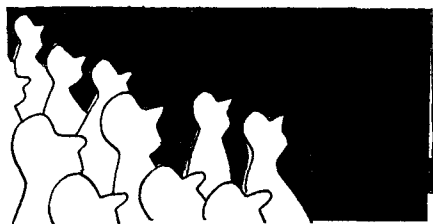


voting would also do away with the possibility of one section's influencing another's electoral behavior.

Dr. Stanton's idea is probably as sound as any proposal yet made to establish a uniform, simultaneous election, fair to all concerned. There is, however, no evidence that projections based on analyses of the votes already tabulated and announced in the earlier time zones have any significance on the voting behavior of those who have not yet cast their ballots, except possibly to discourage marginal voters in a one-sided election. In any case, twenty-four-hour voting is, it seems to us, better than any curb on radio, TV, or newspaper coverage of a great national election.

It has also been charged, now against the networks, formerly against the bulldog editions of newspapers, that early returns do not always indicate final results and are, therefore, injurious and prejudicial to the voting public. CBS



made a bad call in the New York City primary in 1965, incorrectly forecast the gubernatorial election in Georgia in 1966, and confidently identified the wrong candidate as "probable winner" in the Maryland gubernatorial race the same year. But television's occasional electoral boners are inevitable in all media and the newspapers have been no exception. For example, in 1916 the *Oregon Journal* reported that Hughes had defeated Wilson, relying on telegraphed information from the East without waiting to see how California, then a "sure" state for the Republicans, would vote. Similarly, in 1948 the *Chicago Tribune's* early editions elected Thomas E. Dewey; in 1966 *The New York Times* incorrectly reported the Georgia gubernatorial race outcome two days after the election. And no journalist should forget the *Literary Digest* poll disaster of 1932 which stated flatly that Roosevelt could not win—and F.D.R. went on to become President four times.

In any case, it seems to us that the importance of speedy transmission of news to the public at election time far outweighs any prejudicial or manipulative effect on those who have not yet cast their ballot. If any change in our electoral laws has to be made, however, Dr. Stanton's twenty-four-hour voting day establishing a uniform, simultaneous, nationwide election seems to be easily the best suggestion so far. —R.L.T.

Letters to the Communications Editor



British Press Woes

THE TRADITIONALLY noncompetitive British domestic economy makes unnecessary, to quote from John Tebbel's article, "Britain's Chronic Press Crisis" [SR, July 8], "the tremendous volume of local retail advertising which makes so many American papers highly profitable." It also makes inevitable a terminally ill press, a broadcasting system that never was well, and a life of "inconvenience and discomfort" for most residents of the British Isles—acceptable or not, as a matter of tradition. [The situation] won't change until the Establishment moves England into the mainstream of today's world of comfort, convenience, and competition.

Competitors use advertising to promote consumption, consumption supports production, production creates wealth, and wealth supports a healthy press as an essential part of a healthy economy—facts which Britons seem not to understand.

HAROLD W. BANGERT.

Fargo, N.D.

Muzzling War Correspondents

IN REGARD to the article by Trevor Christie, "The Generals and the News 'Spy'" [SR, July 8], a reliance upon precedent set down during the Civil War relating to an alleged crime committed by a civilian and tried by a military court will result only in misunderstanding. In the case of correspondent Thomas W. Knox, it was a matter of applying U. S. law within the United States and the only question, really, was that of jurisdiction of the military court over Mr. Knox. A number of cases from that time recognized jurisdiction by the military court only where civilian courts were not open.

In the case of General Westmoreland's threat to subject reporters to the U.S. Uniform Code of Military Justice in South Vietnam, however, we have quite a different matter. First, there is no extra-territorial extension of U.S. law into South Vietnam. That country has not relinquished this basic principle of sovereignty. (This is not to say that South Vietnam could not waive its right.) Second, the civilian (reporter) living in South Vietnam is there at the pleasure of the South Vietnam government and has a proper passport and visa which acknowledge this. In essence, MACV [Military Assistance Command Vietnam] has no jurisdiction over these persons whether they be U.S. citizens or foreign citizens. His threat is baseless and no doubt the product of applying emotion instead of research to the issue.

The Supreme Court dealt with very similar issues which stemmed from convictions of dependents of military personnel stationed overseas just after World War II. In these cases, where military courts found civilian dependents guilty, they were confined in federal prisons only to have the

court release them for lack of jurisdiction. One might ask whether or not allowing the press corps reasonably free access to military information in South Vietnam is in keeping with the policy of our government. This question is best answered by reflection upon the new Public Information Act, which became effective on July 4, 1967.

JAMES P. HAGERSTROM.

San Bernardino, Calif.

Publicity and Public Relations

L. L. L. GOLDEN's enthusiastic piece about public relations at American Telephone & Telegraph Company, "Lessons of History" [SR, July 8], appeared virtually at the same moment that this huge communications monopoly was being ordered to reduce its rates. Would the front-page publicity triggered by such an edict from Washington have disturbed the two men [former president Walter S. Gifford, and public relations expert Arthur W. Page] given such lavish treatment in this article?

I rather suspect it would. I also have misgivings as to whether they would have approved the pressure their former company has brought to bear on reporters in connection with the controversial merger plan involving the American Broadcasting Company. The issue is whether the integrity of the latter organization as a purveyor of news will not be compromised in the event it loses its current independent status. On the basis of recent efforts aimed at influencing the press to support the fusion, public concern has increased rather than lessened.

Perhaps a remark attributed to Mr. Gifford and cited by Mr. Golden bears reiteration: "If your background of living is not right I don't think any amount of publicity or any amount of effort will result in good public relations." Surely that is no less realistic an appraisal in 1967 than it was in 1940.

