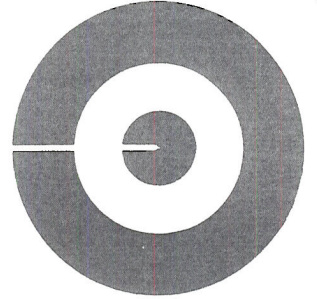


# AIM AIM

# REPORT REPORT



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Volume II

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## PILLORYING THE POST

On March 7, Washington's leading newspaper, The Post, published five letters from AIM that the editors had refused to print. (See insert).

AIM, long frustrated in its efforts to get The Post to correct errors and distortions, paid the paper \$1800 to have those five letters printed under the boldface headline: LETTERS THE EDITOR OF THE WASHINGTON POST REFUSED TO PRINT.

This unprecedented action delighted many readers of The Post, and it rattled the editors. It is a journalistic sin to publish misinformation, but it is a worse sin to refuse to publish corrections of serious errors. The Post was pilloried (exposed to public scorn) by the facts revealed in the AIM public service message.

Readers began asking why the paper had refused to publish the AIM letters. They implied that the public is entitled to corrections and information about errors and distortions printed in The Post.

### A Rattled Editor Replies

On March 11, The Post published one such letter from a reader, and it replied to the question in an editorial in the same issue.\* The excuse given for not publishing the AIM letters was that we had sent The Post seven letters in three weeks, and they had published one. (This letter had provided important information relating to the arrest of Les Whitten, Jack Anderson's colleague. Whitten had been arrested for possession of documents stolen from the Bureau of Indian Affairs. AIM pointed out that several of Anderson's columns published last December had boasted of his possession of stolen BIA documents. He had used those documents for his personal profit, filling the column which he sells with information they contained).

\*This letter was balanced by printing another letter ridiculing the AIM ad. We have since learned that the second letter bore a false name and address, violating a rule of The Post. The author claims to have submitted it to prove that The Post does not enforce this rule (at least not when the letter expresses views it likes).

The editorial argued that AIM was claiming that The Post had an obligation to publish all the letters AIM submitted no matter how short the time span. The argument was summed up with this classical defamatory distortion:

Now, AIM calls itself an "educational" organization, which is to say a lobby; it has means and resources for spreading its message, as witness the advertisement itself. So it seemed to us a bit much to be expected to give this lobby two opportunities a week to use our letters space to advance its "educational" effort at the expense of denying a voice to seven different readers over the period AIM is talking about.

#### AIM REPLIES TO THE POST

AIM immediately replied to The Post, pointing out that the editorial was misleading in several respects. First of all, it did not accurately describe what Accuracy in Media is and what it does. To say that AIM "calls itself an 'educational' organization" is the equivalent of saying that The Post calls itself a "newspaper." AIM is an educational organization and is so recognized by the Internal Revenue Service.

Stretching for the smear, The Post equated "educational organization" with "lobby," and by that trick it managed to convey the impression in lobby-conscious Washington that AIM is in the business of trying to influence legislation. That, of course, is totally false. In our reply, we pointed out that AIM does not take positions on legislation and it certainly does not lobby for legislation. If we did so, we would lose our tax-exempt status. On March 16, The Post published a correction on its editorial page, admitting that it had erred in calling AIM "a lobby".

In addition to smearing AIM as a "lobby," The Post editorial misled the readers about the number of letters it had received from AIM and the number published. By focussing on one three week period, the editorial tried to give the impression that The Post had been reasonable in publishing one letter out of seven received from AIM. What was left unsaid was that AIM had written over thirty letters to The Post over the last two years, 18 of them specifically designated for publication, and until February 1973, not one had ever been published. Nor had The Post done anything to correct the errors cited in the AIM letters.

We pointed out that on August 23, 1971, the managing editor of The Post had written to AIM, saying: "If you have any corrections of factual material I suggest that you write letters to the editor or file your complaints with Mr. Harwood (the in-house ombudsman)." This implied that action would be taken if the complaints were well founded. There was no suggestion that the paper would refuse to correct errors if we called more than one to their attention every few months.

