

Following are the texts of replies to Vice President Agnew's speech on the press yesterday by Arthur Ochs Sulzberger, president and publisher of The New York Times, and Mrs. Katharine Graham, president of the Washington Post Company, and of statements by Reuven Frank, president of N.B.C. News; Dr. Frank Stanton, president of the Columbia Broadcasting System, and Leonard H. Goldenson, president of the American Broadcasting Companies, Inc.:

Mr. Sulzberger's Reply

Vice President Agnew is entitled to express his point of view, but he is in error when he implies that The New York Times ever sought or enjoyed immunity from comment and criticism. Indeed, all American institutions from the press to the Presidency should be the subjects of free and open debate.

It would be wise, however, for those involving themselves in such a discussion to be certain of their facts. Some of Mr. Agnew's statements are inaccurate.

The Vice President has accused us of avoiding the issue of monopoly journalism. Quite the opposite. In fact in an editorial on March 13, 1969, headed "Competition Not Monopoly," The Times stated: "The constitutional guarantee of freedom of the press provides the press with no warrant for seeking exemption from the laws prohibiting monopoly. If anything, the sanctity attached to press freedom by the First Amendment makes it the special obligation of the press to fight for the broadest extension of that freedom."

This is a sentiment that The New York Times has expressed repeatedly and still holds.

Report Is Printed

Mr. Agnew is again mistaken when he says that The Times did not "carry a word" on the story about the Congressmen and Senators signing a letter endorsing the President's policy in Vietnam. The New York Times printed the story. Unfortunately, it failed to make the edition that reached Washington but was carried in a later edition of The Times. Moreover, The Times has given considerable attention to that story as it developed. In the paper of Nov. 6, there was a story on Page 11. In the paper of Nov. 7, there was a front page story that

the House Foreign Affairs Committee had approved a resolution endorsing President Nixon's "efforts to negotiate a just peace in Vietnam." In the paper of Nov. 13, there was the story to which the Vice President referred. In the paper of Nov. 14, President Nixon's visit to the House and the Senate to convey his appreciation to those who supported his Vietnam policy was the lead story. That story again reported the fact that more than 300 Congressmen and 59 Senators had signed the resolution.

As to the assertion that the story about the Pope appeared on Page 11 while a less important story was printed on Page 3, the Vice President unfortunately does not understand some of the complicated problems of making up a newspaper. Many important stories have to appear on pages other than Page 1 and a story that appears on Page 3 or Page 6 is not necessarily considered more important than a story that appears on Page 11 or 13.

It is the basic credo of The Times that news and editorial opinion are kept separate and that opinion should appear only on the editorial page. We shall continue to follow that credo.

Mrs. Graham's Reply

Vice President Agnew's remarks about the Washington Post Company are not supported by the facts.

The Washington Post, Newsweek, WTOP-TV, and WTOP Radio decidedly do not "grind out the same editorial line."

It is long-standing policy of the Post Company to enlist in each of its enterprises the best professional journalists we can find and give them a maximum of freedom in which to work. Each branch is operated autonomously. They compete vigorously with one another. They disagree on many issues. We think that the result is journalism of a high caliber that is notable for a diversity of voices on a wide range of public issues.

As to the voices of public opinion in the Washington area, they are plentiful and diverse. Washington is one of the most competitive communications cities in America by any objective standards. It is one of only three cities

left with three major newspapers under separate ownership, all of them first rate.

In addition to the four major television stations, there are three ultra-high-frequency stations. Radio is even more competitive in the area with some 35 outlets.

Mr. Goldenson's Statement

As I said last week, after the Vice President's first speech, I firmly believe that in our free society the ultimate judges of the reliability of our news presentation will be the viewing public.

Again I leave it to the public to determine whether the Vice President's renewed attack today is an attempt to intimidate and discredit not only television news reporting but other major news media. Personally, I believe it is.

I hope we are not facing a period in the history of our nation when high Government officials try to act both as judge and jury on the issue of a free press.

Mr. Frank's Statement

In Vice President Agnew's second speech on the press, he seems to have lowered his voice, but is seeking new targets.

His first speech concentrated on the news operations of the television networks. He said that because they reached many more people than The New York Times, they were not entitled to the protection of press freedom.

His current attack is aimed primarily at The Washington Post and The New York Times and particularly at the "news judgment" of The Times. We do not welcome this sort of Government intervention directed against newspapers any more than we relish it when it strikes at broadcast news.

Dr. Stanton's Statement

Apparently the Vice President is embarked upon a campaign, despite his rhetoric to the contrary, to intimidate the news media into reporting only what he wants to hear. We repeat what we said in reference to his attack last week: Whatever the deficiencies of a free press, they are minor compared to those of a press which would be subservient to the executive power of Government.