or phony will somehow triumph by television. Any candidate, no matter how glamorous, will have to stand the test of time. He'll have to discuss the issues, and discuss them in impromptu fashion over long periods of time on television and in the newspapers. He will face the probing of very learned and distinguished gentlemen who have spent their lifetime in the business of journalism and politics. One must really stand the test of time in offices of responsibility, so I don't think the future runs to movie stars or good-looking candidates or "images." John Kennedy was attractive, of course, but he had the intellect, the governmental know-how, the wit, and the intelligence to stand before a press conference every two or three weeks and discuss any issue that came before the United States Government. I think this was the lasting imprint that he really left on the American people, who believed that he understood the workings of our Government and that our nation was safe and secure in his hands because he worked at it.

## ROWLAND EVANS

The exploitation of television by politics is one of the modern wonders. Consider, for example, the television-age Presidential campaign. These are the days when not one but two entirely separate, disconnected campaigns are waged by each candidate. This was true to some degree in 1960, to a greater degree in 1964, and will dominate future campaigns. Campaigns are waged concurrently by different teams of the candidates, advisors and experts, who sometimes go for days and weeks without even seeing or communicating with each other.

Campaign number one is the traditional political exercise: the candidate stumps the country, holds press conferences, moves from city to city, is seen in the flesh, talks to voters and makes speeches. Campaign number two is a sort of *sub rosa* television campaigning.

It's canned—taped in late August and early September in five-minute bits, and then allowed to seep out over the airwaves near the end of September, all of October and early November. It moves into the living rooms of the country.

These two campaigns are so disconnected that the reporter who covers the traditional conventional campaign never sees the unconventional TV campaign. Last fall, while touring with President Johnson, reporters never saw the short five-minute spots that were canned much earlier and concurrently, perhaps, with a TV speech that he was making out on the Trail. We never saw those, and yet some of the experts who worked with the President are convinced that the living-room campaign was fully as important in getting votes as the conventional campaign.

Despite the importance of the living-room campaign, TV will never substitute for the historic, traditional campaign. It does not affect, in my opinion, the dynamics that make it essential for a Presidential candidate to go out and be seen in person.

Further, I think that the argument that campaigns should be reduced in length because we now have television is erroneous. I don't think you can have too much exposure in a Presidential campaign. Let me cite one example. Leaving aside the TV debates in the 1960 campaign, if that election had been held in mid-October, Mr. Nixon almost certainly would have won. And I think the explanation is that it took two months in 1960 for what I believe to be the essential sterility of the Nixon campaign to come through. Voters don't catch the full impact of a personality because they see the man on television all the time, or because they listen to his speeches. It takes two months, sometimes three months, for the full impact of a Presidential campaign to strike home. The fact that we use TV so much in politics today should not, and will not, shorten Presidential campaigns in the future.

Now let us consider some implications of the marriage between politics and technology. I was very surprised in 1958 when I first observed the use that a candidate can make of this medium. I accompanied Mr. Nixon early in the '58 Congressional campaign, and his custom upon arriving in a city was to go at once to a television studio where he engaged in a crossfire of questions with four or five reporters. What surprised me was the kind of questions that would be asked. Many were the ugliest, meanest, nastiest questions you could imagine. They impugned Mr. Nixon's honesty. They slighted his personality. They questioned his motives. After

the second of these engagements, I asked him why he subjected himself to that kind of punishment and abuse. He told me that he planned it that way—that he always called the television studio and made sure that the reporters who were to appear with him were the toughest reporters in town. He told me that exposure to hostile questions automatically created sympathy in the audience. And I found, as I investigated this, that Mr. Nixon was absolutely correct!

We might also consider other aspects of the raw power which TV can bring to politics. First, it exposes voters—who normally would never be exposed—to the candidate of the other party. A reliable study showed that during the Stevenson-Eisenhower campaign of '52, 44 per cent of the Stevenson voters watched between 20 per cent and 50 per cent of the televised speeches of General Eisenhower and Mr. Nixon. How many others, who may have favored Stevenson at the onset of the campaign, changed to Eisenhower because they saw him in their living rooms? Yet these same voters might never have taken the trouble to attend a speech delivered at a local rally by a Presidential candidate.

Had it not been for the televised Army-McCarthy hearings in 1954, the Senate might never have censured Joseph McCarthy. And you may recall what happened to Estes Kefauver as a result of the televised crime hearings. He became, almost overnight, a major national political figure.

Shortly after he moved into the White House, I asked President Kennedy about television and politics. He answered—and I quote—“Television gives people a chance to look at their candidate close up and close to the bone. For the first time since the Greek city-states practiced their form of democracy, it brings us within reach of that ideal where every voter has a chance to measure the candidate himself.” If, as Kennedy said, television really does give every voter a chance to measure his candidate, does it also give every candidate an equal chance to be measured? I consider this the most difficult question in politics today. The answer is, of course, no—there is not an equal chance for each candidate to be measured—and the reason is money.

Money has always been a vital ingredient of politics, and television is obviously increasing the financial demands on each candidate. This, I suggest, is the one conspicuous area in which politics has not caught up with technology. I don't think the gap is as important as some commentators would have it, however, particularly in view of the fact that Congress, by repealing Section

315 in specific cases, has made it possible for the major candidates to appear on free time either in debate or in other forms of contention. The questions, despite this, are far from answered.

Finally, I would offer some brief comment on this matter of whether television is truly a builder of demi-gods. I know TV has been criticized for its use by politicians. It is said it offers the perfect medium for those who have the knack of talking glibly. I discount this as a factor in political life today. It took no television to make Huey Long what he was, and the most cursory view of history will turn up any number of examples which attest that a politician-demagogue does not need TV to build himself up. Quite the contrary, in exposing the candidate "close to the bone," TV may make the rise of demagogues less likely in the future.

# THE GREAT DEBATES

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HOWARD K. SMITH  
STANLEY KELLEY, JR.

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That the efforts of the television industry to engage President Johnson in debate with Mr. Goldwater on the 1960 model were foredoomed is evident from the cool appraisal of Great Debates prospects offered by STANLEY KELLEY JR. One need not go as far as Dr. Kelley in assigning the Republican Party to near-oblivion to see why future Presidential encounters on television are less than probable. It is not cynicism which prompts Dr. Kelley's analysis, but a willingness to see a campaign for what it really is to the candidate—a power contest in which only victory counts.

If this is obvious, it is sometimes forgotten in the long aftermath of the Kennedy-Nixon debates, which to many among us now appear to have represented a high point in American political experience. HOWARD K. SMITH gives eloquent voice to this point of view in the excerpt from his keynote address to the Conference.

HOWARD K. SMITH

I know that many politicians fear and oppose direct debate or confrontation on television. The objection is made that an ability to perform on TV is a bad criterion for judging a candidate for office. I disagree. At present, we judge by a host of qualifications from the cut of a man's hair to the cleverness of the slogans invented for him by a public relations firm. I think it would be far better to judge candidates by their ability to explain and argue and answer under pressure of their opponents' presence while a large public is watching.

Some politicians have argued against the idea by going down the list of our past Presidents and alleging that all the good ones would have been failures on TV. George Washington had imperfect dentures and would have looked and sounded ridiculous; Thomas Jefferson had shifty eyes and would have appeared insincere and sneaky; Abraham Lincoln was physically awkward and had a high-pitched voice and would have seemed a man of no depth. On this scale, the only President who would really have displayed the aspect of greatness would have been—Warren G. Harding!

Well, I disagree with that, too. TV has a kind of spiritual X-ray built into it. Phoniness glares through. That is why so many non-news dramatic productions on TV fail, except with the very young and indiscriminating viewer. I recall the candidate of recent times who was nominated by his convention and who went onto the podium, looked up at the cameras and said—"I accept...in all humility," but there was no trace of humility on that face, and that candidate was beaten then and there.

In our imperfectible world I think that debate and personal confrontation on the broadcast media is by far the best way for the public to assay a candidate. I wish it could be made a Constitutional requirement.

## STANLEY KELLEY, JR.

Shortly after the 1960 TV debates, Richard Salant of CBS wrote an essay about them called "A Revolution That Deserves a Future." Now, one man's revolution is perhaps another man's gradualism, but I, too, think that television debates were a significant innovation in political campaigning and that they deserve a future.

If one evaluates the debates on the only reasonable basis for doing so, which is to compare the kind of discussion that occurred in them with the kind that normally occurs in political campaigns, it is clear that the debates gave us one of the most mature and informing discussions we've had since or before.

Candidates, we all know, habitually find that the other man is for "creeping socialism" or "galloping reaction"—the kind of picture that they often give of each other's views is highly distorted. This wasn't so in the debates. The two candidates in 1960 actually confessed, before millions of viewers, that they sometimes agreed on public policies and issues. That's very rare. And when they did

expose their differences—which they did—they tended to expose them in much more specific terms than in the 1964 campaign. I can recall, for instance, that when talking about Aid for Education both did more than say they were for it. They actually argued about whether aid should be given for salaries, or only for school construction. Perhaps that stuck in my mind because of my professional interests, but it was not uncharacteristic of the form that discussion took in the debates. The 1960 candidates were more specific about what they proposed to do than candidates usually are. In some ways, the discussion in the last campaign was also informative, but one would hardly say the Great Society was sketched out in any detail in President Johnson's speeches.

The Kennedy-Nixon debates had their critics, but the criticism was not, it seems to me, well founded. Max Ascoli, Editor of *The Reporter*, called the debates "electronic nightmares," and seemed to think that somewhere, sometime, there had been a much higher level of discussion. To believe that, I think he must have failed to read the Kennedy-Nixon speeches prior to the debate, or speeches of other campaigns.

Henry Steele Commager of Columbia wrote an article condemning the series, entitled "Washington Would Have Lost A Television Debate." I don't quite understand how he knew Washington would have done so badly in a joint encounter before the TV cameras, particularly when he didn't know who his opponent might have been. I suppose he was trying to say that Washington wasn't glib and photogenic, or something of the kind. But I certainly would have hated to argue against Washington in debate, or against President Eisenhower, or against many other people who are not particularly noted as debaters. A politician knows that simply scoring debate points is not what one attempts to do before the television camera in a political campaign. What one does is try to win votes, and either Eisenhower or Washington would have been a formidable opponent.

I think I might sum up my judgment of what's likely to come by saying that the television debate is a campaign institution that almost was established. Almost, but it missed. For television debates to really become a part of national Presidential campaigns I think at least three things would have to happen.

The first, of course, is that debates had to happen once. That actually did occur and, if you stop to consider, it wasn't on the whole a very likely thing. It was quite an unusual combination of

circumstances that led both Nixon and Kennedy to decide that they could benefit by an encounter on television. Nixon hoped for and needed to win Democratic votes. While he was the candidate of the party in power, he was also the candidate of the minority party of the country. He needed Democratic votes, and the debates seemed to him a very good way to reach lots of Democrats. Kennedy, on the other hand, was less well known and could also hope to reap benefits from the encounter. And both were quite confident of their ability as debaters. So under those circumstances, it happened. The first condition for establishing a regular series of debates was thereby met.

If Kennedy had not been assassinated in Dallas the second condition for the institutionalizing of the campaign debate—that we have a debate in which an incumbent President is one of the contenders—might also have obtained. But Kennedy was assassinated, and President Johnson did not see fit to honor the commitment President Kennedy had made to debate before the cameras in the '64 campaign. There were many good reasons (politically short-run) why Johnson should not have agreed to debate. He was far ahead, according to every indication there was. It would have been extraordinarily gracious of him to give Senator Goldwater's views the advertising—and Senator Goldwater himself the advertising—that an encounter on television with Johnson would have afforded.

However, the fact that an incumbent President hasn't debated gives some credence to the argument that it's somehow a different thing for an incumbent President to debate than it is for two contenders who are not incumbents. This view has been taken by a committee of the American Political Science Association, which argued that a President shouldn't get caught in debates because he might give away secrets, or debates might be embarrassing to the country in a situation like the Cuban missile crisis. I think this raises an essentially phony issue. If another Cuban missile crisis occurred and a debate were scheduled in the middle of it, no incumbent President in his right mind would hesitate to cancel it—just as he would not hesitate to cancel a press conference—and no voter or opponent could seriously criticize him for it.

The third condition necessary to the institutionalizing of the campaign debate is a fairly even contest between candidates. We had that in '60—we did not in '64. One of the principle reasons that the future for debates is gloomy, in my opinion, is that the future of the Republican party is gloomy. It seems to me that,

barring some kind of foreign policy disaster or a domestic scandal, the Republican party will cease to be a significant competitor in Presidential politics. It was badly beaten in the last election and if one looks at its prospects for '68, they are not at all promising.

There are now almost twice as many Democrats in the country as there are Republicans. About 53% of the people consider themselves normally Democratic. We will be going into a campaign in '68 which will probably see the Republicans badly divided again. They don't seem intent on patching up their differences. We will see a campaign in which the Democrats will have the advantage of a tremendous legislative record with something in that record which has pleased almost everyone. If the prospects for competitive politics in Presidential elections are not good, they aren't good for debates, either. We will then see a situation in which an incumbent President will have very little reason, other than perhaps long-term interests in the value of campaigns themselves, to debate against his opponent.

· Is there anything we can do about this? I think perhaps the tradition of television debates can be kept alive at state and local levels. But I also think that the networks, groups like the Fair Campaign Practices Committee, and others may simply have to wait for a future occasion when the race is closer and the appeal of debates to people generally can have more influence on the calculations of candidates. If one looks to the future, the past looks better all the time.

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## SECTION 315: THE PROSPECTS

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E. WILLIAM HENRY, CHARLES E. GOODELL  
JULIAN GOODMAN, LEON BROOKS  
JOHN DE J. PEMBERTON, JR.

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There is a Congressional nightmare dominated by a television operator imperiously denying the candidate access to the camera and microphone while giving his opponent valuable time and production gifts, following the yesteryear pattern of some forceful newspaper publishers. The broadcaster may argue that this vision is not justified by a history in which the concepts of fairness and objectivity have been built into a strong journalistic tradition and buttressed by the high standards of professionalism now prevalent among the TV news fraternity. He argues in vain.