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\*AIM REPORT, Vol. II, No. 3, published by Accuracy in Media, Inc., 425 13th Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20004. Francis G. Wilson, President, Abraham H. Kalish, Executive Secretary. Change of address with zip code, should be sent to the Washington address. Accuracy in Media, Inc. is a nonprofit educational organization. Gifts and contributions are tax deductible.



We believe that a paper has a duty to correct every serious error that comes to its attention. AIM has never suggested that every letter it sends to The Post or any other newspaper must be published. We do ask that every error be corrected in some way, if not by publication of the letter describing the mistake.

MORE ADS TO COME

The purchase of space in newspapers to correct erroneous and misleading reporting is a potent tool. The AIM ad in The Post achieved what over thirty letters, numerous press releases and many phone calls had failed to accomplish. It moved The Post to tell its readers something (albeit inaccurate) about AIM. It impressed upon the reporters and editors that it was no longer possible to avoid AIM's exposure of their errors by simply tossing our letters into the wastebasket.

We hope to be able to continue to serve the public in this way, not only with The Post, but with other newspapers as well. This will be possible only if the generous help we have received from you, the AIM supporters, is continued.

AIM GETS PUBLIC TV TO BALANCE PROGRAM ON EQUAL RIGHTS AMENDMENT

AIM was contacted last month by some ladies opposed to the Equal Rights Amendment. They were upset because the Washington production center for the Public Broadcasting Service was planning to put on a program about the Amendment which would feature a well-known proponent of ratification. It appeared that there were no plans to balance the program with a comparable representative of women opposed to ratification. The ladies had tried to persuade the producers to invite Mrs. Phyllis Schlafly, a leader of the forces opposing the Amendment, to appear on the program, but they had been turned down.

AIM consultant, Bernard Yoh, went to work on the problem. The PBS lawyers readily agreed that the program should be balanced, and they were willing to have Mrs. Schlafly appear. However, the producers balked, and it took several more hours of negotiating before everyone involved agreed to make room on the program for Phyllis Schlafly.

The result was that a well-balanced program on the Equal Rights Amendment was aired on February 25. One of the attorneys for the other side even expressed his appreciation to Mr. Yoh, saying that adding Mrs. Schlafly had not only made the program balanced, but it had made it more lively and interesting than it would otherwise have been.

NEW YORK TIMES PUBLISHER PERSONALLY PAYS TRIBUTE TO AIM

The AIM REPORT for February included a letter from Anthony Lewis of The New York Times acknowledging an error that AIM had called to his attention. We also reproduced the correction that Mr. Lewis made in The Times. We did not have space to include a letter, dated January 29, that we received from Arthur Ochs Sulzberger, President and Publisher of The New York Times, which began with a remarkable commendation of AIM's thoroughness. Mr. Sulzberger wrote:

Dear Mr. Kalish:

I believe you must be the most thorough reader that The New York Times has, and I think in the particular instance that you mention in your letter of January 24 you are correct.



About the same time we received a letter from Mr. Marvin Siegel, Assistant Metropolitan Editor of The Times thanking us for calling attention to an error concerning the funding of a strange drug abuse program at the Lincoln Hospital in New York City. According to a story in The Times the program involved an effort to get addicts off drugs by turning them on to revolutionary activity. The Times said this strange program was being funded to the tune of over \$800,000 by the Federal Government. AIM checked and found that Federal Government officials denied that a penny of Federal money was going into the program.

Mr. Siegel confirmed that the program was being funded by the New York State Narcotic Addiction Control Commission. He added: "Even the Commission did not know of this until prodded into checking its records."

The error about the source of the funds was duly corrected in a tiny correction box in The Times, giving the readers no reminder of the strange nature of the program that was being financed. Taxpayers in New York State might be interested in knowing more about this odd use of their tax dollars and the lax supervision by the New York State Narcotic Addiction Control Commission--if all those journalists who are supposedly eager to expose waste and corruption would only tell them about it.

