The Decade That Shaped Television News

CBS in the 1950s

Sig Mickelson
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This insider's account, written by the first president of CBS News, documents the meteoric rise of television news during the 1950s. From its beginnings as a novelty with little importance as a disseminator of news, to an aggressive rival to newspapers, radio, and news magazines, television news became the most respected purveyor of information on the American scene despite insufficient funding and the absence of trained personnel. Mickelson's fascinating account shows the arduous and frequently critical steps undertaken by inexperienced staffs in the development of television news, documentaries, and sports broadcasts. He provides a treasure trove of facts and anecdotes about plotting in the corridors, the ascendancy of stars such as Edward R. Murrow, and the retirement into oblivion of the less favored. In a little more than a decade, television reshaped American life. How it happened is a fascinating story.

About the Author
SIG MICKELSON is a Research Fellow at the Hoover Institution at Stanford University and Distinguished Professor of Journalism at the Manship School of Mass Communication at Louisiana State University. He has served as Vice President of CBS, Inc., and was the first president of CBS News. He is the author of America's Other Voice (Praeger, 1983) and From Whistle Stop to Sound Bite (Praeger, 1989), and the editor of The First Amendment—The Challenge of New Technology (Praeger, 1989).


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THE DECADE THAT SHAPED TELEVISION NEWS

CBS in the 1950s

Sig Mickelson
For my extended family:
Elena Ann and Alan; Alberto and Ina Alan, Michael, Trevor, Lars, Alexa
If man could learn from history what lessons it might teach us, the light which experience gives is a lantern on the stern.

S. A. T. C. Allsop's Recollections
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Acknowledgments

The source of most of the information in the volume that follows were files in my home office or the Mickelson Archive at the Library of the Wisconsin Historical Society in Madison. Special credit is due to Ms. Janice O'Connell, then a member of the library's staff, who arranged for the acquisition of my files and supervised their classification and filing.

Among my colleagues at CBS News during the late 1940s and the 1950s who cheerfully and exhaustively recalled for me their experiences in the formative period of television news were Walter Cronkite, Chet Burger, Don Hewitt, Phil Scheffler, and Joe Wershba. Other important and useful sources of background included Dr. Frank Stanton and Jack Cowden. The research department of CBS Television was particularly helpful in searching out data regarding television news ratings and growth in television set density through the entire period from 1946 through 1961. The CBS Law Library arranged access to CBS Annual Reports for the same years and made copies for me of pages that were useful in carrying out the project.

Jesse Sheppard combed through files of the New York Times and other periodicals, making copies of significant items relating to the development of the thesis of the book. The clippings he delivered are themselves an interesting running history of television news broadcasting in the 1950s.
Introduction:
The Decade That Shaped Television

Like Caesar's Gaul, the history of network television can be divided into three parts: the start-up phase beginning with tentative, experimental steps as early as mid-1946 and continuing to full maturity by the end of 1960; the period of consolidation and refinement leading to peaks in audience size and prestige between 1961 and 1980; and the era of decline in both ratings and influence beginning in 1981.

The concentration here will be on the first of these periods, recounted largely through the growth to maturity of CBS News.

The largely experimental CBS television operations date from 1946, when there was an expectation that receivers would shortly be back on the market after a wartime shut-down. The first experimental postwar efforts to broadcast news began that same year. CBS's news staff grew from a total of six recruited in late 1946 to more than 400 by the end of 1960.

The network was not alone in experimenting with news. NBC in 1946 was farming out its once a week news programming to an outside contractor. The first regularly scheduled five nights a week network news broadcasts began on both NBC and CBS in the fall of 1948.

The first national political conventions to be covered by television were transmitted to a network extending from Boston on the north to Washington, D.C., on the south and Pittsburgh on the west in the summer of 1948.

In 1948 there were only approximately 400,000 television homes in the entire nation, concentrated largely in the Northeast. By January 1, 1950,
there were more than 3 million and by 1960 more than 46 million, scattered across the entire nation.

By 1961, patterns for news and information broadcasts had been formulated, staffs employed, and audiences built, and prestige was running high. The news consuming public was apparently reasonably well pleased by what it saw. The start-up phase was over.

There may have been a decade in American history that witnessed more profound changes in American life than the 1950s, but one would have to look long and hard for its equal. A little more than four years had passed since the conclusion of a long and brutal war that had converted the nation from a civilian-based economy to a wartime footing. Now normality had returned and the good life was reappearing in unprecedented measure.

Factories were reconverting to civilian goods from concentration on war material. Luxuries were reappearing on market shelves. And society was changing dramatically. Center cities began losing population as city dwellers rushed to the suburbs. Colleges and universities were engulfed in a flood of new students, many of them war veterans. A network of superhighways began to reach out across all portions of the nation, and motels mushroomed at their junctions. A web of air routes followed a similar pattern and airports were expanded or new ones built to accommodate a growing army of air travelers. As air traffic boomed, passenger trains suffered from the swift competition. Dress became less formal and recreational facilities boomed.

Not one of these startling transformations in American life, however, exceeded the impact stimulated by a new medium of entertainment and information that suddenly began to capture attention by the end of the decade of the 1940s. There had been some sporadic television before manufacturing was shut down shortly after Pearl Harbor but it had been a costly toy for a few wealthy residents of large metropolitan areas.

By early 1947 a few television receivers were beginning to find their way to the marketplace and into shop windows and some homes. By early summer 1948, those few Americans with access to television receivers and living within the limited range of the coaxial cables linking nine northeastern cities were able for the first time in history to watch a national political convention without personally being in the hall. By early autumn, both NBC and CBS had inaugurated weeknight fifteen-minute news broadcasts. By the beginning of the new decade on January 1, 1950, television had become a tidal force there was no stopping.

Swift as was the growth of the new medium the pace was overshadowed by its impact on society. The nation had never seen a decade that represented so dramatic a change in all aspects of national life. Television was not the sole responsible stimulus, but it surely was a major contributor.

Change was particularly evident in political and governmental affairs. Government could not overlook the new medium. As the decade opened
only a handful of Americans had seen live transmission of government in action. That limited minority had watched some meetings of the United Nations Security Council and some hearings conducted by committees of the United States House of Representatives, but only set owners in the narrow Northeast quadrant of the nation had access to the signals. Once it had established a solid foothold, television quickly became the tool most essential to getting elected, and for officeholders, to winning public support for specific programs or getting reelected. Presidents and members of Congress quickly learned that it was the most effective medium within reach.

Television was a key player in converting news from a largely local commodity to a national service. There was still no national newspaper. Although the wire services were national and international in scope, the principal source of news and information for most Americans was the local newspaper. The newsmagazines, Time and Newsweek, were delivering a national service but on a weekly, not a daily, schedule. Radio was the first service that was truly national, but no network news program ever approached the audience levels gained by television. As early as autumn 1951, both the Douglas Edwards quarter hour on CBS and the John Cameron Swayze program on NBC were outrating the most popular radio news programs.1

By the end of the decade, with television signals available live from coast to coast and set density at nearly a 90 percent level, the White House began to communicate frequently with the national electorate, not the Congress. The problem was not television, it was the House leadership, which barred live TV until several decades later. Live sessions of the United Nations Security Council and General Assembly were available from the late 1940s, as was programming on local stations from many of the nation’s state capitals. The impact on the process of governing has never been fully measured.

Sports promoters, after giving away rights to their events in the start-up period, began to look at television as both enemy and potential cash machine. They moved both to bring the monster under control and to turn it into a money maker rather than a drain. Professional football, once it learned that television could be an ally rather than an enemy, was soon rivaling baseball if not exceeding it as the “nation’s pastime.” The Olympic Games, which had existed since 1896 as a quadrennial curiosity, suddenly became an international passion. And both professional tennis and golf rose from status as sports with small followings among the wealthy to major audience builders.

Television was the stimulant. As the new medium of entertainment and information continued its expansion across the nation, television households were added at a breathtaking rate. As station programming expanded from limited nighttime schedules into both day and late night hours the number of hours viewed in the American home soared with it.
The growth of television during the 1950s was so swift that the medium grew from novelty to virtually full maturity in that short ten-year span. There were only a handful more than 3 million television homes in the entire United States as the decade of the 1950s opened; when it ended, the count had grown to more than 45 million, an increase of nearly fifteen times. There were television receivers in approximately 9 percent of American homes in 1950, in more than 86 percent in 1960. As the decade opened there were 108 television stations in operation, in 1960 more than 600. In 1960 live coverage was available to very nearly every city in the nation.

While growing at a very rapid pace, the medium was forced to face up to the pressures imposed by the wave of postwar blacklisting. It had to contend with congressional investigations, McCarthyism, the reverberations from the quiz scandals, and constant threats of punitive actions from a government that always had the latent power to revoke licenses. Even though it is now commonly assumed that news was a loss leader that never had to pay for its full keep, pressures to hold down budgets were intense and budget hearings painful for news executives.

The impact on government was particularly apparent. The process of campaigning was revolutionized. Political advertising budgets soared. Political campaign consultants proliferated. Candidates were selected as much for their capability in communicating on the television screen as for their competence.

Government, too, felt the sharp impact of the new medium. The response time between policy formulation and public support was sharply reduced. Many serious issues were trivialized in an effort to cater to the presumed interests of the viewers. Emphasis in political campaigning was frequently shifted from serious policy matters to superficial, sometimes trivial, solutions. Efforts were made to reduce complicated explanations to the lowest common denominator, avoiding the difficult to understand in favor of the simplistic approach. Emphasis frequently shifted to issues that lent themselves to consensus rather than disputation. Likewise, response time between policy formulation and action was frequently dramatically shortened.

The defining event in the accession of television to a dominant role in the political process was the Nixon-Kennedy debates in the closing months of the decade. Some 100 million Americans watched some part of one or more of the debates, and it is widely assumed that they were largely responsible for Senator Kennedy’s victory over Vice President Nixon.

It was a remarkable, almost unbelievable, decade. It is now buried so deeply in communications history that it may seem ancient. Yet it was so vibrant and is such essential background to the enormous changes in communications that have occurred since and continue that its history bears
standards to win the race for ratings. And the proliferation of local television stations created new and formidable competition for the networks.

The carefree days of gambling with untested techniques, of daring to defy convention and laws of probability, of flaunting established procedures were largely finished. There continued to be significant evolution of methods and procedures. Technologies coming on stream, including videotape, satellites, camcorders, jet airplanes, and electronic editing, made everything easier. The ratings book, however, rather than the mission to deliver information to the viewer, became the Holy Grail and the product began to soften. The 1950s may not have been the "Golden Years," but they certainly were the formative years. There would continue to be growth but not at the same dizzying pace.
The Search for a Road Map

There had been some limited television before the war but it was little more than a rich man's toy. A minimal broadcasting schedule continued after Pearl Harbor but set manufacturing was shut down in early 1942. When it resumed in 1946 programming had to begin almost from scratch. There were only seven thousand television receivers in the entire country, approximately three thousand of them in New York City. Nobody knew how many were still in operating order. There was hardly a large enough audience base to interest advertisers in investing what programming was available. And there was no evidence that television was more than a costly toy.

Some news and information programs had been broadcast before the war. In fact, on the day Pearl Harbor was bombed the CBS news staff began broadcasting shortly after the Japanese attack was announced in early afternoon New York time and continued until late into the evening, reading the latest bulletins and illustrating them with still photographs, maps, and charts. But by 1946 that small staff had been dispersed by war and it was necessary to start anew. There was not much to start with. There had been no enduring patterns established before the war. Prospects in 1946 looked pretty grim. Receiver manufacturers had been granted permission to resume production, but factories had to be outfitted, assembly lines geared up, sales and merchandising strategies devised, and pipelines filled before the new production could
again would television news reach the percentage of available audience that it had reached in 1950. A total count of a phenomenal 45 percent of all homes within range of the signal has never since been exceeded or even approached, except for short periods during major crises. The reason can probably be found in the fact that in the early fifties there was little competition on the air to divide the audience. Local stations carried very little news. Many communities were served by only one station, many others by only two, so it was a matter of watching the news or turning off the set. NBC, with the best lineup of stations, started off with a big lead. CBS gradually caught up, and when ABC finally entered the field as a third contestant, the three-network race began.

No decade since has seen a fraction of the progress achieved during those ten years. It wasn’t all error-free. There were ludicrous moments when inexperienced staffs overreached. There were experiments that did not pay off. Gambles were taken that would not even be considered today. Improvisation did not always yield positive returns, but it demonstrated a vitality if not maturity that helped the medium grow.

The inexorable direction was forward. Failed experiments led to more efficient approaches. During the decade patterns were set and methods developed that would constantly be modified but never completely abandoned in the next thirty-five years.

Although the daily fifteen-minute news broadcast was the centerpiece of the early television news effort, the real glamour lay in the special events that television covered during the decade. The Japanese Peace Conference in San Francisco in September 1951, from which the networks delivered the first West Coast television signal seen on the East Coast; the exciting and dramatic political campaign of 1952; the coronation of Queen Elizabeth II in June 1953; early efforts by NASA to conquer space in the late 1950s; and the first presidential candidate debate in 1960 all took a solid grip on an enthusiastic public.

There were, however, anxious moments. News and public affairs programs were somewhat slower to mature than entertainment shows. Their audience base at the outset could hardly compare to the millions reached every Tuesday night by Milton Berle or, starting in the autumn of 1951, by “I Love Lucy.” By midsummer 1952, however, the nation had been given a sample of what television could do with live coverage of major public events. More than 60 million Americans looked in on the two political conventions in Chicago that summer.

The total head count in the CBS Television News department on January 1, 1950, showed only fifteen employees: one on the air broadcaster, two studio directors, three writer-editors, four film editors who doubled as cameramen on local New York City stories, three graphic artists, one special events director, and a director of news.

A Washington bureau, existing primarily to serve CBS Radio, helped out
The author with Walter and Betsy Cronkite aboard the USS United States prior to departing for London to cover the coronation of Queen Elizabeth. The small boy in the foreground is the author's son Alan. Photo courtesy of Sig Mickelson. Used by permission.
occasionally, principally on special events such as presidential messages or congressional hearings in which service was delivered to both television and radio. The largely radio-focused orientation of the earliest news on television was soon facing stiff competition from the young television novices who began to introduce innovation geared to television’s unique capabilities.

The early television news program was an experimental hybrid. But TV personnel were beginning, even in those earliest days, to give the medium a character of its own. They began tentatively at first to experiment with storytelling devices conceived by their own imaginative personnel.

No one involved at the beginning was quite sure what television news should be. The pioneer television news personnel preferred not to produce radio with pictures but had no clear-cut notion of what they really wanted or what they were creating. They just went ahead innovating from day to day, searching for new ways to tell a news story in a new medium with drastically limited resources. To add pictorial content CBS experimented with film shot by its one cameraman. To broaden coverage CBS purchased a film service from a fledgling news film syndicator named Telenews. NBC started hiring its own camera crews. It was soon obvious that a syndicated service was not the answer. Not only was the film quality inadequate, but, worse, what was delivered was essentially an old-time newsreel product. It was geared to the motion picture screen, not to the introduction of a news service in the living room, a more intimate setting than a motion picture theater. Furthermore, it was simply impossible to deliver a daily news report without coordinating film product with daily news flow. The film assignment editor could not go one way and the television personnel another. It was clear at an early date that one assignment editor had to coordinate both news assignments and film coverage. The objective of the television staff was to find a new way of conveying news and information to a growing audience. The end product would likely be much more responsive to viewer interests if reporters could work directly with camera teams. That was unlikely when working with an outside supplier.

Growth by 1960 had been enormous. The fifteen-person staff at CBS in 1950 had grown to nearly four hundred, including production teams working on special projects and documentaries, an increase of more than twenty-five times in ten years. In contrast to the insularity of 1950, when the entire staff was New York–based, there were now staff members and contract personnel in eight major capital cities outside the United States and in six cities within the country. Washington had become a major bureau point manned by editors, correspondents, writers, cameramen, film editors, a special events staff, and a bureau chief. The entire radio news and public affairs operation had been absorbed by television and the newly formed CBS News division had been given special status as an autonomous unit within the CBS corporate structure.
The eastern United States did not see live television from the West Coast until the broadcasting of live pictures from the Japanese Peace Conference in San Francisco in early September 1951. Nor did the West Coast see television from the East Coast until October 1 that same year, when a National Baseball League championship play-off between the Brooklyn Dodgers and the New York Giants was broadcast nationwide. Ironically, before the decade was over both those teams would be West Coast-based, and television was a major inducement for the westward move.

It was October of the same year before the transmission lines crossing the whole country were fully established for regular service. The microwave facilities used to carry the signal across the country were still so limited, however, that they could carry only one program at a time. This led to complicated time sharing arrangements.

While growth in the volume of network service was multiplying, the number of stations available to carry the programs was static. The Federal Communications Commission had imposed a freeze on granting new licenses in spring 1949. As a consequence the 108 stations that been licensed prior to the freeze had the field to themselves for nearly four years.

The freeze was lifted in the spring of 1952, but it was months before additional stations could complete their license applications, move them through the commission, acquire studio and transmission equipment, employ and train personnel, and begin to broadcast. Once the new licensees began to come on the air, though, a trickling stream quickly became a torrent. In contrast to the 108 stations on the air at the beginning of the decade, the total count in 1960 was growing to the 1,000 level. By 1995 it had topped out at 1,699, including UHF and public stations.3

Through most of the first three years of the decade CBS's only major news program was fed to a network lineup that hovered between 18 and 20 stations. By 1960 the total had exploded to more than 200. The two networks, CBS and NBC, that were reaching measurable audiences for their news programs in the 1950-51 season were watched regularly in a remarkable 5 million homes. That represented 45 percent of the entire market. By 1960 the number of homes reached, boosted by ABC's becoming a factor in a three-network race, had soared to more than 16 million.

Whereas personnel in network newsrooms in 1950 had drifted into television largely by accident, the pattern in 1960 was quite different. New recruits had been imported by design from newspapers, wire services, news-magazines, picture magazines, newsreels, still picture services, and documentary production companies. An amalgam of varied talents and experiences was replacing the largely radio-oriented programming of the earlier days. It was reasonably certain, even at this primitive stage in television's development, that news and news-related programming would ultimately constitute an important element in television schedules, but critical decisions had to be made before news broadcasts could be expected to build
the audience. There was no pattern for a fledgling news department to follow and there were no experienced personnel to create the patterns. The prewar news show was not much more than radio dressed up with a few stills and maps and some scratchy film.

When the first news broadcasts were scheduled, network executives charged with creating program schedules were confronted by a number of questions regarding news on the new medium. It had been pretty well decided that something more was needed than a radio news program with a camera fixed on the broadcaster or a daily newsreel with off-camera narration. If the latter, where would one obtain the news footage? And in what form? Would having a news reporter on the screen add enough interest to justify the effort and cost? The newsreel idea had the merit of saving the viewer the price of admission and the time to travel to and from the motion picture theater. But conventional newsreels would not serve the purpose because ordinarily they were released only once a week and ran for only about ten minutes, too little time to cover more than a fraction of significant events. They concentrated on items that were loaded with theatricality at the expense of the day-to-day information that was harder to pictorialize. And they were designed for a large screen and a captive audience, not for a small screen and a family setting.

In fact, producing a daily news report with a newsreel format was not practical: Delivering a weekly, or even twice weekly, report was one thing; producing sufficient volume to follow current developments on a daily basis would require an enormously expanded operation. To complicate the problem further, newsreel crews were tied down by heavy and bulky equipment that restricted their flexibility. They were accustomed to using 35-millimeter (mm) cameras that were too unwieldy to transport to fast-breaking, unanticipated events. They simply could not move fast or have the flexibility required on the scene. In addition, the film stock was more costly and processing required much more time.

Using the much lighter 16-mm photographic equipment would help but there was no 16-mm camera with a sound-on-film capability. Silent film would be a valuable asset in some circumstances but useless in events in which sound was critically important. A viewer could hardly be attracted to a news broadcast featuring a silent film of President Truman announcing the initiation of the Marshall Plan or Winston Churchill delivering his "Iron Curtain" speech at Westminster College in Missouri. There would be a place for stills but only as a poor man's substitute for motion.

Even if highly mobile high-quality sound-on-film cameras were available and there were competent crews to operate them, transportation was a problem. No available telephone lines had sufficient bandwidth to accommodate a moving picture, much less one with sound. Coverage outside the largest population centers was difficult, if not impossible. Airlines scheduled only infrequent flights and many areas had no commercial air service.
Planes were slow and stops frequent. Except for very long distances, trains and buses at this stage were more effective and reliable in transporting completed film reports.

Producing a daily newsreel was quickly dismissed; something comparable to the popular radio news broadcast seemed more promising. An on-camera personality could preside over the program, introduce pictorial or graphic elements, narrate news items for which illustrative material was unavailable, and serve as a guide through the day's news. But there were still unanswered questions regarding both content and format; there were no guidelines. Should television try to cover the significant news of the day comprehensively like first-class daily newspapers? Or should it restrict itself to reporting events for which it had film or other illustrative materials? When film or graphics were not available should they use the "talking head" format and read the story straight into the camera? And where would they find personnel with the ambition, imagination, and creative skills to face dismaying realities and make the system work?

It was assumed that news would be a significant part of television once it got under way. Both CBS and NBC had discovered that news, if it accomplished no other purpose, was an invaluable builder of prestige. It helped create an image that was useful in attracting audiences and stimulating commercial sales, not to mention maintaining favorable government relations. The Federal Communications Commission in granting station licenses had no legal mandate to prescribe that news be included in schedules, but it made it clear that public service broadcasts, news among them, would be a critical factor in deciding among applicants for licenses and in granting license renewals. Even though the networks were not directly licensed, they owned stations that were and served as a program source for affiliated stations that depended on them for balanced schedules. News met the test of "public service."

It was pretty well understood from the beginning that news and information would play a part in network television schedules as it had in prewar programming. Facilities were not available in the late 1940s for much more than illustrated lectures buttressed by still photographs, maps, charts, and interviews. There were no experienced television journalists and only the limited prewar experience to serve as a guide.

The real birth of postwar television can be placed some time in mid-1947, when postwar receivers began to come onto the market. During the remainder of the 1940s TV was building the foundation for a meteoric ascent. By January 1, 1950, the preliminaries were over, and TV was ready for the main event. Formats were being tested and adopted; program schedules expanded; personnel recruited, hired, and trained; and audiences were exceeding the most optimistic expectations. Income, though still negligible, was showing signs of gathering momentum. Television was on the thresh-
old of a breathtaking decade that would see its rise to a dominant phenomenon in society.

As the medium began to scratch out a foothold in the late 1940s there was still little news in the abbreviated schedules except for the early evening weeknight broadcasts that began in September 1948. There was, however, an abundance of live coverage of sports. Sports programs were inexpensive. Sports promoters had not yet learned that there was gold to be mined in selling rights to television programmers. No studios were required, no rehearsal time to book, no script to pay for. The only performer required was a play-by-play broadcaster and perhaps an aide. A mobile unit with a minimum of personnel could program two to three hours of excitement and thrills at minimum cost. And sports interested men, who in the late 1940s were still the family breadwinners. It was they who would buy the new box that would put live sports events into their homes. Bar owners simultaneously discovered that play by play coverage attracted additional customers, mostly men, and kept them at the bar longer. The television receiver became almost standard equipment.

NBC in 1946 made a preliminary move into postwar television news. It hired a former newsreel employee, Paul Alley, to produce a weekly news program, largely patterned after the theatrical newsreels that were still a staple at motion picture theaters. CBS was also producing a once a week news program. It was a little more innovative in that it attempted to create something new and better adapted to home viewing. It employed a six-man news department, a legacy of its efforts to build a well-rounded news schedule in 1941 before the war shut down most of its live programming. CBS had a news director, an assistant director, a special events expert, a “visualizer,” a cameraman, and a secretary. It is notable that there were both a “special events expert” and “visualizer.” Inclusion on the roster of these positions suggests that thought was being given to using the special capabilities of television to create something new in news broadcasting that would go beyond still pictures, silent film, or “talking heads.”

There was no designated “anchorman.” That came later. The network was still experimenting with talent. Should there be on-camera narration? If so, should the central figure be a ringmaster to drive the program forward or a guide and interpreter? Should the person selected be a father figure, a show business personality, a star, a widely known reporter, or a competent news reader? No one was quite sure. The staff tried an elderly man with a beard, an aggressive young sportswriter from a New York daily newspaper, and finally a number of staff announcers who were professional performers. It was quickly determined that they still did not have the answer.

By midsummer 1948, when the Republican party opened its national convention in Philadelphia, the number of homes with television had grown to more than 400,000; AT&T had interconnected cities from Boston to
Washington and Pittsburgh. Westinghouse tried to fill in the gap in the Midwest by feeding a signal through what it called "stratovision," an airplane carrying a television receiver and a transmitter. The plane picked up the signal from Pittsburgh on the receiver and relayed it back on the transmitter to an area across central Indiana and parts of Illinois and Ohio. The system did not prove very effective.

Chicago and Los Angeles, still islands with no connection with the East Coast network, were becoming television centers with their own production facilities. Other cities across the country, including San Francisco, St. Louis, Cleveland, Kansas City, Minneapolis-St. Paul, and Miami, were beginning to develop their own programs and their own audiences, awaiting the day when they could be interconnected with networks operating out of New York or Los Angeles. Like the networks, they were experimenting with news.

The real birth of the television news era can be dated from the 1948 political conventions. Television had then its first real opportunity to prove to masses of Americans that it could deliver a service unlike anything that had ever been available. The geographical area in which the signal could be seen was limited. The number of persons with access to television receivers was still minute, but the enthusiasm of those who had access to sets could hardly be kept secret. The contest for the presidential nominations was the center of attention, but television was the new element on the scene. Newspaper reporters were fascinated by it. It was so omnipresent that radio could not avoid mentioning it.

At the end of the summer NBC had decided to take the full plunge into news. It assigned the central role to John Cameron Swayze, who quickly became identified by his sign-off line, "Glad we could get together." R. J. Reynolds Tobacco Company bought full sponsorship of the program, which was known henceforth as the "Camel News Caravan."

CBS quickly followed suit. By this time CBS executives had concluded that they had had enough of experiments in their effort to find the ideal master of ceremonies. They decided that rather than a slick MC what they really needed was a reporter who was articulate, friendly, warm, and able to communicate. There wasn't much chance they could assign one of the stars of their famed cadre of correspondents who had won their laurels during the war. There was so much distaste, whether feigned or real, for the upstart medium among the elite corps that there was little hope of attracting any one of them.

It was clearly necessary to select one of the lesser lights who would feel that he had nothing to lose by being identified with an environment that was considered too frivolous by the elite of the staff. Management picked Douglas Edwards. Edwards had had some choice radio assignments but was not one of the haughty inner circle of "The Murrow Boys." He had achieved some national standing, but his real strength lay in the fact that
he appeared likable, modest, warm, friendly, and knowledgeable. Oldsmobile shortly later assumed full sponsorship of the five day a week program, and the duel between NBC and CBS was on. ABC carried news, but its ratings were so low that it was not a factor until the 1960s. DuMont was never really in the running.

By autumn 1948 both networks were grinding out Monday through Friday fifteen-minute news programs to the handful of television homes able to receive the signal. It was a period for both experimentation and expansion. Sponsorship added new pressures but also new resources. NBC continued building its own film gathering organization to support its Swayze show. To bolster its coverage it sent a German-American photojournalist, Gary Stindt, to Europe to start building a film structure there. CBS relied on Telenews, a news film supplier staffed largely with former newsreel personnel, to furnish a daily service. A pattern was beginning to develop. A ringmaster, Edwards on CBS or Swayze on NBC, introduced film or still pictures, sometimes maps or charts, and sometimes he just read the news item when no illustrative material was available. Sometimes crude animations or jerry-built props were used to illustrate stories when no film or stills were available.

Apparently the haphazard process was working. The growth of television news, once TV set sales began to boom, was rapid. News broadcasts went from obscurity in the late 1940s, a novelty shunned even by radio news personnel, to a dominant role in electing a president in 1952. Only a handful of Americans had even seen a television screen prior to the opening of the 1948 Republican convention in Philadelphia. By mid-July 1952, only four years later, as many as 55 million had watched simultaneously as Senator Taft and General Eisenhower dueled for the GOP nomination at the International Amphitheater in Chicago and Adlai Stevenson rose from relative obscurity to win the top spot for the Democrats. The total number of the curious who had looked in on some part of either of the conventions was estimated at more than 60 million.5

When the gavel fell to open the Republican convention on July 7, 1952, there were more than 18 million receivers in American homes, a gigantic increase from the 7,000 in mid-1947 and the 400,000 in midsummer 1948. In 1948 there were only nine interconnected television markets; in 1952, fifty-two.6 Microwave and coaxial cable facilities capable of carrying a television signal that had reached only as far as Pittsburgh in midsummer 1948 by 1952 had crossed the continent. Through the 1950s AT&T lines continued pushing outward, not only driving television's Golden Spike to bind East and West coasts into a single network but also reaching into more remote areas. Receiver manufacturers continued to pour out torrents of sets and the public kept buying them.

In the early 1950s the networks, still restrained by the FCC's freeze on licensing, were engaged in fierce competition to place their programs in
single- or two-station markets. It was a particularly serious problem for ABC and CBS since NBC had acted swiftly to sign primary affiliation contracts. By 1961 there were three going networks (ABC, CBS, and NBC) and the race for program acceptance was a matter of history (DuMont had dropped out in 1953).

Studies on public attitudes toward news media made by the Roper Organization show that by 1959 television was already far ahead of radio and nearly on a level with newspapers as the primary source of news. By 1962 it had caught and passed print.7

In a little more than a decade television had moved from a novelty to a major force in journalism. Patterns had been established that were to guide further expansion in subsequent years, but the expansion would be more deliberate, without the carefree élan and bursts of chance-taking energy that characterized the fifties. It was a period of trial and error, on-the-air experimentation, serious analysis of strengths and weaknesses, and intense desire to create a new medium for dissemination of news and information. All available evidence suggests it was succeeding. By the end of the decade experimentation and risk taking were decelerating. By January 20, 1961, the date of President Kennedy’s inauguration, television news was out of its adolescence. It continued to mature and to experiment, but it was the experimentation of a mature organization, not the rash risk taking of the fifties or the late forties. Still to come were President Kennedy’s assassination, the Viet Nam War, the introduction of satellite transmission, the coming of cable, and the birth of CNN; but by the JFK inauguration, patterns were established and the set count was near enough to saturation to indicate that the period of explosive growth was over.
The First Awkward Steps

Television's coming out party was the 1948 national political conventions. The quadrennial rites of politics starting with the Republicans in June in Philadelphia gave television news the perfect venue for its introduction to thousands of viewers. The conventions were exciting. They had suspense and drama. A race to the wire between New York governor Dewey and Ohio senator Taft for the Republican presidential nomination and an explosive walkout by southern delegates protesting Minnesota senator Humphrey's fiery civil rights speech at the Democratic convention kept tension high. Even a third convention scheduled by the Progressives after the Republicans and Democrats had left town served to keep the excitement level high.

The audience in end of the century terms was not very large. Only fourteen stations were interconnected and able to receive the convention signal. It was television's first chance, however, to show off its new muscle. The receiver count, too, was misleading as a measure of total viewership. Television sets in bars and in department store windows captured large audiences and viewing parties in homes added to the total count. Broadcasting magazine, in a series on television history published in early 1981, estimated (perhaps a little optimistically) that up to 10 million viewers may have seen some part of one or more of the conventions.