What others say privately, Representative CHARLES E. GOODELL (R-N.Y.) states openly—that Congress will simply not repeal the equal time provision. The reason is clear: the stakes are too high; the politician cannot afford to risk his campaign fortunes in the hands of a broadcaster who could turn unsympathetic. Modification is another matter, and Representative Goodell offers one more in a series of proposals purporting to remove the obstacles to adequate coverage while protecting the right of the minority party outside the two-party consensus.

The network spokesmen put forward pleas for complete abandonment of Section 315. JULIAN GOODMAN, Senior Executive Officer at NBC, maintains that television journalism has reached maturity and is entitled to equal treatment with other media, while CBS Vice-President and General Counsel LEON BROOKS argues that the networks cover campaigns and candidates as part of their professional function, under which it is their right to deal with candidates in terms of their newsworthiness.

All of which leads the American Civil Liberties Union Executive Director, JOHN DE J. PEMBERTON JR., to remark that newsworthiness is hardly a protection of the right of the minority voice to be heard. Nevertheless, even Mr. Pemberton is uncomfortable with Section 315 as it now operates; he prefers to rely on less precise, but what he regards as more effective, pressures such as the Fairness Doctrine and broadcasting's own professionalism, together with some form of "equitable time."

All would seem to agree with FCC Chairman E. WILLIAM HENRY that if broadcasters and politicians are to enter future campaigns with less friction, it will probably be on the basis of modification, not repeal, of Section 315. In his opening remarks to the Conference, Mr. Henry defines the essential problem as a conflict arising from our attempt to reconcile two concepts of how the television medium is to play its political role: 1) as a free journalistic medium, and 2) as an election "platform" to which the candidate has the right of access on his own terms.

## E. WILLIAM HENRY

With respect to campaigns and candidates, broadcasters have a dual responsibility. They are, in the first place, electronic journalists in the best sense of the word. In using this natural resource they have the widest discretion in deciding to give or not to give exposure to candidates and political issues, in selecting the times at which candidates or other spokesmen will be seen and heard, in choosing the forum and the format for the programs presented, and in determining the over-all treatment of a candidate and his campaign.

But let us also remember that, in addition to being a journalistic vehicle, each radio and television set is also an electronic platform. For the first time in man's history a political candidate may be transported into the living room of almost every eligible voter. If we truly believe in the democratic process—in the ability of the electorate to make a reasoned judgment in the voting booth—we must also insist that candidates have as wide discretion as the broadcaster. Candidates must have some opportunity to use this natural resource—this electronic platform—as they used the soap box, the tent, or the debating platform in the days gone by. On such occasions the candidate's use of broadcast facilities must be free from all outside influences—including that of the broadcast journalist. On such occasions the role of the journalist is, in short, to keep hands off.

## CHARLES E. GOODELL

The effect of the equal time provision of Section 315 is to place a crippling restriction on broadcasters in the coverage of any contest which is not limited to serious candidates of major parties.

The present rules of equal opportunity in broadcasting are made up of two related but significantly different concepts. One is the rigid statutory rule of "equal opportunities" established by Section 315 of the Federal Communications Act, applicable only to legally qualified candidates for public office during campaign seasons. In practice, this rule is operative for perhaps the six months preceding election day in every even-numbered year for candidates for the U.S. Congress, and for about ten months every four years for candidates for the Presidency.

The other aspect of equal opportunity is the Fairness Doctrine, which comes into play more often in relation to ideas than to personalities. It requires that a hearing be granted to all sides of controversial questions. It has its application to people as well as to ideas but functions principally to allow individuals who have been the object of criticism or attack an opportunity to respond.

One effect of the equal time provision is to dampen public interest in political campaigns and in the candidates. This point is made dramatically by a comparison of the size of the television audience for the Presidential candidates in the last two national elections. In 1964, according to one rating service, the largest audience that watched either President Johnson or Senator Goldwater on television was slightly more than seven million homes. In 1960, on the other hand, with the equal time requirement suspended, the first debate between Vice-President Nixon and Senator Kennedy was viewed in 27 million homes. This audience was even larger than that which watches the typical episode of *Beverly Hillbillies*, an audience estimated at 22 million homes.

Somewhat different figures are available from other sources, but all estimates of the size of the largest television audience for either Presidential candidate in 1964 agree that it was only one-fourth to one-fifth the number of viewers who watched the first debate in 1960.

Given the limited number of broadcasting stations and the limited number of hours—particularly of good time—in the broadcasting day, public interest in the respective candidates for a public

office should be taken into account in the treatment which broadcasters are required by law to give to candidates.

Nothing is more absurd than to furnish the same amount of time to the Presidential nominee of the Socialist Workers Party as is granted to the nominees of the Democratic and Republican parties. The practical effect of such a requirement is to diminish the coverage of serious major candidates rather than to increase the coverage of the candidate whose cause is hopeless.

There are two ways of breaking out of the bind imposed by the equal time requirement. One, suggested by spokesmen for the major networks, is the repeal of Section 315.

The second way of breaking out of this bind is by revision of the equal time provisions. Many members of the Congress (including Senator Lyndon B. Johnson in 1956) have offered substantially similar bills that would restrict the application of the equal time requirement to the candidates of parties that could show some minimum degree of public support. Usually these bills proposed requiring that equal time be granted to candidates of parties that received at least four per cent of the vote in the last election or that submitted petitions signed by one per cent of the number voting in the last election.

An impressive case for the repeal of the equal time provision insofar as it applies to Presidential and Vice-Presidential candidates can be made on the basis of experience in 1960, when this provision of the law was suspended. In 1960 the Presidential tickets of the major parties were granted without charge equal time down to the minute on the three television networks—eight hours and six minutes of network sustaining time for Nixon and Lodge, and exactly the same for Kennedy and Johnson. Across the nation, individual stations were equally scrupulous about maintaining equality of opportunity. The average time granted to Nixon by 426 television stations on sustaining programs was two hours and fifteen minutes; for Kennedy, it was two hours and twenty minutes. Radio networks and stations maintained comparable balance in affording sustaining time to the two competing candidates.

Conclusive evidence that the broadcasting industry was eminently fair in its allotment of time in 1960 is the fact that only three complaints—all directed toward stations—were made to the Federal Communications Commission alleging deprivation of equal opportunity or unfairness toward a major party Presidential candidate

in the course of the campaign. Only five allegations of this type were made on behalf of minor party Presidential candidates.

The 1960 campaign developed new and imaginative techniques for the appearances of the candidates, notably the debates. The candidates were compelled by the type of programming used to address themselves to the major issues. And, as has been noted, public interest, as shown by the size of the viewing and listening audiences, reached heights not attained before or since the 1960 campaign.

In spite of the impressive performance of television and radio in 1960, when they were temporarily freed from restraints of Section 315, it is unlikely that the Congress is now ready to repeal the equal time provision, even for Presidential campaigns.

If this assessment of the temper of my colleagues is correct, I suggest that Section 315 should be amended to require equal time only for the candidates of the two major parties. Provision could be made to require broadcasters who provide free time to major parties to also give free time to minor parties, the proportion to be determined by the size of the vote received by such parties in the last election or by the number of signers of a petition for free time which such parties could submit to the Federal Communications Commission. In order to qualify for any free time, however, a party should be required to show a rather high degree of public interest in its candidates.

Thus the equal opportunity bind can be broken. With such an amendment, no serious obstacle would remain to the full use of all the ingenuity that the broadcasting industry can muster to present programs that give penetrating, complete, and balanced presentation of the major candidates, their minds, and their hearts. Such an amendment could well be a halfway house to complete and permanent exemption of Presidential campaigns from the equal time restrictions of Section 315.

Many in the minority party are deeply concerned about the danger of one-sided presentation of the political scene by radio and television arising from the natural advantage possessed by the party which occupies the White House. Whatever the President says or does is a major news story. Television and radio are at his disposal whenever he chooses to use them. Lyndon Johnson's gallstone got more coverage in a 24-hour period than all Republicans in the country can hope to get in a month. The leading figures in the Administration, by virtue of their position, command

coverage. This is difficult enough for a minority party without having to cope with a President who saturates the news.

Given this power of the Administration, there are dangers that the voices of the minority party and other dissenters will be drowned out. Although most discussion of the problem of providing balanced coverage of the political scene centers on coverage of election campaigns, these dangers are more acute in periods outside the campaign season. The minority party is severely handicapped if nothing is heard from it except during the two or three months preceding an election. In such circumstances, it is likely to find itself talking to closed minds and deaf ears.

Obviously this is not good for the party out of power. Nor is it good for the public for whom political parties and television and radio and the press exist.

There is an obligation on the media to provide balanced coverage, to see to it that responsible critics of the Administration receive a hearing. Let me hasten to add that the minority party has an obligation to offer responsible and serious criticism. If the spokesmen of the minority have nothing of consequence to say, the media of communication cannot be blamed for ignoring them.

I suggest that the problem of balance in coverage by all media—television, radio, and the press—the problem of affording critics of an administration a fair hearing, is one that should be high on the agenda of leaders in the field of communications. Perhaps something useful could be learned from the practice of the broadcasters in England where each political party is granted each year some free time in proportion to its vote in the last election.

An attack on this problem by the broadcasting industry would help to make democracy work. It would also help to allay the doubts that make the Congress hesitant to modify existing restrictions on campaign broadcasting.

## JULIAN GOODMAN

The art of reporting news on television has grown more, and has improved more, in the 25 years of television's life than reporting in newspapers has improved or matured in the 500 years since the invention of the printing press. This is not in any sense a criticism of newspaper reporting because it didn't have quite as far to go as television journalism did. I say this with considerable pride in

television reporting which has achieved a stature more than justifying the creation of the medium.

We have traveled far from the day when the chief assets of what was then called a "newscaster" was a handsome face and a voice that shook the pictures on the walls. Worse, he merely read what somebody else wrote. In those earlier days each network had at the very most a 15-minute daily newscast, which was generally considered a welcome but unnecessary interruption in the day's entertainment.

Now the chief assets and requirements of the successful television correspondent are: 1) an ability to report a story; 2) the ability to write, and 3) an ability to appear on the air and make people believe and understand what he has to say. The latter quality—presence on the air—is important, but not all-important. It will not stand alone, in my opinion, as the sign of a good television correspondent.

There was a time when we had trouble simply keeping pace with the electronic marvels the scientists were perfecting for us. This time has past. We have caught up. We came to realize that upon reviewing the extraordinary coverage of the assassination of President Kennedy provided by all the television networks.

But, long before that, television news had reached a point of maturity that brought it a long way from the earlier 15-minute program each day. NBC news and informational programs account for almost a quarter of the television network schedule. Our news division has brought to the American public around-the-clock coverage of a manned spacecraft orbiting live pictures from the moon, and a three-and-one-half-hour program dealing with United States foreign policy—an assessment which replaced an entire evening of entertainment programs. More recently it devoted an entire day to coverage, free of commercials, of all the public activities related to the Pope's first visit to North America.

Considering the advances of the past years I believe there are few who could deny that television is now a basic part of the American press. And, in light of the responsibility that television journalism has taken upon itself, it deserves the same Constitutional freedom enjoyed by the printed press.

We do not have those freedoms because we use the airways, which being limited in number are subject to government regulation. Some of the regulations are necessary and desirable; but some are not. One which definitely is not is Section 315, which requires, with

some exceptions, that the broadcaster who makes facilities available to a candidate must provide the same opportunity to all candidates for the same office.

National Presidential elections, as we all know, may be contested by as many as a dozen parties in addition to the Republicans and Democrats. Most of them are seldom heard of or voted for. We are required to provide time for minor parties, and it is a distinct handicap to broadcasters who are attempting to provide a rational and conscientious service for voters.

No broadcaster would deny the need to be fair, but we have now fully earned the right to show we can be fair without legislation to enforce it.

## LEON BROOKS

As far as networks are concerned—and I think that in this connection I can speak for all the networks—we don't give free time to candidates simply in order to extend to them an opportunity to present their positions. We put on political programming because we regard it as our journalistic function. We are very reluctant to turn our facilities over to a candidate—free of charge—to use as he sees fit, in order to serve his purposes. Certainly we proceed in this way at the Presidential level, except as we are required to alter this policy under Section 315. But we do not consider that we have a moral obligation to give free time to benefit political candidates.

Since the networks and stations regard it as one of their more important journalistic functions to cover campaigns, there is certainly no absence of political reporting. One of the best ways to cover a campaign is to have candidates appear on stations or networks in formats wherein they express their positions on the various issues. The public is given an opportunity to see and hear them in action—to hear them respond to questions and see how they act under fire. This is, in effect, the reason why networks and stations have fought for the repeal of Section 315.

The 1959 amendment expanded our ability to do this because it provided that certain kinds of programs are to be exempt from Section 315. The ruling didn't go far enough, but it was a great help. The proposals which Representative Goodell and Dr. Alexander make would similarly expand our opportunities, I think, to

perform our journalistic function in presenting candidates to the public.

Let me emphasize my belief that, when enacted, Section 315 was soundly conceived. It was not enacted for the benefit of the candidates, but for the benefit of the public. It was enacted to assure, under conditions which then prevailed, that the public would have an opportunity to hear all the candidates and to see all the candidates in action.

Let me summarize, then, by saying I don't think we have any obligation, under the Communications Act, to give candidates free time. We do not exist for the purpose of handing over a platform for candidates to employ whatever kinds of techniques they choose. It has already been statistically established that when buying time, candidates apparently much prefer announcements where it is impossible, of course, to discuss any issue in depth.

Representative Goodell's proposal to modify Section 315 seems very sound. He suggests that we be permitted to give time to majority candidates with additional obligation only to those minority candidates who are of significance. This is why we have advocated the repeal of Section 315. With repeal, I am sure, any minority party in which the public is interested would get exposure, and proof can be discovered in the New York mayoralty campaign where a significant third-party candidate, Mr. Buckley, received considerable exposure.

I think that the real fear, in Congress and in other places, of Section 315 repeal is that stations and networks will be grossly unfair, and that newsworthy candidates (or the candidates of the party out of office) will not get their fair share of exposure. I would suggest that we have some evidence to prove that that isn't the case.

