

CITIZENS' COMMITTEE OF INQUIRY

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TO ALL CRITICS:

This is a report on our request ~~for time to~~ reply to the "CBS News Inquiry: The Warren Report".

On July 7, Leon R. Brooks (Vice President and General Counsel) replied to my telegram of July 5. This letter crossed in the mails with my letter of July 13. Mr. Brooks refused the request stating:

"We find no basis for the charge that significant viewpoints on any controversial issues of substance were not given in the broadcasts."

On July 20, I wrote to Mr. Brooks citing the premature nature of his refusal and stating that I expected his reconsideration in the light of my letter of July 13. On July 28, Albert Hayden Dwyer (General Attorney) reiterated in two brusque sentences CBS' refusal to grant our request.

At this point, I consulted with our attorney who advised us to make a formal complaint to the FCC. On August 10, I did so, outlining explicitly and in detail exactly how the FCC regulations apply to this case and enclosing copies of all correspondence between myself and CBS. On August 25, Mr. Ben F. Waple (Secretary) replied, stating:

"The question before the Commission is whether the licensee, in discharging his obligation under the fairness doctrine, can be said to have acted within the wide discretion afforded it to make judgments in this area of broadcasting journalism, Report on Editorializing 13 FCC 1246.

Given this standard we do not believe that the network can be said to have exceeded that wide discretion in the circumstances."

In other words, the FCC has adopted a policy of non-regulation -- allowing the licensees to make all decisions

independently of FCC regulations. I have since re-read the Report on Editorializing and it contains no mention of 'wide discretion' in this area (stations are given total discretion in determining format and who will present conflicting opinions).

So here the matter will end, with one last letter to Mr. Waple (cc: all commissioners). When I first embarked on this venture, I fully realized the futility of such a move and the great improbability of success. These people simply will not face the issues and will use any excuse, rationalization, perversion, or lie to avoid any semblance of justice. ~~This, some of you had told me before and I did not~~ disagree -- but slight hope, perhaps naive hope, was always present as it always is.

Copies of all correspondence between myself, CBS, and the FCC are available to you upon request.

Best wishes to all,



Steven J. Burton,
National Chairman,
Citizens' Committee of Inquiry