

and libel may well be unconstitutional because they contradict the specifics of the Bill of Rights which, to Justice Black, means what it says, literally. This is an astonishing premise and a very exciting one, and we are greatly indebted to Justice Black for stretching our minds, even if we do not agree as to practical matters. For ultimately it is in the world of the practical that his premise fails in the America of the 1960s, though who is to say that one glorious day the human race will not be so advanced that pure free speech will at last be a practicality?

The fundamental difficulty of Justice Black's position is that it robs the voiceless little man, the unimportant, the defenseless (as well as the vociferous and battle-hardened) of the right to legal recourse against defamation and persecution. In our system of balances and checks, few Americans have access themselves to news columns or editorial pages. Yet they are often subjected to unjust defamation and persecution from columnists and editorial writers, even when the latter are under the threat of possible suit for libel. A scurrilous news report or opinion constitutes, moreover, far more than just "saying something." It is, in most libels, a definite act which satisfies Justice Black's own definition: ". . . when they do something."

Libel and the results of libel can be very real to the injured. Were it not for the legal restraints of law, the vicious and irresponsible would turn freedom into license, and lord-of-the-manor journalistic feudalism would eventually choke our democracy. For uncontrolled license destroys a freedom fundamental to the U.S. Constitution, which nowhere states but everywhere suggests the right of the innocent to be left alone.

—R.L.T.

The Permanency of Type

"Many things that are defamatory may be said with impunity through the medium of speech. Not so, however, when speech is caught upon the wing and transmuted into print. What gives the sting to the writing is its permanence of form. The spoken word dissolves, but the written one abides and 'perpetuates the scandal.'"

—Justice Benjamin Cardozo
in the U.S. Supreme Court.

Letters to the Communications Editor



FROM GENERAL FOODS VIA Y.&R.

DURING THE PAST WEEKEND I caught up with your editorial on advertising ethics [SR, June 9].

Your support of the new AAAA code undoubtedly will be appreciated by that organization. Your comment about Maxwell House Coffee pricing, however, cannot possibly be appreciated by General Foods . . . nor by us. We share with General Foods their diligence in protecting their consumer franchises that have been built so carefully over the years. By associating General Foods with words like "false" and "deceptive" your editorial does a disservice to that corporation.

The facts in the incident of the FDA pickup were explained in a General Foods statement as early as May 4. Young & Rubicam has worked with General Foods for thirty-eight years. My own experience with GF and its people has been an intimate working relationship that covers the past nineteen years. We know of no company, large or small, less given to what you call "shenanigans."

HARRY HARDING,
Executive Vice President,
Young & Rubicam, Inc.

New York, N.Y.

(Statement From General Foods)

General Foods had decided some months ago to eliminate the word "economy" on the 10-ounce size of Instant Maxwell House Coffee and was well along toward making label and jar lid changes when a quantity of this product was seized at the National Tea Company in Chicago by the Food and Drug Administration. Arthur E. Larkin, Jr., vice-president and general manager of the company's Maxwell House division, has so advised wholesale and retail distributors.

Mr. Larkin pointed out that while manufacturers' prices do constitute a base or starting point, each retailer ultimately sets the actual shelf prices to the consumer. "Our per-ounce Instant Maxwell House Coffee list prices to the grocery trade," Mr. Larkin said, "represent substantial economies in both the larger sizes (6-ounce and 10-ounce) over the 2-ounce size. The packaging change on the 10-ounce size was decided on because of the possibility that, in especially competitive markets, the differential in General Foods pricing to distributors between the 10-ounce jar and the 6-ounce jar might not be large enough to withstand the growing retail trend to feature the popular 6-ounce size at reduced prices.

"New labels and metal lids for the product's glass jars were ordered shortly after the first of the year," Mr. Larkin said. "These new packaging materials were first used toward the end of Febru-

ary, and are now being used exclusively by all four Maxwell House plants."

ADVERTISING IS COMMUNICATION

YOUR COMMUNICATIONS SECTION [SR, May 12] included two letters (by David Tillson and Robert E. Peterson) that typify one form of criticism often heard about advertising. These critics imply that the very existence of advertising is undesirable, and that its elimination would somehow rid us of the social and economic shortcomings which the critics associate with advertising.

This sort of reasoning seems shortsighted. The institution of advertising is nothing more than one of several methods that businessmen and others use to communicate information and ideas. As such advertising has no will of its own, it is neither good nor bad of itself. If deprived of advertising I assume its users would simply substitute some other form of communication.

I am in no way suggesting that advertisements as a whole are unethical, any more than I am suggesting that all advertisements are free from deception or bad taste. But to imply that by eliminating advertising we would be rid of false and misleading statements is hardly realistic. The basis of the problem is the honesty and ethical standards of the advertiser. Efforts toward improvement should be directed at the advertiser and not the tools he uses, if any really effective change is to occur.

HOMER DALBEY,
Assistant Professor of
Business Administration,
Oregon State University.

Corvallis, Ore.

"THE LESSON OF A.T.&T."

YOUR accurately phrased and pertinent article, "The Lesson of A.T.&T." [SR, June 9] makes too brief mention of James D. Ellsworth, assistant to President Vail, in the development of the company's public relations policy.

Representing N. W. Ayer as copy writer, I wrote many of the early "policy" advertisements (about 1912 to 1916). I was closely associated with Ellsworth, knew him well, and respected his fine conception of the meaning of honest public relations.