In 1959 Section 315 was amended in order to permit certain types of programs to be used with candidates without any equal-time obligation. The fairness obligation remained. The Commission, I am sure, has in its files complaints that have been filed since 1959, specifically with reference to the 1960 and 1964 elections. Some candidates protested—and submitted complaints—that they were treated unfairly when their opponents were given exposure in programs exempt from 315. After the 1960 election, the Sub-committee of the Senate Committee on Interstate Commerce made a study of these complaints. An examination of their published report to the Commission reveals that the number of

substantiated complaints of unfair treatment in connection with programs exempted from Section 315 was very small. I think that a search of the Commission's files would reveal the same to hold true for 1964. The networks believe, then, that we have a record in fact on which we can stand.

I would note, in closing, the reason why political surveys, studies and statistics have been filed by stations after each election. When Section 315 was suspended in 1960 the Congress added a provision to this suspension which required the stations to report to the Commission as to the manner in which they had handled political broadcasts during suspension. The Commission was then to report to the Congress. The purpose of the provision, of course, was to see how broadcasters would behave if Section 315 were not in the law.

I think we behaved very well, and we confidently expected—on the basis of that behavior—that we would get more relief from Section 315. That hasn't turned out to be the case.

## JOHN DE J. PEMBERTON, JR.

In terms of the role of free speech in the functioning of a system of self-government, radio and television broadcasting today have taken the place of the stump and the soap box of 1791, when free speech became a Constitutional principle by the addition of the First Amendment to the Constitution. The kinds of oral discussion of issues that can influence the election of Presidents and Congressmen, or that can affect their responses to opinion among their constituents, is now heard on radio and TV—and the speaker who does not thus amplify his voice operates at a nearly impossible political disadvantage.

Broadcasting is almost unique among the media of mass communication in that it is the only one of them that is subject to a comprehensive system of governmental regulation. Only motion pictures are subject to a measure of review in a manner that may influence the content of their communications, and the system of regulating the showing of movies is by comparison isolated and spotty.

Although the stump and the soap box were not subject to regulation in 1791, it is not inherently inconsistent with the role of broadcasting as the comparable vehicle for politically influential discussion that it is comprehensively regulated today. Nor is it

inconsistent with the First Amendment that this is so, for that amendment provides only that "Congress shall make no law... abridging the freedom of speech..." It is entirely within the competence of Congress to make laws *aiding* the exercise of the politically significant freedom of speech. The problem is only to insure that such laws do just that.

We should discuss freedom of speech and the regulation of broadcasting in the context of the alternative means available to guarantee that broadcasting will genuinely serve that freedom. Current debate over the Communications Act seems to me to have identified two such alternatives:

1. First are the forces of commercial competition, which will promote those uses of program time that attract the most profitable audiences and will penalize the broadcaster who is not serving the public interest—as that interest is measured by advertising revenues.
2. Second is the constantly increasing professional competence and responsibility of broadcasting management and, especially of broadcasting journalism.

From the point of freedom of speech, neither of these alternatives *nor* government regulation has yet established that it will serve us adequately. At the height of the blacklisting experience in the mid-fifties, for instance, the advertisers proved unable or unwilling to stand up to pressure to keep unpopular ideas and the people who espoused them off the air. The managers and the journalists only rarely did better, and the FCC seemed without machinery with which to call a halt to this suppression. On the other hand, and more currently, the comparably suppressive forces of the closed society in Mississippi today may be proving that a difference does exist between the effectiveness of private, competitive, and professional forces and those of government. In the Lamar Life Broadcasting renewals, the FCC has disappointed the intervenors, who appeared as advocates of free speech about racial equality, by denying them a public hearing on the issues raised. But the system at least is allowing them to seek judicial review of this agency action, and they are now in the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia on that issue. Nothing in these cases suggests that either commercial competition or broadcasting professionalism has been or will be adequate to promote free speech in Mississippi broadcasting in the face of the overwhelming pressures that exist to silence it.

It is in the context of these ultimate tests of broadcasting's capacity to serve free speech that I offer my conservative approach to the regulation of misuse and abuse. First of all, the fact that government regulation has not yet cured the evils of suppression in such instances cautions against our hastening to entrust to it the regulation of additional evils, and here I refer to the proposals for a federal libel law and particularly to a criminal federal law for libel. Indeed, we should be cautious in regard to the dilemma of government regulation of speech itself: We look to free speech as an essential weapon in the arsenal of popular control over government; if government in turn is to have increasing powers over speech, then who will regulate the regulators? How can regulation be kept from serving only the interests of those who for the moment control the Government?

But these same ultimate tests, of the kind I have used as examples, have shown that private-sector control will not alone suffice to assure free speech. If John Stuart Mill spoke of a free trade in ideas in the same way that Adam Smith spoke of a self-regulating free economy, it does not follow that we can safely mix these metaphors. An idea's capacity to win acceptance in the marketplace of opinion is simply not of the same quality as that which will enable it to sell hair spray. We may congratulate ourselves on the growing sense of professional responsibility in broadcasting, as I think we should, but it may still be necessary for professional responsibility to enjoy the support of administrative regulation wherever a kind of Gresham's law would otherwise let entertaining mediocrity drive free speech into disuse.

Thus, all of the faults we have attributed to the Fairness Doctrine fail to show that unregulated broadcasting will broaden the spectrum of ideas that are broadcast. The fairness principle—that broadcasters must assume responsibility for avoiding a one-sided presentation of issues of public importance—is fundamentally sound from the point of view of freedom of speech. If the Fairness Doctrine leaves some broadcasters in doubt as to the precise terms of their obligations, is that not preferable to the mathematical niceties of, say, the equal time rule?

True, the Fairness Doctrine might provide incentive for some broadcasters to avoid controversy altogether but, after all, isn't this the point where professionalism can properly be looked to for an answer? No manager seeking to serve the interests of his community is satisfied with the avoidance of controversy, and journalism's pro-

fessional standards require that controversy be heard. It is conceivable that unreasonable regulation will overcome these professional ambitions, even though the broadcaster honestly desires to be fair. But the case has yet to be made that the FCC's application of the doctrine is unreasonable. More significantly, it has not yet been proved that truly hated ideas will more than occasionally be allowed to penetrate a blanketing of opposite points of view, unless they are protected by the sanction of the FCC's power.

The equal time rule of Section 315 is not so easily defended, nor do I think a conservative need defend it in its present form. But it is not necessary to burn the barn in order to roast the pig. If Section 315 actually handicaps the offering of free time to serious candidates, then it ought to be changed—but not at the expense of all the free time that is made available to minor party candidates. There could be no worse blow to freedom of speech than the pre-emption of the air waves by the candidates of the two major political parties—and that would be true in either of two quite possible eventualities: if the two major parties move continuously toward an indistinguishable political middle, or if the ultra-right succeeds in its current project of driving one of these two into extinction.

The 1960 experience with suspension of Section 315 is hardly encouraging for devotees of free speech. In return for the unqualified blessing of the Nixon-Kennedy debates we all but lost the minor candidates from political view. It is scarcely arguable from this experience that the cost would be less in any future year.

Equal time can be modified without incurring this cost. But the first condition of modification ought to be a statutory obligation on the licensee to provide significant free time to all legally qualified candidates above the level of, say, county sheriff. And then the equal time provision might well be improved by the substitution of a more flexible concept. The American Civil Liberties Union claims no copyright on the word it has offered for this concept, which is "equitable time." Under it, the flexibility we have been gaining experience with under the Fairness Doctrine would guide the broadcaster's choices. Rather than mathematical precision, the exercise of honest judgment would be the thing required of a licensee. This judgment might give weight to such things as (1) the public interest shown in what a candidate has to say (but measured in terms of the public's previous opportunity to hear what he has said), (2) the public's interest in the problems to which he

addresses himself, (3) the licensee's judgment of the importance of these problems, and (4) whether the candidate continues to say something new on repeated appearances.

Let me conclude with two propositions: The first is that public regulation of broadcasting needs no further rationale than that the public claims ownership of the air waves. Perhaps if we had owned and managed the pulpwood forests in the beginning, we would now regulate the newspapers too. But the regulation of either must be reconciled with the First Amendment, which prohibits those laws that abridge free speech and press but permits those which aid it. My second proposition is that the Constitutional guarantee of free speech has its primary meaning, not with respect to Democratic speeches and Republican speeches—they would be heard whether or not there was a Constitutional guarantee—but with respect to the *unaccepted* social view and, in the words of Mr. Justice Holmes, to the thought that we hate. For all of the error and even danger that may lie in giving a hearing to such hated thoughts, "the remedy to be applied," as Mr. Justice Brandeis taught us, "is more speech, not enforced silence."

# THE HIGH COSTS OF TV CAMPAIGNS

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HERBERT E. ALEXANDER  
STIMSON BULLITT  
HYMAN H. GOLDIN

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Nowhere in the discussion of politics and television does argument grow so heated, and confused, as in the area of costs. Despite the many proposals made to date, we seem to be far from even basic agreement. This was certainly the thorniest of subjects dealt with by the Conference.

Basic to the confusion is a general inability, or unwillingness, of political people to recognize the economic and technical complexities of the medium they are so enamored of; this is why the "free time" demand so often makes little impression. Much of this is made clear by the penetrating report of HERBERT L. ALEXANDER, Director of the Citizens Research Foundation and formerly Executive Director of President Kennedy's Commission on Campaign Costs. Dr. Alexander brings to the discussion a welcome realism and an understanding of many of the practical matters which must be taken into account. He offers a number of interesting suggestions.

STIMSON BULLITT, head of the King Stations in the Northwest, similarly sets forth a series of provocative proposals to cut the cost of campaigning. His address concentrates on the problem from the point of view of the station. It is often forgotten, in the heat of argument, that every other national election does not involve the Presidency and that, therefore, while the networks continue to play an important informational role, in the non-Presidential election year campaigning is largely a matter of stations.

This is seen, too, in HYMAN GOLDIN's revealing survey report. Its most important finding, perhaps, is that the political campaigner overwhelmingly prefers spot announcements to program time, however much the thoughtful observer may deplore its use. It matters little, therefore, whether program time is made freely available to candidates and parties, as they are demanding; they will find spot campaigning irresistible, and will inevitably generate high television costs all over again. No one is seriously arguing for the granting of free spot-announcement time.

Public discussion has tended to stay away from this question. Unless it is faced squarely, little real progress can be made toward lowering the cost of television campaigning.

## HERBERT E. ALEXANDER

In 1964 total charges for paid political broadcasts on radio and television networks and stations were almost \$35 million, including both nomination and general election charges. Total costs for all political activities at all levels of government ran near \$200 million. Thus broadcast costs constituted 18 per cent of all political spending, probably putting broadcasting at the top of the list as the largest single political expenditure.

But political spending for broadcasting varies according to candidate, party, level of candidacy and, certainly not least, availability of money. Spending by national-level political committees of the two major parties for broadcasting in Presidential campaigns in 1952, 1956 and 1964 accounted for over one-third of total funds spent. In 1964 Republicans spent 38 per cent of their national-level Presidential expenditures on broadcasting, and the Democrats probably spent an even larger part of their somewhat smaller budget for this purpose.

On the other hand, in small constituencies, or even in larger areas where a constituency covers only a small part of a broadcast station's listening range, many candidates never buy time nor are they given any. Some actually manage to campaign much as was done generations ago—and at small cost. There are more than 500,000 public offices filled in elections in the U.S. over a four-year cycle, and one-third are considered significant. Obviously, most candidates never get near a station. But in addition, for some nominations, there are primary elections, so the number of candidates in primaries and general elections is huge—much too large for our broadcasting facilities to handle or the public to endure. Within the range of elective public offices from the courthouse to the White House, then, there are variations of broadcasting need and usage, and the problem is one of delimiting the discussion to relevant candidacies and relevant costs.

Broadcast costs for political purposes continue to escalate. The Federal Communications Commission survey of political broadcasting in 1964 indicated total network and station charges at all levels in the general election period were \$24.6 million, representing an increase of 73 per cent from monies spent for this purpose in 1960, and an increase of 150 per cent from the \$9.8 million spent in 1956. According to one study, from 1959 to 1964, basic rates increased 31 per cent in network television, 41 percent in spot

television, 9 per cent in network radio, and 21 per cent in spot radio.

Nor is the end in sight. Color TV will surely bring higher time and production costs; as production costs increase, the investment for a single program becomes formidable and programs and particularly spot announcements must be repeated in order to average down the initial investment. Thus more time has to be bought. In addition, newspaper ads are bought to alert the potential audience. In 1964 almost 20 per cent of national-level Republican broadcast costs were for production—not time charges—and on occasion production costs may be as high as time costs. This points to an important area, production costs, which is rarely considered in discussion of high broadcast costs. Still another potential area of cost is in possible political uses of CATV facilities.

To ease problems of political broadcasting, the industry offers some free time but no more imaginative responses than urging the abolition of Section 315, proposing candidate debates, and the shortening of campaigns. The latter proposal—short campaigns—can be easily disposed of: as much or more money may be spent in less time to achieve greater impact. And many candidates wanting to buy time could not be programmed to reach the electorate. The volume of political programs and announcements in a short period would disturb if not lose audiences and would hardly contribute to an intelligible public dialogue.

Advocacy of shorter campaigns also overlooks the facts of political life. Overwhelming Democratic dominance in Washington and the statehouses means the challengers need time to get known. The advantages of incumbency are accentuated when the occupants of office can arrange to make news-warranting coverage, while challengers have difficulty competing for a fair share of the microphone or the TV camera. The advantages of incumbency normally are not calculated in dollars but are most obvious in the broadcast facilities available to occupants of the White House and to members of Congress. Facilities like these should be available to incumbent and challenger alike, if necessary provided by government subsidy, and should be available at statehouses, city halls, or at some state facility such as at ETV stations, for use at cost.

The Great Debates were an innovation and a service made possible by suspension of 315 for the Presidential elections of 1960. The industry position on free time normally is to offer free time for debates on a "take-it-or-leave-it" basis. Broadcasters are under-

standably concerned about program format and audience size, yet offering free time to debate but not for other purposes simply may not be acceptable to many candidates. Broadcasters cannot expect to substitute their judgment for that of candidates who may not want to give exposure to less well-known opponents. Besides, candidates may need and want more exposure to public view than is provided through debates and interview programs. They may need to develop ideas at length without interruption. Suspension of 315 in 1964 would have subjected a Presidential candidate to pressure for debate he did not want, with the result that broadcast costs in the Presidential campaigns increased greatly over 1960, while sustaining time provided by broadcasters decreased greatly.