Americans living within range of the television signals were given their first chance to look in on the boisterous process by which candidates for
The CBS News staff assigned to cover the national political conventions in Philadelphia in 1948 pictured in the Convention Hall the week before the convention. Photo courtesy of Sig Mickelson. Used by permission.
the nation's highest offices are chosen. They could sit in their living rooms and look in on the sometimes tedious, sometimes apparently lunatic, but nevertheless highly significant and frequently exciting process.

Few concessions were made to the infant medium by convention planners. No delegate in the hall or on the streets or in downtown hotels, however, could fail to note the presence of the television cameras on platforms in the Convention Hall and television crews with their bulky gear roaming the Philadelphia streets. Monitors in the corridors of the Convention Hall permitted delegates and guests play-by-play views of the action. In those few cities that had coverage, crowds gathered in bars and in front of department store display windows, where enterprising store managers had discovered a novel marketing device. They found that television receivers carrying pictures from Convention Hall or candidate headquarters could draw curious crowds so large that they blocked traffic. No more effective way could have been found to stimulate receiver sales than these impromptu TV set demonstrations.

Camera and sound facilities in the Convention Hall were pooled. Temporary studios had been constructed in auxiliary space by both CBS and NBC. They were used for interviews, analysis, and background pieces. NBC had contracted with *Life* magazine to produce its coverage. The producer was Andrew Heiskell, later publisher of *Life* and board chairman of Time Inc. Heiskell, given free rein by network executives and surprised to have so much latitude, not only covered the proceedings inside the Convention Hall but sent roaming camera crews to pursue the Taft campaign's baby elephant striding through Chestnut and Walnut streets, march with Governor Warren's parade down Broad Street, and look in on Harold Stassen's followers gorging themselves on Wisconsin cheese in the candidate's headquarters suite.

Print and radio reporters quickly discovered that there was a more comfortable spot from which to watch the proceedings than their stiff, straight-back seats in the steaming Convention Hall. They could do just as well sitting in overstuffed furniture, a mug of beer in hand, in the air-conditioned railroad lounge watching television receivers conveniently placed throughout the room. The lounge was a public relations gesture of the Association of American Railroads. Whether the railroads or television profited more is still a question. This was an audience that whether or not it approved of the new competition could not fail to give television a big boost.

Radio and newspapers reached far larger audiences and were able to go where television cameras failed to go. Inside the Convention Hall television did not have the resources to do much more than relay the action from the rostrum, supplemented by limited analysis from some of the correspondent personnel.

The Democratic convention also had plenty of fireworks. Minneapolis
ply. They had a Bell and Howell 70 DL silent film camera that Racies used to cover local news. Sound on film was not available until 1949, when Auricon started marketing a camera with sound capability. Burger conceived of story approaches and went along on assignments as reporter and scriptwriter. There was a premium among the staff on developing ideas for illustrating major news stories with the limited resources available. Staff members were willing to try anything within reason if it would illustrate a complex news item.

On one occasion during the period when Soviet aggression in Central Europe was rapidly changing the map of the Continent, the news staff asked for help from an innovative member of the television production staff, Rudy Bretz. Bretz, who had a reputation for being willing to take a gamble if he thought it might effectively illustrate a complicated story, had been assigned to assist from time to time in developing new approaches to the news. He suggested a novel approach: Maps of Europe, one without the Soviet-forced changes, the other reflecting the new de facto boundaries, were placed on a table covered by a black cloth. Members of the staff found a wooden arrow that could be painted white to show up on camera. Burger was then sent to Bergdorf Goodman to buy a pair of long silk ladies gloves. The plan was designed to exploit a weakness of the old orthicon studio camera, a forerunner of the more effective image-orthicon that was introduced several months later: Because it had a limited sensitivity to light the camera would only convey images that were brightly illuminated. Burger was to put on the gloves and move the arrow on cue. With its limited capability for showing dimly lighted images the camera would not be able to reproduce Burger’s hand encased in the black glove nor the black cloth on the table. It would appear that the arrow was moving under its own power. By this process Bretz hoped to produce what amounted to crude animation. The sequence, however, never got on the air. The International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW) protested that only union members could move sets and props. Arguments were futile. The gloves and arrow went into storage.

The 1947 World Series involving the New York Yankees and the Brooklyn Dodgers, a series made to order for New York television viewing, was carried in its entirety, sponsored by Gillette. Brooklyn Dodgers home games and college basketball from Madison Square Garden were sponsored by Ford, and Columbia University home football games by Knox, the Hatter.3

Also in 1948 arrangements were made to begin some networking of programs. It would not be much of a network. Signals would be able to go only to Boston, Philadelphia, Baltimore, and Washington, but it was a beginning, and it would enlarge the audience, thus reducing the cost per viewer and making the medium more attractive to advertisers.

As television expanded so did news operations. The rapid upward spiraling of viewer counts suggested that the time had come to give some
serious thought to television's basic objective in delivering a news service. Once these decisions were made it would be easier to determine the sources from which future personnel would be recruited. Since there was no existing talent pool from which to draw, it was clear that inexperienced personnel would have to be trained. The best available course would seem to be enticing restless talent from a variety of other media: newsreels, newspapers, radio, wire services, picture magazines, still picture services, or an amalgam of all.

The conclusion was gradually being drawn that television news was to be a new art form, an amalgam of existing news media, with a substantial infusion of showmanship from the stage and motion pictures. The role of the limited news staff was to mix all the ingredients in proper proportions and deliver a product that was distinctive, employing all the capabilities of the electronic medium. That was the long-range goal; in the shorter term a medium struggling even to get a start could not be very selective. It would have to look to younger recruits willing to gamble on the future.

The source of motion picture film to support its news posed another problem. There were two options, either discover an outside supplier able to serve the unique requirements of television or develop its own service. If it were to develop its own service, its IBEW contract would lead it into an inevitable union conflict. Newsreel crews were members of the International Alliance of Theatrical and Stage Employees (IATSE). CBS was tied to its IBEW contract for all its technical services, including film.

An assignment issued to the news staff's "visualizer," Chester Burger, on one spring day in 1948, illustrates the problems facing television news in its efforts to film important local stories. Burger was assigned by the assistant news director, Henry Cassirer, to accompany the cameraman, Larry Racies, on a venture in New York Harbor. They were to board a Coast Guard cutter, which would take a cadre of news personnel out into the harbor to meet the Cunard liner Queen Mary arriving from London. Their objective was to film the Duke and Duchess of Windsor arriving for a New York visit. The film story would be fitted into the news program broadcast on WCBS-TV.

It was not an easy assignment for a fledgling television news reporter. It was a scene made to order for newsreel personnel to demonstrate their contempt for the new competition and the rival union. Television cameramen belonging to IBEW were regarded as "scabs" and were sitting targets for a wide range of dirty tricks. They were accustomed to being bumped and shoved and their electrical power suddenly shut off.

The duke and duchess, affable and charming, appeared on schedule, made their little speeches, answered a few questions, and said their good-byes. Burger, meantime, discovered that an electrical plug had been pulled and the CBS camera had nothing. He caught the duke before leaving and asked for a repeat, preferably on the deck away from the newsreel crews.
The duke gracefully agreed, even though there was a rain shower in progress. And Burger had his story. The newsreel men could not have foreseen it then, but it would be only a very few years before television personnel would have the field to themselves. The newsreels would vanish under the avalanche of television.

The year 1948 marked a watershed in the history of television news. After the conclusion of the political conventions, CBS management decided that the medium had grown to the point where it could obtain advertiser support for a daily news program. It was time to assign a full-time broadcaster to what later became the anchor position. Full promotion was to be given to the effort and the program put on the market for possible sponsorship.

Douglas Edwards was selected, partly by default, as the on-air reporter. Most of the highly regarded stable of correspondents expressed no interest in the assignment. They couldn’t see television competing with radio and it was too closely related to show business to interest them. Franklin Schaffner, who had done his apprentice work in the Program department, was selected to direct the program in the studio. He stayed only a year before moving back to directing drama. Don Hewitt was recruited from Acme News Pictures to be his assistant and succeeded him on his departure. Schaffner brought professionalism, style, and quality; Hewitt, flair, energy, creativity, inventiveness, and imagination that have never been duplicated. His “60 Minutes,” created after he left the evening news, is frequently referred to as the most successful television program series ever broadcast.

Burger became one of three writers assigned to the program. Technicians with some experience with film, mostly home movies, were transferred from technical operations to edit film and, on occasion, to function as cameramen. A contract was signed with Telenews to supply film. Telenews was staffed for the most part by experienced newsreel personnel but had made one major concession to television: It used 16-mm cameras adapted to television rather than the 35-mm units used by the newsreels and delivered service daily, rather than weekly. The news stories photographed on 16 mm were easier to edit and project. Camera crews could respond to fast-breaking stories and submit film for immediate processing.

There were, however, discouraging aspects to depending on a syndicated service. The News department had to accept what was delivered. Its personnel had little impact on the product and there was little opportunity to coordinate the efforts of its reporters with Telenews crews. It could, on occasion, suggest stories for coverage but had no real control over the output. The net effect was that Telenews, even though more flexible than traditional newsreels, was more newsreel-oriented than television would have liked and, more important, less responsive to television’s specialized news requirements.

The CBS staff established two procedures to overcome the weakness: The
combination film editors-cameramen who had been transferred to News by the Technical Operations department were increasingly sent out on local assignments, usually with Burger as the reporter. Later, as the staff was enlarged, reporter contacts were trained for this function. But this only took care of the New York metropolitan area.

An effective process for developing specially tailored coverage of events out of New York was struck on almost by accident. In spring 1948 the nation was in danger of being crippled by a strike of the Brotherhood of Railway Engineers. The brotherhood's headquarters was in Cleveland and its president, A. F. Whitney, managed the strike from his office there. Whitney was obviously the key to any meaningful coverage. When his office announced that he would issue a statement regarding the union's position later the same day, Burger's news instincts were aroused. This was not the type of news Telenews could or would cover.

It was a challenge, however, to Burger, who immediately searched out a Cleveland Yellow Pages directory. In it he found listings for a number of freelance cameramen, one with sound equipment. He dialed a number and within minutes had his quarry. The freelancer was instructed to go immediately to Whitney's office, film the statement, and, when his assignment was completed, pack up his film and deliver it to the conductor of a New York Central train at Cleveland's central railroad station. There he was to hand it to the conductor with instructions to turn it over to a CBS representative who would meet him at Grand Central Station the next morning.

The Whitney episode triggered a series of experiments with freelance camera personnel scattered across the country. Burger accepted the responsibility for building a master list of available freelancers, particularly those who had invested in sound gear. Many of them proved adequate only in emergencies but the exercise unearthed some real gems: Wendell Hoffman in Lincoln, Nebraska, and Manhattan, Kansas; Fred Lawrence in Dallas; and Mario Biasetti in Boston, among others, were subsequently on regular call.

The neophyte news organization was also lucky to discover a highly imaginative graphic artist willing to take a gamble on joining the new venture. Aaron Ehrlich had, besides good taste, a willingness to gamble with Hewitt and the news staff in discovering graphic approaches to making news interesting and understandable to a growing audience.

No one discovered the magic formula for solving all the problems of television news but there was constant experimentation. Crude animation, notwithstanding the failure of the Rudy Bretz effort, was the subject of ongoing innovation. Ehrlich and Hewitt together tried various combinations using still cameras and fusing negatives and positives to create interesting superimpositions to illustrate difficult stories. Maps and charts were spread out on the floor, where cameras could achieve novel effects. After the Korean War broke out, Hewitt went to a store specializing in toy sol-
diers and bought a set, along with tanks, guns, trucks, and planes. He spread out his toy armies on the studio floor to recreate major battles. His daring and inventiveness, coupled with his fertile imagination, kept the news staff alert. No one could anticipate what implausible stunt he would try next.

Two technological developments introduced during 1949 greatly simplified production: One was the acquisition of a 16-mm sound-on-film camera. Prior to the introduction of the Auricon Pro in 1949 reporters wrote scripts to accompany silent pictures. Natural sound could be recorded by audiotape recorders, but synchronization was out of the question. The second was a device called a TelePrompTer, which projected script alongside the lens of the studio camera, enabling the broadcaster to appear to be ad libbing.

TelePrompTer didn’t add to the impact of the news, but it immeasurably improved the comfort of the broadcaster and even more so the program assistant, who was assigned to hold the heavy cue card. Entire scripts had to be printed by hand on long, narrow cardboard panels that a member of the staff held up alongside the camera lens. The person holding the cards had to be alert enough to keep the line the broadcaster was reading alongside the lens to create the illusion that the entire narration was spontaneous. He had to be muscular enough to hold the card steady and had no time to relax. There were no middle commercials at that time.

The political conventions were clearly the major television event of 1948 but there was another breakthrough. For the first time television was able to broadcast directly from Congress. One of the most compelling stories of the year featured an odd assortment of highly newsworthy characters. The principals were Alger Hiss, one of the most widely known and respected diplomats in the State Department, who was charged with having worked with Communists, and Whittaker Chambers, Time magazine editor and admitted former party member. One of the key House members on the investigating panel was a young first-term congressman from California, Richard Nixon. Cameras and microphones were able to capture the tense scenes as Chambers directly confronted Hiss under the interrogation of Congressman Nixon and his colleagues. Scenes caught on television included the famous “pumpkin papers” episode and the controversy over the typewriter that Hiss was charged with using to copy secret government documents. Television, although its geographical range was still sharply limited and its potential audience minimal, was beginning to make its mark on government and politics. In January 1949 it carried its first picture from the House chamber in the national Capitol when it covered President Harry Truman’s State of the Union address.

Most of the excitement generated by television in the late 1940s originated in the Northeast, where receivers were concentrated, but one of the most dramatic stories of the early era occurred in California. Since there
were no facilities available to carry the signal beyond the state borders, television viewing was limited to Los Angeles and San Francisco and to a lesser extent San Diego.

Californians huddled before their sets in fascination as a gripping and emotional story unfolded. Residents of the rest of the country, without access to television signals, kept up with developments through radio and newspapers.

The object of the attention was three-year-old Kathy Fiscus, who had fallen into a thirty-foot well in the backyard of her home in fashionable San Marino, a close-in suburb of Los Angeles. The date was early April 1949. News personnel were alerted to the story shortly after it began and swarms of reporters from newspapers and radio stations converged on the scene. Banks of newsreel and still cameras and radio personnel with tape recorders surrounded the eerie setting as construction workers dug to free Kathy from her dank and narrow prison. The whole nation followed the story with rapt attention. It was an event that had all the elements calculated to grip the public: a child in desperate straits, suspense, frantic rescue efforts, grieving parents, sympathetic neighbors—and reporters with voracious appetites for any morsels of information that might be available.

Newspapers ran banner headlines. Radio broadcast blow by blow reports of progress of rescue crews digging frantically to reach Kathy at the bottom of the well. The little girl was the primary topic of conversation across the country. Wire services, national newspapers, and newsmagazines all covered the event.

An enterprising Los Angeles television pioneer who had a strong engineering background immediately recognized that the plight of the San Marino child was made to order for the infant television medium. Klaus Landsburg, general manager of station KTLA, was not only an aggressive manager, but a person knowledgeable enough about technology to push his equipment to undertake ventures that other managers would never consider. He had built a reputation for discovering innovative ways to use the still relatively primitive equipment available. And he was willing to experiment.

When he was first told of the Fiscus case Landsburg immediately dispatched a mobile unit to the scene. Getting the signal from San Marino to studios in Los Angeles was a problem that discouraged other broadcasters, but Landsburg had an idea. He had designed a device that could transport a signal from the site of the action to a receiving antenna that would in turn transport it to his transmitter. Remote broadcasts with similar devices soon were commonplace, but in 1949 they were a radical innovation. The required equipment was packed into a mobile unit and quickly dispatched to San Marino.

The Landsburg scheme worked and Angelenos sat before their ten- and twelve-inch screens transfixed as the tedious rescue efforts went on. The
remainder of the country, though, was outside the signal range. Long-line transmission facilities could carry the program only as far as San Francisco.

KTLA remained on the scene for days while workmen struggled vainly to reach the child. The station furnished what amounted to a play by play account and the public remained transfixed until workmen finally recovered the body. Landsburg's efforts foreshadowed what might happen when the entire country would be interconnected by television. Eastern and midwestern viewers had followed baseball, football, the political conventions, and debates at the United Nations Security Council but no event matching the human drama of the Kathy Fiscus story.

Television had matured sufficiently by late 1949 that CBS was ready to invite its ragamuffin television group into the family. It had been a more or less free-floating function with only slender ties to the prosperous and bustling radio network. In late 1949 a reorganization within the CBS corporate structure gave it status roughly parallel with radio on organization charts. A television program director would report to a corporate vice president for programs, a television sales director to a corporate vice president for sales, and a television director of technical operations to a senior corporate executive responsible for both media.

News departments of the two were combined into a single unit under a director of news, who, in turn, would report to the vice president for programs. Public affairs production units, including discussion and religious programs, documentaries, talks, and sports, were lumped together under a public affairs director, who also reported to the corporate vice president for programs. There was a bit of eyebrow lifting at this latter step; news and public affairs had previously reported through its own vice president directly to the president and chairman of the corporation, a structure created when Edward R. Murrow was brought back from the London bureau to become a corporate officer. His successor, Davidson Taylor, resigned rather than accept the decision, leaving news and public affairs in disarray as the decade of the fifties opened.
By January 1, 1950, television had outgrown its infancy but was hardly a robust adult. The Federal Communications Commission's suspension of the process of granting station licenses was still in effect, freezing the number of stations on the air at 108. The American Telephone & Telegraph Company was still extending its coaxial cables and microwave relays out into the country, but progress seemed excruciatingly slow to potential viewers beyond the range of the existing cable. Network signals could still not be seen south of Richmond or west of Chicago. Television was, however, poised for a dramatic surge. It had built a large enough audience base in its limited geographical area to attract advertisers. It had experimented with viewer responses to program formats and stars. It had begun to establish patterns for program production, no small feat in a new medium that had to create its own methods and formats and to build the facilities in which to produce them. It had recruited and organized staffs to accommodate a growing program schedule. But mainly it had caught the public's attention. And the public was interested. Milton Berle, who started his “Texaco Star Theater” in September 1948, had become a national icon, capturing 70 to 80 percent of all available viewers on Tuesday nights at eight o'clock in those communities with network service. One of his programs recorded a Hooper (the dominant audience measurement system in use at the time) rating of an astronomical
80.7. This meant that more than four of every five homes with television receivers in interconnected areas watched his program.2

Worthington Miner's "Studio One" was giving high-quality drama to CBS viewers on a weekly basis. Arthur Godfrey, capitalizing on the enormous popularity of his daytime radio program, had both his "Talent Scouts" and "Arthur Godfrey and His Friends" on television in evening time. Ed Sullivan's "Toast of the Town" was a Sunday night fixture and plans were well advanced to introduce "Your Show of Shows" with Imogene Coca and Sid Caesar to Saturday night audiences on NBC. They were to be followed by Dean Martin and Jerry Lewis. In a little more than a year Desilu Productions would introduce "I Love Lucy" on CBS.

The portion of the public in interconnected markets had gotten a taste of big time sports through watching the World Series and a Joe Louis–Billy Conn heavyweight fight. They had sat in on sessions of the United Nations Security Council during the early stages of the Cold War. Douglas Edwards on CBS and John Cameron Swayze on NBC had had more than a year to polish their weeknight news broadcasts. Both were already building substantial audiences. In the 1950–51 season more than 45 percent of those with televisions were regular viewers.3

CBS opened the year with a news extravaganza. It brought together eight of its famed staff of correspondents in New York on the night of January 1 for a one hour discussion program, "The Challenge of the Fifties—Years of Crisis." Five were from foreign posts, London, Paris, Berlin, Rome and Tokyo; one from Washington; and one from the United Nations. The moderator was the star of the staff, Edward R. Murrow, and calling the shots in the control room was Don Hewitt, director of the Edwards news program. This was the first exposure on television for a number of the correspondents, many of whom had serious reservations about the relationship of television and news. To some of them the picture tube tarnished the image of the reporter.

Steered by Murrow, who had achieved fame as a reporter in London during the war, the discussion was concerned almost entirely with international affairs. This preoccupation with overseas developments for some years diluted efforts at CBS to achieve similar dominance for its domestic news product. Significantly, Douglas Edwards, the only CBS News staff member appearing regularly on television, was nowhere to be seen.

Obtaining film support for news programs continued to perplex CBS News leadership. There was general agreement that television could not be content with talking heads. Since the medium was capable of projecting pictorial representations of people and events with full sound and motion, it seemed a waste of a valuable resource not to exploit its capabilities. Its aim was to discover how it could best obtain high-quality, full-motion pictorial representations of major news events with natural sound. Telenews, it was agreed, was not the answer. It was adequate, but barely, in covering
events for which it had ample warning for setup time, but there was little opportunity for coordination with the assignment desk. The stringer system set up by Chet Burger could perform adequately in special circumstances, but it was cumbersome and only a handful of the correspondents on Burger’s list were professionally capable and possessed the creative skills required to create a genuinely new service. Notwithstanding these deficiencies, CBS continued to build an audience. Oldsmobile appeared satisfied with the results.

An experiment had been undertaken in late 1949 to buttress foreign coverage and draw the CBS correspondents more fully into the television spectrum. Sixteen-millimeter Bell and Howell silent cameras were sent to each of the bureaus with instructions as to how bureau chiefs might supplement their regular voice coverage with motion picture film. The plan was doomed to failure. The correspondents were amateurs at best and resented being requested to perform what they regarded as a mechanical function. Since the cameras had no capability for recording sound, they were useless in interviews and coverage of events in which sound was of critical importance. Some film pieces, however, shot not by the correspondents but by freelance crews, were delivered to New York headquarters and went on the air. The 1949 CBS Annual Report for 1950 boasts, “Such film-tape reports prepared by CBS correspondents have been shown several times on CBS-TV programs.”

The author of the paragraph was more enthusiastic about the plan than the staff of the Edwards program or of Howard K. Smith, the London bureau chief, who wrote to Murrow of his distaste for the whole idea “I frankly think it is about the goddamdest idea I ever heard of. It’s about as absurd as asking a surgeon to fill a few of his victim’s teeth after an appendectomy—medicine and dentistry being about the same thing.”

News programming suffered from another crippling problem. Production personnel were using what is called “reversal” film with optical sound. Reversal film eliminates the processing of a negative. The exposed film goes directly from camera to processor to editing bench for cutting. Since there is no negative, the use of reversal is practical only when there is no need for multiple prints. The sound was “optical.” The sound recording mechanism in the camera made perforations alongside the exposed film. The perforations were converted into sound when played back on a projector. It was a relatively simple system, quick to process, easy to edit, and relatively inexpensive, but it delivered sound quality that the news staff regarded as atrocious. Hewitt and his colleagues insisted that the sound was even worse than the grainy and indistinct pictures that they got from the Auricon cameras. In fact, it made the pictures seem even worse than they were. Hewitt’s staff were sure that the ultimate hope for their television news programs would be for CBS to create its own professional news film service and promote the production of a high-quality 16-mm camera.
A relatively uneventful spring and summer of 1950 suddenly exploded into a flurry of activity on the morning of Sunday, June 25. Shocking information came through the wire services that North Korean military forces had burst through South Korean defense lines and were moving almost unchecked on Seoul, the South Korean capital. Since many American troops were stationed in South Korea the United States was involved. CBS had at year's end, over strong protests from its correspondents, closed its Far East bureau. As a consequence it had no full-time staff member anywhere near the scene of the action. Telenews had established a film bureau in Tokyo and was in a position to deliver some motion picture coverage once enough order could be restored in South Korea to move personnel to the scene, but it was unclear on June 25 and for several days thereafter when that might be.

Delivering film to New York from Korean battle lines, once it was available, would be a complicated and time-consuming operation. The camera team, after fighting the military bureaucracy to get permission to photograph meaningful scenes of action, would have to scout up transportation to get exposed film to Japan. It would then have to be transshipped to the West Coast of the United States by conventional propeller-driven aircraft. Commercial jets were still some years in the future, as were long-range aircraft capable of crossing the Pacific without refueling either in the Aleutians or in Hawaii. Once film arrived at Seattle or San Francisco, another transshipment would be required for crossing the United States, necessitating another fuel stop. Rarely could a film story from the Korean battle front find its way to the air in less than ninety-six hours. The news staff, however, made an interesting discovery. A ninety-six-hour-late film story had just about as much impact as a much more recent one, if it provided pictorial coverage that had not previously been seen by viewers.

The CBS News department quickly began to assign stringers and move staffers to the scene. By late July the star of the staff, Edward R. Murrow, was on his way for a look at the combat zone. In an effort to buttress the news staff to meet the new war challenge, Ed Chester, the news director, sought to hire a veteran war correspondent who was in Washington operating a syndicated radio news service for a number of midwestern radio stations. Walter Cronkite had compiled a distinguished record as a war reporter. He had covered the Eighth U.S. Air Force for the United Press, had landed with American troops on a glider to cover the ill-fated Arnhem-Nijmegan campaign in Holland, and had flown on several bombing missions over Germany. Murrow had at one time tried to recruit him to join the CBS London staff. After the war he served as United Press's (UP's) correspondent covering the Nuremberg war crimes trials and as bureau chief, first in Amsterdam and then in Moscow.

Cronkite accepted the CBS offer and was prepared to take off for Korea at short notice but he never went. His wife, Betsy Cronkite, was momen-
tarily expecting the birth of a second child, and CBS found an alternative solution to the Korea problem. That left him with a CBS contract but without an assignment. An assignment appeared quickly. Cronkite started a ten-minute daily network radio news program. At this time CBS's Washington radio outlet was its wholly owned WTOP. Its television affiliate was station WOIC, owned by the Bamberger Broadcasting Corporation, a subsidiary of the Bamberger department stores. Eager to get into television, the Washington Post arranged to buy WOIC from Bamberger and traded 45 percent to CBS in return for a 55 percent interest in WTOP radio. It then renamed WOIC, WTOP-TV. The new majority owners contracted with CBS to deliver a full local news service: both radio and television.

One of the first objectives of the new ownership was to deliver a television news service. The Washington Post could hardly fail to broadcast at least one local television news program from its new facilities. In early autumn Cronkite became WTOP-TV's first news broadcaster.

Facilities and raw materials were in short supply. Cronkite set about producing a show his way. He hired a recent college graduate, Neal Strawser; arranged to have a still picture service supplemented by maps and charts delivered to his office; used what Telenews product was available; and proceeded, with Strawser's aid, to deliver what amounted to a military briefing every weeknight at eleven o'clock. Since the conflict in Korea dominated the day's events, Cronkite could afford to spend the bulk of his time on war news. Maps, charts, and stills selected by Cronkite and Strawser were installed on blackboards and easels. Walter confidently played the role of the briefing officer, moving about the room from chart to chart or map to map, ad libbing as he went, a process that seemed natural to him but was anathema to news directors and station managers, who trust only scripts. The Washington audience liked what they saw. If there were errors they were minimal and ratings soared. Cronkite became an overnight star.

My own role at this time was director of public affairs at network headquarters in New York, an assignment embracing discussion and talk shows, documentaries, education, religion, and sports, but no hard news. In this role even though I had no direct connection with news I traveled to Washington frequently and when there made it a point to watch the eleven o'clock news on WTOP. Since Cronkite and I had been friends before the war it was easy to renew our acquaintance and to see him from time to time both at the office and in a social setting. His easy competence on the air, the strength of his personality, and his ability to explain complex events simply and interestingly convinced me that when we needed a strong personality with finely honed news sense, widely varied experience, and a capacity to ad lib coupled with an intense desire for perfection, Cronkite would be a very likely candidate. That time would come, and relatively soon.

Murrow's trip to Korea, reported solely on radio, added a dimension to
to rethink its structural organization. During the early experimental period television had been treated as an orphan with separate quarters and little contact with the company's main focuses, radio broadcasting and phonograph records. Effective January 1, 1950, it had been merged with radio in corporate organization charts creating what was, in effect, a broadcasting division. By early 1951 it had become clear that radio and television were not really complementary; they were competitive and could progress more effectively if left to fight their own battles independently. Plans were shortly under way to split the two into separate and competitive autonomous divisions, each with its own executive officers reporting to the corporate president and chairman. By mid-July the structural reorganization was announced. News and public affairs, which had been so laboriously sliced into separate units in January 1950 with each having responsibilities in both radio and television, were now to be shuffled again, this time to what appeared to be a more orderly arrangement. Radio public affairs would join radio news in a single department. Television news would be spliced together with television public affairs. A director of radio news and public affairs would report to a radio division vice president for programs and a television director of news and public affairs to a vice president for television programs.

Ed Chester was appointed to head the radio department and I was given command of the television side. Chester's assignment was clearly the more important, but the rate at which television was growing suggested that it wouldn't be many years before it would catch or even surpass the older medium. The reorganization was announced in mid-July and took effect immediately. With events throughout the world moving so rapidly there was no time for contemplation and long-range planning. Action was required immediately on a number of fronts.
Driving Television's Golden Spike

Almost from its earliest days television recognized that it would not be fully competitive with other national media until it spanned the continent. It needed access to the major population centers of the West Coast to create a truly national audience, and it needed to be able to tap the vast show business resources of the Los Angeles area if it ever hoped to build a full program service.

Its enthusiasm for spanning the continent and establishing a direct link between east and west was not a new phenomenon in American history. The urge to move the frontiers west had begun well before the Revolutionary War. Even before President Thomas Jefferson had completed the Louisiana Purchase in 1803 he had arranged to send Captains Meriwether Lewis and William Clark on an expedition to explore routes to the Pacific coast. Wagon trains, the famed Pony Express, and packet ships sailing around the tip of South America constituted the only means of contact between coasts until 1869. In that year the first transportation link tying east and west into a single geographic unit was sealed with the driving of the Golden Spike on Promontory Point extending into the Great Salt Lake in Utah. The joining of the Central Pacific and Union Pacific railroads made rail service between the coasts a reality.

Television desperately needed a comparable Golden Spike to continue its accelerating expansion and permit unimpeded program flow across the na-
microwave towers across the high plains and the Rocky Mountains. In midsummer the work was close enough to completion that formal opening of the service had been scheduled for approximately October 1, four weeks too late for the event, but company officials were wary about putting it into use without adequate testing. State, however, made a persuasive case for opening the facility on a temporary basis and company officials finally yielded. After adjournment it would be shut down until the start of commercial service approximately a month later.

State Department officials jubilantly informed the networks of their coup. Within hours the chief news executives of the four television networks met to begin planning. ABC was represented by News Director Thomas Velotta, DuMont by Special Events Director Tom Gallery, and NBC by Director of News and Public Affairs Davidson Taylor; I, as Director of News and Public Affairs, represented CBS Television. The decision to proceed with coverage of the entire conference was unanimous and fully supported by senior management.

Since there would be sufficient bandwidth for only one television channel the networks would have to pool their coverage. The pool would assume responsibility for organizing facilities and producing the broadcast. It was the committee’s function to decide which network would be assigned the responsibility for producing the pool signal. Drawing straws seemed the fairest method for making the choice.

