

Time Inc. Opposes News Panel To Monitor Press Performance

NYTimes

MAR 6 1973

Time Inc. announced yesterday that it would not support the National News Council being set up by the Twentieth Century Fund to monitor the performance of the national news media and evaluate complaints about its accuracy and fairness.

Hedley Donovan, Times' editor in chief, said in a statement that "any council that might sound like a single institutiona voice for the press, or an authoritative judge of press performance, would accentuate what are already widespread misconceptions about the workings of the American press."

The council, whose 15 members would be drawn from the journalism profession and the public at large, would have no coercive power, but would receive, screen and investigate complaints and then make public its findings on news stories carried by "the national suppliers of news," such as wire

services, television and radio networks and national newspapers and news magazines. t

The proposal has generated wide controversy. Proponents who plan to join it contend that systematic, independent evaluation of press performance would be fruitful. Opponents, who do not plan to cooperate with it, contend that any council, even though privately financed, would tend to legitimize the regulation of the press.

Mr. Donovan, in his statement, said that Time Inc. would neither join nor financially support the council but would "answer its inquiries, as we do other questions about the publications."

He contend that "too many politicians and others are already disposed to discuss 'the press' or 'the media' as though all the thousands of magazines, newspapers and news organizations of TV and radio could be considered a single institution."