Admittedly, 315 works least well in Presidential elections because there are inevitably more than two candidates. I have often wondered why the equal time provision was not interpreted to mean that stations are so obligated in Presidential campaigns only in states where minor candidates for President are on the ballot. I do not see why national networks should be held to equal time for minor Presidential candidates when there are only two major candidates on the ballot in all states. Moreover, broadcasters have not been timid in lobbying for other purposes, so why should they not lobby for states to tighten up their requirements for getting on the ballot. This would eliminate many frivolous candidates while not preventing serious minor candidates from gaining ballot recognition.

But in Senatorial, gubernatorial and other campaigns where there are only two candidates and 315 is no hindrance, the industry record is not good. FCC surveys of Senatorial campaigns in 1962 and in 1964 show that television broadcasters have not provided significantly more sustaining time when only two candidates are running than when more than two are contesting an election. Moreover, much free time that is provided is not donated in prime-time periods, but on Sundays or other times when audiences are small. In the past, the broadcasting industry has put the burden of proof on the defenders of 315. By way of rejoinder, I believe the burden of proof rests with the broadcasters to show that free time is being given generously where there are only two candidates. Even when there are three or more candidates for major office, stations could schedule broadcasts at fringe rather than prime times, rather than keep candidates off the air entirely unless they purchase time.

Surely some free time is offered, one or both candidates refuse,

and proposed programs fall through. Some major candidates for major office seek no time. I recognize that broadcasting is highly competitive, that broadcasting economics are complex, that it is easy to lose audiences, and that political formats cannot often compete for attention in the mass media. Understandably, broadcasters are wary of programming political speeches that may be dull while competitors are broadcasting popular entertainment programs. It may be true, as Vincent Wasilewski, President of the National Association of Broadcasters, has said, that broadcasting contributes more financially to political candidates, in the form of direct donations of valuable air time, than any other industry in the United States. However, no other industry has the affirmative obligation to serve the public interest in political campaigns, either. This obligation should be recognized as an exception to the federal prohibition against corporate contributions (including anything of value) to political activities. For this reason among others, re-evaluation of the corporate prohibition would be useful.

Generally, I believe Mr. Wasilewski's point well taken that some proposed solutions would vastly and unfairly increase the broadcasters' contributions. I believe broadcasters should make significant donations of time as a condition of their licensing, but I do not believe the industry should be expected to bear all the burdens since some properly should fall on the candidates, the parties, and the Government. High broadcast costs pose problems because we have failed to provide through private contributions, through governmental assistance, or in combination, adequate means for candidates to pay campaign costs they desire to incur. The political parties have defaulted by failing to develop broad-based and steady sources of political funds. The Government has defaulted by failure to provide meaningful legislation to assist candidates and parties to reach the electorate. And the broadcasters have defaulted by failing to meet their affirmative obligations to politics, which could be done in greater measure in relatively simple and inexpensive ways.

As each has defaulted, so each has a constructive role to play, alone or in combination. The alternatives exist if we will discern the facts, the trends and the possibilities.

One unmistakable fact is that most political broadcast charges are for spot announcements and do not involve program time. In 1964, 73 per cent of TV stations' charges were for spots, while for radio 93 per cent were for spots. Including network charges which average down the proportions, 60 per cent of dollars spent in

the general election period went for spot announcement. Many candidates prefer to spend their normally scarce dollars for spots, and many stations prefer to sell them and not risk longer programs that might lose audiences. The listener is a captive of a spot announcement, which is over before he can switch stations or turn off the set. Whether spots are placed for strategic reasons, for reasons of cost, convenience, size or type of audience, to activate voters, or because stations prefer to sell them, the question is what candidates would do if provided free time by broadcasters or by government subsidy. I assume provision would be made only for program time, and that for Constitutional and practical reasons political spots would not be prohibited. The evidence suggests that candidates would still want to buy spots, to gain name recognition, to identify with an issue or a party. Spot announcements do not edify, and complex issues cannot be reduced to brief slogans or simple themes. But public discussion rarely faces this matter which accounts for such high percentages of broadcast costs.

Another fact is that Congressional, state legislative and certain other constituencies cover only a marginal part of the listening range of most stations. It is uneconomical and inefficient to broadcast to a station's entire area in order to reach just a fraction of the audience supposedly interested in a particular election. In such contests and such areas, free time is not often offered, nor is time worth buying. There are 40 or more Congressional districts within listening range of many metropolitan New York stations, including some in New Jersey and Connecticut. As for New Jersey, there have been until recently no commercial TV channels in the state. A candidate seeking free or paid time on New York or Pennsylvania stations finds his message going mostly to out-of-staters who do not vote in New Jersey.

There has been practically no dialogue on these issues, yet they touch many crucial points. If subsidies are given, what candidates will get them? Or if stations are required to give free time, what candidates for what offices should receive it? Candidates only in the state in which the station is located? Will Congress decide to aid federal candidates and leave state and local candidates to fend for themselves? Should the party be given free time to divide up as it sees fit? If so, the party at what levels? Time is limited on key stations that candidates seek. Candidates never seek time on some stations, particularly smaller or FM radio stations. How are these to be treated? If each station agreed to divide up the 40 or more

Congressional districts in the New York metropolitan area and take a share, whether time is given free or paid by subsidy, would it be collusion, subject to anti-trust action? What stations would get the colorful candidates in the "silk stocking" or reform-challenged districts, and what stations would get the one-party dominant districts in which there is hardly a contest or a modicum of voter interest?

Still another fact: many station managers complain of the nuisance that scheduling and staging political broadcasts can be. I suspect considerably more broadcast time would be given if each station did not have to sweat out the issuing of invitations, negotiating dates, production and other details. An escape from these nuisances could be achieved simply and inexpensively. Candidate and station alike would benefit if, for example, in statewide campaigns pre-packaged and taped shows were made available to every local station for showing at times they choose. A candidate cannot appear on 50 separate stations in a state, making news of publicity value to each station. Nor are statewide networks for simultaneous broadcasting necessary. Some central agency, such as the Wisconsin State Forum, the Rutgers University Forum, or the League of Women Voters, could provide the taped shows in series for broadcast by commercial stations. Indeed, the state broadcasters associations or the states themselves could subsidize the pooled programs, thus alleviating station production-costs while providing candidates with numerous potential outlets for each taped program.

Another suggestion that would simplify scheduling problems for broadcast stations, and make for more generous grants of free time, would be for them to present regularly scheduled strip-broadcasting of political programs. Stations provide news, weather and sports on a regular basis at given times, and could schedule for a period of weeks prior to an election 5-, 10-, or 15-minute segments regularly before or after news broadcasts. Five-minute political speeches are endurable for stations on a sustaining basis, are challenging for verbose candidates, and surely would attract audiences if regularly scheduled and preannounced. Free station-plugs of upcoming political broadcasts also would be most helpful.

Broadcasting stations have other significant responsibilities to serve the political process. WMCA in New York City carries on an elaborate registration campaign, but we do not know how many other stations give out registration and polling booth information by area as any substantial newspaper does. How many TV stations

present voting instructions and sample ballots, as many newspapers do? How many stations have run bipartisan fund-raising campaigns with the cooperation of the political parties? Clearly the broadcast media can be potent means of political fund-raising—witness the successful national Republican fund-raising efforts over television in 1964. How many stations have tried to sell to advertisers, as they are permitted to do under a 1962 ruling of the Internal Revenue Service, time for bipartisan registration, get-out-the-vote and contributions drives? How many stations have carried the American Heritage Foundation-Advertising Council spots urging registration, voting and contributing?

I mention these possibilities for consideration, not because broadcasters are not making contributions of time and service (some of them are) but because there are so many ways in which the broadcasting media could assist candidates and parties further by easing fund-raising problems or helping to reduce political costs. Because broadcasting can be such a potent force, achieving impact where the written word cannot always reach, broadcasters have a special responsibility to program politics in meaningful ways. No amount of coverage of conventions or election results, and no amount of money spent on expensive computers and commentators, makes up for the lack of imaginative programs bringing candidates to the electorate and heightening citizen participation in the political process through significant registration, get-out-the-vote and contributions drives.

In turn, I agree with Chairman E. William Henry of the FCC that the Internal Revenue Code should be amended to give incentive to broadcasters to program free political time by permitting them to deduct from their taxable income not only out-of-pocket expenses of free broadcasts (which are now deductible anyway) but also to deduct at least a portion of the lost revenue—if ample free time is made available to political candidates under standards the FCC could set. In this way, responsible broadcasters would be properly and justifiably benefitted for undertaking programs which serve the public at election time. Mandatory free time for politics can be made a condition of licensing, but I believe the Government should share some of the costs with broadcasters.

Similarly, consideration should be given to government sharing of more costs through direct subsidies, though it is difficult to untangle some of the thorny questions posed earlier about who should get them. My tentative vote is for the parties to get the money, and

let the parties untangle the knot. Certainly defining equal time in terms of parties rather than of candidates would ease numerous problems.

Before the day of subsidies arrives, we need to contend with what we've got—Section 315—which provides a protection to candidates that neither the Fairness Doctrine nor journalistic discretion ensure. Moreover, 315 works well with respect to paid political broadcasts, because minor candidates rarely have the funds to buy time equal to that bought by major party candidates. With respect to free time, however, I believe the equal opportunity provision could be amended to permit a policy of "differential equality of access," according to which if free time is given, major candidates would receive free equal time, while minor candidates would receive free equal time but less than that afforded to major candidates whom the public would be most interested in hearing. I won't burden you with a magic formula for distinguishing major and minor candidates, for mine might be as arbitrary as yours. But the doctrine of differential equality recognizes our predominant two-party system while also giving independent and minor party candidates a chance to be heard.

At the Presidential level, one could suggest further suspension of 315, but I would like to propose an alternative: under either the equal time provision or under the doctrine of differential equality of access, consideration could be given to broadening the definition of a news program, to go beyond the 1959 amendment so as to include any joint or simultaneous appearances of major party candidates, properly defined, on any single program, properly defined. An amendment along these lines would give broadcasters wider scope to present major candidates in debates or back-to-back or in other ways on the same program, including programs presented in special series for the duration of a campaign. Experimentation along these lines would give recognition to the special news quality of a program on which major candidates appear together, and enable broadcasters to treat such appearances as news rather than political programs. Candidates might not agree to appear, but if they did they would have no less protection than they have when they appear on a news interview program. Minor candidates need not get equal treatment unless broadcasters decided their appearance would be equally newsworthy. If this formula worked successfully at the Presidential level, the principle could be extended to other levels.

Primary campaigns pose special problems. In 1964, 28 per cent of

total network and station charges were incurred in nomination campaigns. Of the \$10 million spent in broadcasts in campaigns for nomination, \$6.8 million was spent by Democrats at all levels, despite a costly Republican contest for Presidential nomination. In Presidential campaigns for nomination, and in many primary campaigns in states dominated by one party, there are normally more than two candidates. The doctrine of differential equality of access could be applied, as could the notion of broadening the definition of a news program. Of course, major or leading candidates for nomination would need to be properly defined.

If I have raised more questions than I have tried to answer, it is because there are more questions than most of us realize, certainly more than the industry and others have tried to raise. There are no panaceas, and repealing the equal time provision would not solve most of the points I raised. Cost factors serve to illustrate the complexities of the problem, but there are no easy solutions to the cost problem without confronting the matters of production costs, of candidate and station preferences for spot announcements, of the advantages of incumbency, of numerous, manysided constituencies within listening range of most stations, particularly in metropolitan areas. I respectfully suggest that the industry, the political parties, Congressional committees, the FCC and state governments begin building a body of data and dialogue on these trends, these problems and their implications. I have merely noted but not developed in detail that broadcasting is only a part—albeit a significant part—of the whole matter of political campaign costs, a problem which fails to get the attention it needs in a democracy.

## STIMSON BULLITT

TV's impact makes TV almost essential for a campaign, while its cost makes it prohibitive for many. Yet not only is there a high over-all cost—getting into the game—but the unit cost is high compared to that paid by many other users of the medium.

The most harmful consequence of cost factors is their tendency to exclude candidates of merit—as well as candidates who lack both merit and money. Access to this powerful instrument now is largely limited to those who are either rich or show enough probability of winning to attract campaign contributions. By definition, the latter status can be attained by only a few, and attainment without

entering Faustian bargains is as hard as it was for the Biblical rich man to pass through the needle's eye in order to enter the Kingdom of Heaven.

This harm becomes greater in the cases of primaries and small offices. Few channels of communication are available. A candidate has a commensurately greater problem of access to and dependence on a TV station.

By its own effectiveness in directly reaching the voter, television tends not only to outshine other election methods, but actually to disintegrate some of them, such as the party organization, which tends to become superfluous in the television age. TV's effect on campaign processes compares to that which it seems to be having on professional baseball—withering the minor leagues.

The general result is greatly to favor those who are in or up—the incumbent, the rich candidate, the well-established one who arrived long ago—and to bar the upstart, the dissenter, the man outside the consensus. This campaign problem is accentuated by the focus of news broadcasts on the consensus every day of the year. As good as newscasts generally are, especially the network news, about the only men outside the consensus who can get their notions broadcast are H. L. Hunt and Billy James Hargis. Television gives an enormous advantage to those enabled to use it and a corresponding disadvantage to those who are kept in the outer darkness. It leaves them ciphers and their ideas unknown, making even greater the contrast between haves and have-nots of access to this precious medium.

This increased emphasis on cost does not mean that as a ticket for admission to public office the gifts of political leadership have been superseded by the ownership of riches—that Pericles is replaced by Croesus. Nor does it mean that campaigning skills have given way to the skills of making money—the replacement of Cicero by Crassus. It does mean a narrowing of the dialogue, a stagnation of public ideas and a concentration on the proven, the widely popular and the previously successful.

The path toward mitigating this harm seems to lie in a combination of subsidies, rules of application and other policies which would enable greater diversity and a freer market of ideas.

Subsidies can be provided by the stations, by the public treasury, or both. If by the Government, should the subsidy go to the candidate or to the station? The former would seem to permit greater freedom, flexibility and competition, enabling the candidate to place his money where he thinks it would be most effective, choosing be-

tween media and between organs within a given medium. However, the public interest would not be well served if the money were used for measures which provide heat rather than light. Such money would simply shift funds from the public treasury to the mass media without public value. On the other hand, to require candidates to spend their money on forms of solicitation which enlighten rather than simply get votes might be impossible. The only apparent alternative is a direct subsidy to stations, putting strings on the money to require that the programs which it buys are used for public enlightenment.