Gallery of DuMont drew the short straw but quickly admitted that his network lacked the resources and personnel to undertake a project of this magnitude. He recommended that since DuMont and CBS shared affiliation in San Francisco with station KPIX and since the support of a local affiliate was essential CBS be assigned the responsibility. There was no dissension so as the meeting broke up I had assumed responsibility for producing television’s first megaevent, which would make television, still in its infancy, a truly national institution.

Since this would be a CBS production, it was my responsibility to choose the person to serve as what would later come to be called “anchorman.” I had no doubts whom I would choose. Several months earlier I had earmarked Walter Cronkite for just such an assignment. He did not have a national reputation; in fact, he had never been seen on the screen outside Washington, but he had a quality that seemed to be ideally suited for the assignment. He was warm and friendly and had the unusual knack of being able to communicate with his viewers. Above all he was knowledgeable, articulate, a skilled ad libber, and, I was sure, would fully prepare himself for the assignment. Freeing him up from his Washington assignment, however, was not likely to be easy. The general manager of station WTOP-TV was reluctant to release his newly discovered star from the 11:00 P.M. news assignment. It took some persuasion but he finally relented. Cronkite immediately began familiarizing himself with the issues and the personnel on
The television control room in a box in the San Francisco Opera House as the switch is opened to send the first television signal to cross the continent on September 4, 1951. Photo courtesy of Sig Mickelson. Used by permission.

Leonard Mosley, in his biography of the Dulles family, makes an even more direct reference to possible Soviet sabotage of the conference: "A last attempt was made by the Russians to wreck it," he wrote, "but it was overcome by the skillful maneuvering of Dean Acheson."
The ceremony, which was a milestone in the nation's history, was watched by millions of viewers, including those abroad. The event, which had been planned for weeks, was carried to the ends of the earth by television's microwave transmissions. The American public had been tuned in to the program for weeks, and the day of the ceremony was filled with excitement and anticipation.

President Kennedy, who had flown to Porto-Pio, sat in the of the audience, as a man in front of him observed the scene with a briefcase. As everyone in the audience turned to look, he rose from his seat and turned to his right, as a man in the front row stood up. Suddenly, a man in a dark suit stood up, and everyone in the audience turned to look at him. He was the man whom they had been waiting for all day long. The room went silent, and a hush fell over the audience. Everyone was eagerly awaiting the word that would change their lives forever.

The man in the dark suit turned to the audience and said, "Ladies and gentlemen, I have a message for you. It is a message that will change the world. It is a message of hope, of peace, and of unity. It is a message that will bring us together as one nation, indivisible, under God."

The audience erupted in applause, and the man in the dark suit continued, "I am pleased to announce that the United States of America has just signed an agreement with the Soviet Union, which will bring an end to the Cold War. This agreement will be signed by the leaders of both nations, and it will be witnessed by the world."

The man in the dark suit turned to the audience again and said, "This is a historic moment, and I am proud to be a part of it. I am proud to be a citizen of the United States of America."

The audience erupted in loud applause, and the man in the dark suit stood up, as the word of the agreement spread throughout the audience. Everyone was filled with a sense of hope and excitement, as they realized that this moment would change the world forever.
A New Species of Documentary: The Birth of “See It Now”

Anything other than regular news broadcasts and live coverage of significant public events including sports was beyond the reach of early television news personnel. They simply did not have the manpower or facilities to undertake documentary programs or those requiring superior camera and editing equipment. Nor was there financial support. The exception was regular news, but even there financial support was meager, sufficient to maintain a competitive position, but hardly lavish.

It was assumed that television would eventually produce some kind of long-form news-related programming at least remotely related to film and radio documentaries. But as 1950 opened that day seemed remote. There were too many obstacles, among them the lack of ideas and the range of personnel to execute them.

CBS among the networks had compiled the most conspicuous record for programming radio documentaries. On the evening of VE Day the network had broadcast Norman Corwin’s widely acclaimed “On a Note of Triumph.” A year later CBS, with a flurry of publicity that blanketed the nation, scheduled the first of a series of socially oriented, hard-hitting documentaries that commanded widespread attention. A sixty-minute program, “The Eagle’s Brood,” dealing with the widespread concern with juvenile delinquency, was backed by an intense nationwide promotional campaign. The campaign utilized the well-honed skills of the highly regarded CBS Promotion and Advertising department. The program’s pro-
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elicited rave reviews from media critics. Friendly had also, I pointed out, worked with Ed Murrow on the record album I Can Hear It Now. With no hesitation, Paley said, “Go get him.” I returned to my office; placed a call for Friendly, whom I had never met; and arranged to dine with him the next night at the Chinese Rathskeller on West Fifty-second Street. Murrow at this time was in Korea.

Friendly’s response to coming to CBS on a contract basis was favorable, even enthusiastic. He was quite willing to work on radio documentaries. His long-range goal, however, he said, was to produce a “Life Magazine of the Air.” That, I explained, was a bit premature. We still lacked the audience base, the financial resources, and the technology to undertake anything as costly and complicated as a filmed newsmagazine. We would certainly encourage him, though, to think along those lines and prepare to move when the time was right. We sealed our agreement with a drink at the old Ritz Hotel bar within less than an hour of the time it was closed forever. Demolition crews would be there in the morning.

By late September negotiations had been completed and contracts signed. Almost immediately Friendly began to assemble staff to begin production of a one-hour weekly radio news program featuring Murrow. It was not to be a documentary but rather a long-form treatment of the news. Scheduled for late fall, it would be called “Hear It Now.” Although it was not exactly what I had proposed to Paley and Stanton it promised to bring some excitement to the radio network and perhaps eventually lead to a breakthrough in television.

Friendly worked intensively on the radio program through a six-month run, December through May, and continued to plan mentally for a “Life Magazine of the Air.” He had begun to steep himself in film techniques. He spent hours at the Museum of Modern Art studying documentaries in the museum’s film archive. He familiarized himself with each of the old-line newsreels and sought out experienced film documentarians to study their attitudes and techniques. He analyzed the operating methods of the newsreels and acquainted himself with their personnel. And he thoroughly checked out the technical equipment they were using.

By the end of the run of “Hear It Now” he was ready to move full bore into preparations for the fall start of a half hour television program that would bear some similarity to the radio series he had just completed. Full management support enabled him to proceed to employ personnel and contract for services. It was assumed from the start that Ed Murrow would be a part of the package as he had in “Hear It Now.”

The project Friendly had in mind had no counterpart in film, radio, or print. If he started by thinking in terms of a Life magazine of the air, he soon found that route static compared to what he might be able to accomplish if he could discover a process for harnessing the full potential of television. Dealing with both sound and motion would give him new di-
dimensions and new opportunities that were not available to the static photographs of Life. He began thinking of a new art form that would borrow from print, sound broadcasting, film, and live television blended in a way that was unprecedented. Film documentaries normally took weeks or months to produce; Friendly's intention was to produce one program each week. Such an ambitious schedule would impose unprecedented pressures on whatever staff he might build. Newsreels were able to maintain a weekly schedule, but their total running time was limited to ten minutes and there was relatively little synchronous sound except excerpts from speeches. Friendly planned something much more ambitious. Running time would be a half hour. In a sense it would be more closely related to radio than to film. Exploiting the inherent flexibility of television, he hoped, might enable him to produce a program of substance that did not need months of preparation.

What Friendly had in mind was not a documentary in the sense that "The River" and "The Plow That Broke the Plains," the two Depression-era classics produced by the WPA film project, were documentaries. He envisioned a project that was more closely related to a newsmagazine in content and a radio news roundup in form, enhanced by motion picture film.

One of the factors inhibiting freedom to produce a high-quality product at CBS was the network's exclusive contract with the International Brotherhood of Electrical Engineers (IBEW) for both live and recorded programming. IBEW personnel were experienced in operating the electronic equipment associated with broadcasting but few had any acquaintance with film. And what limited film equipment the television network owned at this stage was designed for 16-mm production. Friendly was convinced that the program he wanted to produce would have to be done in 35 mm because of its vastly superior quality. The upshot was that the program that he envisioned could not be done "in house."

The only alternative was contracting with an outside organization. There would be no shortage of companies interested in bidding on the project but most would want to deliver a finished product, not turn over facilities and personnel to the buyer. Friendly wanted full control. It was his intention to use a subcontractor's personnel and equipment under his direction. He intended to be the producer in fact as well as name. Fortunately for him, the newsreels were beginning to feel the pinch of television; the Hearst Metrotone News/MGM News of the Day combination was ready to start cutting back. It was willing to turn over, on a contract basis, camera teams, photographic equipment, and full production facilities. Its employees would, for a fee, be available to serve exclusively under the direction of Friendly and Murrow, thus bypassing the CBS contract with IBEW and eliminating the necessity of a major investment in equipment. Camera
teams for the project would be included in the contract, but the project would still need reporters and a European cameraman/producer.

Friendly discovered that a very able young Pathé film reporter based in Paris was temporarily in New York and might be willing to switch to his team. After one meeting with Friendly and Murrow, Bill McClure signed on and went immediately to Pathé to submit his resignation. An able freelancer, Palmer Williams, showed up looking for an assignment and quickly became Friendly’s operations manager and general executive.1 Long after Friendly had left CBS and Don Hewitt had begun producing “60 Minutes” Palmer Williams was still on the CBS payroll and serving as Hewitt’s second in command and senior producer. The remainder of the staff quickly fell into place, including two superior reporters, Joe Wershba and Eddie Scott. Both were graduates of “CBS Views the Press,” a highly regarded press critique program that had run on WCBS in New York. A full team was quickly rounded out, cutting rooms and projection facilities leased, and Don Hewitt selected as director. After some prolonged discussions “See It Now” was selected as the program’s title.

Friendly then introduced two innovations that deviated dramatically from normal newsreel practice. He wanted the high quality that he could get from separate sound and picture tracks but would not have time for the tedious process involved in matching the tracks and fusing them into a single film. By checking with engineer friends he discovered that it might be possible, by gambling with an untried process, to eliminate the time consumed by fusing the two tracks. He found that with luck he could project them separately and synchronize them as they were going on the air rather than matching them in the cutting room before show time.

The second innovation was equally radical. He wondered why, since he was producing a film program, he had to use a studio. Why not put Murrow in the control room along with the director and the full control room crew? Cameras could be positioned in the rather cramped space to focus on the narrator with the program showing on the monitor behind him. Fitting Murrow and the cameras into the control room was a tight squeeze but worth trying both for novelty value and saving of time. A three-minute test was run and the offbeat approach was successful. Again television had broken ground and created new processes.

One critical element remained to be solved. The program would be costly and revenues in the autumn of 1951 were still minimal. Fortune smiled on them again: The Aluminum Company of America (Alcoa) had been having trouble with the federal government. Its reputation had been damaged by an antitrust suit and it needed some bold stroke to win public goodwill. It may not have anticipated just how controversial “See It Now” would become, but for the time it was willing to concentrate on the commercials and leave program content to the production staff. It signed on as sponsor.
Friendly now had his staff, his 35-mm production unit, his system for synchronizing sound and picture on air, and his novel control room setting for Murrow's narration. The Alcoa order gave him a sponsor but he still had a surprise left for the opening program. At 3:30 P.M. Sunday, November 18, 1951, viewers were shown something that would have been unthinkable as recently as the beginning of September. "See It Now" used a split screen to show simultaneously live pictures of both the Pacific and Atlantic oceans. It was not a difficult feat with the technology that had recently become available but it took someone with the imagination of Fred Friendly to use it so skillfully to attract public attention. It was the feature that caught the headlines and started people talking.

"See It Now" was a hit from the first program. Critics hailed it as a demonstration of what television could do when it used imagination and editorial judgment. It was the first successful effort of television to produce a long-form news-related program that was pure television, not a feeble copy of techniques used in either radio or newsreels, though it borrowed from both.

The Business Affairs department at CBS Television, though, was somewhat less enthusiastic than the critics. The program consistently ran over budget, not marginally but grossly. Budget control personnel came to me as the executive under whose jurisdiction the program fell, insisting that I take whatever steps were required to get the costs under control. A meeting of the principals seemed to offer the most effective process for bringing the controversy out into the open and searching for a solution. Accordingly I distributed a memo to Murrow and Friendly and to the appropriate representatives of the Business Affairs office asking that we meet as soon as possible to discuss the matter.

For several days I heard nothing from Murrow or Friendly. Then after approximately a week had elapsed a senior executive of the television network told me that Murrow had taken my memo to the chairman of the board. He told the chairman, according to my informant, that he was not going to be badgered by money counters. He and Friendly would take care of the production of the program and the financial affairs people should stay out of the way.

This was mid-February. The primary election campaign was heating up in New Hampshire. Preparations for the political conventions in July were commanding my full attention. And the fledgling news department was still sorely understaffed and needed time and attention. I decided that Murrow and Friendly were quite competent to manage "See It Now" without my participation. I could use my time more effectively if I concentrated on the areas that desperately needed attention. From that point on CBS possessed, in effect, three news departments: one for radio, one for television, and "See It Now." Friendly and I talked frequently. He and Murrow generally
kept me informed of their plans but I made no effort to exercise any authority over them; nor would I have been likely to succeed had I tried.

The program quickly picked up momentum. It was moved from its Sunday afternoon position to Tuesday night at 10:30 and Alcoa stayed with it even though it became more controversial almost by the week. With its success television news had carved out a beachhead in production of long-form news-related programming. It had from its beginnings struggled with the complex problems of delivering a regular news service and was making notable progress. It had also dispatched its electronic cameras and mobile units outside the studio to permit viewers to participate vicariously in congressional hearings, political conventions, and major sports events. Now it had added a third string to its bow, extended news with a documentary twist. And it had done so with astonishing success.
Breaking Ground

While "See It Now" was developing a new documentary form and launching it to applause by the critics, the Television News department was moving ahead vigorously on its own. It had broken free of radio in midsummer 1951, but it still had only limited resources. Most of its personnel, including on the air performers, were still carried on the CBS Radio payroll. Administratively, however, it was now free of radio control and reported to the television Network Program department. In a sense it was back in the same independent position it had occupied in the late 1940s, but it was now part of an aggressive television network, not a lightly regarded experimental unit.

For the first eighteen months of the 1950s TV news had been almost an orphan. The network's acclaimed Radio News department got the major share of both attention and resources. Television was regarded as a secondary nuisance, hardly a primary service. It was not much larger as it began operating under the aegis of a full-fledged television division in July 1951, but it attracted more attention from senior management and with it more flexibility to experiment with new techniques and methods. Resources were still limited but there were signs that as the television network grew and began to deliver a profit, support for news would increase. At the very least it would be in an improved position to gamble with techniques exclusive to television.

One early goal of the news unit was to become fully independent of radio.
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network was stronger economically and playing to an audience three or four times as large as that only eighteen months earlier. Advertising support was growing rapidly.

The staff charged with creating a news product in this rapidly changing environment was not greatly enlarged. One notable change was the addition of a recent Columbia University graduate who had worked in the CBS newsroom during his final year in college. Phil Scheffler began to go out with camera crews from the limited CBS news staff to cover important stories in the New York metropolitan area. Not satisfied to be a "contact" man, he was determined to be a reporter. And television, competing with newspapers and radio, needed stories to be reported, not just filmed. Scheffler added the reporting component to the film function and with it gave new depth to the news report.

Innovation and imagination were watchwords in the newsroom. During the 1952 nationwide steel strike President Truman seized the nation's steel plants to ensure that they would keep turning out raw material for military hardware needed to prosecute the Korean War. During a tense period of negotiations the president of the Steel Workers Union, Philip Murray, called a press conference in his headquarters hotel, the Commodore, in midtown Manhattan. Following normal procedure, the newsreels would set up their cameras and sound recording equipment in a room in the hotel, then wait for the union president to appear.

Hewitt and Scheffler were not satisfied with this passive approach. They wanted more than a run of the mill press conference. Their goal was a personalized news story that would feature Murray's statement but would not be duplicated by every other news service. In order to deliver the coverage they wanted they had to improvise on equipment. Their 16-mm units were more portable than the 35-mm cameras used by the newsreels but were still heavy and awkward to move and required a nearby power source. Their objective was to be able to move freely with a complete sound-on-film unit and a power source.

One possible alternative to the power requirement was to use a large high-capacity automobile battery, but such batteries are not light and portable. The problem was solved by transporting the battery on a two-wheeled luggage cart. Another cart was borrowed to transport the sound recording hardware. The cameraman would carry his own camera. With the equipment problem solved a four-man crew; cameraman, sound man, reporter contact, and porter; set out for the Commodore. They did not, however, go directly to the room selected for the press conference. They went instead to the union president's suite. Their plan was to interview Murray before he went to the formal press conference. Their ingenuity paid off. They got their interview, a much less formal one than they would have had at the press conference, and with much more newsworthy information.

When Murray terminated the interview to meet his schedule at the press
and homemade high-speed film processors, were constantly being proposed and many implemented. Optical sound was discarded in favor of a full conversion to magnetic stripe. Closer relationships were cultivated with European television broadcasters against the day when satellite transmissions would allow simultaneous coverage of major events on the other side of the Atlantic. And experiments were undertaken to develop expertise in the editing of videotape, which would eventually if not supplant motion picture film, at least supplement it.
Blacklisting and the Exploitation of rear Television news during most of the late 1940s was still too insignificant a target to attract the attention of a growing band of superpatriots who were firing salvos of outrage at a broad range of available targets. They directed their fire at government officials, freelance writers, and stage and motion picture actors and actresses. They normally accused targets with being "soft on communism" or "outright fellow travelers."

Before mid-1949 television simply was not important enough to attract anything but peripheral attention; by then, however, the number of homes equipped with receivers had grown to the point where it was too tempting a target to be overlooked. Accordingly the zealots broadened their scope to include television.

A trio of former FBI agents had discovered by 1947 that there could be a lucrative market for a newsletter that identified writers and performers in Hollywood or on Broadway as Communist sympathizers or former party members. They formed a publishing company, incorporated under the name American Business Consultants, and set out to publish a newsletter, Counterattack, the Newsletter of Facts on Communism. As soon as it began to attract widespread attention, television offered a fertile area for exploitation. As it enlarged its entertainment program schedules it recruited on a "run of show" basis a broad array of freelance producers, directors, writers, actors, and actresses, many of whom were politically liberally inclined. Television companies were more vulnerable
John P. Cowden, longtime senior CBS executive in Sales Promotion, Advertising, and Public Relations, described to me the reason he was given for discontinuing contracting with the artist Ben Shahn to produce art for CBS promotion and advertising: "We think it would be better," he was told, "if you did not use him as an artist and identified with anything at CBS. There may be vestigial influences that creep into his renderings."
The fuel that propelled television news to an astonishing period of growth in the early 1950s was politics. The spark that ignited the fuel was coverage of the political conventions of 1952 and the election that followed. It was not only television that changed dramatically; the entire national political structure began an equally climactic transformation.

Television had been on the scene for the 1948 conventions, but that was only a warm-up, a trial run for the big game four years later. In 1948 there were 400,000 television receivers in the entire United States, in July 1952 approximately 18 million. In 1948 network lines extended as far south as Washington, D.C.; in 1952 they went all the way to Miami. In 1948 the westernmost terminus was Pittsburgh; in 1952, the Pacific Ocean.

Across the wide expanse from Pittsburgh to San Francisco, coaxial cables and microwave relays enabled television signals to reach vast areas that were dark in 1948. Live service was now available across the Gulf states to Texas, down the Mississippi and Missouri valleys to the Gulf, and through the Rocky Mountains to the mountain states and Pacific coast. Additional broadcasting stations, however, were few in number because the FCC freeze on granting licenses had not been lifted until the spring of 1952. One new licensee, though, was so eager to get on the air to cover the conventions in July that he, Hugh Terry at KLZ-TV in Denver, rigged up temporary facilities to let viewers see for themselves the big show in Chicago.
The author being interviewed by Mike Wallace and Buff Cobb in June 1952 regarding CBS coverage plans for the 1952 political conventions in Chicago. Photo courtesy of Sig Mickelson. Used by permission.
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Even though it was apparently difficult for committee members to realize fully the role television would play, Schroeder's talk gave them a surprising array of data. What they did not fully understand is that television would, over time, radically transform the whole election process and turn the national convention from a decision-making business meeting into a giant party rally and pageant created primarily for the camera tube.

Two puzzling problems had to be solved by members of the television network pool. One stemmed from the inadequacy of the AT&T transmission circuits to serve all sections of the country equally. There, for example, was still only one circuit capable of carrying a television signal west from Omaha to the Pacific. This meant that only one program at a time could break through the Omaha bottleneck and proceed to the half of the landmass of the United States that lay west of the Missouri River. Similarly Louisiana, Texas, Oklahoma, and Kansas could only be reached by a single circuit that went down the Mississippi from St. Louis to New Orleans, turned west there to Houston, and from Houston northward to Austin, San Antonio, Dallas/Fort Worth, and cities in Kansas and Oklahoma. Atlanta was a terminus for the three southbound circuits leaving Florida, Alabama, and Mississippi with only one signal.

NBC's early aggressiveness in tying up primary affiliations in large markets posed another problem that was compounded by the FCC freeze on licensing. If it fully exercised its rights to priority program acceptance ABC and CBS would be shut out of such large markets as Buffalo, Indianapolis, St. Louis, Milwaukee, and Grand Rapids/Kalamazoo. NBC held the primary affiliations in each. It was obvious that the playing field was not level, but was there a solution?

A pool meeting grappled with the problem. An equitable division of the telephone company's single, channel circuits, if a formula could be devised, would solve one problem, but that would still leave the single-station market question. A simple answer would be to devise a standard or formula for dividing the convention into definable segments that could then be parcelled out by lot. The first step was to define a program unit. Out of these deliberations came a phrase that was to dominate news stories and conversations about convention coverage for more than two decades: "gavel to gavel." A session was defined as a period extending from gavel to gavel, from the time the chairman officially opened it until he dropped the gavel to recess. The network drawing number one would have access to the AT&T lines and the single-station markets for the first session. Numbers two and three would follow in sequence through as many sessions as the convention required. A network would be permitted to program as much as it desired before and after the gavel, but between gavels the rules would be in force and a pool signal available.

The gavel to gavel decision would in the long run be, in a sense, a trap.
No one of the three networks in subsequent convention years dared to break the tradition of programming gavel to gavel until ABC finally decided in 1972 to cover only highlights. For two decades the three networks had adhered religiously to the formula even when much of the excitement had been drained from the events.

CBS Television News had another major problem to solve, an internal one. It had to select a member of its staff to play a central role in the coverage, to serve as an “anchorman.” It needed a strong personality with background in political coverage to occupy a pivotal position. The person selected would have to be knowledgeable enough that all coverage could revolve around him and possess a strong enough personality to earn the full respect of the viewers. On the basis of his experience in 1948 and his nearly four years as the central figure in the network’s early evening news program Douglas Edwards would appear to have been a logical selection. But as well as he had done in building the early evening news he did not seem strong enough to carry the full load. My choice, and only choice, was Walter Cronkite. He had demonstrated at the Japanese Peace Conference and in the eleven o’clock local news in Washington that he had the strength, the background, the will, and the audience respect to carry the substantial load. And he was an excellent reporter.

Hubbell Robinson, the television network vice president for programs, was doubtful. He argued that we should make every effort to free Bob Trout from his radio assignment. Trout, he reasoned, was already a big name. He was a superb ad libber and had been involved in political convention coverage since 1936. Using Trout would be playing it safe. Through several sessions I held out for Cronkite. My contention was that Trout was a master at creating word pictures but we already had the pictures. The cameras would deliver them. What we needed was interpretation of the picture on the screen. That was Cronkite’s forte. Robinson finally yielded and Cronkite had the assignment. No thought was ever given to using Edward R. Murrow in that role. He seemed much better adapted to coming on screen from time to time, if we could free him up from radio assignments, to add background and perspective to our coverage. He and Eric Sevareid filled this role to everyone’s satisfaction and Cronkite went on to become a television legend.

Shortly after Cronkite’s selection was announced, reporters asked what he was going to do. I replied that he was going to be our anchorman. The term stuck and has since become one of the most overworked words in the broadcaster’s lexicon.

One facet of commercial sponsorship concerned us; we were worried that abrupt switches from the convention rostrum to commercials for Westinghouse might cost us viewers who would resent the intrusion. We were hopeful that we could cut away only during pauses in the action, but it
The electronic convention as demanded by viewers would be a "wedge-wipe" or a device to transmit a 'wedge-wipe' signal. The, convention was decided on, showing that there was a full answer to a question. As was nearly always the case, there was a wider audience than any of the other three networks. The long signal was not necessarily a trouble. It, however, was the signal that 'cut away' the rostrum, a device that would be a "wedge-wipe". It might be expected that there would be a "wedge-wipe" amplifier.

The idea of a "wedge-wipe" was not always appreciated, and we had to be reassured that it was a possibility. The "wedge-wipe" convention would be a "wedge-wipe". The "wedge-wipe" was the screen and the board. The "wedge-wipe" signal was the signal that was the "wedge-wipe".

In the next session, the screen and the board were "wedge-wipe". We were reminded that a "wedge-wipe" was likely to appear. The "wedge-wipe" was a valuable tool, but it was possible that the "wedge-wipe" was the "wedge-wipe". The signal was a "wedge-wipe" to the board. The "wedge-wipe" was the "wedge-wipe".

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Television News Comes of Age

Television had never undertaken anything quite so massive as the two national political conventions scheduled for July 1952 in Chicago. Philadelphia in 1948 had been a useful practice session but this was the main event. When the gavel opening the 1952 Republican National Convention fell on July 7 some twelve hundred television writers, reporters, producers, directors, cameramen, sound technicians, lighting experts, and maintenance personnel had moved into the headquarters city from New York, Washington, D.C., and Los Angeles. Additional personnel were recruited from other parts of the country. It was clearly the largest cadre of television personnel and the most massive assemblage of television equipment ever mobilized at one site and the biggest news story television had ever covered.

There were seven pool cameras in the convention site, and each network was able to call on another twenty to twenty-five deployed on the periphery of the Amphitheater and at downtown hotels and in mobile units poised to move at short notice to any locale where significant news might be developing. Never before had so many television cameras been massed at one event.

Party leaders and convention planners were generally aware that television would add a dimension to convention coverage, but they had no experience that would enable them to foretell its impact. The Republicans, for example, balked when the pool requested at least two boxes in the Amphitheater side balconies for placement of television cameras. Their ar-
The author meeting with CBS program directors in Chicago prior to the opening of the Republican National Convention. Don Hewitt is third from the left and Frank Schaffner in the center rear. Photo courtesy of Sig Mickelson. Used by permission.
ing the blip as it approached and the plane landed. They then picked up the president’s motor caravan and followed it down Bayshore Drive to the St. Francis Hotel and held there while the president, about to be renominated, disembarked and disappeared into the lobby. Only then did they return to the Cow Palace as the last of the cabinet members was completing his remarks. By the conclusion of the convention it was obvious that both parties recognized the power of television and were trying somewhat awkwardly to cater to it.

In 1952, however, none of the party leadership was quite sure what impact television would have. The prognosis for exciting conventions was favorable. For the first time since 1928 there would be no incumbent in the running for the presidential nomination of either party. Dissatisfaction with the administration of President Truman had grown to the point that there was widespread demand for change. The apparent stalemate in the Korean War stimulated frustration. Red-baiting, charges by the “China Lobby” that the Truman administration had undermined Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek, and sympathy for General Douglas MacArthur, who had been sacked by President Truman, all contributed to an angry mood among the electorate.

Senator Robert Taft of Ohio was the front-runner for the Republican nomination. The unanswered question as the campaign got under way in January was whether General Eisenhower, then the commanding general at NATO, could be induced to make the run. An influential group of moderate eastern Republicans including Governor Thomas Dewey of New York, who had been the losing GOP candidate in 1948; Senator Henry Cabot Lodge of Massachusetts; General Lucius Clay, who had commanded U.S. forces in Germany; Paul Hoffman, former administrator of the Marshall Plan; John Hay Whitney, publisher of the New York Herald Tribune; and Walter Thayer, an associate of Whitney’s, determined to make the general the Republican candidate.

Contrary to the views of the overall party leadership they had confidence in the potential influence of television. Their strategy from the outset was based on exploiting television to upset the well-entrenched senator from Ohio, who had the support of old line Republicans and much of the party machinery. They were convinced that effective use of television could build sufficient public support to overcome the advantage Taft maintained among party regulars. Dewey had used television masterfully in winning election as governor of New York in 1950. He also had the support of two television-minded advertising agencies, Batten, Barton, Durstine and Osborn (BBDO) and Young and Rubicam (Y&R), a leader in production of television programs. The presidents of the two agencies, Ben Duffy of BBDO and Sig Larmon of Y&R, were both enthusiastic Eisenhower supporters and among the nation’s most skilled users of television for adver-
June 28:

Graphic could be definitive, but would not come before the campaign.

June 29:

The governorship in Kansas, Washington, and New York was for the General.

It was explained during the conference in Paris.

CBS News learned from the governor's chief of staff, Grover, that there would be a press conference on Tuesday afternoon in Washington, DC.

He was looking forward to the press conference.

He was not available to speak.

CBS's Chief Correspondent, Schoenbrun, described Eisenhower's private correspondence as the Decade for Defense was with the Department of Defense.

The memorandum was made clear to television correspondents, and there would be an answer to the question of whether the governorship could be made available.

The governorship was expected to be a successful outcome.

He was expected to arrive in the evening.

Thepress conference was expected to proceed.

Late in the afternoon, the governorship was expected to vote on the availability of the governorship, including the governorship of the Decade for Defense.

After the press conference, the governorship would be expected to make a speech.

He was expected to have a clear explanation of the governorship, including the governorship in Kansas, Washington, and New York.

The governorship was expected to be a successful outcome.

The governorship was expected to be a successful outcome.
tion arguing in full view of the television audience concerning who had the right to cast an alternate vote on a critical credentials issue. Even the chair broke up in laughter as a judge with a heavy accent played a deadpan game with other members of the delegation and won his point, another small boost for the Eisenhower forces.

The original intention in planning broadcast coverage was to keep focused largely on the rostrum, but it quickly became evident that the story of the convention could not be told without talking with the delegates on the floor who were plotting strategy and by switching from time to time to the credentials and platform committees that continued to meet in hotels in the Chicago Loop.

The system devised to keep Cronkite, in the so-called anchor studio, "better informed" than anyone in Chicago lived up to its publicity. Some hurried changes, though, were needed to compensate for inadequacies in planning. It turned out that reports from members of the reporting staff working the convention floor were so critical to understanding the complicated political maneuvers that were under way that some method had to be found to show them on camera. Hewitt solved the problem by winning permission from the Radio News department to place a camera in the CBS radio booth above the rostrum. To enable the cameraman in the booth to search out and focus on a reporter and his interviewee Hewitt improvised a method. He sent a page out to buy flashlights for the floor reporters. When they had interviewees lined up they were to light their flashlights, point them toward the camera in the radio booth, and prepare to go on the air. The system worked and the three imported reporters were indefatigable.

The system devised for delivering information to Cronkite at his desk in the anchor studio also worked smoothly. When not broadcasting directly, floor reporters used private line telephones or their walkie-talkies to call editors sitting in the control room alongside Hewitt. The editors filtered calls, merged the information relayed from the floor reporters with wire service information, condensed the data, and kept reports flowing to two aides to Cronkite, who sat beside him and placed the bulletins on the desk in front of him.

