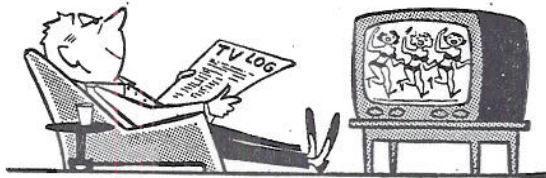


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# Terrence O'Flaherty



## The Salesman and the Preacher

**M**OST POLITICANS are a mixture of preacher and salesman, yet they are beholden neither to God nor the balance sheet. Last week television gave us a splendid opportunity to watch two big ones in action — Richard Nixon and Lyndon Johnson.

When the preacher instinct outweighs the temptation to sell — as in the case of Johnson — or when the salesman out-talks the preacher — as it always does with Nixon — I become v a g u e l y uneasy at the imbalance.



Mr. Nixon

If either a preacher or a salesman takes to television there is usually a good reason and last week was no exception. Nixon did so to sell a war to the people and Johnson did so to sell his image to history. Neither was entirely successful.

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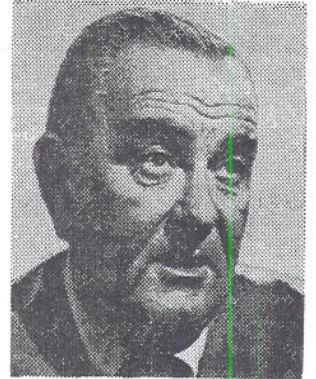
**A**S TELECASTS, both productions were inept and unimaginative. President Nixon hopped up and down from desk to map in a manner more becoming to a product demonstrator than a chief executive, but he was attempting the biggest sale in his career and perhaps he felt instinctively, as most salesmen do, that an awful lot of people weren't in the mood to buy. A war is a more serious purchase than a used car, particularly when you have one already.

In his third and final installment in the CBS-LBJ interview series, Johnson discussed his personal relationship with the Kennedys in a manner as courtly as a Southern minister conducting a funeral, but it was deeply marred by several outside considerations. While the emotional nature of the subject

made it the most compelling of the three interviews, the background clatter and amateurish camera work by the CBS crew were a disgrace to the television medium.

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**I**N ADDITION to these irritants there is the matter of commercialism in a show of such historic importance. For God's sake why can't the enormously successful CBS network afford to present a former President of the United States talking about the most fascinating single event in American history — **WITHOUT COMMERCIALS?** — or get a sponsor more considerate than Connecticut General?



Mr. Johnson

Unfortunately this avarice can be traced to Johnson himself, who sold these recollections of what should be considered national community property and therefore free of financial considerations. These interviews were not written memoirs which take months of personal effort on his part, and his sale of them to CBS for commercial sponsorship is unbecoming to a man of his statesmanship.

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**H**IS RECEIPT of a reported \$300,000 for these interviews became even more repugnant when it was learned that the former President had second thoughts about his comment regarding the Warren Commission and requested — six months after the filming last October — that they be deleted on the grounds of national security.

His contract with CBS did not give him the right of censorship or review of the interviews but it did permit him to "delete for national security." Obviously there are occasions when military and diplomatic information should be withheld from general publication, but further secrecy regarding the events surrounding the assassination of President Kennedy only serves to create more suspicion in the public mind about an event that should have been, by now, completely open to the public eye.

Furthermore, Johnson should realize that his comments would eventually be leaked anyway. Sources "close to CBS" revealed they concerned his statement that he had never been "absolutely satisfied" with the Warren report and his expression of doubt about "the motivations and connections" of Lee Harvey Oswald and his defection to the Soviet Union.

It's easier to sell a new war than an old memory.