Subsidies should not be granted or applied on a flat basis. The races to which they are applied vary widely in needs and significance. The stations, whether contributing or receiving a subsidy, vary greatly in their profitability, primarily according to the size of the market (and secondarily on the number of competitors with which a station shares it). Because the revenue curve in relation to market size rises more steeply than the cost curve, the net profit curve rises even more steeply than the revenue curve. As a result, a small-town station may have an extremely small profit margin and a big-city one, a large margin. This variation in profitability creates an equivalent variation in capacity to do useful and expensive things in the public interest. Therefore, without a graduated subsidy scale, regardless of the difficulties which this would entail, it would be both unfair and ineffectual to impose an equal duty of such programming on big-city stations and the small.

Here is a rough approach to the problem. The networks and the network affiliates in the top 50 markets should contribute their own time—and money—on the ground that they can afford to by reason of a privileged position. And a graduated scale of subsidies should be granted by the United States to other commercial TV stations.

In applying the subsidized time to campaign programming, stations perhaps should give free time to certain of the small races (and perhaps run them in a low-priced period) and offer to sell participants in the bigger races time at a heavily discounted rate, say 10% of card rate (the 90% discount, the subsidy element, being contributed by the Government or borne by the station, as the case may be).

The programming time which should be provided should be of two kinds. Where a candidate cannot afford to buy himself other

exposure, he should be allowed to speak his piece as he sees fit, unrestricted except in the use of some kinds of procedural or technical dishonesty (the lack of restriction being to protect him from unfairness—intentional or otherwise—at the station's hands).

But for the rest of his time and for the time provided others, the station should keep tight format control toward the end of producing Cromwellian portraits. The basis of the policy is to give citizens a rational basis for decision, not to give a candidate, free of charge, a chance to misrepresent himself or to assert not his nature but his trademark slogan and his name.

The basic gain of the subsidy program would be to reduce the cost burden on candidates—with resultant decline in thralldom to contributors—and reduce the contrast between haves and have-nots of access to the medium. The combination of subsidy and regulatory pressure would tend to induce a station to provide free or cheap time to a candidate who otherwise would be excluded.

In the large races, where big money is available to be spent (such as general state-wide elections in the bigger states or the New York mayoralty), the low rate plus the exposure would tend to induce the significant candidates to present themselves in a program enlightening to the audience, while the comparatively small but substantial charge would still tend to exclude those insignificant candidates who could not afford to pay it.

However, the subsidy program alone is insufficient. In some cases, the offer of free time gives an airing to certain candidates who are a waste of everybody's time. In other cases, even a heavily discounted rate may bar from the air some impecunious minority voice which has something to say and which ought to be heard. Possible examples are the candidacies of LaFollette for President in 1924 and of Stuart Hughes for Senator four years ago in Massachusetts. But the best examples are people so obscure we never see them on the screen, some of whom are even deterred from running at all.

In the smaller races (including almost all primaries), the device of the heavy discount is too unsound in its discrimination to justify use. The reasons are two: the narrower spread in financial capacity among the candidates—because the charge excludes many significant candidates and fails to keep out many insignificant ones—and the lower correlation between significance and capacity to pay.

The subsidy system can substantially help the candidate with a middle-sized campaign fund but not the man with a small one. He often cannot get enough exposure to make a significant impact.

Like middle-income public housing, it is useful but does not solve all problems in the field. The practice of giving exposure to a candidate who does not have a chance merely conceals the injustice.

Often a candidate with a big campaign fund can swamp his opponents. The proportionate disparity between him and some of them is narrowed only slightly by the subsidy, since he adds his share to his bounty. An incumbent is not only likely to attract an adequate campaign fund—a real self-fulfilling prophecy—but his free news-event appearances between elections may be enough to take care of him.

The subsidy may strengthen the dialogue by putting the parties on a more even basis—in some places by reviving the two-party system—but fails to reach beyond the zone of consensus. Yet it seems reasonable to ask and to help the medium to do more than support the consensus even though the Government itself does not.

The subsidy program's primary limitation is its failure to provide for sound discrimination. The problem remains of fair treatment in a subsidy's use. One aspect of this is how to formulate a policy, enforceable either by a subsidy carrot or a penalty stick, which can assure exclusion of the man from the Free Will Greenback Party or the Total Immersion Trotskyites, yet not bar some worthy young unknown in a primary or a new minority voice of significant novelty or dissent.

Since the subsidy system is not enough, supplemental measures are needed. I think the most useful, most effective of them all is various means to enable a greater diversity of outlooks and orientation among the licensees, the people who operate TV stations in a given community or a given region.

Now it avails little to give the candidates access to the medium if they cannot use it to gain access to the audience. Can anything be done about this problem? With a large audience, the cost per thousand would drop and less money would need to be spent.

Here are two suggested partial solutions which are supplementary rather than exclusive.

First is an agreement between stations in a given market to run their political programs simultaneously. The programs would not duplicate each other, so there would not be a waste of time and effort, but they would be run at the same time in order to escape loss of audience to other TV shows. Such an agreement would be difficult to reach, but not impossible.

Second is to stage and dramatize the programs to give them more

popular appeal. Many candidates lack the staff support which can provide this independently. Since this lack is often due to lack of campaign funds, the station thus tends to serve as an equalizer as well as dramatizer.

Another measure is to induce the candidates to do their homework, both in the subject matter and in their use of language. This factor makes a big difference in appeal as well as persuasion. Many candidates, unless urgently guided otherwise, persist in spending hours shaking three or 400 hands—with most of the time spent tearing around in a car going to occasions where hands may be shaken—rather than preparing for a TV appearance at which 30 or 40,000 people may make their decision on how to vote in his race. When Kefauver spoke in Seattle in 1950, much of the audience was primed for ignition by a show of leadership, and he was on the only TV station in the Northwest. Yet he merely read a speech by two local flacks; the audience could see little but the top of his head and the upper rims of his glasses (although this limited view can be attributed in part to the cameramen's lack of developed skill).

Also, a station can produce special programs on a race. One kind is a documentary consisting of a series of biographical sketches of the contestants in a given race. Another is a telethon, but run by the station, not by the candidate, who may be inclined to have batting practice pitches put to him.

For a TV campaign program to be in the public interest, it not only should enable the worthwhile candidates to appear and to win and hold the audience, but it should *enlighten* the audience as well. It should illuminate the candidates and what they are talking about. It should provide light rather than heat. The latter can be provided by provocative slogans, catchy jingles, projection of an apparently appealing personality, incessant repetition of a name, and other measures with which we in the media must make our living. The use of these may give one candidate a competitive advantage over the other, but the only public issue is the matter of the cost and its consequences. Our problem now is what methods can give to the public information and understanding on which to base their civic decisions. Here is a suggested general framework on which many variations can and should be made, both to improve the scheme and to provide the variety necessary for preserving public appeal.

So that the candidates and their positions can be accurately compared with each other—the essential element of the voter's decision

—they should be presented together and engaged in addressing themselves to the same matters.

If there are no more than three candidates, and if they can and will join the issues, the debate format provides both enlightenment and drama. It should not be forgotten that understanding and amusement are not mutually exclusive, that light is not necessarily dull.

Another format, and one of more general application, is to have the candidates answer the same questions. No rehearsal, no advance notice. Camera work should make the candidates appear as realistic as possible—to show the “real them.” No teleprompter, no reading of speeches prepared by someone else. And no cosmetics, except perhaps as a corrective measure where a person looks worse on TV than on the street.

Further, candidates should be examined by a single interrogator so that consecutive thinking can be followed, and responsive answers can be pressed for. With several questioners a query can more easily be evaded. To undertake this, a station must assume the initiative in providing a skilled and fair interrogator and seeing that he is properly prepared. The problem of fairness is a difficult one because a questioner can conceal a bias far more easily than the witness—the candidate—who must take positions, even if they are blurred. The interrogator’s responsibility is a large one because although he cannot misquote a candidate as a writing reporter can, he can misrepresent him by guiding the subject and influencing the tone of the discussion.

Our medium’s nature, so aggressive in comparison to the passive book on the shelf, makes it a fitting instrument to provide members of the public with some of the things which they ought to have in addition to those for which they ask.

## HYMAN H. GOLDIN

In 1964 it took about \$35 million to turn the political broadcasting stiles. Of that sum, almost \$25 million went for the general elections. That was two-and-one-half times greater than similar expenditures in 1956. Or stated another way, between 1956 and 1960 political broadcast expenditures increased by 45 per cent and between 1960 and 1964 they increased by 70 per cent. This suggests an exploding political universe—increasing at an increasing rate. Opponents of Section 315 are free to hypothesize that the greater increase in 1964 was attributable to the failure of Congress to pass

the waiver for the Presidential race. We do know that in 1956 network charges for political broadcasts (which are almost entirely for the Presidential and Vice-Presidential offices) were \$3,250,000; in 1960 they dropped to \$3 million; and in 1964 they rose to \$3,925,000.

For the countless thousands who have written to complain about their favorite programs being preempted in whole or in part, it will come as no surprise that most of the political dollars were spent on television. In fact, the ratio was 70 per cent TV to 30 per cent radio.

Perhaps the most dramatic—and grim—statistic of our whole survey was the division of the candidate's dollar between spot announcements and program time. This greatest of all communications services—this medium heralded for its unique potentiality to instruct and inform as well as to entertain—was valued by the candidates primarily as an electronic billboard. Sixty per cent of the dollars spent in the general elections went for 10- to 60-second announcements, and 40 per cent for program time. This harsh comparison is softened somewhat by the availability of free time. In TV, in addition to 7,176 hours paid for, the candidates or supporters received 3,944 hours free. This raises a haunting question: If candidates got more free time would they spend less on programs and even more on announcements? At any rate, the broadcasters should be given credit for holding the line—no free announcements for political candidates.

The other side of the coin, literally, is that political broadcasting is bringing in substantial dollars to particular stations. It brought \$50,000 or more to 118 TV stations.

Other aspects of political broadcasting can be highlighted as follows:

### *Editorializing*

A relatively new development is a station's editorializing for candidates. The number so participating was small in 1964—17 TV and 140 AM stations—but the practice is growing. In fact, about twice as many stations reported editorializing in 1964 as in 1960.

In both TV and radio a majority of the editorials dealt with the candidates for President. For obvious reasons, we didn't attempt to determine which side they favored; this type of inquiry belongs strictly in the non-governmental sphere.

Under the Fairness Doctrine, broadcasters who editorialize for or against a candidate have a special obligation to inform the opposed candidate and offer to make comparable time available to his

spokesman. This obligation is greater than the standard responsibility under fairness, but there are those who contend that the stations should be required to go even further and put the opposed candidate himself on if he wishes. The contrary argument is that this would set off the 315 chain reaction, requiring equal opportunity for the candidate supported by the station. This is a particularly complex and sensitive issue and likely to be the subject of further Congressional inquiry.

### *Sustaining Time*

Almost a third of the TV stations and over half of the AM stations reported they have a policy of not making free time available to candidates. In practice, however, most of the TV stations with an anti-sustaining policy actually carried network sustaining political programs—apparently these stations have a different policy when a program is initiated by the networks.

Over-all, TV stations gave an average of over 5 hours of free time and radio stations almost 3 hours (excluding the stations which did not carry any free time).

Of a universe of 559 TV stations, 521 (94 per cent) reported sustaining time, counting both network and non-network programs; however, only 353 (68 per cent) reported non-network sustaining time. The significance of this is that about 200 TV stations did not provide any sustaining time for Senatorial, gubernatorial, Congressional, or any other local candidates. On the radio side, only one-third of the AM stations had non-network sustaining time and two-thirds (2,670 stations) did not.

We made two other analyses of significance.

### *Close Senatorial Races*

We selected 11 states from Pennsylvania to California and from Ohio to Texas which had close races as measured by the final results of the general Senatorial elections. There was a good deal of state-wide interest in almost all of these races, and so we attempted to measure how actively involved were the TV stations in these states. As to paid time, the interest was very high—90 per cent of the stations participating. As to free time, however, the tally was 32 per cent.

### *General Senatorial Races*

A similar type of analysis was made across-the-board in the general election Senatorial races. There were 34 states with Senatorial con-

tests: in 20 states there were no minor party candidates for this office, and in 14 states there were minor party candidates. In both categories the proportion of TV stations reporting sustaining time was the same—29 per cent. The conclusion—at least statistically—was that the presence or absence of a third candidate was not a significant factor. Practically the same results showed in the 1962 survey, and we called it to the attention of Congress.

In appraising the adverse effects of Section 315, it must be appreciated that while minor party candidates have a right to equal time if stations have given sustaining time on non-exempt programs to any other candidates for the same office, it doesn't follow that the minor party candidates always exercise their rights. Moreover, broadcasters may provide free time on programs exempt from the rigors of Section 315. Thus, while a total of 60 TV stations gave free time in the Senatorial races which included minor party candidates, only 29 gave free time to the minor candidates.

#### *Networks and Section 315*

In 1960, when Section 315 was waived in the general election for the Presidential and Vice-Presidential candidates, the TV networks gave over 39 hours and the radio networks 43 hours. By contrast, in 1964 in the general elections the TV networks gave only 4½ hours and the radio networks 21 hours. Very little of this time went to the candidates themselves in TV, only 1¼ hours; on the radio networks, the candidates appeared for 7½ hours. Practically all of these appearances were on exempt programs. As a result, the TV networks gave no time to minority party candidates and the radio networks gave only 30 minutes.

Thus, under Section 315 as presently drawn, the networks are able to present major party candidates without presenting the minority candidates. However, they are not able to give as much free time as they may wish to major party candidates, because they cannot carry such candidates in debates, back-to-back, or straight talks without incurring the equal opportunities obligations of Section 315. As a result, at least at the network level, Section 315 disadvantages the major party candidates without benefitting the minority party candidates. Waiver, amendment, or repeal of Section 315 as to Presidential general elections appears "statistically" valid. As to other elections, however, the political broadcast surveys failed to substantiate any strong case for change of Section 315.