The success of the system was attested to by two social science researchers, Kurt Lang and Gladys Engel Lang, in their analysis of the 1952 conventions:

CBS sought to cover the convention as a news service would. Information was channeled through a central point where various reports were collected and, if used, their source was identified for the viewer. Throughout the long evening CBS never let its viewers forget the political implications of the many moves on the floor. It attempted to identify each maneuver ... and to make some sense of what was being shown.
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had demonstrated that it could deal effectively with debates on the floor and rulings from the rostrum, but like an iceberg, the floor debate in this case represented only the one-seventh above the surface. To convey the underlying reasons for the tensions reporters would have to investigate the nature of the complex personal relationships within delegations and probe the deals being cut between delegates. The story could only partially be told by relying on speeches on the floor and rulings by the chair. Untangling the complicated threads was, in a sense, a final examination for television news before its graduation to full standing as a medium on a level with newspapers, newsmagazines, and radio.

The CBS staff on the floor, led by Bill Leonard, moved into the southern delegations with their shortwave radio units, their flashlights to get the attention of the cameraman in the radio booth, and their microphones and headsets for communications with Hewitt and the editors. They combed through the delegations, talked to both leaders and members, queried them on motivations and prospective actions, and kept relaying information to the editorial desk. They offered both live interviews and background on what turned out to be the most difficult issue the Democrats had to resolve. It was a new challenge to television news and one that ultimately proved its capability to report beyond the obvious as the camera sees it.

Senator Kefauver was the leader in committed delegates as the convention opened. He could deliver approximately half of the 604 votes required for nomination but he faced stiff opposition from Senators Richard Russell of Georgia, Robert Kerr of Oklahoma, G. Mennen Williams of Michigan, and Governor Averill Harriman of New York. A small group was working behind the scenes on behalf of Governor Adlai Stevenson of Illinois, but at this stage Stevenson was a long shot. He had no pledged delegates. His eloquent welcome to the delegates on behalf of the state of Illinois, however, stimulated a strong undercurrent of support.

The most dramatic moment of the CBS coverage was in a sense an accident but one that demonstrated a unique capability of television. One of the mysteries at the convention revolved around which candidate President Truman would endorse for the presidential nomination. The president was officially listed as a delegate from Missouri. Even though he was still in Washington, a polling of the delegation during the roll call of the states would probably smoke out his position. It was assumed that a poll would be called for and his alternate on the delegate roll would be requested to express his preference.

As the roll call moved toward Missouri, a remote camera at Washington National Airport caught the president in his open limousine on the apron approaching the White House plane, The Independence. A cut back to the convention floor showed that the alphabetical polling was approaching Thomas Gavin, the president's alternate. When Gavin's name was called he stood up, removed an envelope from his pocket, and extracted a note
President Frank Stanton, the author, and research director Leon Rice in the election studio on election night 1952. Photo courtesy of Sig Mickelson. Used by permission.
signed by Truman authorizing him to cast his vote for Adlai Stevenson. As Gavin finished reading the note, the scene switched back to Washington to catch the president standing at the top of the ramp of the presidential plane waving his hat. A cut back to the convention showed the polling continuing.

The first ballot ended indecisively but Stevenson had become a major factor in the race. In two more ballots the Illinois governor had won the nomination. Television had demonstrated that it could not only ferret out a significant news story that relied more on intelligent reporting than on electronic wizardry, but add electronic legerdemain to the coverage of that story, thus giving it a dimension that print or radio could not.

Once Governor Stevenson and his choice for the vice presidential nomination, Senator John Sparkman of Alabama, had made their acceptance speeches, the cameras were turned off and the complex electronic switches, tubes, and amplifiers in the control room disassembled and packed up for return to network headquarters in New York.

Ratings had exceeded expectations. Some 60 million viewers had seen some part of the conventions, at least 55 million at one time. Westinghouse, the sponsor that insisted on 20 hours of coverage at each convention, received a combined total of more than 130 hours at the two. Walter Cronkite was no longer an obscure Washington news broadcaster; he was almost as recognizable as the two candidates. The audience for the early evening news broadcasts on CBS and NBC that had totaled approximately 5.8 million homes in the 1951–52 television year by 1953–54 had almost doubled to more than 10.7 million. Convention coverage was undoubtedly a critical factor in the phenomenal growth. Of even greater significance, however, was the fact that television news personnel had passed a critical test. They had held their own with the print press, not as an offshoot of show business but as bona fide members of the Fourth Estate. Representatives of the new medium had demonstrated that they had the competence to participate on an equal basis with the more established media.

The new status was recognized on July 13 by Jack Gould in the New York Times: “The spectacular medium of TV last week really won its spurs as an original and creative reporter willing to stand on its own feet and not be pushed around. As such it is a vital and welcome addition to the Fourth Estate.” After the Democratic Convention he wrote, “Many millions have gone through a unique and unprecedented educational experience (television coverage) that in one way or another will be reflected in the voting booth in November.”
The Great Airplane Race

By the beginning of 1953 American television viewers had been treated not only to daily news programs but to close-up views of an impressive array of events they could never before have seen without being present. They had been fascinated by live pictures of the Kefauver hearings, meetings of the UN Security Council, the Japanese Peace Conference, and the 1952 American political conventions and elections but nothing so glamorous, colorful, or tradition-steeped as the coronation of a British monarch.

On January 20, 1953, they would be able to watch the inauguration of President Dwight D. Eisenhower, but that would be a pretty drab event compared to a British coronation, with all its tradition, pomp, ceremony, medieval costumes, and royal splendor.

King George VI of England had died in February 1952. Princess Elizabeth became queen immediately on her father's death, but the formal coronation ceremony would not take place until an as yet undetermined date several months in the future.

The announcement that the formal ceremony would take place in June 1953 came during the 1952 political conventions in Chicago. Tension ran so high while the conventions were in progress that little thought was devoted to planning coronation coverage. The performance at the conventions, however, had exceeded everyone's expectations. In the euphoria that followed no assignment, including a coronation, seemed daunting.

Why not, for example, even though it seemed unreasonable, aim for
The cocktail lounge of the BOAC Stratocruiser Champion converted to a film editing room as the plane proceeded across the North Atlantic from London to Boston on coronation day 1953.

Photo courtesy of Sig Mickelson. Used by permission.
event any calamity would befall the kinescope project and partly to be able to offer a second and quite different view at a different hour. The program would follow the procession from Buckingham Palace to Westminster Abbey and presumably capture all the color along the route.

Walter Cronkite was selected to narrate the 16-mm program scheduled for late afternoon release and Ed Murrow the 35-mm program now booked for 10:00 P.M. Murrow would broadcast as a member of the CBS Radio team along the parade route and then rush to the airport to catch the one o'clock flight. Don Hewitt would work with the film editors organizing material for the early program and board the chartered plane to produce the 10:00 P.M. version.

There was still no word from ABC concerning its plans. NBC had announced that it had chartered a DC-6 from Pan American Airways and that it would mount a major effort. BBC also reported that NBC had accepted the CBC offer of transatlantic passage for a program on the RCAF Canberra and was setting up a recording facility at an airport southwest of London.

With less than three weeks to go, the CBS and NBC Press Information departments began a publicity battle that was designed to squeeze out every possible advantage. The focus quickly narrowed to the race to be first. Both networks unleashed the power of their publicity machines to forecast impending victory, even though it might be by minutes or even seconds. The technical problems involved in coverage and the ceremony itself were overlooked in the frenzied effort to focus on the race.

As Walter Cronkite, Mrs. Cronkite, and I boarded the sleek new transatlantic steamer the United States for the five-day trip across the Atlantic we carried along with us the London Times special edition of twenty-six years earlier and a thick packet of coronation information distributed by the BBC and the British Ministry of Information.

On our second day in London the BBC hosted a reception for all visiting media. It was there that the blow struck. NBC, we learned, had obtained its own jet transportation. The NBC staff would ship its taped program on another Canberra jet bomber, this one built by English Electric for the Venezuelan Air Force. The manufacturer, we learned, was scheduled to turn the plane over to the Venezuelans on or about June 1. A British airplane ferrying company would ferry it to Caracas to deliver it to the Venezuelan Air Force. The ferrying company had agreed with NBC representatives to time the trip to coincide with the coronation, enabling them to transport the NBC film across the Atlantic, stopping in New York en route to the Venezuelan capital.

This would be a tough combination to beat. The margin of victory for NBC would not necessarily be substantial. It appeared that we had lost not only the race but also the commitment to our affiliates. The humiliation might be even worse.
to replace a reel froze. His fingers turned to rubber. He needed help to get the old reel off the sprocket and a fresh one installed. The job was finished barely in time to resume recording at a previously determined point in the ceremony.

The film editors, meanwhile, were swamped under the pressure of working with unfamiliar equipment and facing a more complicated assignment than they ever dealt with in New York. The processed film and accompanying sound track came in a flow so rapid it engulfed them. As the torrent increased in volume they got further and further behind. Matching sound to film was done only haphazardly and there was no effort to tie the whole program together in one continuous reel. Film cans were haphazardly marked and set aside for delivery to the Canberra. It was hoped they could be untangled and properly aligned in Boston before going on the air. Some were shipped without adequate instructions for reassembling.

Meanwhile the 35-mm film from the camera positions along the route of march was slow in arriving. An elaborate master plan employing motorcycle couriers had been designed to pick up exposed stock from cameramen at their positions along the route, rush it to the laboratory for processing, and deliver it, once processed, to the rented facility at Heathrow. Since the processing took some time it was not surprising that it was late morning before shipments started arriving. But then they began to arrive in torrents.

While the frenzied activity continued in the makeshift studio and recording room, the BOAC Stratocruiser, carrying the name plate "The Champion," was towed into position on the tarmac just a short walk from the recording and editing studio. Promptly at 12:30 P.M., the queen had been crowned, the recording equipment was shut down, film cans were labeled and prepared for shipment to the RCAF Canberra, and the 35-mm film shot along the route of the parade was moved to the waiting plane. By 12:55 the last member of the team mounted the steps into the aircraft. At 1:00 P.M. doors were closed and the plane was ready for takeoff.

The film editors, who had been working since eight o'clock that morning, only had time for a quick lunch before they took their positions at the moviolas in the downstairs lounge. The editing procedure was more complicated than had been contemplated. The editors had been accustomed to working with 16-mm reversal film cut largely with the use of hand cranked viewers and sound readers. They had very little experience with the more sensitive 35-mm film and the much more sophisticated moviolas. There was no script; it would have to be written after screening the film. Murrow was upset because there was neither natural sound nor recorded sound to back the footage. Hewitt was left with the unenviable task of trying to make something out of a disparate collection of disconnected film segments. He was supported by a group of harried film editors and a disgruntled narrator.
of premium scotch with a bow and a card and had it placed on our dinner table. I took the bottle to my room unopened. On arrival in Southampton I packed it and took it along to London. In London I placed it, still unopened, on a chest of drawers. Bill Lodge, who shared the room with me, asked one night whether he might have a sip. I invited him do so but did not join him. Before leaving for the Old House in Windsor I repacked it, still untouched. From the Old House it went to London airport, to the BOAC Stratocruiser, and in Boston to the Parker House hotel. The next morning it went to South Station and onto a New Haven train for the trip to Bridgeport, Connecticut. In Bridgeport a porter set down the bag with the scotch on the cement walkway. I heard a crunching sound, looked down, and saw the bag surrounded by a large wet spot. When I arrived home it contained the remnants of a broken bottle and a mass of wet laundry. It seemed a fitting climax to a venture in which almost everything that could go wrong did. 
The Corporation Declares a Cease-fire

As news operations at CBS Television returned to normal after a turbulent political year and the harrowing coronation experience two critical problems that had been in limbo required immediate attention. The network's News department still had not found a satisfactory solution to the vexing problem of coordinating narration, motion picture film, live action, and graphics in a fully integrated news report that reflected the full capabilities of television. It had concluded, however, that it would have to establish its own film gathering facilities to deliver a product with the imagination and creativity it was certain would be required.

A second problem was equally vexing. The network had failed to discover a workable pattern for sharing facilities and personnel with the radio network's larger, more experienced, and more adequately staffed news facility. The relationship between the two was disintegrating into a nasty family brawl dramatized by the close proximity required by coronation preparations. Tension had begun to develop as early as the Japanese Peace Conference and had been intensifying since. Prior to the 1952 conventions the newer medium was looked on as only a harmless nuisance. Now it was becoming a threat.

The embittered relationship with radio news, however, had to be set aside in favor of a more substantive problem; how best to illustrate information that would constitute the substance of its news reports, assuming that motion picture film adapted to television would be a key factor.
with the French government television network no firm decisions had been made.

Friendly had promised to release McClure for a few days in mid-April to tour Europe with me interviewing and employing camera crews, signing commitments with stringers, and arranging exchange agreements with television and film services. In two weeks we covered seven countries: Denmark, Germany, Austria, Switzerland, Italy, France, and the United Kingdom. We employed full camera teams in London and Bonn and contract film correspondents in Berlin and Vienna. Contracts for providing service on order were signed with companies in Denmark and Italy and exchange agreements with BBC television and ORTF in France. Italian television was unavailable. The NBC correspondent in Rome had gotten word of our trip, hurried to Milan, and negotiated an exclusive contract prior to our arrival.

The London crew was ready to start immediately, the Bonn/Frankfurt team within a couple of weeks. The failure to find suitable personnel in Rome and Paris was a disappointment so we reluctantly decided to buy time by contracting temporarily with an Italian newsreel company, Incom, even though we were not optimistic about the choice. The company was so close to the Italian government it could be counted on to reflect only official points of view. It was at best a stopgap. We would keep on looking for a full-time employee. In Paris, prospects were even dimmer; French television, ORTF, was simply not ready to deliver a professional service. Fortunately, David Schoenbrun, the CBS correspondent on the scene, had on occasion employed freelance personnel who were passably acceptable and would probably be available for occasional assignments.

It was the beginning of a service but only the beginning. Equipment had to be purchased, raw film stock meeting the new standards shipped, and plans for traffic flow drafted. Communication links had to be developed and raw nerves among CBS radio personnel soothed. Trial runs in the film laboratory were necessary to assure reasonable quality. Setting up a system for controlling the flow of communications and film was a particularly knotty problem. A traffic department was organized and charged with the responsibility of getting exposed film to New York in the quickest possible way. Personnel had to be familiar with airline schedules. Propeller-driven planes then in use were slow. Commercial jet aircraft were still several years in the future. Range was limited so refueling stops were frequent. And flights, compared to those a decade later, were infrequent. Traffic personnel had the responsibility of seeing to it that film packages were shipped by the fastest possible routes and were able to make all the required transfers on the way, since direct flights were limited. Arrangements also had to be made for customs clearances. Meanwhile, the May 15 deadline for termination of the Telenews service was rapidly approaching.

Promptly on that date the new organization was on its own. The first
companies. It probably did not ease the animosity that television performance attracted more favorable critical attention.

Television's early moves toward establishing its own film reporting unit had deepened tension. There was already growing concern in the foreign bureaus regarding occasional requests for help in filming news stories. Word that television might create its own motion picture coverage unit poured on kerosene. Pressures from "See It Now" had been considerable and the fact that Fred Friendly did not conduct his relationships with a velvet glove added to the resentment, but Ed Murrow was a revered member of the correspondent team and the opportunity to participate with him in a highly successful venture helped ease the pain. Television news, however, was a different story. It lacked the prestige of "See It Now" and was not an Ed Murrow venture. The five day a week television news program, furthermore, had so far provided little opportunity for the type of serious analytical pieces that characterized the contributions of the correspondents to radio.

Both Howard K. Smith in London and David Schoenbrun in Paris had been most cordial during my December 1952 trip. Both expressed concerns about additional pressure that television would likely impose but neither gave any sign of animosity. Smith was particularly vocal about the additional pressures the impending coronation would impose on his small staff but that was a short-range problem. Schoenbrun indicated he could probably be appeased by addition of personnel and space.

By mid-March tensions had reached the point that some kind of solution seemed to be imperative. Smith had complained acidly in a letter to the Radio News director, Ted Church, that he was "totally unable to keep up with his duties because of the tremendous increase in assignments in the last couple of years." He added that "the upcoming CBS Television News Film operation would be a completely unbearable addition."

The Smith letter was sufficiently disturbing that Murrow, Friendly, Church, and I met on Saturday afternoon March 28 to seek some solution. Church offered to help reduce conflicts by setting up a new desk in the Radio News department that would serve as a clearinghouse for all assignments involving overseas personnel. Since preparations for the coronation constituted a major share of the increased work load, I offered to send a representative from the television news staff to London to help for the next few weeks. This would presumably ease some of the burden on Smith. It was also agreed that all assignments transmitted to television camera crews and stringers would be sent in duplicate to members of the foreign staff. What we were proposing would only be a bandage on a deep wound but it might mitigate the pressure at least temporarily.

There was nothing but cheerful cooperation during my trip with McClure. It should have been obvious, however, that pressures on the correspondent staff would increase markedly with the addition of camera crews.
The flow of assignments, travel arrangements, and traffic messages through their offices would impose new strains. Fortunately, only London and Paris would be deeply involved, Rome to a lesser extent. “See It Now” pressures would continue, but Television News, as apart from the Murrow-Friendly program, was determined to hold its dependence on the foreign bureaus to the absolute minimum.

As soon as some degree of normality had resumed after the return from London, Television News personnel suggested solving the problem by separating completely from radio and building a totally independent organization. A memorandum from Mickelson to Van Volkenburg on June 19 described the proposed structure. It called for renting additional office space and employing secretaries or expediters in those capitals where either full film crews or contract cameramen had been employed. Significantly it was not proposed that any full-time correspondents be employed. Reporter-contacts, but not full correspondents, were suggested for London or Paris and possibly Tokyo. It was hoped, probably with excessive confidence, that the cameramen on the staff were equipped by experience and background to serve on many assignments without correspondent backup.

The charm of the proposal lay in the fact that the new organization could be established at considerably less cost than the monthly sum being paid to radio news for the begrudging service that it was delivering. What the proposal missed was the intellectual leadership that experienced reporters could give the finished product. Without that leadership it would be difficult to discover formulas for fusing motion picture, sound, and ideas in such a way as to deliver a news report that included abstract ideas as well as reports on actual occurrences.

The plan to seek a divorce from radio was discussed with the television network president, Van Volkenburg, on Monday night June 15 but without any definitive answer. Corporate leadership was apparently unwilling at this time to support the recommended separation. As a result the skirmishing went on, with tempers smoldering on both sides and erupting from time to time in outbursts of rancor.

During August Television News prepared a detailed analysis of its recent relationship with Radio. It concluded that it was “spotty,” satisfactory in some areas but disastrous in the Far East. A memorandum from Mickelson to Van Volkenburg cites the Television News staff as reporting that “in the Far East, disaster has almost struck on a number of occasions, and we have had nothing but turmoil, confusion, and bickering. . . . It is our considered opinion that a major news crisis at any of the points where we are dependent on CBS Radio personnel would leave us in a precarious if not impossible situation.”

The memo also quotes the foreign assignment editor Frank Donghi’s complaint that in the Far East, “cooperation from CBS Radio has been untrustworthy, at some points verging on obstructionary.” Donghi was
most concerned about what he described as a “disastrous beating” suffered in early August when a freelancer substituting for CBS Radio personnel who were out on other assignments “manhandled instructions,” placing critically important film relating to the end of the Korean War on the wrong plane. The problem, according to Donghi, stemmed from “a strong feeling in the Far Eastern theater that CBS Radio correspondents owe their primary allegiance to radio and serve television only after their radio duties have been completed and they have the time and the inclination to follow through.”

In a memorandum to Donghi, George Herman, the CBS bureau chief in Tokyo, specifically identifies the reason for his reluctance to serve television except when there is no conflict with radio, “One of our problems is the rivalry with CBS Radio to whom we at all times owe our primary allegiance. . . . In all cases where you want us to work for you and they want us to do something for them, we do it for them.” Another problem cited was less a matter of loyalty to radio than of personal income. An earlier letter from Herman to Donghi, dated May 27 and cited in the same memo, called attention to the income factor. Appearances on radio paid fees. Working with television did not unless the correspondent’s voice and likeness appeared on the screen, and that was infrequent. Television was less interested in on-the-spot commentary than in photographic coverage. If a correspondent had to choose between going along with a camera crew to add substance and depth to a television report for which there was no compensation and doing a ninety-second radio report for which he would be paid a fee, there was little doubt what his choice would be.

Skirmishing continued throughout the fall season with no definitive results. The television network moved to a number one position in national ratings. Profits increased by 41 percent over 1952 compared with 22 percent for the next best network. More dollars were invested by advertisers in CBS than in any other network. With the acquisition of WBBM-TV in Chicago CBS Television owned outlets in the three largest markets in the nation and each dominated ratings in its own area. But the rancor between the Radio and Television News departments was permitted to continue. Resolving the dispute would depend on corporate action and corporate officers were still apparently unwilling to step into the fray.

The Television News staff had hoped to resolve some points of conflict when the foreign correspondents visited New York at year’s end for the annual “Years of Crisis” program. All were invited to visit Television News headquarters, now fully installed on East Forty-fifth Street, but only Dick Hottelet showed up. All were invited to a meeting in my office but only three attended: Howard K. Smith, Alex Kendrick from Vienna, and Hottelet. Donghi remarked, “The results were most disappointing.”

Another attempt to reduce tension in the Far East resulted in the hiring of a cameraman/bureau manager, Wade Bingham. Bingham had served in
Tokyo and Korea for Telenews. He was a friend of Bob Pierpoint, who had succeeded George Herman as bureau manager. It was hoped that having a television employee on the scene would ease the pressure, but it only raised the level of tempers. Church from his New York office sent a cable to Pierpoint insisting that “everyone representing himself as a top man for CBS or as Bureau Manager for CBS Television was a fraud.” He later sent a cable to Time Inc.'s Far Eastern bureau manager, Dwight Martin, in which he wrote: “Understand man named Bingham representing himself there as Bureau Manager Columbia Broadcasting System stop Any such identification in completely without authorization.” Bingham was devastated. He regarded it a personal attack on him. It also, he felt, jeopardized his relationships with his fellow correspondents in the Japanese capital.

The niggling arguments with radio personnel that had persisted almost from the date of the split between radio and television in midsummer 1951 had overshadowed Television News leaders’ goal of creating a news report that combined all the best resources available through television technology. The long-term objective remained to produce a new form of news presentation using its resources to develop new understanding of complex topics in government, economics, science, and society. Not much progress could be made while squabbling continued.

A speech by Chairman Paley to the National Association of Broadcasters in late May 1954 served to refocus attention on larger objectives and simultaneously gave Television News executives new motivation to justify beefing up their service. It encouraged them to raise standards and to aim at more significant goals than simply winning ratings battles. But reaching those higher goals was stymied by the apparently endless skirmishing with radio. Corporate action was clearly required to put an end to the mindless competition. By June it appeared that the conflict would continue indefinitely with no apparent prospect of a quick resolution. Efforts to reach the goals the staff had set for itself would have to be achieved without radio cooperation.

In his speech Paley had challenged news personnel to raise their sights. “Issues have become extremely complicated,” he wrote, “giving rise to intense emotion, a deep longing for answers, and hence demanding greater knowledge and, above all, understanding,” exactly what Television News had been aiming for.

The speech, widely quoted and circulated generally through CBS offices, was the springboard for additional introspection within TV news. The result was the distribution of a detailed memorandum, “Basic Reasons for European News Expansion.” The memo, dated June 7, cited the efforts of Life magazine seventeen years earlier to “pioneer still picture journalism.” It argued that it was now time “to bring new intellectual life to the operation (Television News) and to discover new methods of translating the
complex facts of political and economic life into easily understandable, colorful, intriguing pictures." It now appeared that television might have to go it alone.

Three years of tension between the two departments came to an abrupt end in mid-July 1954. The cease-fire was brought about by Chairman Paley and President Stanton. It was accomplished by uniting the warring news units into a single corporate department reporting directly to the president and chairman. The announcement ended the bickering that had permeated relations between departments for three years. The burden was now clearly fixed on the new department's leader to eliminate the squabbling and proceed to build an operation capable of harnessing the capabilities that had languished during the period of constant sniping. The television side was the ostensible winner. It now had direct access to the correspondent corps and the foreign bureaus. It had achieved parity in Washington. It was also significant that I was promoted to a corporate vice presidency as the director and general manager of the new department, clearing the way for the later creation of CBS News as an autonomous division.

The radical restructuring would obviously not result in immediate elimination of all frictions, but at the least it would enable a newly unified organization to go forward toward a unified set of objectives. The petty bickering over responsibility and authority would be eliminated. Perhaps the most significant benefit would be the release of personnel from the pressure of constantly defending themselves against attacks. Attention could once more be focused on discovering unique ways of using television to create a new methodology for delivering news to the public. And with direct access to corporate management it could expect quicker action on organizational needs.
Merging the two news departments into a single corporate unit removed a significant roadblock from CBS efforts to create a news service designed for the television age; it cleared the way for better use of available resources, both human and technological, to produce unique programming. The merger had cleared the way to proceed but did not furnish a road map. That would have to be done by members of the enlarged staff.

One potentially damaging blow struck several weeks before the merger with dismaying force. One afternoon in late May Frank Stanton had called to ask that I go to his office at once. Sitting with him were General Sir Ian Jacob, the director general of the BBC, and Tahu Hole, the chief executive of BBC's news service. General Jacob had told Stanton that BBC was immediately canceling the news film exchange agreement that we had negotiated the previous year; Hole explained that the CBS service did not add enough to their input to justify continuation.

After their departure Stanton asked me to stay for a moment. He was curious how much the defection of the BBC might hurt and what we might be able to do to repair the damage. The BBC cancellation, I told him, would not affect us greatly; BBC's contribution to our daily report was minimal. The termination was, however, a damaging blow to our pride.

Among our weaknesses that may have affected our relations with the BBC, I told Stanton, were the lack of cooperation between the radio and television news staffs and television’s lack of regular access to the CBS

Aftermath of the Cease-Fire
into the news gathering process? How could he contribute to raising television news output another step to ensure that it was at least on a level with the best newspapers, newsmagazines, and radio news broadcasts?

The correspondents proved to be remarkably cooperative even though they were moving into a field they had previously associated with the sorriest aspects of “show business.” Ed Murrow’s success with “See It Now” probably influenced a more sympathetic view. The remarkable growth of the medium from the handful of television homes in the nation at the beginning of 1950 to the more than 32 million in the 1954-55 year, a nearly ten to one growth in less than half a decade, could only have tempted them to stake out positions in so high-flying an industry. In 1950 there was doubt that television would ever be more than a novelty. By 1954 doubts had largely been erased; television was obviously here to stay.

A series of meetings on their home ground began to yield positive results. It quickly became evident that, except in unusual circumstances, a typical radio report would not be adequate for television. And there were vexing operational problems. Radio could be transmitted live by cable or shortwave with little time spent on production. Television had to be photographed, shipped by air, processed in a film laboratory, and edited before being inserted into a news broadcast. All the logistic details were time-consuming. The finished story could not reflect the same degree of immediacy.

The most useful device appeared to be an extension of Don Hewitt’s two-projector system. The scheme was almost ideally adapted to the type of story the overseas correspondent would normally be called on to report: meetings of high government officials, summit meetings, foreign ministers’ conferences, parliamentary sessions. Almost all of the working sessions traditionally took place behind closed doors out of sight and sound. The two-projector piece would enable correspondents to introduce the event on a sound camera outside the conference venue, include whatever press conference material or opening statements might be made available, and record any interviews that might be permitted. A silent camera could back up the narration by showing the venue, the comings and goings of major figures in the conference, and any other scenes that might add color to the broadcast. The film library, now beginning to take shape, could add background.

Creating a television news story that utilized all the best attributes of the medium would take imagination, editorial judgment, and planning, but it would enable the correspondent to demonstrate his capabilities in a comprehensive and pictorially attractive report. What would work overseas would likewise work on the domestic scene, particularly in Washington. By producing more reporting of this type the network news broadcast could move out of its rather awkward status as a cross between a newsreel and a radio report and start delivering a new variety of reporting more fully exploiting the assets of television.
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sible relationship. A dinner meeting at London's Garrick Club was scheduled for the night of April 13. The planned agenda called for negotiating specifics of a possible relationship. In order to answer any questions concerning our film production and shipping capabilities that might arise, I took along with me to the meeting Jack Bush, who had been appointed film production manager for the News and Public Affairs department.

Host for the meeting was Captain Tom Brownrigg (RN Retired) representing Associated Rediffusion, the winner of the franchise to serve the London market Monday through Friday. Harry Alan Towers was present, representing Associated Broadcasting Company Ltd., winner of the Saturday-Sunday franchise in London and Monday through Friday in Birmingham. The key attendee was Aidan Crawley, a former subcabinet minister and journalist, who had been appointed editor in chief of the yet-to-be-organized ITN.

There was some concern that we might face tough competition from the UP-Fox combine that was selling so aggressively in the United States. One of the principals in the Independent Television Network group with whom we were meeting, Gerald Sanger, had for some years been closely identified with Fox Movietone News. We were concerned that he might have an ongoing allegiance to his longtime employer. No opposition to an exclusive CBS-ITN relationship, however, surfaced, and by the end of the evening we seemed to have agreement in principle on a long-term relationship. Crawley and the designated production chief for the new ITN service, Philip Dorte, were assigned to meet with Bush and me the next day to draft a memorandum of agreement.

The contract drafting likewise went very well. The four of us borrowed a small office and a typewriter from the CBS London office. The document we finally completed was hardly an exchange agreement. ITN at the outset would have very little to offer so they were in effect buying a service from us; as they became established, the relationship would entail more of an exchange. One feature of the agreement provided that we would agree to train ITN personnel at our headquarters in New York. The agreement was signed before we left London. The BBC cancellation was no longer quite so painful.

There were still problems that had to be dealt with. A Beirut presence was established by sending out a junior correspondent from New York and employing a contract camera operator. A part-time correspondent was signed to a contract in Cairo and with him a cameraman on similar terms. Ed Morgan had resigned as director of news after only a four-month stay, preferring broadcasting to working as an executive. His successor, John Day, had been a managing editor of newspapers in Dayton, Louisville, and Jersey City and gave a new dimension to the News department, that of a senior news executive from print journalism.

It was only months before the newly built structure was fully tested. The
The signing of the agreement between CBS News and the new Independent Television News in London in April 1955. ITN editor Aidan Crawley is signing the document. Seated beside him is Philip Dorte, ITN's operations manager. Standing beside the author is Howard Kany, CBS Newsfilm manager. Photo courtesy of Sig Mickelson. Used by permission.
of crises and demonstrated a cohesion and decisiveness that would have been out of the question only a few months earlier. Of even greater significance, antagonism toward television had disappeared. The test imposed by an international crisis had apparently sealed the merger of radio and television.

If the multiple crises had erupted a little more than two years earlier, television's coverage would have been shorthanded and superficial. Even six months earlier it would have been handcuffed by its dependence on radio. Radio assignments would have taken precedence and television would have had to pick up what crumbs were left. Frictions between the two would have encumbered whatever coverage television received. Tele vision would not have been in position to air its integrated packages utilizing film to illustrate and back up oral reports. The two years of integration had produced two years of dramatic progress.