#### AIM MAINTAINS PRESSURE ON FAIRNESS DOCTRINE COMPLAINTS

In spite of several setbacks, AIM is continuing its efforts to persuade the Federal Communications Commission to enforce the fairness doctrine evenhandedly.

The February AIM REPORT described the blows dealt the fairness doctrine by the adverse F.C.C. decisions on two of our complaints against the Public Broadcasting Service. These complaints involved a program called "Justice?," which was largely a one-sided account of the cases of Angela Davis and the Soledad brothers and a program on sex education. AIM has requested that the F.C.C. review both of these cases again. If they rule against us a second time, we can then take them to court.

We have also filed a brief with the F.C.C. in which we explain why we believe the F.C.C. has the right and the responsibility to enforce Section 396 (g)(1)(A) of the Public Broadcasting Act. This section of the act requires that programs produced or distributed under the auspices of the Corporation for Public Broadcasting be objective and balanced. This provision of the law was incorporated into the Communications Act by Congress, and the F.C.C. is clearly legally responsible for the enforcement of the Communications Act.

#### Vietnam Complaints

In February, the F.C.C. staff ruled against AIM on two long-standing fairness doctrine complaints relating to programs on the bombing of North Vietnam. One concerned an unbalanced panel discussion produced by Public TV dealing with President Nixon's April 26, 1972 broadcast on Vietnam. The moderator, Sander Vanocur, admitted on the air that the panel assembled to discuss the President's address did not include anyone who would defend the position taken by the President. AIM said this violated Section 396(g)(1)(A) of the Public Broadcasting Act, which requires balance.



## THE OPEN MIND OF ALAN COURTNEY

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## ACCURACY IN MEDIA

What this country needs is not a good five cent cigar, but a coast to coast awareness that ACCURACY IN MEDIA INC. is the greatest thing to come along since the invention of the printing press.

For years now all of us have deplored and argued and sometimes went a little haywire over how to help restore a balanced code of honest performance to the media.

Like the weather, everybody deplored, but nobody did anything . . . that is until a group of top men in various fields of expertise joined together to start what almost every citizen would be grateful to know is working for them. Unfortunately the tremendous work of this small band of hardy souls has yet to gain the support and circulation of their efforts by most Americans who have been patiently praying that something like this would come to pass.

What is "Accuracy In Media?" It is what the title of the organization implies. It is a non-partisan group of mostly retired experts in their various fields who are giving of themselves to act as watchdogs of fairness and accuracy in our media so that we are not bombarded by distortions and one sided pleadings leaving the millions of victims of such exposure wondering if they are being given the facts or just another brainwash.

AIM as it is called, works out of 425 13th Street N.W., Washington D.C. 20004. In their short time of existence they have managed to make an impact upon some of the giants in the

media who are concerned lest this educational non-profit organization gain public support from coast to coast. AIM is the answer to all the current pros and cons over what to do to bring back confidence in our great communications system, without adding further big brother government intervention.

The TV Networks had to recognize AIM's irrefutable presentation of complaint directed to some of the so called documentaries that were so badly produced and so terribly slanted. But this is only a tiny start.

AIM desperately needs our support. It costs little enough to create a truly powerful watchdog for fairness and accuracy in our media if most of us contributed less than what so many millions would prefer to spend on one football ticket.

AIM's latest exposure of how NBC distorts the pension picture thus giving assistance to controversial legislation is only one example of how necessary this service can be to all responsible Americans.

Space does not permit the details of the AIM expose of the NBC distortions on pensions, but some of their findings and statistics and facts revealed in their rebuttal to this slanted program by Newsman Edwin Newman, deserves an Oscar Award for integrity and intelligence.

Abraham Kalish is the executive secretary of this magnificent service organization, who someday will rate a monument in the name of freedom that so many in our media at the present time will never understand.

