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**Newsmen a la Agnew**

Vice President Spiro Agnew's carefully-conceived program to intimidate the U.S. news media continues to pay off handsomely for him, particularly among the electronic newsmen.

On "Meet the Press" Aug. 27, the Larry Spivak-led panel of newsmen was suddenly transformed from previous glibness to a state of strange mumness in response to outrageous claims by Mr. Nixon's running mate.

The panelists just sat there and refused to challenge such Agnewisms as these: (1) his contention that thousands of Vietnamese refugees are moving south—while only a few trickle north—because they want to escape the North Vietnamese. The obvious truth is that they are running to the south to escape the incessant daily bombing of U.S. warplanes which are dropping a bomb tonnage unprecedented in history; and (2) the Nixon Administration is taking a hands-off stance in its cooperation with the Greek military dictatorship because it is not the Nixon policy to interfere in the affairs of foreign governments. By this, he must feel that the Nixonian activities in Vietnam, Cambodia, Thailand and Laos—to name just a few—don't really count, perhaps because these are just "Yellow Peril" nations.

It is highly significant that the "Meet the Press" panelists allowed Mr. Agnew to make these highly-distorted statements without the least suggestion of an attempt to square them with the truth. It is evident that this restraint where Mr. Agnew is concerned is not extended to the electronic newsmen's dealings with representatives of the Democratic presidential candidate, Sen. George McGovern, whose spokesmen are subjected to merciless grilling and debate over inconsequential matters, for the most part.

The TV newsmen had a hey-day with the Eagleton affair and have not hesitated to needle, belittle and challenge the McGovern people at every opportunity, on all aspects of his campaign. Apparently, the only way for the Democrats to get fair treatment is

for them to take up the Agnew sledge-hammer and whale away at the news media. Judging from the timidity this has instilled a la Agnew among newsmen, it could be the only thing that will make them humble.

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On NBC's "Meet the Press" (Aug. 27) Vice President Agnew boasted: "I've remained consistent in my views in the last five years."

In a time of tremendous moral and social change, this is hardly a record to be proud of.

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