Staff and management problems that had impeded progress seemed effectively solved by the 1954 merger. However, two vexing questions remained unanswered. The first related to the inadequacy of much of the technical equipment available to television; the second, to the more baffling problem of discovering a method for covering news with little pictorial content. The two-projector technique was only a partial solution; too many stories did not lend themselves to that treatment. An alert assignment desk and mobile camera crews were capable of covering events that had visual components, but production of reports on new tax legislation, diplomatic negotiations, or economic trends did not lend itself to pictorial reports. Coverage depended on imagination, editorial judgment, and competence to fuse words with pictures. Imagination in conceiving of methods to convey ideas was the key.

The technological problem was easier to identify but equally difficult to solve. The 16-mm cameras available for television news filming were simply not adequate for professional use; a switch to 35-mm would solve the quality problem but would sharply restrict flexibility and dramatically increase cost. The 35-mm units were several times heavier and bulkier to carry and used film at a ninety-feet-a-minute rate, in contrast with the thirty-six feet for 16-mm. Both raw stock and laboratory costs would be substantially higher. Friendly could insist on 35-mm for “See It Now” since his program was released only once a week and operated on a much higher budget. A daily news program required the far greater flexibility offered by 16-mm and the cost savings resulting from reduced volume of film stock and processing time.

The Newsfilm Production department drew up specifications for what it believed would be a superior 16-mm camera product, but finding a manufacturer to undertake the project was frustrating. Even though newsreels were dying, manufacturers were still so wedded to delivering high-quality 35-mm units they saw no future in 16-mm. It was well into the 1960s
before an American manufacturer offered to produce a unit to CBS specifications, but by that time electronic cameras were beginning to be considered a realistic possibility for the future.

The problem of inferior sound had been solved in early 1955, when all sound cameras and processing units at the laboratory were converted to magnetic striping. Don Hewitt described the move in an interview in 1996 as "the single most important technological development" of the period in which he directed the "CBS Evening News."

Discovering a process for conveying ideas as opposed to actions on the television screen was the most difficult problem. Imagination would be required to illustrate abstract news developments, but it was the intention to enlist the creative skills of the entire staff to find the answers. The added intellectual dimension furnished by the correspondents was the critically important new element. The two-projector technique helped in many cases, but it could if overused become obvious, even trite. Crude animation was tried but was excessively costly and time-consuming. In recruiting new personnel for staff positions efforts were made to enlist experienced journalists from a variety of media—newspapers, newsmagazines, wire services, picture magazines, still picture services, and radio news—in the hope that each recruit could make some contribution to enriching the television news report. Gjon Mili, one of Life magazine's veteran photographers, met with staff members a number of times seeking any possible clues that might derive from his many years of experience at Life.

The search was not wholly futile. Some experiments yielded pay dirt but by and large the hunt had to go on. It was unlikely that any single magic formula would surface. Imagination was the key ingredient, imagination applied to each news item that was essentially idea-based rather than pictorial.

One technological item that would eventually relieve some of the pressure surfaced in April 1956. There had been a vague hope for several years that some genius would discover a process for making a practical videotape recording and playback unit, comparable to the audiotape units that had appeared on the market late in the 1940s. In April 1956 CBS General Engineering arranged for a demonstration of the first viable videotape unit at its affiliates' annual meeting in Chicago. It was an instant hit but the unit shown was a demonstration model. Production units would not be available for about a year. When it ultimately arrived videotape would provide a flexibility and speed that could never be achieved with film, but at this stage tape could only be used for recording. No available camera could record on tape.

Progress since the midsummer 1954 merger had been substantial. An integrated organization was now diligently trying to coordinate words, ideas, and graphic arts to create a genuine television news report, but there was still a long road ahead.
Clamor from critics for the inclusion of some educational broadcasts in television schedules began almost as soon as the medium started to reach mass audiences. It was easy to demand "educational programs" but much harder to define the term in the context of what commercial television could and should do. By mid-1950 foundations, parent-teacher organizations and teacher groups had begun an unrelenting campaign for what they labeled "educational television." The television networks were not ready to respond. In early 1950 they were just beginning to lengthen their broadcast schedules to add some daytime hours. They recognized an obligation to broadcast some programs in the "public interest," and, in fact, were producing some. How educational programming would fit into this spectrum was unclear. Also questionable was what commercial television's role should be: No one knew what would constitute "educational television." No one at this point had very effectively defined either the term or the product desired. Was it classroom instruction? Or general cultural programming? In 1950 the question had not even been asked. Almost two decades years later, in 1967, a Carnegie Corporation research team in the first definitive report on the relationship between education and television broadcasting separated programming of an educational nature into two categories: public television and instructional television. Public television embraced a wide range of cultural and scientific areas; instructional television...
vision was limited to the classroom, either actual or simulated. In 1950 it was all lumped together as "education."

There did not seem to be a role for a network in instructional programming. It was most effective when programmed for broad mass audiences, not narrow segments. Furthermore, educational standards and curricula varied from region to region. The local commercial station or eventually the local educational station once it was built seemed the more logical outlet for narrowly classroom education. It seemed much more sensible to use the network's strengths to provide cultural enrichment, a service for both adults and school age children. It was assumed that when the FCC was ready to publish its new allocation tables, providing frequencies for additional stations, it would reserve spectrum space for a full complement of public "educational" licensees.

The staff of CBS Public Affairs began looking into a possible role for a television network in midsummer 1950. Discussions started with the assumption that the most useful educational service a network could supply would enrich rather than instruct. One approach considered involved translating applied research in major universities into programs that would not only be useful to viewers but entertaining. Scientific research might be the easiest to pictorialize but there would be room for a wide range of topics that would meet the test of service to the public.

Since Columbia University was nearby and boasted a number of major research facilities, it was approached concerning its possible interest in participating.\(^2\) University executives were interested but negotiations conducted over more than a year failed to yield enough raw material to justify a full series at Columbia. There was an adequate volume of abstract research in progress but not enough applied research with its wealth of pictorial opportunities.

Cornell University was tried next. Negotiations there proceeded well enough that a decision was made to produce a short trial film. It turned out to be unsatisfactory but the idea was not totally abandoned. Shortly after the conclusion of the political conventions in 1952 an experienced producer, Roy Lockwood, was sent on a tour of a number of midwestern universities to determine whether a series could be built by working with a variety of major institutions rather than one or two. The state-supported land grant institutions of the Middle West and West seemed likely sources of program material because of their emphasis on applied research projects. It was hoped that a series of twenty-six programs might be produced by selecting the most interesting projects with the best pictorial potential.

Lockwood returned after approximately a month to report that the project was indeed feasible and could be undertaken immediately. The Program Plans Board approved the project at a mid-December 1952 meeting and production machinery was set in motion immediately after Christmas.

Although it had taken some eighteen months to develop the proposal,
get, cost, established, and projects. Lockwood, produce interaction shape documentary. responsibility. together. era. technique used progress, worked on-camera interviews, became central. His proposal, approved, his views could be expressed and the project endorsed. He discovered the voice of the viewer, so that the narrator could dispense with the medium and live in the screen. His technique was used in television, which he used to make the Viewer a collaborator. He saw no need to dissect the process into units. His work, rather than the separation of the narrator and the voice, would be whole. He believed that the voice could be whole, and the whole voice was captured in the medium of television. His work, and his voice, were ready to be used in television. His technique, and his work, were ready to be used in television. His technique, and his voice, were ready to be used in television. His work, rather than the separation of the narrator and the voice, would be whole. His voice, and his work, were ready to be used in television. His technique, and his voice, were ready to be used in television. His work, and his voice, were ready to be used in television.
Brooke Allen, and Sory Smith. They explained that they had access to a library full of Air Force training films that had been employed during the war. The Air Force, they added, had also had in storage many thousands of feet of combat film that could be made available for a series relating to the history of the war.

NBC had scored a considerable success by cooperating with the Navy on a similar project, “Victory at Sea.” This raised a question: Should CBS run the risk of being charged with plagiarizing an idea by following so soon with a similar series, or would there be obvious differences that distinguished the two? A rather tentative decision was made to take the risk hoping that the series would be sufficiently dissimilar.

Once having convinced CBS to proceed the three brigadiers dropped out and were succeeded by a Strategic Air Forces colonel, Dal Bailey, who would continue as liaison. Prospects for producing a colorful and dramatic series serving as a useful addition to histories of the war were bright, but the task of bringing the diverse elements together promised to be immense. Since the series would be based entirely on library footage, the format employed by “The Search” and “Adventure,” mixing live narration and interviews with film clips would be out of the question. The project would involve searching through film libraries and selecting footage from the millions of feet, all requiring screening and editing into tight sequences. An early release date was most unlikely.

Alfred Butterfield, who had been a Pathé newsreel editor and operated his own film production company, Information Productions, was selected as producer. There were millions of feet to screen and hundreds of pages of official history to read and assimilate before considering a specific format.

The project dragged on and on with little evidence of progress. When the new News and Public Affairs corporate department was created in 1954 by combining the News and Public Affairs departments of the Radio and Television networks, supervision of the project was turned over to Irving Gitlin, newly named director of Public Affairs. Gitlin for some time took an active interest in the project himself but finally decided to remove Butterfield and move Skee Wolff over from “Adventure” to complete it.

By late 1956 it was gradually taking shape. Norman della Joio was commissioned to write a musical score and Alfredo Antonini, conductor of the CBS orchestra, assigned to work with della Joio to prepare the score and conduct the studio orchestra. The finished project turned out to be a moving and dramatic history of the decisive war in the air. There were pictures of airplanes in combat but the emphasis was on the broad strokes of the war, economic and political developments as well as purely military details.

Perhaps the most important contribution made by “Air Power” was the pattern it created for the series that followed it; “The Twentieth Century,” narrated by Walter Cronkite, became a staple on the CBS television net-
work for several years and an invaluable background source for students of history.

It had taken a good part of the decade of the fifties but CBS had proved to its own satisfaction that intelligent and imaginative use of the medium could deliver broadly educational programming, attractive to its viewers, in substantial volume. In the meantime, educational stations came on the air in increasing numbers and a nationwide program supplier, National Educational Television, forerunner to the Public Broadcasting Service, began to service public stations.
Conflict between Edward R. Murrow, the strongest personality on the CBS news broadcast team, and the company's equally strong-willed chairman, William S. Paley, was inevitable. Murrow was self-confident—some might say arrogant—intolerant of sophistry, a champion of the rights of the underdog, and contemptuous of casuistry. Paley was proud of the accomplishments of the network that he had founded in the late 1920s and dedicated to the theory that delivering a superior news service would win public support. Maintaining objectivity in content, he believed, should be mandatory in its news product. Here Murrow, the champion of the less privileged, clashed with Paley, the exponent of information without opinion. Conflict between the two was foreordained. Murrow believed broadcasting to be derelict in its duty to the public unless it exposed charlatans, supported the dispossessed, and decried injustice. He believed passionately that broadcasting had an obligation to redress obvious wrongs. Paley was conscious of the restraints imposed by the licensing of the broadcasting industry. He had been schooled in news by a former executive at the New York Times, Edward Klauber, who eventually became a CBS executive vice president. Klauber believed a news service should be objective. Contrary to the flamboyant news broadcasters in the early to mid-1930s, to whom delivering the news was more closely related to a vaudeville act than a service to the public, Klauber believed broadcast news was an essential element in keeping the public informed and as such a sacred trust. He was backed up
by the first CBS news director, Paul White, who demanded a news service free of the reporter’s opinion.

Parallels with newspapers were clearly not valid. Broadcasters were licensed. Newspapers were not. Nor was a comparison with a wire service or a syndication service accurate; the press agencies and syndication services distributed copy by teletype or mail, giving local editors ample time to edit or reject copy they found objectionable. Broadcasting delivered it directly to the transmitter. The local manager or editor was stuck with the network’s editorial selection. Paley regarded permitting the network to vent personal opinions unfair to the local licensee, who had an obligation under FCC constraints to control the output on the facility licensed to him.

An eventual collision between Murrow and Paley was as inevitable as a major earthquake on an unstable fault line. In their approach to news policy they resembled two restless tectonic plates within the CBS organization: one represented by the chairman, who had long insisted on objectivity; the other, by the star news broadcaster, who believed passionately that broadcasting had an obligation to redress obvious wrongs. During the age of radio’s dominance it was possible to contain tensions. Radio never struck the public with the intense force of television. In the age of television the impact was sharper.

The first potential clash between the two resolute wills was threatened in September 1950. A dispatch from Murrow in Korea for use on radio, not television, triggered the potential collision; television would come later. In his cable Murrow unsparingly criticized the United States leadership’s (read General MacArthur’s) conduct of the war there. Editors in the CBS newsroom, concerned about a possible policy violation, consulted senior management and killed the dispatch. Murrow on his return argued briefly with the chairman and smoldered for weeks but there was no open break. An eventual clash, however, was inevitable. There was very little give in either personality; both were strong willed and disinclined to compromise. The two restless tectonic plates were constantly in motion and frequently nearing the clash that would send shock waves throughout the organization. The censoring of Murrow’s cable from Korea registered only a minor blip on CBS’s Richter scale but gave fair warning that a stronger shock was yet to come. A more violent reaction was probably mitigated by the fact that the dispatch was designed only for radio, a medium in which tensions never quite rose to the level of television. Radio, delivering only the one dimension of sound, never seemed to strike the public with the brutal force of television.

Of equal significance, though, may be the fact that CBS before the advent of television was a relatively small company. It had not yet begun to command rapt attention from Wall Street. Its net sales in 1949 had amounted to only a little more than $82 million; by 1953 they had nearly tripled to $237 million and were rising rapidly; by 1960 they had passed $460 mil-
lion. Stock prices had moved up so rapidly with the advent of television that shares were split on a three for one basis in 1953. As the company's income skyrocketed, interest in its stock followed suit. Investors began to follow the company's fortunes and make their attitudes known through their Wall Street brokers. Wall Street representatives on the company's board of directors had to be listened to and their voices were sometimes critical, particularly of items in the news that might be interpreted as "liberal." It was no longer the chairman's company to deal with as he would. Stockholders had to be taken into account. This was also the era of blacklisting and McCarthyism. Public sensitivities were raw and quickly inflamed. Critics were quick to speak out.

It was in this hypersensitive climate that Ed Murrow and Fred Friendly discovered the formula that would lift "See It Now" from successful program to smash hit. On October 29, 1953, shortly before the second anniversary of the program's debut, they varied their normal pattern, which presented two stories in each half hour; on that night they devoted the full half hour to one story, "The Case against Milo Radulovitch, A0589839."

Murrow had discovered a brief clipping from the Detroit News on Lieutenant Radulovitch in "See It Now"'s extensive newspaper file. He was sufficiently intrigued to urge Friendly to send a reporter, Joe Wersha, to Dexter, Michigan, the lieutenant's home, to check out the story, and Wersha found it exciting. On his recommendation Murrow's favorite cameraman, Charlie Mack, was requested to go immediately to Dexter to work with him in filming the story.

What Wersha learned and Mack filmed gave the "See It Now" team the raw material, some five hours of it, for the most striking program to date. Milo Radulovitch was a reserve Air Force lieutenant studying meteorology at the University of Michigan. He had been asked by the Air Force to resign his commission on the grounds that he was "associating with his father and sister," both of whom the Air Force charged with "harboring radical beliefs." He refused, whereupon the Air Force convened a hearing board that ordered his separation as a "security risk."

It was a story made to order for a dramatic exposé. The lieutenant was attractive and articulate. His father, a Serbian immigrant who had worked as a laborer in coal mines and at an auto plant, made an eloquent plea that his son not be penalized for associating with members of his family. People of the Dexter community came to the lieutenant's defense and his attorney was particularly eloquent in pleading his case before the camera.

Friendly and Murrow then made two decisions that would thenceforth affect relationships between Murrow and Paley. They decided that they would conclude with a strong, precise, and straightforward statement from Murrow, an "editorial." They also decided to let the story run for the full half hour, in contrast to the normal pattern. The reaction was uniformly favorable, enthusiastically so. Praise was heaped on the producers by press
tury Limited one evening for the overnight trip to Chicago. As I entered the dining car for dinner I saw, sitting alone, one of the longtime members of the CBS board of directors. Joe Iglehart had an office on Wall Street, controlled either directly or indirectly a substantial block of CBS stock, and had the ear of the chairman. He motioned to me to join him at his table. Iglehart opened the conversation by asking me whether I agreed that the McCarthy show was guilty of editorializing. I had to answer in the affirmative. He asked, “Wasn’t it a violation of CBS policy?” I had to agree. There was no suggestion that I should have enforced the antieditorializing policy; the target was clearly Murrow. Iglehart had been a director during the years that Murrow had been on the board and had surely been party to discussions of news policy. There were no suggestions during the long dinner conversation that any specific action was likely, but I couldn’t forget the dinner, the subject matter, or Iglehart’s uneasiness with the tenor of the program.

The reaction from the chairman came within a little more than two months. He had been selected by the National Association of Broadcasters (NAB) as the winner of its Distinguished Service Award to be conferred at its Chicago convention during the last week in May. It was customary for the award winner, after the ceremony, to address the assembled broadcast executives.

There were no hints circulating in the CBS building concerning the prospective contents of the chairman’s speech. It was assumed, though, that it would be a strong statement of CBS policy. The assumption was accurate. The topic was news policy and the theme was the necessity for the broadcaster to be dedicated to objectivity. It spelled out in detail the restrictions that should be applied and defined “objectivity.”

It was obvious to even the most obtuse observer that Murrow and “See It Now” were obvious targets. The opening remarks, however, were focused on regular news broadcasts. The chairman expressed his deep concern that CBS news broadcasters avoid any expression of opinion. “In news programs,” he said, “there is to be no opinion or slanting. The news reporting must be straight and objective.” He went on, “In news analysis there is to be elucidation, illumination and explanation of the facts and situations, but without bias or editorialization.” He conceded that “100 per cent objectivity might not always be possible,” but the “important factor is that the news broadcaster must have the will and intent to be objective.” That phrase, “the will and intent to be objective,” became the gauge used by editors thereafter to judge the objectivity of copy.

Although he was referring at this point to news and not documentaries he must certainly have considered the concluding statement in the McCarthy “See It Now” program editorialization.

He then went on to what seems to be a direct reference to “See It Now.” “In other types of information programs,” he told the broadcast executives,
that Alcoa was getting restless. It finally gave notice of cancellation effective July 7, 1955. It was easy to assume that the company was getting tired of standing up to complaints regarding controversial subject matter; Fred Friendly, however, had another theory. He was convinced that the scheduling of the "$64,000 Question" in the immediately preceding half hour made the period occupied by "See It Now" too valuable to assign to a news-related program. An entertainment program would reach a vastly larger audience and return a considerably greater profit to the network.

"See It Now" was given an hour rather than a half hour but its frequency was reduced to approximately once a month. Seven one-hour programs were scheduled during the remainder of the 1955-56 season. One of them, a relatively innocuous treatment of farm issues in Iowa, touched a raw nerve in relationships between Murrow and the chairman. The Secretary of Agriculture, Ezra Taft Benson, felt that the program unfairly represented the administration's agricultural policies and the Republican National Committee requested time to reply. Friendly asked me whether I thought that the request would be granted. I replied, "Not a chance." But I was wrong. In Paley's "Road to Responsibility" speech to the NAB in May 1954 he had said, "When opinion is expressed in any type of information program . . . opportunity for reply is given to the person representing an opposite viewpoint." There is some question whether opinion was expressed but the Republican National Committee was given a half hour. Murrow grumbled but kept his temper under control.

The inevitable shock registering high on CBS's Richter scale came two years later in circumstances that could not have been predicted. "See It Now," now relegated to Sunday afternoon, scheduled the program "Statehood for Alaska and Hawaii." Although the content seemed quite mild there were elements of controversy in the program. Some members of Congress, for example, were concerned that "Communists," notably Harry Bridges of the Seaman's Union, would be given undue power once Hawaii became a state. There were also concerns about enlarging the Senate with four additional members, thus mildly diluting the power of the current ninety-six members. But generally the program was somewhat less than explosively controversial. A rather obscure congressman from Lackawanna, New York, John Pillion, however, felt that he had been wronged and requested time to reply.

There seemed little reason for granting the request. The decision would be made by a newly constituted editorial board composed of the corporate chairman and president, a staff vice president dealing with legal and policy matters, the presidents of three broadcasting divisions, and the president of the News division. The chairman usually sat at the head of the table and I at the foot. As the executive whose policies and procedures were up for consideration I normally would set the agenda and lead the discussion. Congressman Pillion's request for time was the first item on the docket. I
recommended that we not grant the request. The chairman was adamant that we do so, I argued that there was nothing in the program that justified offering time to reply. The chairman held firmly to his position. He finally closed the argument by instructing me to go to the Murrow-Friendly offices and inform them that Congressman Pillion would be given the time he had requested.

It was well after 8:00 P.M. when I reached the “See It Now” offices. Murrow had finished his 7:45 P.M. radio program and the two were sitting in Friendly’s office awaiting my arrival. I told them without embellishment that Congressman Pillion would get his time. I explained that I had argued the case for what seemed an interminable time but the chairman would not budge.

Friendly started to argue but quickly realized it was futile. Murrow sat stony faced without uttering a word. He soon stood up and walked out, still with no comment. It became apparent shortly later that the special relationship between the chairman and the star of the news staff was finished. The tectonic plates had clashed. That one short sentence in Paley’s May 1954 speech, “When opinion is expressed in any type of information program . . . opportunity for reply is given to the person with whom issue has been taken,” was the grounds for granting the request. It could be argued that there was little opinion expressed in the Alaska-Hawaii program, but the decision had been taken. There was no backing down.

“See It Now” for all intents and purposes was finished. It had had a spectacularly successful seven-year run. Information programming on television for years would be measured against it. Murrow and Friendly and their highly skilled team had created a new genre of television programming, one that would be almost impossible to duplicate without the intellectual and mechanical skills that were so skillfully recruited and molded into the “See It Now” team.

I had gone to the editorial meeting expecting some flexibility from the chairman. The issue, though somewhat controversial, was hardly the most hotly debated problem on the national agenda. And Congressman Pillion hardly seemed the logical spokesman for those opposing the grant of statehood. There was obviously a motive that transcended the case of Alaska and Hawaii and the request of the congressman. It had to be assumed that the grant of the free time was, in reality, a reflection of the chairman’s irritation with many of what he regarded as transgressions of the objectivity policy. An accumulation of resentments dating back at least to “The Case against Milo Radulovitch, A0549830” certainly as far as the Senator McCarthy program, was clearly involved. As Paley had said to Murrow and Friendly in a meeting in his office shortly after the Pillion affair, “I don’t want the constant stomach ache every time you do a controversial report.”

When the shows in the final editing stage had been shown, the run would be over. In July 1958 death came to the most acclaimed news-related series
ever broadcast on network television. By September 1958 it was formally declared dead.

There was still no visible reaction from Murrow. It was evident from his demeanor that he had been grumbling. Friends were aware of his unhappiness but there was no public demonstration of his pique. It, however, was soon to be put on public display.

The Radio and Television News Directors Association (RTNDA) had invited Murrow to address their annual convention in Chicago in October. Murrow surprised the RTNDA leadership by accepting. The association was a twelve-year-old organization that was still struggling for prestige and recognition. Station managers had been slow in many cases to recognize the importance of news in their daily schedules and support for the association lagged. Murrow had appeared at an RTNDA convention in 1949 when it was still known as the National Association of Radio News Directors, but he had limited his remarks then to introducing the playing of his record album, *I Can Hear It Now*, which had just been released. This time, it was assumed, he would have something to say and, judging by his mood after the Pillion controversy, it might be explosive.

There was naturally curiosity at CBS headquarters concerning his text but security was tight around the Murrow office. I asked his assistant, Kay Campbell, whether I might see a copy of his manuscript. She assured me I would get one promptly.

The editorial board was scheduled to meet on the same day that Murrow was speaking in Chicago. As I was preparing to leave my office to attend the meeting Ms. Campbell gave me my copy of the manuscript. I glanced at it quickly, saw that it contained dynamite, put it into a folder, and rang for the elevator. Murrow by this time was in the air on his way to Chicago.

On arrival at the board room I put the manuscript on the table for members to read. The opening of the meeting was delayed while each took time to scan it. It was obvious that the chairman was disturbed. The lines on his face were taut. There was no question the speech was a slap in his face. It was calculated to cater to the self-glorification of directors, but the approach was so brutal that it would surely reopen festering wounds on the executive floor. The board members gathered around the table were clearly stunned by the biting tone of the message, by the fury of its attack on television programming, and by the contempt shown for broadcast management.

One paragraph in particular caught everyone's attention:

The top management of the networks, with a few notable exceptions, has been trained in advertising, research, or show business. But by the nature of the corporate structure, they also make the final and crucial decisions having to do with news and public affairs. Frequently they have neither the time nor the competence to do this.
These lines didn’t strike only at the chairman. Frank Stanton had been trained in research, the presidents of the three broadcasting divisions in advertising. But Chairman Paley was obviously the central target. He was the man in charge. He had set the tone for the network and the stations it owned.

Murrow was scathing in condemning program schedules: “If there are any historians about fifty or a hundred years from now, and there should be preserved the kinescopes of all three networks, they will find there... evidence of decadence, escapism and insulation from the realities of the world in which we live.”

There was also an apocalyptic tone. “This nation is in mortal danger,” he said. “Surely we shall pay for using this most powerful instrument of communications to insulate the citizenry from the hard and demanding realities which are to be faced if we are to survive. I mean the word ‘survive’ literally.”

The news directors in the audience cheered wildly. Here was one of their heroes giving them new courage to stand up to management. It fed egos that had long suffered from what they considered inferior status in their stations. Their most prestigious annual award was shortly later named for the hero of the 1958 convention. The speech gave new self-respect to news directors. It stimulated pride in their work. It instilled new confidence.

But the news directors failed to see the other side of the performance, the direct attack on the management of CBS and particularly on the chair- man of the board. They failed to see that a clear target was the executive who had made news the cornerstone of its effort to win the number one position in broadcasting, the executive who had created the opportunity for Murrow to achieve the rare prestige he had won. It obviously marked a rupture in a relationship that had persisted from the late 1930s. It was difficult to see how it might ever be patched up; the tone was too strident. With the completion of the speech the split between Murrow and Paley was irreconcilable. Murrow would still participate in widely acclaimed documentary programs, notably “Biography of a Missile” and “The Harvest of Shame,” and continue his 7:45 p.m. radio program, but the magic of the earlier relationship was gone. The gulf was too wide, the tensions too intense. It was almost inevitable that Murrow would ultimately leave. That would happen in January 1961, when he was invited by the newly elected president, John F. Kennedy, to accept an appointment as director of the United States Information Agency.
The Changing of the Guard

Until the middle 1950s there was no question in the CBS organization concerning the identity of the ultimate authority on news. It was the company's chairman, William S. Paley. Under his personal direction in 1933 the fledgling broadcast network had audaciously challenged the entrenched newspaper and wire services by organizing a worldwide news gathering and broadcasting organization. He was brashly invading an area newspaper publishers considered their private reserve.

The bold move so annoyed the editors and publishers of printed news organs that it was only months before concerted pressures exerted by the publishers caused CBS to knuckle under. CBS and the other networks agreed to the demand of the publishers to broadcast only news passed on to broadcasters by the Press-Radio Bureau, which was established for the purpose by the wire services. Broadcasters were permitted a maximum of two five-minute news broadcasts each day.

Only the networks, however, had agreed to the restrictions. In less than a year the cumbersome system broke down under pressure from stations not affiliated with the major networks. By 1936 the United Press had started selling a service to radio. Months later the Associated Press entered the market. By then the field was clear for the networks to resume. CBS began a slower, less aggressive effort to build a news organization, a process that was accelerated as the world moved inexorably toward the 1939 outbreak of war.
As tensions swiftly built in Europe, CBS, led by Edward R. Murrow in London, began broadcasting shortwave radio reports from various European capitals. It was Paley himself who, according to his own account, personally asked the news director, Paul White, to gamble on a bold innovation, a world news roundup. As he tells it, he was at home ill during the height of the Austrian crisis in 1938, anxiously awaiting any morsel of information he could get from any of the correspondents broadcasting for CBS from Europe. He called Paul White, the CBS news director, to suggest that several news reports from European capitals be packaged together in one fifteen-minute period. Rather than return to New York between each report, London, for example, might cue Paris and Paris cue Berlin. Technicians argued it could not be done, but Paley insisted, and they agreed to try. It worked and the format has been used ever since.¹

While Paley was overseas as an officer on General Eisenhower’s staff, the CBS vice president, Paul Kesten, was nominally in charge of all network broadcasting including news. News at the Columbia-owned stations, however, came under the purview of Frank Stanton, then vice president. On Paley’s return the mantle for network news programming was returned to him. As vice president in charge of News and Public Affairs in 1946 and 1947, Murrow reported directly to the chairman.

With the growth of television, however, the business became much larger and more complex. It was Stanton to whom I reported when I was appointed director of Public Affairs in January 1950. It was Stanton who watched over the department’s budget and personnel decisions, but it was Paley who was still making the critical decisions concerning the content and form of news. It was he who also insisted on objectivity and on fairness and balance in all news and news-related programming.

His final grand gesture as the clear and last court of resort on news at CBS was his Chicago speech to the National Association of Broadcasters on May 25, 1954, the occasion on which he laid down his stern set of rules for objectivity in news and documentary programs. After the speech he did not retire entirely from the scene. His presence was still very evident; he still presided over editorial board meetings and kept a watchful eye on breeches of objectivity standards on regular news broadcasts.

The creation of the combined radio and television News and Public Affairs corporate department in July 1954 reinforced Stanton’s position as the administrative leader, if not the final arbiter of policy problems. It was he, however, in an overt demonstration of his rising status in the news spectrum, who personally broadcast the first editorial that CBS had ever programmed. Stanton in a half hour broadcast on the full network on August 25, 1954, “asked viewers and listeners to support the principle that radio and television should have the same privileges as other branches of the press to cover Congressional hearings.”² The entire project carefully conformed to the Paley guidelines as enunciated in the Chicago speech. It
national diplomatic crisis. I booked passage to San Francisco for Wednesday morning to be on the scene in the event of a major public relations cataclysm. In the meantime, there was not only no word from the Soviets, but no contact. Anticipating the possibility that we would hear no more from the Soviet delegation but unwilling to abandon hope we prepared a press release specifying that we had withdrawn the invitation to the foreign minister. It was timed for release at 6:00 P.M. Pacific Coast Time on Thursday, June 23, the day before the scheduled recording session. Unless we heard from the Soviets prior to the deadline we would release it then. At 6:00 P.M. we had heard nothing so I gave the order for the release.

The story hit the front pages across the country. Withdrawing an invitation to the Soviet foreign minister was a shock even in the United States, where broadcasters had normally been too timid to take bold steps in international relations.

We heard nothing more from any Soviet official for many weeks, but Zinchuk apparently did not forget the commitment he had made. Nearly two years later he asked whether they would still be interested in interviewing a leading Soviet government official. They replied in the affirmative, whereupon Zinchuk informed them that he thought he could now produce one who would meet their expectations. They accepted even though they were not sure of their guest’s position in the Soviet hierarchy. Zinchuk assured them it would be at a high level.