There is nothing so powerful as the truth. The dedicated officers of this organization who are giving of their full time services are seeking to preserve the great heritage of our free press by appealing to the public's right to know. Yes, the right to know when any one in the media distorts or slants. The right to know involved the matter of omission as well as commission. By going to the public and presenting irrefutable evidence to substantiate their presentation, AIM is performing a useful and absolutely necessary service FOR THE PRESERVATION OF A FREE MEDIA. Too bad so many in our business still cannot see the forest from the trees. Will they wait until the forces of angry reaction bring about the kind of arbitrary solution none of us want?

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### GIFTS OF SECURITIES TO AIM

We have had inquiries from donors concerning gifts of securities in lieu of cash. Accuracy in Media (AIM) welcomes such gifts and would like to point out that because they are tax deductible, the cost to the donor is less than the amount of the gift. In cases where securities have appreciated greatly in value, the cost to the donor can be considerably less. AIM will be pleased to help you obtain the fullest tax benefit from your generosity through careful advance planning.



# Letters the Editor of the Washington Post Refused to Print:

The following letters have been submitted to the Post by Accuracy in Media for the purpose of correcting inaccuracies or misleading information published in the Post and other papers. The editor has declined to publish these letters. Since AIM believes that the readers of the Washington Post really do have a right to know, we are publishing them at our own expense:

John Stewart Service

Jan. 31, 1973

SIR: In reporting on a luncheon given at the State Department to honor John Stewart Service and other "old China hands" of the 1940's, the Post described the recipients of this honor as "the men who were persecuted and dismissed for sending news their country did not want to hear." This statement was apparently based on an uncritical acceptance of an assertion made by Mr. William C. Harrop, Chairman of the Board of Directors of the American Foreign Service Association, the sponsor of the luncheon.

In a letter announcing the luncheon, Mr. Harrop said: "The facts they reported were unwelcome at home. Many of these officers suffered harsh domestic criticism and were unable to continue their careers."

Mr. Harrop has admitted in private conversations that he had never made any systematic study of the reporting of the foreign service officers whose reporting his association was honoring. Nor was he able to cite any study that would confirm that Service and his colleagues suffered because they reported factually and objectively information that was "unwelcome at home."

An analysis of the reports from China submitted by John Stewart Service in 1944 suggests that Mr. Service was fundamentally wrong in his judgments about the philosophy and intentions of the Chinese Communists. For example, a report of his dated September 28, 1944, said: "The Communist political program is simple democracy. This is much more American than Soviet in form and spirit." In the same report, Mr. Service assured Washington that it was wrong to think that Mao wanted to bring socialism to China. He said: "The next stage in China's advance must be capitalism."

Mr. Service's analysis of the Chinese communists was dead wrong, but it is incorrect to say that it was unwelcome in Washington. On the contrary, this kind of analysis was very popular in the United States in 1944. Mr. Service was simply one voice in a loud chorus that was telling America that the true democrats in China were the communists and that we should support them, not Chiang. That chorus was largely successful in getting American policy changed, and the policies recommended by Service, and his colleagues were to a large extent adopted.

Those historians who are now rewriting history would have us believe that Washington ignored Service and Davies and gave unstinting support to Chiang Kai-shek. That is not true. The policies followed in the critical postwar years were essentially those that these experts recommended. We actually withheld vitally needed arms from Chiang for a whole year while we tried to force him into forming a coalition government with the communists.

When America later discovered that these policies had helped bring about Mao's absolute control of the mainland and when they found that the communists were Stalinist totalitarians, not the democratic reformers described by Service, there was strong criticism of Service's reports and policy recommendations.

However, John Stewart Service would probably never have been fired on the basis of his misleading reporting alone. What got him into hot water was the fact that it was found that in 1945 he wrongfully gave copies of some 18 classified State Department documents to Philip Jaffe, the editor of *Amerasia*, a pro-communist publication. He has admitted this serious violation of security, and there is no doubt that it weighed heavily in the judgment of the Loyalty Review Board.