THOMAS G. MORGANSEN.

Jackson Heights, N.Y.

Preferred Media

AS USUAL, I find your communications issues provocative and informative. The controversy John Tebbel outlines on the impact of media in his article, "The Great Media Impact War" [SR, June 10], was of particular interest. I was disappointed, however, that he did not tackle, except for a few phrases, some of the problems the opinion researchers overlooked.

Neither the Roper Research Associates nor the Opinion Research Corporation of Princeton, New Jersey, it appears from the Tebbel article, asked why the interviewed were watching or reading the media under study. Some researchers have done this. For example, in a study completed last year at the University of Wisconsin, Madison, by John G. Udell, director of business

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Radio: The Languishing Giant

By RAYMOND SWING

IN THIS country, stock is being taken of electronic communications. This time it is without rapturous admiration for what they do so wondrously; the evaluation is registering in what respects these communications are failing. A revolution is being measured—a revolution that is not reaching its potential.

Radio and television in this country have grown up so far without social supervision. Radio matured first and reached its maximum value in World War II, when it helped make our nation, hitherto a collection of regions, into a unified whole. The war was deciding the survival of our way of life and through radio the whole country could learn about it as it developed, everyone doing so generally at the same time. It heard the story in diverse terms, but all of them sharpened the acute awareness of our national identity. We did not become less regional but we found ourselves, as regions can, to be a single community. We were not fully aware at the time that this was happening, and even now we hardly appreciate that it was happening and that radio was producing this result.



Raymond Swing, whose journalistic career was equally divided—twenty-seven years in newspaper work, twenty-seven in broadcasting—celebrated his eightieth birthday this year. He broadcast first for the Columbia School of the Air, then for Mutual and for the Blue Network. He originated *American Commentary* on the BBC, to which he contributed for eleven years, and ended his services at the microphone as political commentator for the Voice of America. During World War II, *The New Yorker* wrote that his voice, next to that of Franklin D. Roosevelt, was the best known American voice in the world.

Then came television, which carried on the development of the community. But television, in growing up, smoothed its social purposes in the surge for profits. This is what is now under examination. The social services of television and radio must be established and enlarged, which they cannot be while profit-making is the overriding consideration. That is the essence of the studies of the Ford Foundation and the Carnegie Institute. Whether it is called educational, public, or cultural television, the meaning is the same. Commercial television cannot afford to stimulate and reflect community interests. Now some way is being sought to put the electronic revolution at the service of the community, to edify as well as entertain it.

Both the Ford and Carnegie studies focused on television, but that is not to say that TV has completely superseded radio. Presumably radio will be examined in due course. About as many American homes have radio as have television sets. The number of radio sets in the United States, in and out of homes, is in excess of 160,000,000, of which more than 50,000,000 are in cars. But radio no longer is building a national community as it did. It has been relegated to minor functions. Television surpasses it in glamor, excitement, and, indeed, in its occasional presentation of social problems. By now its national audience is tremendous, far greater for individual programs than radio ever mustered, a fact that turns out to be a hindrance to fulfilling its social duties, since social programs do not attract tremendous audiences. The hope is that cultural or public television can be independently financed, and that then it can perform its social functions far better than radio ever did. No doubt it can. The capabilities of the medium are almost limitless. But it would be a serious error to assume that television can do everything better than radio. If that were true, radio would not be languishing but dying, which it is not.

TAKE a quite minor example of radio's unique value, the blackout in the East two years ago. During the darkness, transistor radios kept a considerable portion of the public informed of what was happening and what was not happening, and so prevented panic. This it would do in a time of real national calamity if electricity were cut off. Transistorized

radio is making a major contribution in creating vast audiences throughout the world for short-wave broadcasts. Americans, not being listeners to short-wave broadcasts, have little idea of their importance. Already there are about 250,000,000 radio sets in use outside the American continent. Millions of them bring news and features to regions not served by newspapers. Millions of illiterates now receive world and local news, many of them with cheap transistor sets.

This is the prelude to the creation of a world community made up of regions in the same way the United States became a national community. Indeed, it is the first time that the creation of a world community has become conceivable. It will take much more than short-wave radio to bring it about, more than radio plus television, which in time is sure to become universal. But the community cannot come into existence without them, and the impact of the electronic revolution should be measured in such terms. For many years radio will play a greater part than television in pulling the regions of the world together, and we need to utilize our own radio fully if we are to make our contribution to this growth.

RADIO can do two things better than television. It can explain the news and it can produce superior music. Both of these functions require undistracted listening, the ear being the doorway to the mind. If the eye gets into the act, the mind's contribution is diluted. This is not true of news documentaries and opera. But news documentaries are not numerous enough to give the public a full and convincing study of what the news means. And opera is only one dish of the musical feast.

Television in its daily output makes little effort to explain the news. Even the vaunted half-hour programs of Huntley-Brinkley and Walter Cronkite do little more than verbalize headlines, with a taped feature now and then, all interspersed among the commercials. Even Eric Sevareid's daily essays, sober and suggestive though they are—and a credit to him and to television—cannot add greatly to the understanding of the news. They are not meant to, otherwise they would be given more time. Howard K. Smith, Charles Collingwood, Joseph C. Harsch, and Daniel Shore are among the experienced broadcasters who are quite capable of explaining the news. But a news commentary is a demanding challenge and cannot be done in gulps of two-and-a-half minutes. Television, in trying to create the illusion that it is conscientiously and ably reporting and interpreting the news, is guilty of one of the most glaring frauds of our time. The deceit is only partly due to the obsession with profits. It also