

APR 4 1972

NYTimes

Home Front Propaganda

When Congress launched the United States Information Service at the very start of the cold war, it clearly intended that the material produced for foreign consumption should not in any way be used for political purposes at home. There has never been a change in that policy; yet Acting Attorney General Kleindienst

now affects to read the law in precisely the opposite sense. Mr. Kleindienst has given Senator Buckley of New York full legal support in the showing of a U.S.I.A. film about Czechoslovakia on the Senator's monthly television program. Mr. Kleindienst stretches a statute that expressly requires all such material to be available "for examination" by representatives of the American media and members of Congress into approval for its distribution to the public by television.

When the U.S.I.A. some years ago contracted with a film company to show its movie "Jacqueline Kennedy's Asian Journey," Republicans in Congress complained to the Controller General about that "scheme to propagandize the American people." He agreed and warned that no such contracts would be approved in the future without express statutory authority, which the House had declined to provide.

Frank Shakespeare, director of the Information Agency, in retrospect now questions the propriety of having allowed Senator Buckley, who is certainly a "political figure," to make domestic use of the film on Czechoslovakia, whatever its merits. He has likewise apologized to Senator Fulbright for the insulting remarks made about him by a U.S.I.A. official on the television show that incorporated the film. And that aide has quite properly turned in his resignation. The fact remains that Senator Buckley and Mr. Kleindienst have both displayed singularly poor judgment.