The American Foreign Service Association does no credit to its own reputation when it honors Service and his colleagues without first ascertaining the facts. The Washington Post practices poor journalism when it parrots this distorted version of history without checking the record.

## Amnesty

Feb. 9, 1973

SIR: Haynes Johnson's recent article on the issue of amnesty (2/4/73) suggests that there is a need to clear up the serious misunderstanding that has arisen about the actions and attitude of Abraham Lincoln toward deserters and draft evaders. Johnson and others have discussed Lincoln's policies without drawing a clear distinction between his offer of amnesty to those who had rebelled against the Government of the United States and fought for the Confederacy and his policy toward those who deserted from the Union forces or evaded the draft. The distinction is an important one.

Lincoln issued an amnesty proclamation on December 8, 1863, while the war was still in progress. It provided that members of the Confederate forces below the rank of colonel and others who were supporting the Confederate cause, with certain exceptions, would be exempted from any punishment if they took a loyalty oath. The purpose of the proclamation was to encourage desertion from the Confederate forces. It did not apply to those who were already prisoners of war, and Lincoln made it clear that it was "not for those who may be constrained to take (the oath) in order to escape actual imprisonment or punishment."

It is most misleading to confuse this tactical move by Lincoln to encourage enemy desertions with Lincoln's policy toward deserters from his own forces. The standard punishment for desertion during the Civil War was death, and although Lincoln commuted many death sentences, many such sentences were carried out. As the war neared its end, on March 11, 1865, Lincoln issued a proclamation offering a conditional pardon to deserters. The condition was that they return to their units and serve out their enlistment, adding time for the period of their desertion. The proclamation stated that those who failed to turn themselves in or who fled to avoid the draft would be deemed "to have voluntarily relinquished and forfeited their rights of citizenship" forever. Lincoln clearly took a very firm stand toward deserters and draft evaders, a fact that has been badly obscured in much of the current discussion.

Post readers might also be misled by Haynes Johnson's discussion of Truman's pardoning of some selective service violators after World War II. Johnson says that Truman granted amnesty to 1523 violators, but he fails to say that

90 per cent of the selective service violators whose cases were considered by Truman's amnesty board were not pardoned. Nor does he say that the pardons were not extended to deserters. None of those pardoned by Truman were excused because they sympathized with the Nazi cause and had moral scruples about fighting them.

Mr. Johnson advocates that an amnesty board be established "to determine those cases that merit pardon on grounds of moral objections to the war." These would not be persons who could qualify for conscientious objector status because of opposition to all war, but persons who objected to this particular war. There is no precedent in American history (or probably the history of any country) for forgiving deserters and draft evaders for such a reason.

## TV Bias

Feb. 14, 1973

SIR: By coincidence, George Will's article arguing that TV bias does not matter appeared in the Post at the same time as an article in *TV Guide* demonstrated that TV bias matters very much.

Will contends that the networks are indeed biased but lacking in power to influence public opinion. Therefore, we need not worry about the distorted view of the world that comes over the tube.

*TV Guide's* article, "The Black Eye That Won't Go Away," shows that the city of Newburgh, N.Y. is still suffering today from the unfair negative image that it was given by an NBC documentary aired over ten years ago. The mayor of Newburgh is quoted as blaming the difficulty experienced in attracting industry to his city on the unfavorable impression that was created by the NBC program.

Was the NBC portrayal of Newburgh accurate and fair? The people of Newburgh don't think so. The local newspaper described the program as "a hatchet job on the city." It asked for an apology from NBC, but no apology was ever made. The *TV Guide* points out that because of the NBC documentary the local media are extremely distrustful of the national press, both print and broadcast.

The Newburgh case is only one of many that could be cited to show that TV has a stronger influence on public opinion, for good and ill, than Mr. Will seems to believe.