LOU HAZAM is a Producer-Writer for NBC-TV News. He graduated from Columbia University in 1933, and for the past two decades has earned distinction in the field of broadcast reality writing and production. His 1956 NBC-TV series, *The March of Medicine*, was the first program ever awarded the Albert Lasker Medical Journalism Award. Among his many acclaimed TV documentaries are *Shakespeare: Soul of an Age*, *Vincent Van Gogh: A Self-Portrait*, *Greece: The Golden Age* and *The River Nile*.

JOHN H. SECONDARI is Executive Producer, ABC-TV Special Projects, and an ABC News Commentator. He began his broadcasting career with CBS in 1945 and was later appointed Deputy Information Chief and Film/Radio Chief for the Marshall Plan in Italy. He served as the ABC Washington News Bureau Chief from 1956 until his present assignment in 1960. A prolific writer, Mr. Secondari has authored several novels and television plays. In addition, he has produced scores of documentaries, educational films and news specials, among them the *Saga of Western Man* series.

# DIALOGUE

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LOU HAZAM  
JOHN SECONDARI

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*Among the many documentarians now serving American television, a small group is creating vivid reconstructions of the lives of great men, great institutions, and great periods in history. LOU HAZAM and JOHN SECONDARI, in particular, have earned distinction for their productions in this cultural-historical genre. Here, Mr. Hazam and Mr. Secondari review the challenges and limitations of their craft.*

INTERVIEWER: *Both of you have worked in the two general areas of communication that have come to be termed "theme" and "news" documentaries. What distinctions in approach exist in these styles?*

MR. SECONDARI: I am not conscious that there is any great difference between approaches. Basically, we work with the same materials. Our first problem is finding out what we want to say, which implies research. We must choose a subject matter. We must find a proper way of treating the subject matter. We must test our work for truth and accuracy, and we must engage in production itself. From this point of view the two styles of documentary are identical.

MR. HAZAM: If there are any differences in the handling of these two kinds of documentary, they lie solely in production. In the historical or cultural type you can exercise greater play of imagination. One has more freedom in developing interesting techniques than normally exists in the news documentary.

MR. SECONDARI: It's necessary to accept the fact that selectivity is common to both. We have some greater freedom, obviously, in creation, but both styles ultimately deal with fact. I think the

enormous advantage of the historical documentary is that it offers a perspective which perforce cannot be included in a current affairs program.

You can have a degree of confidence in actually assessing the value of what you include. Your knowledge of the subject has, after all, been time-tested—poured through that great sieve of scholarship over the centuries. This cannot hold in the news documentary. Truth and accuracy are established to a higher and more final degree, and the validity of the historical documentary depends, therefore, less upon this concern for truth than upon the imagination and inventiveness with which these time-tested facts are transmitted.

MR. HAZAM: We tend to overlook the point that contemporary subject matter is self-limiting. The ingredients which make up a current news report are slimmer. A news piece, which is the truest documentary, is cut out of the moment. It is taking place now, and this conditions your thinking and creativity. But in a work devoted to a Leonardo da Vinci or a Michelangelo, there are centuries between you and the subject. You can devise the techniques you need or require.

The happenings in a news documentary are there only as you can know and experience them. The people who are involved in these happenings, for example, may have profound limitations. Yet simply because a man talks through his nose gives you no license to hire a beautiful voice to speak his words. But in working with historical material, you are afforded this luxury.

MR. SECONDARI: This should not imply that we have any less responsibility to deal honestly and fairly with our material. The fact that we are bringing that material out of the past gives us no right to distort facts. For me, the fascination of creating a historical document is simply that it permits one to establish greater identification between the viewer and the events and personalities he sees on his screen.

MR. HAZAM: And yet this can be done without actual people portraying the characters. In news documentary you have to use the people who are actually involved in a situation.

INTERVIEWER: *How do you feel about the use of actors in the historical documentary?*

MR. HAZAM: I must confess to being sensitive on that point. I prefer not to use the actor because the form should try to represent truth, and you cannot show the truth of the 15th Century except through the cold facts and those artifacts of that century which remain.

The essential difference between what we are doing and a Hollywood fiction-film approach is that we try to put our stories together in such a way that the true essentials of the period are conveyed. The moment you introduce actors you break a rule, and the next question is where do you stop. Once you've gone that far, the only difference between our work and Hollywood's is in terms of the number of actors we use to show troops marching on a city. We usually march with our cameras. We can't afford actors and don't want them, because everyone knows they are not real. I think using actors simply waters down the documentary. It's a step backward.

MR. SECONDARI: Lou and I may vary in our pattern, but essentially I would agree. In our programs most of the people who carry out functions similar to an actor's are staff or crew. On my budget you couldn't hire actors! I never show faces, but I will employ moving figures simply because there are certain times, I feel, when the only way to help the audience associate with the action is to introduce movement, even if only a shadow or something of that nature. I do use actor's voices, but they speak only those words which—so far as the records can establish—were the words actually spoken at the time.

I do not think this variation in technique is what really sets us apart. Lou and I are different individuals, from different schools and with different ideas and concepts. We take the bones of our subject and flesh them out with those techniques the medium makes available to us. The luxury we are afforded now is that we can be certain of what we are dealing with. Both of us did news work where we had to take the event and present it on the air as it was happening or as we believed it was happening. There is more margin of certainty for us now.

MR. HAZAM: It's the luxury of research—of knowing you are dealing only with what reasonable men have long ago agreed is truth—that makes you feel more secure about freedom in technique. What we did in *Michelangelo* and what the movie *The Agony and the Ecstasy* does are quite distinct. I haven't seen the movie yet,

but I have my suspicions: we have no assurance that the facts of those Hollywood scenes, and the words put into people's mouths, ever existed in the 15th Century. In our documentaries, if we departed for a moment from the known facts the barriers would be down and we simply would not know what we were doing. So we can't afford the fictional techniques at all. They're not related to what we are trying to do.

MR. SECONDARI: Lou, do you sometimes feel as I do—that what we are doing is really simply whetting the audience's appetite? Aren't we really trying to stimulate them to go to the library, perhaps, and begin to learn more about this subject for themselves?

MR. HAZAM: To some extent. I have often been told that it doesn't matter what we do provided that we have created a feeling of what it must have been like in that period. But we must still try to reflect accuracy in each detail. To me there is nothing closer to true documentary than a newsreel film. There is nothing to be gained, of course, by calling every piece of newsreel film a documentary, and yet it does show you what is happening in a precise time and place and what is happening to the people who are involved at a given moment. I think we must try to stay as close to that as possible, despite the bridge of history.

INTERVIEWER: *What about the future? We hear that the documentary is a fading institution in national television. There was a great burgeoning of the form after former FCC Chairman Minow's denunciation of the medium, but it is said to be diminishing.*

MR. HAZAM: I'm not certain that all that is said about Minow's influence is justified. Before he came to office, for example, NBC News had done *Way of the Cross*. We had begun *Van Gogh*. We were already putting out shows of this kind. Perhaps the number of documentaries was increased after he spoke out, because more money was made available on all the networks. As to whether it has diminished or not, I cannot say.

MR. SECONDARI: My workload hasn't diminished, but perhaps over-all production has. If it's true, there are some other reasons for it. First, there has been an enormous increase in the cost of documentary production. Five years ago it was possible to do a

very good show for \$100,000. Today that same show would cost \$225,000. Costs have multiplied by 225 per cent.

MR. HAZAM: We want to do more, and we are given money to do more. But spiraling costs have made it tougher.

MR. SECONDARI: I think we are made to carry more of the network load than in the past. We are charged for all kinds of things in what can only be called a unique bookkeeping system. But I must say in all candor that this does not explain whatever diminishing may be occurring. The fact is that the documentaries produced in recent years have simply not held a uniform excellence. A lot of dross has been labeled documentary. A number of people have taken on the responsibility of making these programs without fully understanding the amount of money involved. Consequently they were forced to settle for inadequate budgets and weak production. This is complicated by another important factor: amazingly enough, there are very few good people who want to come into this field. This is a major problem.

MR. HAZAM: It is very difficult to find those people to whom you can assign responsibility. There are reasons for this, I suppose. One makes far less money in the documentary field than in making film commercials or soap operas. The personal desire is lacking—along with the inclination to put up with trouble. A great deal of personal energy is required. The hours are appalling.

MR. SECONDARI: I think that a range of scholarship and imagination is also lacking in too many cases. The single greatest shortcoming among the many gifted young people I have worked with is patience. They begin in research, but they don't enjoy it at all. After a year as a researcher they want to produce a show, and they simply are not ready.

MR. HAZAM: Perhaps the greatest weakness stems from lack of experience. This can be acquired only over a period of years, and in a variety of aspects of the field. In the long run this is the only way in which you can know what is demanded of you.

So many of today's so-called documentaries are not documentaries at all, but triumphs in library research. One can go to all the film libraries of the world and get a lot of film, put it together in a proper sequence with nice narration and a nice musical score, and come up with a "documentary." We are asked to hail

these as great when they are not. It is true that they "document" something. They document the Roosevelt period, the airplane, the steam-engine, but in my mind that's not what we are talking about here at all. A good research person, a fine editor, a first-rate writer and a discerning producer must put these things together. But it is difficult to find people who not only can start from scratch and build a documentary from library research, but who can also decide what the proper ingredients are and how they can be given creative presentation.

MR. SECONDARI: If the documentary is diminishing this may be at the root of it. I do not see anyone coming along that we, who have been in this movement most of our lives, can hand it over to. This is not because we are so all-knowing or gifted that we have become indispensable. It is merely difficult to find people who have gained 30 years of experience in a variety of media and situations—experience that will enable them to deal with the problems.

MR. HAZAM: Certainly it is not lack of audience interest that is curtailing the amount of documentaries now being made. I find that people like documentaries. The person who watches *Bonanza* or *Rawhide* is often the same person who will watch *Michelangelo*. I am not sure the audience is composed of just intelligentsia. People from all walks of life have an interest in documentaries and get a lot of pleasure and reward from seeing them.

MR. SECONDARI: It is hard to tell about who watches what on television because of this numbers game called ratings—which I don't know anything about but instinctively distrust. I do know that in the movies, where people pay to see what they want to see, two of the largest money-makers of the past five years—in terms of proportional expense to revenue—have been documentaries. One was *Mondo Cane* and the other was *The Sky Above and the Mud Below*. Neither cost more than \$400,000 to make and both have grossed millions. They ended up in neighborhood houses throughout the world, where people from all walks of life paid hard cash to see them. I think this is a more reliable index of the attitude of the public toward the form.

MR. HAZAM: I think John is right to be optimistic about the audience. The kind of show we are doing can have a broad appeal and at the same time draw those who have made it a habit not to watch television. Yet it's hard to foresee the future. At one

time the motion picture documentary was a booming business. It died because it encountered distribution problems.

MR. SECONDARI: The studios didn't care about assuring distribution because too many people were trying to make them. The distributors had absolutely no taste or basis for judging what was good and bad. More people were interested in going out and making a documentary than in staying behind and learning how to make one, and it wasn't long before the public's taste for these films was vitiated.

Whether any of these factors may eventually contribute to the end of documentary in television I am not sure. But we must assume that documentaries are going to continue; and since they rarely pay their own way it must also be assumed that in order to meet the astronomical costs they will decrease in number. Yet a decrease in number suggests an increase in quality. I do not believe it is possible for any single organization within the industry—especially with the manpower market as it is—to produce 52 good documentaries a year.

MR. HAZAM: We do not have the people to do that.

MR. SECONDARI: If you can do 12 in a year—with everything the network can throw into them—you are doing damn well.

MR. HAZAM: You may be able to increase that slightly by adding good people. But there is a larger problem. We have come a long way with the form in this medium, and I have a terrible fear that what we do in the future may be merely a repetition of what we have already done. I don't like to contemplate this. I would prefer to move off in some new direction, utilizing the television film in new ways. I would prefer to avoid doing the same old thing with a new cast of characters. But it's hard to find something that hasn't been done.

MR. SECONDARI: You would be surprised at how hard it is to explain anything which is not basically visual in nature. I would like to do a show on Voltaire, for example, but it is hard on television to imagine what will be put on the tube. The limitations of film as a communicative medium are enormous.

MR. HAZAM: And this is compounded by the simple fact that the producer may begin to lose interest once he has explored a particular film-making concept. Having done a da Vinci or a

Michelangelo you can, of course, go on. You can do a Titian, a Renoir. Having done a River Nile you can do any river you want. But having done them—having explored them creatively—you are not overly enthusiastic about doing five more. You'd like to move on to something else. That doesn't mean the public would not be interested in a string of rivers or a dozen more artists. It just means that the challenge is losing its fascination for the man who creates them. In a way he is in a rut. It may be a velvet-lined rut because everyone, including the critics, is pulling for him before he even begins—but it's still a rut.

MR. SECONDARI: And you feel the pressure to repeat what has gone before. In the industrial world they have a terrible habit. Salesmen go out and sell your work long before you have announced to anyone that you intend to do it.

INTERVIEWER: *I wonder if you have any convictions regarding the network attitude which restricts the amount of work to be contributed by independent producers in the field of public affairs. There are exceptions, of course, but is network policy in this area generally healthy?*

MR. HAZAM: Even though a network buys programming from outside sources, it is still responsible for what is telecast. It is responsible contractually to the people who made it, of course—and for whatever agreements were made between the producer of the program and the people who worked on it. But it is also responsible to the public. For this reason, I think I can understand why NBC feels that it cannot be totally responsible for what an outside producer brings in. If a program is made by their own people—people they know and who are tried and trusted—they can feel they are on safe ground. I do not say I necessarily agree with this attitude, but I feel this is what is behind a network's thinking.

MR. SECONDARI: I believe it is essential for the networks to maintain a high degree of responsibility for programs which they carry. Not because their vision or talent is greater, but because the network has the ultimate responsibility to the people.

But cost is also a factor in doing really important public affairs programming. The expense cannot be borne by many outside producers. Some programs will continue to be bought from independents because they have taken big risks and can find those

sources of subsidiary revenue which make a program interesting to the network. There will be some relaxation of this network attitude—there has been some already. I believe the best independents and the networks will join forces. But I do not believe it is fair for an outside producer to declare unequivocally that he has been “barred” from the networks.

MR. HAZAM: One must consider the fact that a network has a large paid staff which is responsible for documentary production. If 50 per cent of that staff is at work and the rest are on standby, it is hard to reach out and buy an independent work when an assignment can be given to any one of five producers who are not working. If you're paying a producer and he has no assignment, you will give him an assignment before even considering the outsider.