He had been a newspaper man, and had a fair knowledge and understanding of men and women "who are the public." He had a large part in defining the Bell System policy of those formative years.

As an advertising man, I learned much from Jim Ellsworth.

LOUIS E. SEABER.

New Canaan, Conn.

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FIRST

FIRST IN THE HEARTS OF WOMEN

Ask any woman how she feels about McCall's, what the magazine means to her. You'll discover quickly why more women buy McCall's than any other magazine in the world. McCall's circulation base of 8 million is larger than Life (7,000,000), Look (7,000,000), or the Post (6,500,000).

McCALL'S: FIRST MAGAZINE FOR WOMEN—FIRST IN CIRCULATION—FIRST IN ADVERTISING.

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U. S. TELEVISION ABROAD:

By JOHN TEBBEL

LONDON.

WHILE the debate over television's role in American culture is being argued on the playing fields of Washington, the entrepreneurs of the prerecorded small screen are quietly building themselves an international industry. With tape and film they have introduced the American wasteland, if indeed it is, into the programming of every country that has any television at all, and they are anticipating the needs of emerging nations that do not yet enjoy this blessing of civilization.

In little more than a half-dozen years, international television sales abroad have reached a total of more than \$25 million. The center of the new industry is London, where the three major American networks and several producing organizations have sales offices busily selling United States television in Europe and on other continents.

London is the center for European, African, and Near Eastern distribution, but the networks and other distributors also have salesmen in Toronto, Mexico City (covering Central and South America), and Sydney, Australia, which is presently the distributing point for Asia.

There are sound business reasons for this expansion, which has only begun. One reason is the startling fact, little known outside the trade, that during this year the total of television sets owned outside the United States will surpass the American total. By the end of 1962, we will have fifty million sets; the remainder of the world will have fifty-three million, and this is one gap not likely to be closed. It will, in fact, tend to widen steadily as time goes on. As one might expect, the United Kingdom has more receivers, twelve million, than any other foreign country, but West Germany can boast four million in its rapidly expanding economy, while Italy has nearly three million and the Scandinavian countries nearly two million.

There is a tough competitive scramble to reach this juicy market. Of the American networks, NBC was first to realize and exploit the situation, and

consequently has an impressive head start on the others as a supplier of television film. CBS has proceeded more cautiously, but it easily ranks second in sales, while ABC, a relative newcomer to the struggle, is third. Then there are the several large non-network suppliers: Revue (MCA), Screen Gems (Columbia), Ziv (United Artists), ITC (Independent Television Corporation of England, formerly an American-British company but now wholly British owned), Desilu Productions, Warner Brothers, and Four Star. The BBC, too, is active all over the world; many of its shows are seen on American networks, who do not, however, distribute them through their international divisions. These strong competitors—producers and distributors—have one thing in common: they are big and getting bigger.

There is now some American television on every service in Europe, and it will be seen on the newest group of small TV services, just going on the air this summer in Sierra Leone, Kenya, and Gibraltar. For TV has become a status symbol. If a new nation wants status these days among the developing countries, it must first have an airline and then a television service, which will undoubtedly run at a substantial loss. In most of these countries, advertising revenue will be sought immediately to help offset the expense. The new African nations carry commercials on their services, as do some in the Middle East, but old established Western European countries like the Netherlands, Belgium, and France, along with some in Scandinavia, permit no commercialism.

The chief usefulness of television in every country is propaganda: it gives the government a means for communicating instantly with the people. While such usage does little for the quality of programming, it justifies a cost which few of these nations would otherwise consider worth meeting.

In spite of government propaganda, however, television remains an entertainment medium. This is particularly true in Britain, where the decision in 1955 to introduce commercial TV opened the way for American com-

panies to establish their new industry. It was, in some ways, a painful introduction, accomplished through the Independent Television Act of 1954, which created the Independent Television Authority and ended the BBC's twenty-seven-year monopoly. This act was pushed through Parliament by a determined group of Conservative backbench MPs, who later were accused of highpowered pressure tactics on behalf of the "commercial interests," meaning industry and advertising agencies.

Having been created, the new Authority found itself confronted with the formidable task of filling the air in competition with the BBC's established programs. Fortunately for it, at about this time American television began to be available on film, especially the high-rating Western shows and crime thrillers in the usual thirteen-week and twenty-six-week series. This was exactly the kind of fare the Authority needed to create and reach the mass audience it believed was waiting in Britain. There were complicated questions of clearing rights to be solved, but the American networks were only too willing to help solve them, and on September 22, 1955, the new Authority put its first telecast on the air from a London station. By the end of last year, 95 per cent of Britain's population was within reach of ITA's operating stations.

Skeptics on both sides of the Atlantic who predicted that Britons would not like or understand American television films proved to be profoundly wrong. To experienced observers this was hardly surprising because the viewers were only looking at a condensation of something already thoroughly familiar to them, the American motion picture. Hollywood, in fact, has conditioned the whole world to easy acceptance of the rival medium. When the BBC, countering ITA's success, imported the Perry Como show on film, British intellectuals protested in the press and even in Parliament, but BBC audiences plainly enjoyed not only Como but the familiar motion picture and stage personalities who were his guests.

As America's TV film salesmen moved from Britain to the Continent,