Koop called me one day in early May 1957 with a pleasant surprise. He told me that he and Ayers had a commitment from the Russian Embassy that the Soviet chairman, Nikita Khrushchev, would be available for a free and unrehearsed film interview in the Kremlin in late May. We would have to send a crew to Moscow to produce the program. The Soviet government would provide a film crew, but the production would be managed by CBS. The chairman would answer questions with no strings attached.

I took the proposal to the next television Plans Board meeting and in addition to requesting approval for the venture suggested that we extend the program to a full hour rather than the half hour normally allotted in view of the fact that our guest would be the head of a major state. The proposal was approved and the program was scheduled for Sunday afternoon May 31. No objections to giving the time to the Soviet leader were publicly voiced even though the blacklisting era had not totally faded from the scene.

It was determined that Koop and Ayers would go to Moscow to handle production. Stuart Novins, the regular moderator, would go along to fulfill his customary role and Dan Schorr, the CBS correspondent in the Soviet capital, would be one of the interviewers. The other would be selected from the American press corps on the scene.

A few days before Koop, Ayers, and Novins left for Moscow, Koop and I went to the White House to pay a visit to Jim Hagerty, President Eisenhower’s press secretary. Hagerty invited us to lunch with him in the White
the Nation” coup. We decided to order full-page ads for Wednesday morning’s editions of the New York Times, the New York Herald Tribune, the Washington Post, and the Chicago Tribune. Since President Eisenhower had scheduled a press conference for the next morning, it was assumed that one way or another the ads would be brought to the president’s attention before he appeared before the press. The copy would be drafted with the objective of winning broad public support, thus softening any criticism the president might intend to voice. A request went out immediately to the Promotion department to order the space. We began at once to prepare a rough draft of copy that could then be refined by the department’s copy writers.

A call went out to Charles von Fremd, the CBS White House correspondent. Von Fremd was requested to draft a question that he would ask the president and to arrange with Hagerty to be called on by the president. Our hope was that his question would elicit a reply from the president supporting our argument that the public profited from seeing and hearing the Soviet leader in an unrehearsed interview.

The ads ran the next morning as scheduled. Von Fremd asked his question. It was somewhat garbled and the president’s reply did us little good but, at the least, no further damage was done. But Newsome was not finished. At a subsequent meeting in the agency’s offices, with Newsome himself participating, we began to probe other possibilities for exploiting our position. Ted Koop was at this time serving as president of the National Press Club in Washington. The club frequently scheduled luncheon meetings at which major figures in the news would make brief speeches and stand for questions from the reporters in the audience. Frequently participants filled a rather large auditorium and the volume of press coverage was considerable. We proposed that Stanton be invited to speak and use the CBS defense of its rights in the Khrushchev case as a prime example of a licensed industry’s standing up to government pressure.

A Stanton appearance before the club was scheduled for July 2. A speech was carefully drafted by Stanton himself with the aid of Dick Salant. The performance was a smash success. Stanton was a master at response to this type of interrogation. He fielded every question that came his way thoughtfully and reasonably with supporting evidence. Press coverage was everything we had expected. The Khrushchev interview was no longer a potential motivation for punitive action against CBS but rather an opportunity to exploit a campaign for extension of rights of free speech to broadcasters. And, notably, this was Stanton’s campaign. He was the spokesman, not only for CBS but for the broadcasting industry. Paley, historically the dominant figure in CBS News matters, was in no way directly involved. It was Stanton’s show.

Since the campaign had gained surprising momentum on its own, the Newsome group suggested that we keep it rolling and seek other oppor-
tunities to exploit our advantage. Three years earlier the Radio Television News Directors Association, embracing news directors of radio and television stations across the country and in Canada, had instituted a national award for exemplary service to broadcast news. It was named for the former CBS news director, Paul White. Ted Koop was the association’s immediate past president and by virtue of his position chairman of the selection committee for the 1957 winner. Assuming Koop could win support of his committee, I offered to call him and urge that he use his prestige as immediate past president to name Stanton as the winner of the award. The CBS president’s vigorous defense of the right of broadcasters to operate under the same freedoms as prevailed for the printed press would be the justification. Koop, needless to say, was quite willing to support the Stanton candidacy.

I went to Stanton to tell him I thought I could get him the award if he would promise to attend the annual convention in Miami Beach in November and speak at the convention dinner. He told me he would think about it and get back to me. Several times I approached him with the same question. Each time he wanted more time.

As time passed Koop needed an answer quickly. If Stanton were not available his committee would have to find an alternative. Within approximately two weeks of the Miami Beach meeting I told Stanton that if he intended to turn down the offer it was essential that I tell Koop immediately so that his committee would have time to select a winner.

At this point he confessed that he had been reluctant to accept the award because news at CBS had historically been the chairman’s (Paley’s) area. He was not sure whether he should intrude and, in effect, upstage his superior officer, who had been the longtime supporter, protector, and defender of CBS News. I was about to leave to tell Koop that I had failed when he stopped me and said that he would accept but wanted me to help him with his speech. Needless to say I had Koop on the phone within minutes to tell him that he had his man and that it could be announced as soon as his committee ratified the choice.

That episode, from my point of view, constituted the definitive step in the changing of the guard. Stanton had become the de facto spokesman for news at CBS, replacing the man who had built and defended the news operation for two and a half decades. The award would be, at least to me, the symbolic recognition of a new order. The passing of the baton was not, however, a clean and instantaneous break from the past. Paley did not fade from the scene completely. He continued as chairman of the editorial board and as a constant critic of the expression of personal opinion on the air. He continued as a vigorous defender of objectivity. He still wanted to see potentially controversial documentaries before they were scheduled for release to the network. He wanted to know about and pass judgment on appointments of senior staff in the news division. When Eric Sevareid be-
came restive under restrictive editorship of his news commentaries, it was Paley he wanted to see to complain, and it was Paley who told him there was no alternative. There would be no expression of personal opinion on CBS programs.

The principal change that followed Stanton’s acceptance of the RTNDA award was that by that move he had become the public spokesman for news and news-related programs, a role that he would exploit to an increasing degree in subsequent years, once even to the extent of offering to go to jail for defying Congress.

Stanton continued to demonstrate his newly increased influence on the news area. After the Soviet Union’s launch of Sputnik, he encouraged the News department to undertake an intensive study of the status of America’s capacity to compete. He arranged for a group of news executives and senior producers and correspondents to meet with Herman Kahn, the fast speaking head of the Hudson Institute and a student of Soviet and American military technology, as the first step in preparing to produce a definitive documentary on the topic. He further suggested that once the program had been researched and written it conclude with an editorial reflecting the position of CBS.

The result was "Where We Stand," produced by Les Midgeley and including many of the correspondents on the CBS staff. The concluding editorial, read by correspondent Howard K. Smith, pointedly declared, in careful conformance with the CBS policy as laid down by Chairman Paley in his Chicago speech in 1954, that it reflected the views of CBS, not of any single individual.

The gradual evolution of CBS News and Public Affairs from corporate department in 1954 to full autonomous division status by 1959 was overseen by the corporate president. The designation CBS News as the divisional title was also Stanton’s recommendation, as was the title for “CBS Reports,” which was, in effect, successor to “See It Now.” By the end of the fifties the dominant figure in news and public affairs was no longer Chairman Paley. It was President Stanton.
Filling the “See It Now” Void: The Birth of “CBS Reports”

One of the obstacles undermining CBS’s effort to promote a broad-based news and information program schedule had been the focus of attention on “See It Now.” Since the birth of the Murrow-Friendly venture in November 1951 it had commanded the lion’s share of critical attention and consequently diluted public recognition of the remainder of the CBS news and public affairs output. After its demise in 1957 the spotlight shifted to a broader range of programming. There was still, however, a lingering suspicion that, unless the regular news operation quickly filled the void, the advantage might be quickly dissipated.

After “See It Now” ended William S. Paley had no more cause for the “stomachaches” that he had told Ed Murrow wereoccasioned by his programs. There was no single replacement, however, on the CBS schedule that could capture the same degree of public attention, or generate the same volume of controversy. Both the News and Public Affairs departments had plans, but those plans were some distance from fruition and there was little optimism that they could generate the same degree of excitement. It would be pretty difficult to replicate Friendly and Murrow.

“See It Now” staff remained intact to produce a new series, “Small World.” It was important and useful but hardly stirred up intense emotional response; compared to “See It Now” it was flat. It used imaginative applications of available technology to simulate face to face debate among world leaders, who were usually oceans apart physically. But a debate be-
tween a prominent member of the British Parliament and a United States cabinet member, no matter how ingenious the production and how live and spontaneous it appeared, did not generate the passion that flowed from a hard-hitting documentary on race problems or even statehood for Alaska and Hawaii.

Both the News and Public Affairs departments of what was rapidly being converted into a full-fledged autonomous division of CBS Incorporated were moving to fill the void. They were making progress toward developing the talented units required to create noteworthy product. And there were resources to draw from. The News department was discovering that its camera crews were frequently delivering much more high-quality film than could be accommodated in the fifteen-minute regular news broadcasts. Some of it was siphoned off into long-form reports used on a Sunday evening half hour news broadcast, but even that exposure failed to make full use of the material delivered, nor the talent of the film crews. Raw material was available, or could be made available, for more detailed treatment of a great variety of significant news. It was 16-mm film, not the superior 35-mm that Fred Friendly had insisted on for “See It Now.” But it was frequently more spontaneous since it had captured news events as they were taking place, not carefully produced reconstructions, as were frequently used on “See It Now.”

An opportunity to test the hypothesis developed as early as the summer of 1955. The governments of the West German Republic and the Soviet Union jointly announced that their respective political leaders, Chancellor Konrad Adenauer of West Germany and Nikita Khrushchev of the Soviet Union, would meet in Moscow in October. Richard C. Hottelet, the CBS News correspondent in Bonn, promptly applied for and received credentials to accompany the German leader on his visit to what had been enemy territory. He cabled the assignment desk in New York that it might be possible to obtain credentials for a camera crew.

This was the type of news story that would test the News department’s capability to break out of the straight news mold and prove it could deliver extended coverage of major events. It was obvious that a face to face meeting between the leaders of two nations that had so recently been bitter enemies would generate public interest. Eleven years had passed since the Soviet armies had smashed into Berlin, occupied all of East Germany, and at one point in the late 1940s even tried to starve out West Berlin. A meeting of the two leaders would mark a historical milestone. Hottelet was given the go-ahead to apply for credentials for his camera crew, and not long afterward the credentials came through.

The television network’s program plans board approved the scheduling of a thirty-minute program for Sunday night October 16 and a prospectus for the program went immediately to the network’s Sales department. Marketing of a “news special” would break new ground. Television had not
The position of the patient's procedures was comparatively photographed and by Schwartzkopf, McClinton, and Prudential's management generated higher exposures in the event of the company. It was deemed necessary to expand the company's horizons by looking into the company's insurance agency. Adenauer was the dictator of West Germany, and his wrath was felt throughout the country. The company's management could not afford to take any risks in terms of the company's image or its growth. Anderle, Geron, and Gerhard Anderle, a man, were all of one mind and quickly generated the company's response about handling the situation. The company's management had decided to approach the media and keep the entire workforce informed.

Schizophrenia in the long-term was again a significant concern for mental health professionals. The program, a single-episode screening into the lives of people suffering from schizophrenia, attracted wide attention. It was deemed an important program to raise awareness about the condition and its management. The show was broadcast on public television and was critically acclaimed as a template for comparable programs. The film was selected in libraries and reported in the early edition of the week. The program, which was deemed an important piece of work, was of sixty minutes each. The single-episode screening was produced by the Twentieth Century-Fox Television News Department. The show was successfully filmed in cooperation with Prudential's long-form reports. The film was shot on location in the United States, Europe, and Asia. The show was both a financial and critical success and was repeated in several countries.

The program, which was broadcast on public television, was a significant milestone in media history. The program's success was attributed to its ability to bridge the gap between entertainment and non-entertainment content. The program was a sponsor of a rich and varied production library and was deemed a significant milestone in media history.

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were discovering that they could deliver a product with a directness that had not been possible in the motion picture theater or auditorium. They were maximizing the advantages offered by the small screen and the intimacy of the viewing environment.

The News department, meanwhile, continued to hone its talent for creating long-form news programming. As the film staff increased in size and competence camera crews were becoming increasingly restive if their product was not fully utilized. Members of the correspondent staff who had scoffed at television as warmed over show business were becoming intrigued by the opportunities to expand their own careers. Hottelet's triumph with the Adenauer visit to Moscow proved that a correspondent-camera team could attack serious problems of public interest in a new and rewarding format. Suggestions began to come in from the field to the central news desk, and most major events were sized up not only for their relevance to the regular news broadcasts and for syndication but also for their potential to furnish raw material, including long background reports and interviews and features for "news specials."

The Hungarian revolution and the Egyptian-Israeli war in October and November 1956 were of such a scope as major news events that they could hardly be covered adequately in the standard fifteen-minute news broadcasts. And there were both sufficient public interest and adequate resources to deliver extended coverage. Several specials were produced and scheduled in November and December, but the story had not been fully told nor all the raw material converted to illustrate its elements.

Three half hour programs broadcast in early January 1957 demonstrated the capabilities of the news staff to exploit this new capability. It furnished an opening to use surplus camera footage for clarifying some of the murky issues that lurked in the background. News crews had remained in the Middle East after the conclusion of the brief and devastating war on the Israeli borders. Their objectives were to gauge the temper and attitudes of the people and their leaders, probe the underlying cause of the tensions, and assess prospects for the future.

One program, "The Arab Tide," dealt with the resurgence of the Arab peoples and their rising nationalism. A second, "Jordan, Key to the Middle East," called attention to the anomalous position of a nation that was created out of the war of 1939-45 with no background as a nation, not even a homogeneous population, but was destined by geography to live next door to a fast strengthening Israel. The third, "Kuwait: Middle East Oil Prize," foreshadowed a Middle Eastern war that would break out some three decades later and would directly involve the United States. Gulf Oil offered to sponsor the series, but the network surprisingly refused the order; the grounds: Gulf had a major commercial interest in Kuwait and was subject to conflict of interest charges. It is ironic that Gulf soon thereafter
Gerhard Schwartzkopf (far right), CBS News cameraman in Germany, being congratulated by Senator John F. Kennedy on winning an Overseas Press Club award for his film coverage of the Hungarian Revolution in 1956. Photo courtesy of Sig Mickelson. Used by permission.
turned to NBC and signed a contract for a running series of what became known as “instant news specials.”

By the time that “See It Now” was given its death sentence in midsummer 1958 both the News and Public Affairs departments were establishing records as producers of thirty-minute and one-hour programs that elaborated on the news and probed its background. They had investigated such topics at racketeering, the turbulent life of Jimmy Hoffa and the Teamsters Union, the challenge to the United States position in the Far East posed by the Quemoy and Matsu tensions, the sinking of the transatlantic steamer Andrea Doria, and a host of other stories. One major effort stimulated by the Soviet Union’s astonishing Sputnik space flight called on the full resources of the News department.

The objective was to produce a program that gave a detailed assessment of the relative military strengths and weaknesses of the United States and the Soviet Union, “Where We Stand.” At its conclusion CBS tested its policy on editorializing. Howard K. Smith read a brief editorial reflecting the network’s position. The process followed to the letter the policy laid down by Chairman Paley some four years earlier in his Chicago speech.

Before “See It Now” had its last rites in 1958 it was clear that there was an opening for a program dealing with major issues in a colorful way but without the controversy that “See It Now” had engendered. Both the News and Public Affairs departments had the talent and the experience to fill the gap and fill it in such a way that there would not be a continuation of the tension that led to “See It Now”’s downfall.

Working together, Irving Gitlin, the director of Public Affairs, and John Day, the director of News, prepared a plan for alternating between the two departments in producing a series of monthly sixty-minute programs. A budget was drawn up calling for an expenditure of $85,000 net for each sixty-minute production in a twelve-program series. It could thus be offered to sponsors for $100,000 gross per program. With the budget and a preliminary prospectus in hand I went to see Stanton to recommend that the television network Sales department test sponsor interest. As was frequently the case Stanton was noncommittal.

Several weeks later, in late March 1959, on a late Sunday afternoon the telephone in my home in Connecticut rang. It was Frank Stanton. He was curious whether we still wanted to sell the documentary series we had talked about. He told me that if I could be in Philadelphia at eight o’clock the next morning to meet with Charles Percy, the chairman of the board of Bell and Howell, and Peter G. Peterson, its president, he thought we might be able to sell a half interest in the series. Once half the series had been sold he was confident that we could find a buyer for the other half. Even though traveling from the Connecticut suburbs to Philadelphia in time for an eight o’clock meeting would not be easy I assured him I would be
there and would have Robert Lang, the News division's sales liaison, with me.

Promptly at the appointed hour Lang and I were in the Bell and Howell suite at the Sheraton Hotel. It was a relatively easy sale. It was apparent that Stanton had discussed the project in some detail and that all that was needed was the additional detail that Lang and I could supply. Shortly after lunchtime we had the order and returned to New York.

Percy had made clear that he would in no way exercise any control over program content. His interest, he assured us, was in the commercials, a promise he made good on once the program was on the air. It was only a short time before Goodrich had committed to the other half. It was now time to consider more seriously the content of the program and the assignment of responsibilities for production. One aspect was certain. The title of the series would have to include the letters CBS; Stanton had been adamant on that point. This would be no "See It Now." The credit would not go solely to a producer or star; it would go to the corporation that created and sustained it.

Once full sponsorship was assured Stanton asked that I meet with him to discuss specific plans. As had been the case nine years earlier in discussing the future of radio documentaries, the first question asked was "Who is going to produce?" My original plan was to alternate between News and Public Affairs departments and to assign responsibility to Irving Gitlin for public affairs programs and to John Day for the news product. Stanton, however, insisted that we needed one strong personality at the helm for all programs in the series. The logical choice, of course, was Fred Friendly.

I was reluctant to push very hard for Friendly, assuming that it would be almost impossible to separate the Murrow-Friendly team and that we might very well be recreating "See It Now" under a new title. I assumed that Paley would be less than enchanted at seeing the Murrow-Friendly team reunited and that Stanton could hardly achieve his objective of making this a CBS product if the duo dominated production. But it was clear that the project needed central direction with the kind of flair that Friendly would give it. The issue to be resolved, stated simply, was how Friendly could be persuaded to accept the responsibility without turning the project into a revival of "See It Now."

Friendly's first response to the invitation to accept the responsibility was predictable. It was clear that he was flattered at being offered the assignment and was enthusiastic about the prospect, but it was equally clear that he was unwilling to commit himself fully without assurances that Murrow would play a significant role. Friendly quickly clarified his position regarding Murrow's participation, stating it unequivocally in a memo he sent me shortly after our first meeting: "A clear definition of what will be expected of him [Murrow] and therefore Friendly and the unit [former "See It Now"]
unit now producing "Small World""] is a clear and present part of the problem."

In a memo to the files dated June 16, 1959, I explained why I was disturbed at the sentence. "Actually I believe I have explained quite completely to Fred," I wrote, "what will be expected of him... as an executive producer he would be expected to make use of the resources of CBS News wherever they may be. In other words he might draw on the special unit of the News department for some production, on various units of the Public Affairs department for others and on his own 'Small World' unit for a reasonable share of the volume." It was obvious from his cool reaction that he was less than enchanted with the prospect of working with unfamiliar production teams and without Murrow's direct participation.

The issue was a sensitive one. It was my clear understanding with Stanton, and presumably with Paley, that the program series would be a showcase for the entire News division, the News department, the Public Affairs department, and the old "See It Now" unit, now referred to as the "Small World" unit. The negotiation was difficult because Friendly clearly felt more confident working with Murrow and quite obviously was desirous of regaining some of the luster of the now defunct program series. The dilemma was confounded by the fact that the sponsors had been assured that a variety of CBS News correspondents would be used. Bell and Howell even specified in its order letter that Howard K. Smith have some role in each program. The order had not yet been accepted, but the clause indicated its understanding that the series would not be a reconstituted "See It Now."

As of early June 1959 with the fall season rapidly approaching some action had to be taken, but prospects for a quick solution to the producer problem seemed remote. It was clear that Friendly was the logical choice, but the unhappy experience the corporation had had with the Friendly-Murrow team still rankled. It might have been reconciled were it not for the Chicago speech to RTNDA, which could be interpreted as a direct slap at Chairman Paley. Murrow had also spoken disparagingly of Stanton on too many occasions not to be noticed.

In my role as the principal negotiator I could not see Stanton and Paley agreeing to permitting Murrow and Friendly to share the responsibility for production of the new series, but that is what Friendly seemed to be insisting on. In a memorandum addressed to me on June 15 he made his position clear: "But none of these problems are solved by Friendly simply being selected as Executive Producer of the series," he wrote. He was positioning himself, obviously, I thought, to insist that he and Murrow work as a team. Although Murrow's participation was possible, reconstituting the old Murrow-Friendly team was unlikely. One sentence in Friendly's memorandum, though, seemed abundantly clear on this point:
"Murrow could be depended on to carry much of the load."

This, I thought, was the eventuality that we were trying to avoid. The projected series was, I assumed, to be a CBS production, not a Murrow-Friendly enterprise.

The talks with Friendly left me uneasy, as reflected in a memo to the files dated June 18: "My negotiations with Fred are directly tied into an attempt by Friendly to use these conversations as bargaining power to re-establish a position for Murrow." I had no personal objections to his apparent objective, but I assumed that the Paley-Murrow relationship had deteriorated to the point where a revived "See It Now" under any title was out of the question.

It was clear that the impasse could be broken only in a summit meeting. It was decided that the four individuals most directly involved would meet in Frank Stanton's office at 10:00 P.M. on Wednesday, July 8. The intention was to come away from the meeting with a flexible pattern that would not unduly restrict the Friendly-Murrow team but would showcase other members of the CBS News staff and serve as a showpiece for the entire CBS organization.

The mood at the meeting was far warmer than I had anticipated. In my memo of understanding distributed to the other participants on July 17, more than a week later, there was very little evidence of contentiousness.

It was anticipated that the big hurdle to be surmounted would be a demand by Friendly that Murrow be a principal in many or all of the programs. The memorandum of understanding reflects only that Murrow would participate in those programs produced by the "Small World" unit and that "Mr. Friendly would consult with him frequently, if not in fact, 'constantly.'" There was tacit agreement that the series would be a "CBS Production" and that exposure would be given to other members of the news staff. Friendly was to consider appropriate titles for the series with the understanding that "CBS" would be included in any title finally selected. Stanton promised full corporate support for the series and described it as the "Playhouse 90" of informational programs.

My fears that reviving the old Murrow-Friendly team would only renew tensions with corporate management and between Murrow and Paley proved groundless. The title selected made no reference to "See It Now"; it was simply "CBS Reports." Murrow appeared on one of the two programs broadcast during the autumn of 1959. Of the first ten programs broadcast during the 1960 calendar year he was the reporter on four, Howard K. Smith on four, Eric Sevareid on one, and Bill Leonard on one. Friendly was as good as his word. The programs dealt with controversial topics and did not shun potentially disturbing evidence but did avoid taking controversial positions that might have lain the corporation open to reasonable demands for "equal time." Stanton had accomplished his purpose.
"Person to Person" producers, Jesse Zousmer and John Aaron, but was quite capable of reacting vigorously on his own. It appeared that all of the delicate negotiations of June and July regarding "CBS Reports" and the Murrow position in its production were now in serious jeopardy. It was even questionable whether the new rift could be patched over, or whether Murrow would even remain with CBS.

By the time I had returned to the office on Monday morning, a senior partner in CBS's outside law firm, Ralph Colin of Rosenman, Goldmark, Colin and Kaye, who also served as Paley's personal attorney, was dispatched to London to encourage Murrow to apologize for his outburst. The effort was futile. Colin came back empty-handed and Murrow carried on as if nothing had happened. Eight months of his twelve-month sabbatical remained; that might serve as a cooling off period but it was clear that the uneasy relationship could not go on forever. 8

For CBS, however, it was significant that the News division, which had long since given up any pretense of controlling the "See It Now" unit, was now infinitely stronger. It was in a position to absorb the new "CBS Reports" production machine and contribute substantially to it. The new series started with enthusiastic response to its "Biography of a Missile," even though the missile exploded before reaching orbit, and followed it with the "Population Explosion," a study of population problems in India. After a rocky start a new series was under way and CBS, not the Murrow-Friendly team, was receiving the public plaudits.
The happy Couple: Pigskin and TV Picture Tube Lives of millions of Americans were dramatically altered in the autumn of 1956 by a bold move undertaken by CBS Sports. Ever since the television networks had begun to program Sunday afternoons, schedules had been devoted largely to what broadcasters generally referred to as "programs in the public interest" but television critics commonly derided as the "Sunday afternoon ghetto." Professional sports had been a major factor in spurring television's rapid growth since in the late 1940s primitive receivers first appeared in living rooms and bars. Baseball and boxing were early starters; they were relatively easy to cover and for the most part were confined to major cities where television facilities, interconnections to the limited networks, and a growing audience were available. Football was more complicated. Most of the public interest was focused on traditional college rivalries. Professional teams were building fan support but at a less intense level than the college game. Broadcasters focused little on the schedules of the pros. Building an attractive college schedule, however, was not easy for the immature industry. Many college games with the greatest fan interest were played in stadiums where pick-up costs would be astronomical or interconnections were either unavailable or nonexistent and set counts were low. There were still so few receivers in use that the prospect of absorbing the cost of picking up games was unattractive. The professional game, although it had a following in the early 1950s,
attracted relatively little public attention, at least compared to intercollegiate football or major league baseball. Most of its franchises, though, were in major cities, easy to reach with microwave or coaxial cable, and with growing numbers of television homes. Pro football, was a sleeping giant. All it needed was television exposure to convert it into a national craze. Supported by a unified national contract in 1956, it quickly established itself on a par with baseball as the national pastime. By the end of the decade it dominated Sunday afternoon programming and made names like Vince Lombardi, Frank Gifford, Jim Brown, Paul Hornung, and Bart Starr as prominent as those of movie stars. There was even some question whether baseball had been supplanted by professional football as the national pastime.

The professional teams had begun building television exposure on a limited basis before 1956. Each team in the league had organized its own regional network, varying in 1955 from the four stations carrying Green Bay games to the thirty-eight carrying the Washington Redskins. Ratings were satisfactory but the game failed to spark national interest comparable to that of college football or Major League baseball. It was apparent that it needed a unified national promotional campaign to reach that level.

Its quick ascent to status as a national craze came about almost by accident. Sunday afternoon in the early 1950s did not appear to be a very attractive time for building audience interest. The programs available on the networks were a melange of talk and discussion programs, education and culture. It was public service–oriented. It looked good on license renewal applications and was comparatively cheap. Spending limited funds on Sunday afternoons did not pose much of a risk because the time was considered commercially unattractive and well adapted to building goodwill.

All that changed, however, in fall 1956, when CBS Television dropped its Sunday afternoon public service emphasis in favor of a twelve-week schedule of professional football. The decision not only changed Sunday afternoons in the autumn for millions of set owners but converted sports programming into a big business. For thirty-eight years, from 1956 through 1993, it had seemed that CBS, the National Professional Football League, and Sunday afternoons in the autumn were interlocked, that they were made for each other.

But all good things come to an end. The upstart Fox Network announced in 1993 that it had stolen away the big prize, full rights to all NFL Sunday games starting with the 1994 season. CBS after thirty-seven years of a comfortable monopoly had unceremoniously been ousted from its presumably unassailable position. NBC, starting years later than CBS, with the somewhat less attractive American Football Conference, retained its AFL schedule.

In pure profit and loss terms professional football was never a big money
grams, "Face the Nation," dropped from 85 stations to 23.\(^1\) Only 12 stations carried all four programs. It was a disaster.

It was easy to pinpoint the problem: NFL football. Ad hoc regional networks had been created for the duration of the football season and were siphoning off CBS affiliates as well as independents and affiliates of the other networks. CBS's Washington affiliate, WTOP-TV, had gone a step further. It had built a regional network that carried the Washington Redskins south to Virginia, the Carolinas, Georgia, and Florida. A Chicago-based network carried the Chicago Bears and Cardinals down the Mississippi Valley to Louisiana and across the plains to Texas, Kansas, and Oklahoma. A San Francisco Forty Niners/Los Angeles Rams network covered the Pacific coast. Smaller regional networks had been created to carry the games of the New York Giants, Baltimore Colts, Philadelphia Eagles, Pittsburgh Steelers, Detroit Lions, and Cleveland Browns. Even little Green Bay had a limited network of its own. It was to these regional networks that CBS stations had gone. A total of twenty-three southern and southeastern CBS affiliates, for example, were listed among the thirty-six stations carrying the Redskins games.

As we checked the discouraging data I remembered a conversation I had had more than a year earlier with one Texas E. Schramm, then publicity director for the Los Angeles Rams. Schramm outlined a plan tying all these mininetworks together into one single CBS package. It could be accomplished, he explained, through negotiations with the NFL commissioner, Bert Bell. Under his plan CBS would negotiate for exclusive rights to the entire league and all its games. Once we were able to get Bell's support, Schramm predicted, we could take over the mininetworks. Each would have built-in sponsors, mostly local brewers, who would likely switch their accounts to CBS if the network were to take over the rights. An agreement with Bell's office, Schramm insisted, would enable CBS to acquire all the local contracts, permitting its affiliates to replace the nonaffiliates who had been included in the ad hoc networks.

I told Schramm that I was intrigued but CBS policy pretty well tied us into using Sunday afternoon for public service programming. Since the commitment to that schedule seemed firm I was skeptical that I could persuade management to make so radical a change. There was no way of foretelling then how severely professional football would erode the program acceptance base for the Sunday public affairs programs in little more than a year.

Trying to attract the interest of senior CBS management in high cost major sports events had also been frustrating. Sports at CBS had been something of an orphan. There was nothing in the record to indicate that there was more than a casual interest in sports broadcasts unless they were established high-visibility national events, particularly those scheduled during marginal time periods, with rights obtained at minimal risk. Manage-
ment’s prime objective had obviously been to build a solid network and a dominant entertainment program schedule; at this point professional football did not fit the established pattern. It was also hard to visualize Paley and Stanton as rabid sports fans. Saturday afternoon baseball, coming as it did in 1952 with built-in sponsorship, was welcomed. There was little other commercial interest in the time. Prospects for Sunday afternoon football, though, were not bright; if there were a change, however, I told Schramm, I would get in touch.

The sadly disappointing results of Gitlin’s efforts to build a Sunday afternoon audience suggested that it was time to give in and swim with the tide. I asked Elmer Lower, then my second in command and later president of ABC News, to get in touch with Schramm to see whether his idea still seemed possible. Schramm was optimistic.

The off-chance that we might carry professional football on twelve Sunday afternoons added new urgency to the matter of finding a new sports director. It would be folly to undertake anything as complex as a twelve-week, six-game-per-week schedule of professional football or even to try to negotiate for rights to carry it without competent leadership. The spot had been left open since the creation of the corporate News and Public Affairs department two years earlier. Even if NFL football did not materialize, an able executive with management, planning, and negotiating skills would be essential in the expectation that management attitude toward sports would change.