INTERVIEWER: *Wouldn't an increase in outside production offer opportunity for the training of more talent?*

MR. SECONDARI: It is probable, but new talent will still have to find angels to finance their ventures. A network will not buy a show by an unknown until it sees a print, and the first print will cost \$200,000. As a consequence, only two or three producers in the industry today can walk into a network, say they want to do a show, and have the network respond: “Fine, how much will it cost?” The response usually is: “Fine, when you've finished it, we'll take a look.”

MR. HAZAM: While there are extraordinary exceptions to this rule, I don't think that the demands are so great that a network can't answer them within its own staff. I think network executives feel there are enough documentaries on the air, and if they want more they have the staff to produce them. Of course, a unique content or rare treatment is always welcome—if it can meet the network's test of responsibility for accuracy and honesty.

MR. SECONDARI: There's no question that if an outside producer came in with an outstanding product that was not duplicated by anything on the air or in progress he would probably get it on. But it should be pointed out that it is possible for an outside producer to make extremely profitable arrangements with non-network sources. David Wolper has proved it. So I think my heart bleeds only relatively for outside producers.

MR. HAZAM: I think I have tried to explain what the network policy is and what lies behind it. It all reflects this matter of complete responsibility for what is aired. If an independent or freelance producer brings in a controversial film he has made, we have to ask ourselves a number of questions about how he arrived at what is shown. There may be an exciting five-minute sequence featuring a woman making wild declarations. What agreements did the producer have with her? How do we know she represents a valid point? We simply do not know what has gone on beforehand, and we must consider these factors.

This hardly implies that any or all outside producers are not responsible. They may be more objective and able than we are. The problem, however, remains: the network people cannot be *certain* of what is being shown to them, and they can enjoy a relative feeling of certainty only if it's been done in their own shop.

It might be added that many doors to cooperation in the actual production of documentaries are closed to the independent producer—and not for reasons of his character or his quality as a producer—as he sets out to do a program. The network name normally assures quick and generous cooperation from most institutions and organizations. I doubt if an independent could have gotten into the Vatican as John did for his films. The network name carries prestige, some promise of financial responsibility, and an assurance of professional care and quality. The independent may have all of these, but the source may not be aware of it.

INTERVIEWER: *Have you had much opportunity to judge the European work in your field?*

MR. HAZAM: I must disqualify myself as an authority because I have seen very little European work. But I have seen the work of the Canadian Broadcasting Company and admire it very much.

MR. SECONDARI: I've seen a number of European works and I do not think there is anything we can learn from them. They are behind us technically and behind us in understanding of the form. It is quite obvious that most of them are done for state-owned or -directed systems, and the "policy" point-of-view comes through in their outlook and their production procedures.

MR. HAZAM: Would you say, John, that they are more concerned with nuts and bolts?

MR. SECONDARI: Precisely. They are concerned with the nuts-and-bolts aspect of a story and never achieve that big inspirational or moving quality found in so many American productions.

INTERVIEWER: *I wonder if you would respond to the most frequent criticism leveled at the documentary in television—that it fails to touch a nerve in society and no longer generates controversy in the documentary tradition of “social argument.” Is it that there are no longer any valid subjects for the argumentative and probing documentary?*

MR. HAZAM: I hope that is not true. While I think it would be rather dull if the public were given a steady diet of da Vincis and Michelangelos, certainly the crusading isn't finished. The late David Lowe did some remarkable things. He wrote history with his programs on migrant workers, the Klan, and the costs of dying. I don't think this will stop. Others will pick up the torch.

MR. SECONDARI: Yet there are some deep problems. It is just as hard to “sell” controversy to an audience as to a sponsor. There is an abundance of news on the air. Issues have become so complex that there is great danger that the individual may no longer identify with events that are taking place. He does not see where his position is or what courses of action lie open to him. As a result, controversy for its own sake does not draw attention.

MR. HAZAM: I agree to a point. Perhaps it is more difficult to sell controversy than it is to sell art. But I don't think the presentation of controversial shows has stopped—or can stop—simply for this reason.

MR. SECONDARI: Yet there is a greater measure of agreement on vast issues today than ever before. Perhaps the point is not really one of controversy as opposed to non-controversy. What our critics fail to understand is that the documentary cannot begin to operate in the way of a daily newspaper. A critic may complain that we do not “come to grips” with problems of the day, but he does not reflect that for us to come to grips with issues in our form, our style, and our technique is not so simple as inserting a sheet of

paper into a typewriter. It might take six months, and by the time we have "come to grips" with this controversy the entire issue may have lapsed into history.

MR. HAZAM: This was radio's great advantage. All that was needed was a handful of people, an organ, and a sound-effects man, and you could deliver an investigation into a problem within 24 hours. But in TV we drag behind us the clumsiest tools in the world. By the time a documentary is put together, gotten back from the lab, edited, polished and ready, a law has been passed and the problem is eliminated.

MR. SECONDARI: This is the universal complaint of everyone in television. There is never enough time. It's a miracle, I think, that year after year people *do* come up with viable ideas which help to advance the technique and the spirit of documentary.

## COMMENT

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Late last year the Radio-Television News Directors Association gave its annual *Paul White Award* to **Ralph Blumberg**. As former owner and manager of WBOX in Bogalusa, Alabama, Mr. Blumberg was cited for his courageous efforts to bring reason and fairness to the smoldering civil rights struggle in that city. Throughout 1964 and '65, Blumberg presented a series of editorials over his station—first in behalf of reasoned acceptance of the law and, after intimidation, against the Ku Klux Klan.

His stand brought threats of violence against him and his family. Sponsors were pressured into withdrawing their support. The WBOX transmitter building was fired upon and the tower antenna lights were destroyed. Blumberg sent his family north for safety and later, facing economic ruin, he finally sold his station and left Bogalusa. Early this year he joined the staff of WCBS-TV in New York City.

In presenting the award, Richard Cheverton of RTNDA pointed out that it was “not given as evidence of opposition to the Ku Klux Klan or as an endorsement for a position on racial matters. It is given as an endorsement of the principle that all men, and those particularly in communications, should be free to speak without harassment.”

Ralph Blumberg's acceptance speech follows.

One question that many people have asked from the inception of our fight with the Klan is, Why did you take a stand? Was this necessary?

Well, I guess it is like asking a man why does he climb mountains or fly to the moon. There are times when a man does what he sincerely feels he must do.

Community Relations from Washington, D.C. came to Bogalusa in the latter part of 1964 because they felt there was going to be racial trouble, and we were asked to participate because we represented part of the communications media in the area.

I personally believe a radio or television station is more than just a business. When you are loaned a frequency by the Federal Communications Commission you automatically become deeply obligated, not only to yourself and to your family, but also to your community, to the FCC and to your country. We always have the tendency to throw around with great abandon the words "public service," "duty," and "obligation." They sometimes are meaningless until the chips are down. And this, of course, is the moment of truth every broadcaster must face at one time or another in his career. It is almost like playing Russian roulette. But I honestly feel that when a man accepts a license from the FCC he must accept the responsibility that goes with it. We felt our responsibility at this particular time was to expose the Ku Klux Klan.

When you become a target of the Ku Klux Klan you soon learn that if there ever was a devil on the face of this earth, it lives, it breathes, it functions in the cloaked evil of the leaders of the Ku Klux Klan. And you cannot compromise with the devil.

Perhaps I am a little more sensitive to this organization because I am a Jew. And perhaps it is because I keep thinking of Nazi Germany and the millions of people who died over there. I keep wondering if this is the way it started with Hitler in a small area of Germany where people shrugged their shoulders, called him a nut and turned their backs. And I keep thinking to myself over and over again: my God, it *can* happen here.

How can anyone in America in 1965 live in a community with this going on? There is no doubt about it; you learn a few facts of life when

you take an unpopular stand, especially in a small community. You learn that truth and justice and freedom surely come to their own only when it is unpopular to have truth and justice and freedom. You learn what it means to be ostracized in a community, and the one thing we have yet to learn—how long can good people remain silent with a troubled conscience?

When we think of our modern world with all of its complex problems, we sometimes find ourselves extremely naked in our simplicity. When a small broadcaster takes a stand in this quicksand of progress, it is easy to see why someone would ask the question: Is this fight necessary?

But we sincerely believe that there are some things today we cannot lose, especially with the world teetering on the brink of change. And these are our basic freedoms. We cannot rationalize our position when the time comes to stand and fight. There is no middle ground. There is no compromise when it comes to our freedoms. We either have them or we don't. For example, freedom of speech is not a sometime thing. Freedom of speech is not necessarily what the majority of our listeners want to hear. Freedom of speech is not necessarily what we want to hear. But to lose our freedom of speech is exactly what the Communists want to hear.

Yes, we do feel that our stand was necessary. However, we failed miserably in Bogalusa to make the people understand what we were trying to say. But that doesn't mean the next broadcaster who stands and fights will fail, and this is why we feel our problem has become so important. Perhaps other broadcasters will find their answers in reviewing what has happened to us.

Even though the Klan is finally forcing us to sell the radio station, I think perhaps victory is not quite so sweet for the Ku Klux Klan. We do know that no broadcaster must ever let anyone take away his freedom of speech. And we feel it is incumbent upon every broadcaster to let all men everywhere know that we insist on performing our duties with integrity and with courage.

Yes, it is true. When you take a stand, sometimes the price you must pay is very great. But I can assure you the rewards are even greater.

# BOOKS IN REVIEW

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Kenneth Macgowan. *BEHIND THE SCREEN*. New York: Delacorte Press, 1965.

Shelves of specialized books have been inspired by the movies, from the erudition of Kracauer or Nizhny to the personal criticism of Agate, Agee, Schickel or Tyler, to the revelations of Hopper, Parsons, Goodman or Davidson, to the histories of Ramsaye, Rotha or Crowther.

Conspicuously missing has been the over-all volume of erudition, experience, viewpoint, wit and perspective. Few are capable of such range, but in his final years Kenneth Macgowan was completing such a work. It is all his admirers might have hoped for within the limits of 528 pages, including that too-often neglected tool, an index.

The chief reason for this is that California's New Englander led a variety of lives, and each added zestfully to the others. A critic in Boston and New York, active with O'Neill and Robert Edmond Jones at the Provincetown Playhouse, he became a major studio producer, responsible during 18 years for nearly 50 films, including *Young Mr. Lincoln*, *Alexander Graham Bell* and *Lifeboat*. From his thousands-per-week post he chose freedom to found UCLA's Department of Theatre Arts and to be a tireless, hard-travellin' committee-server. All the parts gradually added to a unique whole.

*Behind the Screen* reflects the richness of Macgowan's background. History and art, advertising and economics, directors, cameramen and writers—above all, writers—have their places in these pleasing pages enlivened with 200 illustrations and type-boxes of forgotten oddments Macgowan collected through the years.

From these experiences, Ken Macgowan had become a teacher but wholly without dry didacticism. His relation of early film history is an example: "The motion picture is, obviously enough, the only art created and developed wholly within historical times... No one man invented motion pictures. They grew out of scores of accidents and observations... Early or late, the record is full of coincidences... We have few facts... no full records."

What comes out of this (in the mere first 100 pages) is an international story ("of folly and a touch of mendacity") which continues in today's world of Sweden's admiration for *Perry Mason*, and Japan's for *Bonanza*. As illustrations, there are precise line drawings and film-strips from international sources.

Of especial interest here is Macgowan's grasp of the role of films in TV. From the present free system, he believed pay-TV would develop.

While apologizing for being personal, Macgowan cites his own experience with drama and his son's with music. The tastes of both had been sharpened: "Free television, like radio, cannot educate by experience. The viewers simply tune out the programs that they aren't quite ready to appreciate. With pay-TV, or so it seems to me, we shall be seeing its programs as we see plays and movies. We shall have a box office again... it should have a helpful effect."

The more knowledge he amassed, the more a patient optimist he became; and this book, which is a requirement for all universities and libraries, is a rich monument to a rich, rare life.

*The Washington Post*

RICHARD L. COE

Raymond Fielding. **THE TECHNIQUE OF SPECIAL EFFECTS CINEMATOGRAPHY.** New York: Hastings House, 1965.

This book is exactly what it says it is...a book of techniques for the specialist. It is far beyond the capability of the layman or beginner in motion pictures, but undoubtedly will be used widely in institutions which offer graduate degrees in cinemaphotography or by students who are professionally oriented toward the subject matter. The book-jacket says that this is "the first professional work in English to bring together and describe every special effects technique in use throughout the world. It assumes that the reader is familiar with standard cinematographic procedures."

For the professional photographer who wants to check his technique against an authoritative source, or experiment with new techniques, this book is recommended. Also, as a text for advanced courses in cinema technique it is probably the best.

Jim Atkins and Leo Willette. **FILMING TV NEWS AND DOCUMENTARIES.** Philadelphia: Chilton Books, 1965.

Most professors of broadcast news remember and use Leo Willette's book, *So You're Gonna Shoot: Newsfilm*, as a basic manual in the lab portions of our classes. So, about the only thing I can say about the new one is that it's more of the same. That is, it is an excellent hardware book for the student. The authors are "in" and have drawn widely from their own experience and from those of a host of professional newsmen.

The book is arranged into 15 basic categories covering everything from a statement of the nature of news to advice on getting a job in TV. It is replete with pictures and quotations from a myriad of news directors from all over the country. Nothing is treated in depth, but this was obviously not intended.

This is a how-to-do-it book, and it is a good one for that purpose. Eager TV news students may use it to advantage, and copies will be dog-eared from thumbing exercises in short order. My only criticisms are that there are too many quotations and that the book does not provide a rationale for the newsman as *professional* communicator rather than craftsman.

RTNDA/Time-Life Broadcast. **TELEVISION NEWS FILM: CONTENT.** New York: Time, Inc., 1965.

This book, as did the first publication dealing with newsfilm standards, grew out of series of conferences held around the country by RTNDA for professional newsmen. It presents edited versions of presentations given in the following areas: Investigative Reporting, Covering the Courts and Crime News, Editorials, Covering State Government, Documentaries and News Specials, and a final, excellent section on Color Film in Television News.

This collection of speeches or presentations provides keen insights into the philosophies inherent in the handling and treatment of news in these categories, and does it well. Network as well as successful local station news directors speak with authority and clarity.

