

FP024 1/13/71

Former Newsmen Tells Senate Panel

TV Quality Profit-Oriented

WASHINGTON (AP) — A former television news executive told a Senate panel Tuesday that the profit motive, not government harassment, has led to de-emphasis of news and documentary programs by the nation's broadcast networks.

Fred Friendly, former president of CBS news, testified it is more profitable to televise an "intellectual ghetto" of nighttime entertainment rather than sometimes controversial documentaries and news specials which sponsors are less willing to support.

He told a subcommittee on constitutional rights headed by Sen. Sam J. Ervin Jr., D-N.C., that Vice President Spiro T. Agnew, Congress and the Federal Communications Commission should worry more about violence and low-level nightly entertainment and less about newscasters.

Agnew's "motives might not be so suspect," if he showed such concern, Friendly said.

"If some members of Congress were as concerned with the selling of violence and superfluous medicine as they were with the CBS documentary 'The Selling of the Pentagon', the debate over slanting the news might be more understandable," Friendly testified in the subcommittee inquiry into freedom of the press.

Friendly, now a Columbia University professor of broadcast journalism, took issue with

earlier witnesses who called the FCC a threat to broadcast freedom through its checks on program content.



ON PRESS FREEDOM—Julian Goodman, president of the National Broadcasting Company, talks of censorship and freedom of the press during testimony Tuesday before a Senate Judiciary subcommittee. (AP Wirephoto)