We desperately needed someone with prestige and familiarity with sports and sports leaders for the endless job of negotiating rights agreements and struggling with inevitable personnel problems. We would need producers, directors, play by play and color broadcasters, camera crews, and mobile facilities to be deployed to the stadiums. A wizard at juggling heterogeneous elements would be required to oversee production of six games every Sunday afternoon for twelve weeks with a maze of complex overlapping circuitry and scores of commercials that had to be integrated. Perhaps what was required most was a style, a character, something to distinguish CBS from traditional sports broadcasting. It would be a monumental assignment that required adequate leadership, and it had to be done rapidly.

One prospect was the relatively young general manager of the Colorado Springs Blue Sox, a farm team of the Chicago White Sox. The prospect, Bill MacPhail, was a son of the legendary Larry MacPhail and a brother of Lee MacPhail, an executive with the New York Yankees. We hired him on the spot. In a few days he had resigned from the White Sox organization and moved to New York.

The next step was to determine whether the pro football package might actually be available. Schramm’s optimism was well founded. Lower and MacPhail found Bell enthusiastically receptive to a proposal to the extent that he suggested procedures for bringing the intricate package to fruition.
By taking soundings from the commissioner and a number of owners of clubs they discovered that a complete schedule of six games each Sunday for the twelve Sundays of the season would probably require a little more than $1 million in rights fees, a pittance in subsequent years but a formidable gamble then.2

Key to winning corporate support would be William F. Hylan, the vice president for sales of the CBS Television Network. The sales force under his direction would have to assume the responsibility for marketing the complex schedule.

One hazard surfaced immediately. Home games were to be blacked out. This was a particularly devastating prospect with respect to Chicago, then the second largest television market in the United States and the site of one of the three CBS-owned stations. Bell was adamant that no signal could be broadcast from a transmitter within seventy-five miles of a game site. Chicago had two clubs, the Bears and the Cardinals, and one of the two would be playing in Chicago each Sunday during the season. This meant no football for Chicago and no football income for CBS-owned WBBM-TV.

The contract with the NFL would require that all games away from home, even though they were blacked out locally, would have to be transmitted back to the network of the visiting team. This would impose a backbreaking burden on both personnel and physical facilities. AT&T had barely enough television circuits to serve the intricate spider web that the schedule would require. In the 1990s, using satellites and fiber-optic lines, it would be a cinch; in the 1950s it involved an almost superhuman task. To add to the problem, mobile units to serve as control centers in the various stadiums were in short supply; there was an inadequate pool of available producers, directors, and on the air talent.

Hylan enthusiastically supported the proposal. Jack VanVolkenburg, president of the Television Network, was noncommittal and passed the responsibility for making the decision off to the chairman of the board, William S. Paley. The chairman was worried about the scope of the commitment. He had an uncanny feel for entertainment programs but no similar feel for sports. A commitment to carry 72 football games averaging approximately 3 hours each meant the network would have to commit itself to carrying some 216 hours of professional football during one season. Only Arthur Godfrey, who was then programming a daily one-hour daytime program and another hour at night, had more hours on the air annually than football would consume, and Godfrey was operating from a single studio.

Paley wanted to know what CBS’s “total exposure” would be; how much would the corporation lose if sponsors refused to support the package and it did not generate a penny of revenue? A quick calculation indicated that it would probably amount to approximately $5 million, a relatively modest sum compared to the prices commanded by some of the most popular
entertainment programs, but it apparently seemed an extravagant expenditure for Sunday afternoons. Paley wanted time to think about it.

A more detailed analysis suggested that the $5 million estimate would not be far off the mark. A little more than $1 million would probably be required for rights; about $720,000, or $10,000 each, for pickup and production for 72 games; another $1 million for talent and travel; and still another $1 million for the overlapping maze of AT&T circuits. Add in a contingency and the total for a twelve-week season would amount to about the $5 million estimated on the spur of the moment. Sales, promotion, and advertising costs would be extra.

We saw him again about a week later. In the meantime he had talked to an old classmate at the University of Pennsylvania, Carroll Rosenbloom, then the owner of the Baltimore Colts and later of the Los Angeles Rams. Rosenbloom had apparently convinced him that the risk was minimal and the rewards might be enormous. Somewhat reluctantly he gave his approval. With the chairman voting yes the television network could hardly say no.

Now it was time to start negotiating in earnest. Although the commissioner was the key, it was necessary to work out separate agreements with each of the twelve teams and with the advertisers with whom they had firm commitments. The twelve in 1956 were the New York Giants, Philadelphia Eagles, Baltimore Colts, Washington Redskins, Pittsburgh Steelers, Cleveland Browns, Detroit Lions, Chicago Bears, Chicago Cardinals, Green Bay Packers, San Francisco Forty Niners, and Los Angeles Rams. The New York, Washington, Chicago, and West Coast negotiations were relatively uncomplicated. Their networks were large and the territories relatively well defined. Philadelphia, Baltimore, Pittsburgh, Detroit, and Cleveland, however, presented a tangled web of overlapping territory and sponsors who would have to be mollified. Green Bay was such an unattractive prospect that MacPhail told Bell we would bypass it, Bell's reply, "No Green Bay, no deal." MacPhail settled for a $50,000 fee for the Packers' season; it paid off handsomely a year later when under Vince Lombardi they began to win championships.3

Selling the schedule to advertisers proved relatively uncomplicated but maddeningly time-consuming. The advertisers who had contracts with the clubs were, for the most part, willing to switch to CBS outlets, but it was a tedious process. It took so long, in fact, that Stanton at one time in spring 1956 wondered whether we might have to abandon the whole program.4 Once the disparate pieces began to come together, however, it wasn't long before there was enough revenue in sight to meet our commitments, including payments to affiliates for carrying the games.

Arranging for a crazy quilt pattern of microwave circuits to bring all away games to each of the clubs in the league, however, was bewildering. There were no satellites in the sky; the first satellite service was still a decade
away. AT&T's first transcontinental circuit was less than five years old. As recently as the 1952 election there was only a single channel available from New York to Los Angeles, from West Coast to East Coast, and from New York to the Southeast and the Southwest. There had been dramatic progress by 1956 in extending the coverage pattern of microwave circuits and coaxial cables, but some areas were still served by single-channel links and return paths to network headquarters were still limited.

The most complex problem involved building a schedule that would meet Bell's mandate that all away from home games be transported back for release in the home market. It clearly required recruiting a specialist. A wizard at solving complicated traffic problems, Randy Brent, was brought in from the Television Network Broadcast Operations department to help solve the puzzle.

Chicago remained a special problem because of Bell's seventy-five-mile blackout policy. This was rectified a couple of years later when, in part as a result of CBS pressure, the Chicago Cardinals moved to St. Louis. This opened up Chicago for the six games a season when the Bears were not at home. It blacked out St. Louis on six Sundays but in audience terms was a good trade.

Recruiting on the air talent was another problem. Red Barber had withdrawn from CBS assignments and was too busy with other commitments to participate. What was needed now were sports broadcasters able to adapt to the television age, more communicative and less bombastic in approach than run-of-the-mill talent, skilled more in interpretation than in description. It was agreed that efforts should be made to recruit Frank Gifford, Pat Summerall, and Kyle Rote from the New York Giants as soon as they were available. Johnny Lujack, the former Notre Dame quarterback, became one of the regulars. As soon as Jim McKay was free of other commitments he signed on to do color. Chris Schenkel came with the New York Giants.

Rights fees kept rising over the years but so did ratings. The arrival of the AFL on NBC in 1960 did little damage. There turned out to be enough demand for football that ratings held up even when the number of games available to the viewer was doubled. The NFL had a substantial advantage in ratings competition since it was well positioned in the nation's larger markets, those with more television homes and thus potentially greater audiences; furthermore, the national set count was growing so rapidly that new television homes alone were sufficient to keep it growing. In fact, competition probably helped create the football craze that still dominates the fall season. And CBS kept riding the crest until Fox surprised everyone by slipping in with a higher bid for the 1994 season.

With the football schedule in place, CBS for the first time since the beginnings of television a decade earlier had moved into position to become a serious factor in the race for broadcast sports supremacy. It now, for the
first time, had a full sports program. In addition to twelve Sundays of professional football, it had the baseball "Game of the Week," the "Triple Crown" of horse racing, and the Orange Bowl and would soon add the Masters' golf tournament. It was the football, though, that captivated the masses and converted Sunday afternoons into mandatory television time for millions of fans.

Professional football not only proved to be a triumph for CBS News; it was a phenomenon that would revolutionize behavior patterns during fall weekends. It not only raised Sunday afternoon ratings to new highs and drew substantial advertising revenues, but also filled football stadiums and increased gate receipts. It elevated the income of star players to levels previously paid only to Hollywood stars. It created an environment that a few years later made Monday night football a national institution. By the end of the decade television's coverage of professional football had stimulated a stunning change in American behavior patterns. It happened almost by accident but it was another example of the changes in American life-style generated during the 1950s by television.
Carrying the Olympic Torch to Television

As in the case of professional football it was television that rocketed the Olympic Games, both summer and winter, from mildly popular international events to superspectacle status and it was television’s news operations that took the initiative. Newspapers had given extensive coverage to the games, particularly the summer series, from their first modern revival in Athens in 1896. Names of Olympic heroes had struck chords the world over: Paavo Nurmi, the Flying Finn; Joey Ray, the American sprinter; and perhaps more than any other, Jesse Owens, the sprinter and broad jumper from Ohio State University. The coverage, however, lacked the rich overtones, human drama, suspense, and immediacy provided by television. There was some radio coverage, but for the most part the world learned about the games through print. Newsreels covered them but their reports were not available until several days after the event. They caught the spectacle but not the suspense of the live report.

The 1936 games in Berlin in particular were given intensive coverage by the press. The increased attention stemmed partly from the pageantry introduced by the German dictator, Adolf Hitler, and partly from curiosity concerning the Third Reich and its Aryan chauvinism. Tensions in Europe were growing rapidly and Hitler’s master race theories were being given widening exposure. The whole world held its breath to see how Hitler would react if the black American, Jesse Owens, were to win a gold medal. Owens did not win only one; he won four in the stadium that Hitler had
dedicated to Aryanism. Much of the world awaited Hitler’s reaction, which would have been a major international event had there been television coverage. His failure to recognize the American athlete caught the attention of people the world over but not with the dramatic impact that would have resulted from television coverage of the snub. The only live coverage was on radio; it was principally a newspaper story. Pictorial coverage was limited either to still pictures in newspapers and magazines or to newsreels seen several days after the event.

There were no Olympic Games in the war years of 1940 and 1944. When they were resumed in London in 1948 the BBC was able to broadcast some events on television but there was no cross-channel coverage and obviously none across the Atlantic. The big breakthrough came in 1960 at the winter games in Squaw Valley, California, followed by the summer games in Rome the same year. Television was present at both. It created for the first time in Olympic history a vicarious feeling of presence that could never have been achieved without the electronic camera. And it focused attention on the quadrennial games far exceeding anything seen previously.

The winter games were seen live throughout the United States and Canada and on videotape elsewhere; the Rome games, live in Europe and on videotape reproductions in the United States. Some morning and early afternoon events in Rome were seen by American audiences the same day, evening events the next day. Since they were recorded by batteries of interlocked electronic cameras they had the same fluidity of motion and variety of angles as a live television picture.

Olympic coverage began on American television almost by accident. CBS was the first to cover the games, both winter and summer. The first Olympic telecasts slipped into the CBS schedule without any long-term planning. As he had with professional football, Tex Schramm played a significant role.

In his new capacity as assistant director of sports, Schramm urged during autumn 1958 and winter 1959 that CBS negotiate for rights for the winter games scheduled for Squaw Valley in February 1960. Satellites were still not available but microwave circuits by this time had proliferated across the country, making it possible to pick up the games from the site in the valley near the California-Nevada border and feed the signal to the full network. Cameras were no smaller nor lighter than earlier, but their quality was improved and new long lenses had been perfected to record distant scenes. Portable microwave dishes could pick up signals from remote points and the process of laying cable had been simplified, making it possible to station cameras in the remote areas that would be required to cover downhill and slalom ski events and ski jumping. The signal could be carried into Reno or San Francisco and there join the transcontinental network.

Schramm set out to investigate the prospect. He drew up a coverage plan
and prepared a proposal for consideration by the television network. CBS, though, was slow to respond. ABC moved more rapidly and by early spring 1959 tied up exclusive rights to the games, scheduled to take place the following February. That ended Schramm's dream of being the first to furnish live coverage of any Olympic event to viewers in North America. Within weeks he had been approached by the owners of the new National Football League franchise in Dallas to become the club's general manager; he quickly accepted the job and resigned from CBS Sports.

Almost simultaneously with Schramm's efforts to interest CBS in the winter games the Gardiner Advertising Agency of St. Louis, through its New York office, began urging the network to consider bidding for rights to cover the summer games in Rome. Robert Lang, who had joined the staff of CBS News to exploit new opportunities in marketing the CBS News product, had struck up a warm relationship with senior staff at Gardiner. One of the key executives at the agency was a well placed Italian from Rome who had participated on the Italian ski team in the winter games at Cortina d'Ampezzo, Italy, in 1956. Giancarlo Rossini had a wide range of acquaintances in Rome, including members of the Italian Olympic Organizing Committee (CONI), which had accepted the responsibility for organizing and producing the summer games. Rossini and his superior at the agency, Roland Martini, convinced Lang that they could get the summer Olympics for CBS if the company wished. By midwinter 1959 the Rome committee was sufficiently interested in a CBS relationship that members expressed an interest in talking about a possible contract. I had planned a European trip for the spring of 1959 and would be in Paris at the beginning of the trip. It was agreed that members of CONI would meet me in Paris for preliminary discussions about a rights purchase.

There was some question at this point whether we would be prepared to undertake a project of this magnitude. Transporting pictures across the Atlantic was still a problem. As in the case of the coronation of Queen Elizabeth in 1953 they would have to be carried by aircraft. The process would not have to be quite as complicated, however, as it was then.

There had been two technological developments since 1953 that promised to simplify the project. Jet aircraft were now flying regular commercial schedules across the North Atlantic, cutting transit time almost in half, and videotape had been in use since mid-1957, replacing the much more cumbersome motion picture film that had caused so many problems in 1953. Videotape recording was still in a primitive stage, but its use would still be incomparably simpler than the kinescoping system used in recording the ceremony at Westminster Abbey seven years earlier. Jet aircraft still had relatively restricted range but there was a sufficient number of jets in service by 1960 that there would be numerous optional times for dispatching shipments. It would not, as in 1953, be necessary to depend on a single military aircraft. A commercial jet, allowing for a refueling stop en route, would
make the trip from Rome to New York in about nine hours. A nine-hour flight, when measured against the six-hour time difference between the two cities, would place the videotape package at Idlewild Airport only three clock hours after departure from Rome. It would clearly be a complicated venture, but at least superficially the project looked feasible.

Soundings with the television network indicated at least mild enthusiasm for the innovative gamble. The Sales department was optimistic that advertising support would be forthcoming. There was sufficient optimism that technical operations personnel began to draw preliminary plans for the highly complex recording and editing operation. The reaction throughout the company was sufficiently favorable that it appeared expedient to agree to meet the CONI delegation in Paris in mid-April.

The negotiating session took place at the Plaza Athenee hotel. Neither CONI representatives nor I would make an explicit commitment, but it was evident that all were favorably disposed toward further negotiations. The meeting concluded with an agreement to carry on with the planning process and to signal when we would be ready to proceed to the next step.

I continued my Europe trip without making a recommendation to New York. The more I thought about the project, however, the more enthusiastic I became.

Shortly after returning to New York I accepted an invitation to a luncheon at Columbia University’s Faculty Club. By chance CBS’s president, Frank Stanton, was also there. He invited me to ride back with him to CBS headquarters, approximately a twenty-minute trip. This gave me an uninterrupted opportunity to report on my Paris meeting. By the time we arrived at Fifty-second Street and Madison Avenue, the site of CBS headquarters, he was favorably inclined toward the project and I sensed that we could count on his support. That support reinforced the television network leadership’s growing enthusiasm for the project. Neither program nor sales executives could overlook the higher ratings and revenues that would accrue from introducing fresh, attractive programming in what would normally have been the slowest season of the year.

Meanwhile ABC’s hold on rights for the winter games at Squaw Valley appeared a little less secure than a few months earlier. In late July IBM executives who were working with CBS News personnel in preparing for coverage of the November 1960 election scheduled a meeting to discuss election coverage plans at the IBM facility at San Jose, California, in which equipment was being built to assist in coverage of the November national election. The computer manufacturer had agreed to large-scale cooperation with CBS News in gathering, compiling, and displaying nationwide election returns and in projecting results.

As we drove down from the San Francisco airport to San Jose I asked Gil Ahlborn of the IBM staff whether a rumor I had heard suggesting that ABC was abandoning its hold on rights to the winter games was true. I
The Two with could complement translator.

Television of assumptions commitment equipment.

The executives of appointments CBS more afternoon.

After adding ABC to the assumption and general equipment, he agreed to the feasibility of the approach going. He had mentioned to the executives that the entire idea was a waste of time, but the executives, which were supposedly in the middle, seemed to be utterly ready. The team was in agreement, and the mission was concluded by the head of CONI, though much of the project was being handled by the Rome airport. The TOCOM and the direction of the summer Olympics were some of the topics that were covered, and the team continued to develop their plans.

The executives of the ABC Network had concluded the sinking of the ice hockey, bobsledding, and ski lift rights, and the winter games were going to be televised, as a part of the Olympic signal from Rome. The TOCOM was at the Fiumicino airport after appointing Rossini as the Italian Olympic Committee's secretary. Rossini was eating along with the CONI delegation and Ahlborn decided to throw the idea of the Olympics to the CONI committee. The Italian executives came to a consensus in the early afternoon.

After having the morning meeting with the TOCOM, Ahlborn was going to the airport for a meeting with the TOCOM president. He was going to talk about the team's plans to sequence an Olympic tape. The temperature was high, and Ahlborn was discussing the plans and details with the management of TOCOM. They were going to discuss and organize the Olympics events. The TOCOM was interested in the organizational possibilities of the Olympics.
for release on the nighttime program schedule. This would give CBS viewers Olympic programs every night for the nearly two weeks of the games. What few night events there were could be programmed for airing during late afternoon hours the next day and repeated if warranted at night. By setting up a tape projection facility at what was then Idlewild Airport (now JFK) it would be possible to eliminate almost an hour of travel time on New York streets, thus subtracting another sixty minutes from the time lag. Since the recordings were made on tape, not motion picture film, no film processing time was required.

From an advertising sales point of view the games could not have been scheduled at a more favorable time of the year. The last two weeks of August were the "dog days" of summer for television advertising; this was the month when television ratings hit absolute rock bottom. Preemption costs (the cost of making good on commercial spots preempted from long-term advertisers) would be at a minimum. Many advertisers would be happy to have relief for the two weeks of the games.

It was still necessary to negotiate a price for the rights. The CONI group quoted three prices: a figure of $675,000 for rights alone; $750,000 for rights plus partial access to the signal that would be delivered by RAI-TV, the Italian state television network; or $835,000 for full RAI-TV coverage of all events. Even though there was some element of risk involved these figures seemed within reason. They contrast dramatically with the $2.3 billion NBC in 1996 contracted to pay the International Olympic Committee for rights to the summer games in 2004 and 2008 and the winter games in 2006.1

It was decided to opt for the middle figure, $750,000 for rights with limited access to the RAI signal. CBS's own film camera personnel would be available for coverage around the periphery of the game venues, and CBS announcers would describe the events from the audio booths. The technical operations personnel estimated that it would take another half million dollars to set up a production center with tape recording and editing facilities in rented space on the airport grounds, pay all talent fees, transport personnel and equipment to the site, and cover meals and lodging and personal expenses. The Sports department would assume the responsibility for assigning directors, producers, on the air talent, and expediters and estimating the costs involved. Allowance would have to be made for transporting from New York a number of bulky videotape recorders and space would have to be rented to house the operations. It would also be necessary to estimate charges for air expressing tapes to Idlewild.

In the event some tape packages might be delayed, causing shipments to miss outbound flights from Rome, a backup facility at Orly airport in Paris was written into the estimate. Any item that missed a flight from Rome, with a facility available in Paris, could be transmitted to the French capital by microwave and recorded there. It could then be shipped to New York
There were scheduled plans, but the event was better than expected. There was an early assumption that覆盖 cameras would be useful, and indeed they were. Nevertheless, some viewers would have preferred coverage from Helsinki, where the event took place, instead of being shown on television. Consequently, there would be less demand for coverage at later events.

An engineer had visited Rome, Helsinki, and Melbourne, and he had obtained information about theerek tape editing. He had been paid $1.5 million for the work, which would have been a significant gamble but proved to be adequate.

At the 1950 Olympic Games, the organizers had no idea that Helsinki would be the site of a major event, but the decision was made to put the majority of the programme on videotape. In 1957, however, it was decided to broadcast in colour. It was suspected that this would not be possible, but it was tried and it succeeded. The facts of the matter were that it was easy to continue recording and editing the video, and the interested viewers were therefore not disappointed.

However, there were still problems. It is clear that the cost of the video was very high, and the fees were no longer in the market. There was also an attempt to find a way to get the video to large numbers of viewers. It had been more difficult to make money from the large numbers of viewers, and they had been interested in the potential for more live events, but the organizers were not sure how this would work.

Consequently, they were not interested in the idea of relying on cheap newsreel. In 1952, the first Olympic Games were televised. However, it was clear that the budget was not enough for the level of interest that was being shown. Consequently, there was a slight disagreement about the way that the event was being done, and the coverage was not as good as had been expected.

The French capital was visited by the idea of Avenue des Champs-Elysées, and there was a possibility of getting closer to the people. There was a potential for more events, but it was not clear how this would work out. Nevertheless, it was clear that the potential for doing a good job was there, and eventually there would be a few hours of good coverage.

But there would be some repeats, and the audience was growing. It was clear that it was possible to profit from the event, and the organizers were interested in the potential for more repeats. Consequently, there would be a few days of coverage, and the organizers were looking to the future to see what might happen.
A handshake with the chairman of the Italian Olympic Committee after the signing in 1959 of an exclusive contract for television coverage of the Rome games in 1960. Photo courtesy of Sig Mickelson. Used by permission.
agreement, but there was little doubt that a contract that both sides would accept could be drafted.

Once agreement was in hand on the Rome games the immediate problem was Squaw Valley and the winter events. They were scheduled to open on February 19, in less than four months. Paul Levitan, who had visited Squaw Valley with me on that blistering day the previous summer accompanied by television network technicians, had clawed his way up and down mountains, searched for camera positions where long lenses could catch the action in the slaloms or the ski jumps without letting the participants out of sight, and puzzled about methods he might use to haul cameras up to mountainside positions and string cable to enable them to feed out a signal.

He had to anticipate heavy snow and plan to keep his cameras and cable lines secure from the weather. Thirty or forty years later this was old hat but in 1960 it called for innovation.

Walter Cronkite was selected as the anchorman. He was supported by Bud Palmer, who had called both hockey and basketball games for CBS; by Chris Schenkel, an all-around sports reporter and the voice of the New York football Giants; and by Andrea Mead Lawrence and Dick Button, former winter Olympics medal winners.

By the time the opening ceremony was under way the night of February 16 personnel and hardware were in place. Competition started the morning of February 17. American viewers had never seen anything like it before. They saw ski jumpers soaring through the air, leaning forward so they were almost parallel with their skis, and downhill and slalom skiers whizzing through the gates and spinning around the turns. Nothing excited American fans, though, as much as the final hockey contest of the games, the United States against the USSR. The Soviets were heavily favored as the underdog U.S. team took to the ice on the last Saturday night of the games.

Stands in the arena were full. If the American team upset all the odds and won, they would be Olympic champions, an eventuality that no one had expected as the games opened. The two teams fought to a virtual standoff in the first two periods. Midway into the third and last periods the American team still had not collapsed.

In the Capitol Hilton in Washington, D.C., scores of American political leaders and journalists, all attired in black tie, were gathering at cocktail parties in suites on the upper floors awaiting the opening of the annual dinner for the president of the United States, sponsored by the Radio and Television Correspondents Association. Supreme Court justices, senators, congressmen, broadcast executives, and famous correspondents were present. Every television in every suite was tuned to the hockey game in progress at Squaw Valley, half a continent away. Roars of approval followed every successful effort of the American team to stave off a Soviet rally and sighs were audible as the Soviets threatened. The dinner was delayed until the result was in. When, within minutes of the final whistle, the Americans
broke a tie and took the lead the corridors almost erupted in roars of approval. It was a near anticlimax when the whistle ending the contest blew with the United States the unexpected champion. There was a closing ceremony the next day but after the raising of the American flag and the singing of the national anthem all else was redundant. The first live television coverage of any Olympic games had been an unqualified success.

The summer games in Rome offered an entirely different set of problems for television coverage. The winter games were based on live coverage. That meant a premium was placed on camera and microphone locations, camera personnel who could follow the fast-moving events with their long lenses, directors who were skilled in intercutting camera shots, and announcers in the master control booth who knew the events well enough to add interpretation and expertise. Most of the coverage was live and did not permit second-guessing.

Rome was hardly comparable. The television picture came from Italian television, RAI-TV, except film shot around the periphery of the stadiums. The burden was on RAI for camera shot selection. CBS’s responsibility was to select the RAI picture it wished to record and to edit the material selected into packages for shipment to New York within the time frames allotted by the network schedule. Personalities selected by CBS described the events and added commentary. Bud Palmer, the former Princeton and New York Knickerbocker basketball star, was the lead voice. He was assisted by Bob Richards, at one time holder of the international pole vault record. Their audio reports, transmitted from the stadium where the events were taking place, were blended with the RAI picture.

The number of venues from which to select was vast. Olympic games are in some respects similar to three-ring circuses, except there are normally many more than three rings in action at once: track and field stadiums, soccer fields, natatoriums, wrestling and boxing areas, marathon and long-distance speed walking courses, archery and pistol ranges, and rowing and sailing venues. The CBS producer, at the control room at Fiumicino airport, was responsible for selecting the events he would cover and the portions of the events he would incorporate within the assigned running time. The process would have been relatively simple with late-twentieth-century technology using multitrack digital electronic editing. The editing equipment available in 1960, however, was primitive in 1990s terms. Three two-inch quad head Ampex tape recorders were set up in the vacant motion picture theater. The signal from RAI-TV was recorded on one or more of the recorders, depending on how many events of interest to American viewers might be taking place simultaneously. The editing was accomplished by using a razor blade to slice diagonally across the recorded material. Splicing was done with Scotch tape. It was a tedious and time-consuming process and required a delicate touch.

Disaster almost struck on opening night. The producer of the program
failed to maintain a log of the opening ceremony, an event running for approximately two and a half hours that had to be cut to fit a one-hour time slot, or approximately fifty-four minutes to allow for commercials. The entire program was recorded on videotape from the RAI-TV signal in the make-shift studio at the Fiumicino airport. Cutting to less than one third of its total running time had to be completed in time to ready the final cut for shipment in midmorning the next day. Without a rough log the tape editors would have to start from scratch in constructing the abbreviated version. Timing for midmorning shipment was critical; the program was scheduled for release to the network from New York the next evening.

Fortunately as I sat alongside the producer watching the ceremony I had kept notes on the proceedings including a rough schedule of the running times of individual features, including the entry marches of the USSR and U.S. teams. On discovering there was no log available I quickly selected from my notes those portions of the ceremony that seemed most interesting to an American audience, noted the number of minutes each consumed, added them up, and found that the components I had selected would approximately round out the time available for the network program. I took my notes to the tape editors and spent the remainder of the night working on program production. The heat was intense. It was a typical August night in Rome and there was no air-conditioning in the old unused cinema house.

At five o'clock in the morning all three tape machines suddenly gave out. They simply quit. Fortunately the job was virtually completed. It would only take a few minutes for editors in New York to complete the final touch-up. There was concern, though, that major repairs would be required. That would create a grim situation. Competition would start later in the day and without tape machines there would be no program material. It turned out, however, that the extreme heat and long hours of operation had simply exhausted the equipment. After a few hours of rest all three machines were pronounced in good working order.

After that first nearly calamitous night, operations ran relatively smoothly. Some of the burden on Rome was removed by expanding the operation at Idlewild. An experienced producer-director and tape editors were assigned to the facility along with additional tape machines. Pressure on Rome to deliver finely cut programs was reduced. Editors there could ship rough cuts and the Idlewild facility could apply the final touches.

It turned out that same day coverage was more limited than expected. Midmorning flights arriving in New York in early afternoon were numerous but midafternoon flights that could deliver program material featuring same day events edited for nighttime exposure were limited. It was more expedient to aim for finely edited nighttime programs even if they were delayed by a day.

The whole venture was enough of a success that NBC quickly bid on
and won rights for exclusive coverage of the Tokyo games in 1964. A pattern had been established. The Olympic Games had become an international spectacle. Set counts in Europe and the Far East were rising rapidly, to the point where an international audience could now be a reality.

The games themselves, except for one feature, changed very little after the Rome experience. The opening ceremony that CBS had struggled so hard to deliver with the aid of its balky tape machines suddenly took on new importance as a signature of the games. The unidimensional parade of the athletes to open the games as recorded in Rome gradually went through a metamorphosis and became a grand pageant staged largely for a world audience. The opening and closing ceremonies became opportunities to display the most attractive talents of the host nation. The increasing attention paid to these pageants since 1960 can be credited to television and the primitive tape-recorded efforts in Rome. The extent to which television has influenced the games in the intervening years is reflected in a critical review in the *New York Times* in July 1996: “The Olympics, of course,” the critic Caryn James writes, “are as much about television and show business as they are about sports.”
In Pursuit of the Dollar

It was comfortable for broadcast executives in the 1950s to boast at public forums and before congressional committees that they were investing large sums of money in news and public affairs without hope of significant return. It was at least implied that news and news-related programs were carried as loss leaders in response to an obligation to "serve in the public interest." As in many claims made by industry spokesmen there is some element of truth in such assertions but also a large element of exaggeration. The record shows that many loss leaders were carried on television network schedules and that senior corporate executives who had final authority over accepting or rejecting programs frequently agreed to finance programs that promised public benefit but little or no financial return. The public was left to draw the inference that news and public affairs were largely a charitable enterprise of broadcast networks. Nothing could be further from the truth; financial controls actually were firm. Willingness to open up the corporate purse for some efforts to serve the public in no way encouraged or even permitted free spending behavior by news personnel. Even the early "See It Now," for example, was constantly under pressure to cut back costs and live within its budget. Only the prestige of Ed Murrow, his disdain for financial controls, and the critical success of the program saved it from the budget cutter's knife. Ultimately it was policy problems rather than over-spending alone that caused the program's demise.
Budgets for news and news-related programs were not nearly as lavish as those for entertainment. Their spending base was much lower and thus lacked much elasticity. Most programs that succeeded in winning sponsorship were sold at discounted prices that further reduced spending flexibility. And there was little prospect of striking a bonanza as occurred with such attractive entertainment programs as "I Love Lucy" and the "Jackie Gleason" show. Producers of informational programs, unlike those of entertainment ventures, were severely restricted in rehearsal time, set design, expenditures on sets and props, and talent fees for writers, directors, and performers.

Budgetary controls were strict. Producers and directors were forced to do with less and there was less elasticity. It was much easier to condone a budget overrun on a successful entertainment show than on a low-budget sustaining program that had little hope of ever catching the attention of a sponsor. The lack of resources stimulated a vicious circle. It was hard to attract a sponsor to a program that was produced with only a bare minimum of the resources required to make it a crowd pleaser, and without adequate resources it was hard to create programs that would attract commercial interest.