Syracuse University

JOHN R. RIDER

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- Profiles in Courage* (RCA Victor VDM-103)



## LOOKING AHEAD

### *THE FOURTH NETWORK*

Within the complex and confusing development of electronic communications in our free society the interests of commerce, art, culture, education, engineering, politics and law are deeply engaged in one single effort—the delivery of a message into some 55 million American TV homes. One commercial system—open-broadcast TV—has not only achieved this goal, but must be credited for the very existence of those TV homes. Commercial TV is now confronted, with varying degree of threat, by newer systems which, whether based upon a profit or public service motive, offer alternative programming services and a greater diversity of choice for the viewer.

Pay-TV, in its various forms, has not yet succeeded in establishing a viable operation in the United States, for reasons ranging from its incapacity to operate a system broad enough to finance a truly workable service to its own failure to overcome a sentiment held by many Americans—that what they now get free they may someday have to pay for.

Non-profit systems for achieving the same goal (getting that message into those homes) are gaining in strength. Various educational and community UHF stations continue to go on the air. National Educational Television now serves 104 member stations. Closed-circuit systems are increasing in number. Specialized public service UHF stations are operating.

But to many the Big Promise has not been attained, and with neither rancor nor regret it can be suggested that non-profit systems will not

achieve true force and power within the nation until the nature, character, and style of their messages are improved.

It is hardly my intention to argue that ETV should alter the very reason for its existence by seeking to become a "mass appeal" service. What is arguable is the *size* of the minority now being served—the total impact of ETV. Is there a point at which the extent of service to viewers might lead one to question the justification of this service? Is 15% of the total television audience sufficient to justify the taxing of an entire public? One would, hopefully, assume that it is. But what about 2%—or less? There is a growing suspicion that ETV must seek some kind of breakthrough in degree of audience attention, and none are more desirous of such a breakthrough than those already involved in ETV.

One need not go so far as Robert Maynard Hutchins, who once observed that "the trouble with educational broadcasting is that the programs are no good." Many of them *are* good. Many are inventive, fresh and full of serious purpose. Yet these escape broad public attention. It is, admittedly, difficult to sustain the effort under the present system of financing and the hand-to-mouth existence which tax support and public donation provide. Such support moves ETV along at a pace less than breathless.

At the moment it is irrelevant to dispute the subtle point of whether ETV's audiences include "opinion leaders" and therefore larger audiences are not required. Nor is it necessary to debate educational philosophy—the ancient mass vs. class argument within our educational institutions. ETV *would* like larger audiences on occasion. It *would* like to compete on occasion with the commercial system. And even opinion leaders are not free to move opinion if they can find no support for their positions among the wide public.

Some would be blunt about it, arguing that until the fundamental law of all communication and education—expressed most recently by Marshall McLuhan as "that which pleases most, teaches most"—is observed, the attempt to take ETV in America beyond the range of an extreme minority service will fail. If ETV is to succeed, its programs need to be made more dramatic and dynamic; and if ETV is to grow, the system must be able to compete in the bidding for the communicative talent of our civilization. The system must be able to contract for the many significant art-products already being produced for and by the television, theatrical and motion picture industries. ETV must be able to compete for additional leadership in management as well as in creativity. And it needs to buy additional expert public relations and promotion.

In short, ETV needs great sums of money—not for this year or the year to come, but on a steady and continuing basis. As it seeks to expand open-broadcast efforts it will find the tax support dispensed to it through school systems more and more confining, for closed-circuit and open-

broadcast educational interests are certain to clash. As ETV seeks increasing tax support from Federal and state governments it will find itself correspondingly curbed, hampered and restricted in the uses of such monies. But, most important, such monies will *never* be enough. Furthermore, in light of program and financial limitations, ETV will discover that the more than 80% of the American home-viewing population who have never seen, and may never see, its programs will balk at the kind of major tax support required to make the system a competing and significant program service.

One might call attention to the failure of a current broadcasting experiment in England, of which an observer reported that "if BBC-2 was attempting to reach a minority audience, it succeeded beyond its wildest dreams." We need not be so cynical about the purpose or capacities of ETV in America, but we ought to be realistic about its present limited appeal.

What is a reasonable solution? How can a truly national, informational, cultural and educational service be provided in such a way that its programs will continue to grow in impact and popularity; in such a way that the myriad commercial and non-commercial interests within the communications and education complex do not thwart or resist its progress; and in such a way that an enormously affluent American public will provide a large, steady and reliable source of income for its enterprises?

Perhaps we are overlooking the greatest undirected force in the history of mankind—human taste and preference in a mass society. Have we ever troubled ourselves to consider the American public as a *cultural* (taste and preference) force as opposed to a *political* (taxation) force?

Is there some plan for harnessing of broad viewing taste in the interests of a fourth network and alternate local service—a plan which does not admit the restrictive features of commercial support, which does not tax all citizens for a service which most feel they do not need, and yet which encourages public financing in an indirect and—to the people—acceptable way?

I believe there is, and suggest that we first consider the largest audience attractions in the first fifteen years (1948–1963) of commercial television's history:

1. The Kennedy Funeral
2. The 1963 Sunday Game of the World Series
3. The 1963 Miss America Contest
4. The John Glenn Orbital Flight
5. The 1962 Miss America Contest
6. The 1961 Miss America Contest
7. The 1963 Saturday Game of the World Series
8. The 1963 Motion Picture Academy Awards
9. The 1963 Rose Bowl Game
10. The 1960 Kennedy-Nixon Election Returns

In each of the above instances, over 70,000,000 human beings stopped their normal activity, turned on a television receiver, and *attended to* these events.

It is suggested that, aside from comedy presentations, the success of commercial television has depended upon a repetition, with lesser dramatic attenuation, of the same broad, human appeals found in these programs. Even though we may not find some of them to our taste, we cannot deny the enormous human interest they generate. We might ask whether these same natural appeals might somehow be employed to serve the interests of those who seek—perhaps with more serious purpose, with lesser emotional appeal, and with a greater degree of sophistication—to make better citizens in a better society.

Let us proceed in this way. Let the Federal government, through the Federal Communications Commission, establish—much in the manner it established a corporation for the technical development of communications satellites—a National Informational Cultural and Educational TV Service (NICE-TV). This corporation should include representation from National Educational Television, all non-commercial stations now on the air and to come, various foundations, educational institutions, business firms, and a combination of the many interests now seeking to establish subscription (or pay) TV in the United States.

The corporation is to be non-profit. It will be licensed to operate over local non-commercial stations a *limited-hours subscription* TV system. The number of hours (four in any week seems a maximum) will be programmed by the corporation. The success of the venture will rest upon *exclusive* franchise to operate subscription TV in the United States. The subscription hours should be limited to two prime-time evening hours and two weekend afternoon hours.

The programming in these hours, as in the BBC-2 experiment, will be designed for the broadest possible audience. If *Arrest and Trial* and post-1948 Paramount feature-pictures managed to pull a 15% rating against competing commercial systems and BBC-1 (as compared to *less than 2%* for other BBC-2 programming) then perhaps this is one of the levels of entertainment that should be considered. It takes little imagination to foresee that, with subscription TV providing income for this broad-appeal programming, the quality and newness of offerings will far exceed that of BBC-2.

If BBC-2 failed it is because it simply could not support itself on audience-attention alone. It seems reasonable to anticipate, however, that within four years after subscription revenue from these four hours a week begins to mount, NICE-TV could find itself grossing *one billion dollars a year*. I need not pursue the point beyond the following illustration.

For part of its evening two-hour subscription block, NICE-TV could contract with ten major motion picture producers for exclusive showing-

rights to an equal number of major motion pictures the calibre of, say, *Lawrence of Arabia*. A minimum estimate of subscription income from these ten films—viewed in approximately 15 million homes at a charge of one dollar—would gross \$150,000,000 in a single year. For those who wish to compare figures, this total is more than the nearly \$100 million already spent in developing ETV by The Ford Foundation, together with the \$32 million granted by the Federal government. And this from 20 hours of subscription programming out of a potential of 208 annual subscription hours.

The possible income to be derived from a truly national subscription TV service is phenomenal. Indeed, a commercial corporation operating an unlimited subscription system could quickly become so powerful that the necessity to limit it would at once become apparent, merely on the grounds that a harmful monopolistic entertainment monster could result. With the limited-hours concept established, and linked only to NICE-TV, the results could be more hopeful.

One might assume, therefore, the creation of one of the larger non-profit corporations in American history.

What could be done with profits derived from such a plan? First, a larger percentage of net return could be assigned to a national network programming agency within the corporation. This agency would then commence operations on a par with commercial networks—bidding for talent, for ideas, and for those production values which would make its programs fully capable of attracting greater numbers of viewers.

A second share of net income would be assigned to local non-commercial stations in proportion to the subscription income they delivered. Again, the status of local programming would improve and larger audiences would result. No longer would talent with an inclination toward providing more serious program material be hired away by commercial stations. Competition for local audiences would be a natural outcome.

Finally, a lesser percentage of income from NICE-TV would be assigned to state or local education agencies, to be used exclusively in development of closed-circuit TV systems, "second service" local UHF outlets, or any aural/visual operations deemed useful and worthy for *formal* classroom and continuing education.

We can resist retouching the glorious pictures painted by commercial pay-TV entrepreneurs. It suffices to point out that both the NICE-TV network and local non-commercial stations could now build impressive program schedules. There would be funds to commission original drama and to support the performance of original works of music, funds to build first-rate news operations, and funds to support intelligent inquiry. Brains and talent could be sought, paid, scheduled, and showcased in a manner which only a few ETV stations can now hope to approximate. A resurgence of the arts at the community level, linked to the potential of a public

communications medium, is now within reach, and the national potentialities are unlimited.

Where are the snags? What forces could sandbag such dreams? Two-hundred and eight hours of national subscription TV each year will be welcomed by motion picture producers, talent guilds and associations, program-package agencies, and all other such creative organizations. These might observe that, while 208 hours limits the windfall which an unlimited commercial pay-TV system might offer, a new and rich market for creative work is now available.

What of the commercial networks and local stations? In this time and temper it might be useful for them to ponder such a plan. The threat of a full commercial pay-TV system—which may either force them to get into it or curtail their operations—is minimal, but still exists. While none would enjoy the prospect of four hours of major competition—severely damaging their schedules for one weekday evening and one weekend afternoon—the plan would remove once and for all the nagging fears of an *unlimited* pay-TV monolith.

Yet, in view of the pressures that already exist, commercial TV interests might justifiably seek relief. The Federal Communications Commission might make some new concessions to preserve the stability of an economic stimulant vital to our society, not to mention the significant cultural and public affairs contributions which commercial TV makes. (Only the seriously misguided would suggest that the system should be hobbled, let alone toppled.) Pressures regarding the number of commercial minutes in any given hour might be eased. If networks and stations could be permitted the advantage of an additional minute per program hour, more fears might be allayed. Other accommodations might also be made, even to the extent of reviewing the value of such proposed regulation as the "50-50 rule."

Further, as a non-profit corporation licensed by the Government, NICE-TV would be required to make its network and local programs available, after a limited period of time, to all commercial stations upon payment of talent residual fees—but *not* production or administrative costs. These availabilities would not only help existing commercial stations to meet public service requirements at a lower cost, but would create over the years a rich low-budget but high-quality program pool for emerging commercial UHF stations.

What of the theatre-owners—who, combined with broadcasters, fought to convince Californians to vote against their own interests? (They voted, Gilbert Seldes points out, *not* to allow themselves to have freedom of choice.) For them the threat of pay-TV is mitigated. For only one night a week theatre-owners would face direct audience competition of pay-TV, which does not mean the end of the world. To a limited extent, theatres would become second-run outlets for some of the best films produced each

year, since top-drawer producers would undoubtedly seek subscription-income opportunities first. A partial solution would be to curtail, in NICE-TV's original charter, the total number of films to be run on such a basis each year. For theatre-owners, of course, no solution is ideal, but the alternative may lead them to reconsider.

It would seem that some deep and lasting objections to the current operation of television in the United States might well be answered by NICE-TV. Those who continue to hysterically insist upon a Government Network, despite its serious dangers to a free society, might welcome a service which is a distinct alternative to the "salesman-dominated" commercial system they so passionately oppose. A Public Corporation, on the other hand, is *not* the Government, and it would inevitably share the same vulnerability to public outcry as that enjoyed by our commercial networks and stations.

Those rules and regulations which now govern commercial broadcasting would certainly apply to NICE-TV, included among them Section 315 of the Communications Act and such instruments of policy as the Fairness Doctrine. The probability that such a system could become the tool of any special-interest group, including the Government, would be minimal. (If, indeed, one *seriously* believes that network and local-station public affairs and news programming is controlled by "economic interests.")

Perhaps the greatest objections, after all, might come from within the present ETV establishment, where, to a few, the very thought that ETV might on occasion reach an actual *majority* of the audience is anathema. But the greater number of ETV operators and creators are dedicated, resourceful, talented, and generous. They *know* what they could do if they had money, and I suspect that most would welcome that money, even if it meant letting their channels reach out for four hours each week to grasp that *Miss America* audience.

Finally, what of that oft-maligned and condemned body of pitiable souls called "the public"? To what extent will it respond to the prospect of first paying the cost of installing billing-devices on its home-receivers, and then paying for 208 hours of programming each year which it does, indeed, now get "free"? If such programs as *Gomer Pyle* and *Bonanza* should someday move to subscription TV ( and logic suggests that NICE-TV must closely examine this kind of audience-puller if it is to maximize another kind of bonanza) will not the great audience rise up *en masse* to strike down the corporation, the FCC, and perhaps the very Administration which allowed it all to happen? Not, I believe, if any intelligent and long-range approach is made to explaining the project. Not if broadcasters refrain from mounting a furious campaign against it. Not if the American press assumes responsibility for making public comparisons for taxpayers between a solely tax- and foundation-supported open-circuit and in-school ETV development, and this type of plan. And

not if the many forces which may benefit from such a project actively seek its advancement. Indeed, some strange new alliances may be formed—among liberals and conservatives, among business and anti-business interests and, not the least, among educators and entertainers.

It sounds plausible, doesn't it? And for only four hours of a national subscription TV service each week.

Would you believe *three*?

A.W.B.





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