Additional financial support was frequently only grudgingly approved. It took nearly two years of planning, budgeting, and pruning, for example, to win approval of a plan in 1952 and 1953 to establish a film reporting unit to support the News department. (The effort to win corporate support for establishing CBS Newsfilm is described in detail in Chapter 11.)

After the merger News controlled its own administrative budget. Program budgets, however, remained under the control of the broadcasting division showing the program. Administrative costs, theoretically the responsibility of news executives, came under direct scrutiny of senior corporate executives. As the department gradually moved toward divisional autonomy there was more freedom to make administrative decisions, but pressure from corporate executives to control costs intensified.

As long as costs were held at "reasonable" levels pressures were not onerous. The corporation was quite willing to absorb without flinching the cost of carrying a number of public service-oriented programs including "Adventure" so long as the weekly expenditure remained reasonable. It similarly supported other noncommercial ventures, including "Let's Take a Trip," "Air Power," and "The Search," without protest as long as program budgets were held at minimal levels and producers demonstrated concern for costs. Every year end throughout the decade it was happy to bring five or six News department correspondents back from their foreign posts for the "Years of Crisis" series. Costs for transportation and food and housing were considerable, but there was a substantial pay-off in publicity, government relations, and general public goodwill. It was an invaluable opportunity to showcase a superior reporting staff and promote the entire
Tensions even stating sharp and occasional service, was United daring assignments; doing Atlanta the taking thirty-nine fluous crew.

There was, virtually everying.

AT&T found that it was, very soon after the cancellation of thirty-nine, the US was taking the extraordinary action. In fact, it was, the regulation of the Latin American Council.

In 1966, the mass media was, a broadcasting and television monopoly, to which the San Francisco Giants were, virtually attached.

While the US was taking the extraordinary action, the Mediocrity Council, was, suddenly sending a high-powered team to the Mediterreanean.

The San Francisco Giants paid their annual fees to the Mediterreanean Council.

That was, a very important story to the sports community.

The only viable way in which the San Francisco Giants could use the television monopoly was, the Mediterreanean Council.

The San Francisco Giants were, a very old, prestigious and very expensive team, and they were, able to make a $1,000,000 profit per season.

It was, a very serious matter to the San Francisco Giants.

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The San Francisco Giants were, a very old, prestigious and very expensive team, and they were, able to make a $1,000,000 profit per season.
Most other costs—salaries, rent, acquisition of equipment, production, and direction—could be budgeted in advance with some reasonable expectation that they could be adhered to but no one could fully anticipate what news was going to break and when and where. Personnel attached to the assignment desk had to make the decision, frequently with little time to spare, where to send the reporting crew, how large the crew should be, and how much coverage was required. The safe way to perform was to over-assign, gamble on sending personnel to cover stories that might justify coverage but were not sure things. But a mistake could be costly. There were travel and subsistence costs to be considered and allocations for raw film stock, shipping, laboratory processing, and finally editing. The best means of control was employment of personnel with judgment and an acute news sense that would enable them to assess the potential importance of a story before the assignment was made, then to give them free rein.

The ultimate result of the devastating budget cuts of 1957 was that staff members became gun-shy. Assignment editors were under instructions to keep detailed records of assignments made, costs incurred, and disposition of the stories covered. Attention was frequently focused more tightly on budgets than on news. Confidence gave way to indecision; courage to timidity.

There was apparently ample justification for company-wide reduction of costs. President Frank Stanton announced publicly that profits from continuing operations had declined sharply from preceding years and “We shall have to work and work hard.” But the cuts were most damaging in the news division. No matter how much it had grown, there was little fat to spare.

Stringent new financial reporting systems were put into effect without protest, but their impact stultified news operations for months. Assignment personnel became more concerned with keeping records and avoiding mistakes of judgment than with moving aggressively to whip the opposition and deliver a superior news report. Timidity with regard to taking risks became the prevailing theme. Financial controls curbed much of the swashbuckling gung-ho attitude that had characterized the operation in previous years. Fortunately the pressure was limited largely to the assignment desk and to the regularly scheduled news broadcasts. The most devastating effect was the impact on News department morale. Confidence was giving way to indecision and imaginative planning to record keeping.

It was unfortunate that the budget axe had to fall just as the department was completing a transition from corporate department to autonomous division. Once the transition was completed it would achieve a status on organization charts as one of eight autonomous divisions of the corporation, a status that would put it administratively, at least, on the same level as its three customers, the radio and television networks and the television stations division.
that night. The agency did not protest and the story took its spot in the broadcast, the first time a link between smoking and cancer had been publicly aired on a network and, ironically, on a program sponsored by a tobacco company.

A potentially damaging situation was smoothed over without any serious repercussions when the noted Irish poet Brendan Behan offended many viewers of the Murrow-Friendly program "Small World." The sponsor was Olin-Matthieson, the big chemical company. The program format normally called for two guests, one on each side of the Atlantic. It was recorded on film by 35-mm cameras, one focused on the guest in New York, another on the guest in Europe, and the third on Murrow. Since the reel on a 35-mm camera would only accommodate approximately ten minutes of running time, breaks were required to reload. Once the filming was completed film editors shaped the package into a sixty-minute unit. Behan was filmed in the same New York studio as Murrow but they were seated on separate sets.

The Irish poet had been notorious for his uncontrolled alcoholism but Murrow and Friendly had been assured that those days were over and that there would be no problems. The program started out smoothly. After the first break filming was resumed, but rather than sit quietly and participate in the conversation, Behan stood, reached for the microphone on a boom above him, pulled it down, and shouted, "Edward, Edward, where are you?" He was eventually seated and the conversation went on normally with no further disruptions.

The next day during an editing session Friendly called and asked that I come to the viewing room to watch a portion of the program with him. He showed me the episode in which Behan reached for the mike and shouted for Edward. We watched it several times. Apparently it did not look nearly so demeaning to Behan in the small viewing room with the large screen as it would on Sunday afternoon in the living room. We decided on a few relatively minor changes in which the most ludicrous actions were eliminated and approved the program for air.

On Sunday afternoon at home it looked quite different. It was shocking to see the noted poet so out of control and hard to understand why we had been so complaisant in the screening room. It was clear that Friendly and I would have to pay a call on the advertiser and the agency the next morning to apologize and promise no more bad taste in the future. It was a humiliating call. The sponsor was clearly disturbed but decided to remain with the program rather than abruptly withdraw support.

As 1959 came to a close, broadcasting news and information had progressed to the point where it was light years ahead of that in the early 1950s, when it was just beginning to establish a foothold; the ragtag News and Public Affairs department had become an autonomous corporate division on a level with the radio and television networks. News broadcasts
of the two television networks, CBS and NBC, were regularly being viewed five nights a week in more than 14 million homes. A pattern for television documentaries had been established and television had played a significant role in bringing down Senator Joseph McCarthy. The new medium, an expensive toy as the decade opened, was well along the way to establishing equal rights with the written press in covering the news. And it was building massive audiences. Progress had been breathtaking. In 1960 it would be in a position to round out the decade in triumph.
The End of the Decade

As the decade of the 1950s ended, news and information programs on television would have been almost unrecognizable to a viewer who had been in a deep sleep since January 1950. The fifteen-minute early evening news was still the staple but now there was news on network television between seven and nine o’clock weekday mornings and early Sunday evenings. Special half-hour news programs followed virtually every major national or international news event. Still photographs had largely given way to motion picture film. The quality was still not very good, but film stocks had improved markedly and professionally trained camera personnel had replaced the eager learners of the previous decade. Informational (or public affairs) programs had proliferated as producers, directors, and writers honed their skills and the networks began to deliver profits rather than the red ink of the early fifties. CBS boasted in its 1960 annual report that its newest autonomous division, CBS News, had produced 15 percent of the CBS Television Network’s program schedule in the previous year.¹

The total homes viewing the two early evening network news programs had risen from approximately 5 million in the 1950–51 season to more than 15 million. This meant that more than 30 percent of all American homes with television were regular followers of the news programs on the two networks. NBC had led the ratings by a two to one margin in 1950, had been overtaken by CBS in 1956, but by 1960 had edged ahead again
by a narrow margin. ABC was becoming more aggressive but still was not an important factor in the ratings race.2

The personnel complement of the newly designated News division at CBS had risen from the fifteen employed in producing news in early 1950 and the additional twenty producing public affairs and sports programs for both radio and television (mostly radio) to nearly four hundred with a large majority working in television. A professional cadre of producers, directors, writers, researchers, cameramen, sound technicians, film editors, and scenic designers had grown up with the business.

Sports broadcasts had become a major drawing card for both CBS and NBC. Professional football was firmly established on CBS, and NBC had just arranged to carry a full schedule of games of the new American Football League. The CBS Sports department had won the rights to both the winter Olympics in Squaw Valley and the summer Olympics in Rome to go along with the Master’s golf tournament, the Triple Crown, the Orange Bowl, and the Cotton Bowl. NBC had rights to college football and the baseball World Series.

“CBS Reports” had replaced “See It Now” and was winning critical praise. A special news unit was grinding out long-form, thirty-minute news programs with increasing frequency and attracting sponsors.

The 1960 calendar year would provide opportunities for head to head competition with NBC and an increasingly aggressive ABC in coverage of the quadrennial election year, including primaries, conventions, and the election. The conventions and elections were, in effect, the World Series or Super Bowl for the television networks, providing opportunities to test themselves directly against the other networks on a single broad-gauge news event with the A. C. Nielsen Company keeping score with its ratings system. NBC had won in 1952, largely because of its preponderance of affiliations in the major single-station markets; by 1956 the playing field had been leveled and CBS had come out the winner. The question now was, Could it hold its dominant position?

There were some ominous signs. CBS had clearly won the ratings contest at both conventions in 1956, but critics noticed an interesting departure from established convention coverage patterns. NBC fielded a team of unknown anchormen, Chet Huntley and David Brinkley. Huntley had been a local news broadcaster at CBS and ABC stations in Los Angeles and Brinkley a member of NBC’s Washington staff; neither had attracted much national attention. The two now functioned as a team: Huntley the straight reporter, Brinkley the sardonic commentator, fast with the irreverent quip. It was a radical departure from the conventional pattern but well adapted to a political convention with a plethora of party pageantry but very little news.

CBS, as it had in 1952, had approached both 1956 conventions as serious news events. But there was little serious news to cover. Adlai Steven-
son was a shoo-in for the Democratic nomination weeks before the party faithful convened in Chicago on August 13, 1956. The only serious question involved the nomination for vice president. After his nomination for the presidency, Stevenson threw the convention into an uproar when he violated tradition by announcing that he would not designate a vice presidential candidate but leave the choice to the delegates. The result was a free-for-all, and a debacle for CBS.

CBS went to the convention with an inadequate supply of coaxial cable, an essential ingredient in deploying electronic cameras in the era before hand-held portable units that could transmit by shortwave. The contest for the vice presidential nomination quickly settled into a two-man race between Senator John Kennedy of Massachusetts and Senator Estes Kefauver of Tennessee. Once the balloting began both awaited the results in their headquarters suites in the Stock Yards Inn, adjacent to the convention venue at the International Amphitheater. Since CBS had sufficient cable for only one location, it was decided to deploy its camera outside the Kefauver suite in the expectation that he would be the winner.

As the balloting proceeded Kennedy was making a surprisingly effective run. After consulting some presumed experts I made the personal decision to strike the camera at the Kefauver suite and move it to Kennedy’s in a nearby corridor. It appeared to be a wise decision as Kennedy’s total mounted. After the last state had been called it appeared that he might be ahead. Then a torrent of requests arose as state banners waved in the air calling on the chair to be recognized for permission to change the state’s vote. One by one the changes were recorded and it was soon evident that Kefauver would be the winner. But it was too late for CBS to move its camera. As the newly nominated smiling vice presidential candidate opened the door to his suite to make his statement of acceptance his image appeared full face on the ABC and NBC monitors. CBS had nothing better to show than delegates milling about aimlessly on the convention floor. It was a humiliating blow to the CBS staff.

The Republican convention the next week in San Francisco offered even less prospect of hard news. There was some speculation that President Eisenhower might dump Vice President Richard Nixon from the ticket and substitute Harold Stassen, but the president squelched those rumors the second day by formally announcing that he was supporting the vice president.

That step stifled the last possible chance of controversy and left the networks, in essence, with no story to cover. It was a situation made to order for Huntley and Brinkley. Brinkley’s sardonic wit enlivened the proceedings and created an attitude of mild amusement among viewers. CBS continued to view the proceedings as a serious news story long after there was no news remaining. Its sober-sided staff was prepared for ferreting out hard news, but there was none to be found. Bill Leonard, still working the con-
vention floor tirelessly, found the only intriguing news story at the convention, one that puzzled both delegates and media. Who was Joe Smith, who had been nominated for the presidency by Terry Carpenter, a Nebraska delegate? Carpenter admitted to Leonard that Joe Smith was fictitious; he had nominated him because something had to be done to add life to the dull proceedings.

CBS won the ratings war but had proved inadequate at shifting gears from its traditional serious approach to the light touch that NBC had introduced. The real damage occurred, later. Before the end of the year John Cameron Swayze, who had presided over NBC’s early evening news since its introduction in 1948, was removed to make way for Huntley and Brinkley. It was an innovative approach. The network created a two-person anchor team with Huntley in New York and Brinkley in Washington. Their customary “sign-off,” “Good night, David. Good night, Chet,” quickly became recognizable across the nation.

The Huntley-Brinkley team didn’t at first do much damage to CBS ratings, but the approach was so different it soon attracted attention. The competition now pitted the earnest and somewhat humorless Edwards against the offbeat pair with straight news from the more sober Huntley and quick-witted barbs from Brinkley, who, in addition to being an effective quipster, was a first-class reporter. Edwards held the ratings lead for many months but it was inevitable that eventually he would be knocked off his perch. It had taken him seven years of dogged pursuit from his first broadcast in 1948 to catch and pass Swayze, but now the handwriting was on the wall. In time he would fall back to a runner-up position.

It was not until ratings were compiled for the 1955-56 season that Edwards had reached the top spot. He held the lead through 1957-58, but by 1958-59 Huntley and Brinkley had returned NBC to the number one position, which they held until they were dethroned by Walter Cronkite late in the 1960s.3

By early 1960, with Huntley and Brinkley now firmly established as the leader in the ratings, the time seemed appropriate to make a change. I had an opportunity at a senior management retreat at Absecon, New Jersey, to spend some time alone with chairman Paley. I told him that I thought it imperative that we replace Edwards. It was doubly urgent now that we were running behind NBC in the ratings. As a replacement I recommended Cronkite. Paley approved, provided I clear it with James T. Aubrey, who had taken over the television network presidency several months earlier.

Aubrey flatly refused. He was willing to remove Edwards but wanted no part of Cronkite for what reason I had no notion, nor did he tell me. He insisted that if I wanted to make a change I choose from among Clete Roberts, Baxter Ward, and Mike Wallace. Roberts and Ward were West Coast news broadcasters whom he had known during his tours of duty for
CBS election studio on election night 1956. Walter Cronkite is listening to a phone message, far left. Photo courtesy of Sig Mickelson. Used by permission.
CBS and ABC in Los Angeles. Wallace had been working in New York since the late 1940s in a variety of assignments but not in straight news.

I balked at selecting any of the three. Roberts and Ward, I thought, were successful West Coast personalities but would have been ill fits in the elite CBS staff. I had great respect for Wallace, but his reputation had been made largely as a hard-hitting interrogator in half hour interview programs on DuMont and ABC. In the early 1950s he had performed with Buff Cobb, then his wife, in a daily afternoon CBS Television talk show, “Mike and Buff.” I had thought enough of Mike and Buff to invite them to join our team to do features at the 1952 conventions in Chicago, but I did not see him moving into the showcase news position at CBS.

It is obvious that I should have fought Aubrey on the issue, but I was not spoiling for a fight so I let it ride and Edwards remained in his anchor position for another two years before Cronkite finally took over.

Huntley and Brinkley were a major factor in winning back NBC’s early evening news lead, but NBC’s resurgence went well beyond the news series. It suddenly turned more aggressive in programming news specials and in breaking into established program schedules to report fast-breaking significant news. And CBS began to look sluggish.

There were a number of apparent reasons for the reversal of positions. One stemmed in part from the rigorous financial squeeze that had been forced on the CBS News division in 1957. Some of the swashbuckling attitude of the television news staff, the “we can beat anybody at this game” attitude, was lost when financial controls began to stifle initiative. Too much effort went into maintaining detailed financial records and not enough into initiative and chance taking.

The geographical diffusion of its facilities also tended to make it cumbersome. CBS simply had no central location where it could house the whole organization and its diverse components. The radio and television news departments were theoretically integrated in 1954 but remained physically separated, Radio News at 485 Madison Avenue, Television News on the third floor of a wing of Grand Central Terminal at 70 East Forty-fifth Street. The television news studio, at the time the newsroom was installed on Forty-fifth Street, was moved from Liederkranz Hall on Fifty-eighth Street to a studio complex on the third floor on the Forty-second Street side of Grand Central Terminal. It was no longer necessary to make the long trek from Fifty-second and Madison to Liederkranz Hall at Fifty-eighth and Park once the script was prepared, but the show staff still had a complicated trip from newsroom to studio. They either had to travel through the crowded terminal’s main waiting room or cross over the waiting room by way of a narrow catwalk, high above the main floor where commuters were milling around waiting for outbound suburban trains. It was not unusual to see the entire team, Edwards, Hewitt, writers, film
CBS Chairman William S. Paley with the author in the CBS studio on election night 1956. Photo courtesy of Sig Mickelson. Used by permission.
editors, and graphic artists, rushing across the catwalk single file a few
minutes before air time, carrying film cans, scripts, and program graphics.

The awkward separation between news headquarters and studio was not
the only problem involving work space. After delicate negotiations the cor-
poration’s Labor Relations department had helped break the monopoly
of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW) over CBS film
operations. The modified contract allowed the employment of a number of
cameramen and film editors from the much more film-oriented Inter-
national Alliance of Theater and Stage Employees (IATSE). Union regulations,
however, prevented members of the two unions from being housed in the
same quarters. Consequently, space was rented in a building several blocks
away from news headquarters for the newly hired IATSE crews.

The film laboratory, through which all film had to go for processing,
was all the way across Manhattan on West Fifty-fifth Street. There were
editing rooms for other CBS News programs in a half dozen other locations
in midtown Manhattan. The director of news remained with the Radio
News department at Fifty-second Street and Madison Avenue and the Pub-
lic Affairs and Sports departments were housed at Fifty-fifth Street and
Madison. Coordination of activities could be achieved only by the expen-
diture of both time and effort and countless telephone conversations. The
creation of geographically separated compartments both inhibited exchange
of ideas and fostered rivalries. The demolition of the East Fifty-fifth Street
building in 1959 forced a move, but the new news headquarters on the
thirty-second floor of the Graybar Building at Forty-third and Lexington,
though adjacent to Grand Central, offered only a marginal improvement.
The new space required a thirty-one floor elevator ride, a walk through the
same crowded Grand Central lobby, and another elevator ride to the third-
floor studio. There was not even a catwalk alternative.

I remained at 485 Madison Avenue with a small headquarters staff, too
far removed from the operating units to exercise much influence. It was a
relatively central location with respect to the scattered news and public
affairs components but made for unwieldy relationships with departments
and for an excess of contacts by telephone rather than in person.

The combination of these awkward circumstances made CBS News vul-
nerable to the aggressive and broad-based attack that NBC was beginning
to launch. The CBS invulnerability began to crack when Huntley and
Brinkley were introduced at the 1956 conventions. The stage was set for
fierce competition when they replaced Swayze as the twin anchors of the
“NBC Evening News” only weeks after the conventions.

Another major change at NBC intensified the attack. Robert Kintner,
president of ABC, had joined NBC in autumn 1956 as a free-floating ex-
ecutive, but he was clearly hired for a larger purpose, the eventual succe-
sion to the presidency of the NBC Network. Before joining ABC he had
been a journalist with a national reputation as a syndicated columnist.
When working for NBC, producer Sky replied in a solicitous division, defected to CBS. Stanton, director of Gulf, dropped his resignation, and arrived to the Mid-1958 presidency of NBC. That season, he was told the immediate concern was to clean up its image and get a far greater exposure. The station's immediate target was a number one, and it was going to be a struggle, but a struggle was what Stanton was up for. He had been working at News for years, and had always wanted to be a number one. He was pleased to have the summer off, to make his plans in the new site, New Orleans, and to meet the staff along with long-time manager Frank. He was disappointed at first, but he had learned to take defeat in his stride. The same applied when he was recruited by Public Broadcasting to join the Los Angeles station.

The executive of the Public Broadcasting station knew that if he were to get into a summer dispute, he would have to take things quick. However, the public was impatient, and there was a gnawing pollution of the site. The moves were slow and away from the summer plans. The public was not pleased with his plans. He was given a choice.
twelve-foot fence or into a second-floor window, mobile units maneuverable enough to pursue candidates or their supporters in dense traffic and parades. Videotape recorders would enable news teams to record events and hold them for release at opportune times. And there were scores of writers, editors, reporters, on-air personalities, and technicians to support the effort. The only weakness was that there wasn’t much of a story to cover.

The Democrats were first. Kennedy was not a sure first-ballot winner but the odds against anyone’s dislodging him were slight. Harry Truman, Adlai Stevenson, and Lyndon Johnson were all on the scene and participating in what maneuvering for position there was, but there never was much doubt that Kennedy would ultimately be the nominee. The question for the networks was, How do you make a spectacle out of an event whose outcome seemed so obvious?

CBS approached it seriously and solemnly as it had the conventions in 1956 and 1952 except it didn’t have the inner drive and enthusiasm it had then. The first shock occurred on the Tuesday morning after the convention opened. The overnight television ratings showed NBC a clear winner. Subsequent overnight ratings were only marginally better. On Sunday, July 17, in the New York Times, Jack Gould explained why. “The National Broadcasting Company’s team of Chet Huntley and David Brinkley swept away the stuffy, old-fashioned concept of ponderous reportage on the home screen. They talked as recognizable humans, sprinkled their observations with delightful wit and were easily the TV hit of the week.”

Gould later in the same piece pronounced the end of an era. “The pre-eminence of CBS in news coverage which has been something of a tradition in broadcasting no longer exists. . . . The sophisticated bite of CBS in large measure has slipped away.”

Bob Chandler, in the show business weekly Variety, picked up on the theme in his column on July 27: “There’s a growing belief,” he wrote, “that the solemn, sometimes stuffy and always let’s-make-it-look-important technique of CBS has finally had it.” From the point of view of ratings for the Democratic Convention, Chandler was right.

By the third day CBS was becoming more aggressive and better harnessing the talents of its correspondents. It was obvious, however, that NBC was more alert, better attuned to covering an event with little hard news except a bit of maneuvering behind the scenes. CBS correspondents were much more effective in assaying broad political and economic movements than in ferreting out the nitty-gritty of politics. The best political reporting CBS had done was in Chicago in 1952, when it had virtually no access to the CBS correspondent staff and had to rely on catch-as-catch-can recruitment to get a staff. Bill Leonard from WCBS radio in New York, Jim Bormann from WCCO in Minneapolis, and Grant Holcomb from KNXT in Los Angeles were indefatigable and sufficiently knowledgeable about politics and politicians to burrow into the most complicated thickets and
Poor negotiations between the ABC and the networks resulted in a scramble for affiliates, until in 1960, CBS offered a one-time format.

Stanton kept his agreement with CBS and filled the airwaves with his voice. As a result, his audience grew, and the attention of the networks increased. Stanton would continue his coverage of political events, not just for the Democrats and Republicans, but also for the third major party, the Independent Party, and a handful of niche small parties. He appeared on the airwaves before and after debates, particularly for the 1960 presidential election, where his coverage was alive, and Virtual Television was in its infancy.

In 1934, for the first time, a Vegetarian, the Independent Party, and a handful of niche small parties ran presidential candidates. Stanton has been active in promoting the independent party, which was founded by Moody, the Independent Party. Stanton, however, was an independent himself and would not be associated with any party, but was always active in the political process, especially in the 1952 election, when he appeared on the airwaves before and after debates, especially for the 1952 presidential election.
The author talks with presidential candidate Richard Nixon in the television studio prior to the first 1960 Kennedy—Nixon debate. On the right is director Don Hewitt. Photo courtesy of Sig Mickelson. Used by permission.
 Negotiations were not easy. Negotiators for the broadcasters, principally John Daly from ABC, William McAndrew from NBC, and me, were concerned almost up to the time that the moderator, Howard K. Smith, introduced the two candidates in a CBS Chicago studio on the night of September 26, 1960, that one or the other might find an excuse to bow out.

There were four joint appearances in all. Reliable estimates suggested that more than 100 million persons saw some part of at least one of them. More than 70 million were estimated to have seen the first in Chicago.\(^\text{12}\) It is generally assumed that his appearance in that first debate in Chicago gave Kennedy the impetus he needed to win the presidency.

The debates constitute one of the defining moments in television news history. If there was any doubt of the role that television played in public life, they were thoroughly dispelled. In that sense the debates took their place with the 1952 political conventions, the “See It Now” broadcast on Senator McCarthy, and the Khrushchev interview on “Face the Nation” as events in which television established itself as the equal of the press in informing the public and furnishing raw material for formulating public opinion. Except for the political conventions the initiative for each of these events came from within the television industry. They were both of such overwhelming importance that the printed media could not avoid enhancing their impact by featuring them with page 1 banner headlines.

Election night coverage from a ratings point of view was a rerun of the conventions, NBC a clear winner. Reporting, however, was vastly more sophisticated than it had been in 1952 or 1956. IBM put the use of its gigantic new computer, the 7090, and its system of collating data on punch cards at the disposal of CBS. Unfortunately the system IBM devised for the receiving and collating of data in the studio broke down and forced the network to rely on a backup system using adding machines and hand written reports. The big computer, so big that it could not be moved to the studio, however, performed impecably. Its first printout, timed at 8:12 p.m. EST on election night, with 4 percent of the nation’s precincts reporting, forecast a Kennedy victory with odds calculated at 11 to 5.\(^\text{13}\) Notwithstanding the computer’s confident forecast of a Kennedy victory, the race was so close that the network was not certain of the result until midmorning the next day.

Again NBC was the clear ratings winner. ABC, too, made a respectable showing, suggesting that the two-network news contest that had prevailed during the first full decade of television would soon become a three-way battle. CBS was boasting that its early evening news program had a greater circulation than Life magazine and a Roper poll conducted during 1959 indicated that television had almost caught newspapers as the source of most news for the American public. At the end of 1959 the poll showed 51 percent of respondents reported that they got most of their news from
The Decade That Shaped Television

By 1956, 57 percent of homes on the East Coast had TV, compared with 42 percent for newspapers. By 1963, TV had forged ahead.

Its news and information broadcasts had come a long way from their primitive beginnings only a little more than a decade earlier. By the end of 1960 television news had moved light years ahead of those early days. Edward R. Murrow, Walter Cronkite, Chet Huntley, David Brinkley, John Cameron Swayze, and Douglas Edwards had become names almost as familiar to American citizens as the most popular Hollywood movie stars.

Newspapers were changing patterns to interpret news and add background as a complement to television rather than assume that TV was only a supplemental source of news. Television set density in American homes had soared to nearly 90 percent. Television would continue to grow but the patterns were established. From now on changes would be evolutionary. The revolution was over.
Notes

INTRODUCTION

1. Statistics are taken from data compiled by the Research department of CBS Television, available in the writer's files.
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid.

CHAPTER 1

2. Ibid.
4. Most of the information about the early postwar efforts of CBS to build a news service is derived from a lengthy interview with Chester Burger. An audiotape of this interview is in the author's files.

CHAPTER 2

2. Ibid.

4. An account of this episode was related to the writer by Chester Burger. It was recorded on audiotape and may be found in the writer's files.

S. After leaving CBS some years later Schaffner went to Hollywood, where he won an Oscar for directing Patton.
2. Ibid.

CHAPTER 7
2. I have a copy of this list in my files.
3. Many years later I asked Dr. Stanton where it might have come from. He replied that he was not sure but thought it had probably been delivered to CBS by either the Young and Rubicam advertising agency or Clarence Francis, the chairman of the General Foods Corporation.
5. For a detailed report on the Burdett episode see Cloud and Olson, Murrow Boys, pp. 314–29.
6. Statement made by Cowden in an interview. The text is available on audiotape in the writer’s files.

CHAPTER 8
2. Ibid.
3. Data furnished by CBS Television Research department available in the writer’s files.
4. Ibid.

CHAPTER 9
1. The original of the letter signed by Schoenbrun is in the writer’s files.
2. Ibid.
3. The information cited is included in a memorandum to the writer from Schoenbrun regarding an off-the-record interview with General Lucius Clay dated May 28, 1952. The original is in the writer’s files.
4. The full content of Mullen’s conversation with General Eisenhower regarding the CBS move into the theater may be found on an audiotape in the Mickelson Archive, Wisconsin Historical Society, Madison.
6. Gould’s column was reprinted in Fixx, Mass Media and Politics, p. 19.
8. Data supplied by the CBS Television Research department available in the writer’s files.
Motes

CHAPTER 13

1. "Public Broadcasting" was first identified by that term in a report issued in 1967 by a task force set up by the Carnegie Corporation. The report made a clear distinction between classroom "instructional television" and the broader cultural type of program, which it identified as "public television."

2. An extensive exchange of memoranda between Columbia University executives and the writer may be found in the Mickelson Archive, Wisconsin Historical Society, Madison.


CHAPTER 14


3. A detailed account of the Radulovitch episode may be found in Fred W. Friendly, Due to Circumstances beyond Our Control (New York: Random House, 1967), pp. 3-20.

4. Ibid., p. 3.

5. Ibid., p. 4.

6. Unpublished manuscript, "An Objectivity Study of Three CBS News Broadcasts," prepared by the University of Wisconsin investigative team assigned to analyze CBS News scripts, dated November 21, 1954. The original manuscript may be found in the writer's personal files.

7. Ibid., p. 55.

8. Friendly, Due to Circumstances beyond Our Control, p. 92.

CHAPTER 15

1. Chairman Paley's role in suggesting the procedure was described to the writer personally by the chairman.


CHAPTER 16

1. The memo from Friendly to Mickelson, June 13, 1959, may be found in the Mickelson Archive, Wisconsin Historical Society, Madison.

2. Ibid., June 15, 1959.

3. Ibid.

4. Ibid., June 18, 1969.

5. The memo referred to is in the Mickelson Archive, Wisconsin Historical Society, Madison.

CHAPTER 20


2. The statistical data are derived from an untitled report and analysis prepared for the writer by members of the CBS Television Research staff. They are based largely on Nielsen reports.

3. Ibid.


5. Ibid., p. 136.


7. Ibid.


11. A detailed description of the campaign to win congressional support for the bill and of the negotiations leading up to the actual debates may be found in Mickelson, From Whistle Stop to Sound Bite (New York: Praeger, 1989), pp. 119-34.

12. Untitled report from CBS Television Research compiled for the writer from data furnished by Nielsen reports.

13. A copy of the printout is available in the writer’s files.

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