## More TV Bias

Feb. 15, 1973

SIR: In a recent speech the president of NBC, Julian Goodman, charged that "some Federal Government officials are waging a continuing campaign aimed at intimidating and discrediting the news media." Singling out an official who recently charged that there was bias in TV network news, Mr. Goodman said: "He did not say how we are biased."

Accuracy in Media, Inc. has spelled out in detail many specific cases of TV network bias. Many of these involve NBC, and Mr. Goodman knows of them. He misleads the public when he implies that charges of bias are lacking in documentation.

In the AIM REPORT for February 1973, we cite the following cases of bias in NBC News programs in recent months.

1. An attack on private pension plans in America in a documentary called "Pensions: The Broken Promise." The program was very one-sided.
2. An attack on private health care systems in a documentary called "What Price Health?" Another one-sided presentation.
3. A documentary on San Francisco's famed Chinatown based entirely on the carping criticisms of two radical youths whose sympathies for Mao Tse-tung came through loud and clear.
4. A documentary about the drug traffic in Southeast Asia transmitting the views of those who wanted to portray America and its Southeast Asian allies in a bad light. At the same time, NBC did not report the testimony on the other side that was given by Marine General Lewis W. Walt before the Senate Internal Security Subcommittee.

It is not the government that is discrediting the networks. The networks are discrediting themselves by their one-sided presentations of controversial issues of public importance.

## Election Campaign Law Violations

Feb. 19, 1973

SIR: On February 13, the Associated Press sent out a story which began this way: "The General Accounting Office reported today that the campaign organizations of President Nixon and Senator George McGovern failed to report within 48 hours a series of large contributions received in the last 12 days of the 1972 Presidential campaign." The story proceeded to say that no legal action was being recommended because "neither the new law nor the regulations were sufficiently explicit on these matters," according to the Comptroller General.

This report was a very accurate account of the GAO press release on this subject.

The Washington Post carried a story about the GAO release under the headline: "GAO Says Nixon Funds Unit Violated Spirit, Intent of Law." The headline was a summary of the Post's lead paragraph. It was not until the reader penetrated to the sixth paragraph of the Post story that he learned that the GAO had "also reported apparent violations by the campaign organization" of Senator McGovern. The Post story then reverted to the Nixon campaign funds, describing how large contributions had been divided among numerous committees so that each amount would be under the \$5000 floor for contributions that had to be reported within 48 hours. Nothing was said about the fact that the McGovern campaign organization was reported by the GAO to have followed the same practice.

The GAO criticized the Nixon committee for its handling of funds totaling over \$1 million. It criticized the McGovern committee for its handling of funds totaling over \$150,000. Is it the difference in the amounts that justifies the difference in the way the Post reported the criticism of the two committees? Does that wipe out the fact that the GAO criticism was directed evenhandedly at both committees?

# LETTERS TO THE EDITOR:

## AIM's Ad

What good professional reasons could the Washington Post have for refusing to publish any one of the five timely, succinct, and well researched letters that appeared in an advertisement for Accuracy in Media on March 7?

The letters contained pertinent facts otherwise unavailable to your readers. Printing them would have provided a more adequate picture of the amnesty question and other important issues, and at the same time enhanced the quality and balance of your editorial pages.

Ernest W. Lefever,  
Chewy Chase.

I've had no luck writing letters to the Post, except for one time when I said something slightly detrimental to the DAR, but I want to thank you for printing the advertisement of AIM because it gave me an idea of some of the shock you don't print, compared to a lot that you do.

I wonder how many of your readers, besides me, an admitted intellectual slant in the matter of international affairs, will write you, saying they wouldn't have read this dull stuff if it had been printed.

Pauline Corbin,  
Washington.

## EDITORIAL WASHINGTON POST March 11, 1973 (Top part)

Last Wednesday, an organization called Accuracy in Media (AIM) placed an ad in this newspaper to publish five letters which it had submitted to us for publication and which we had not printed. Today in the letters column on the opposite page, a reader, Ernest W. Lefever, is demanding to know "what good professional reasons" we could have had for not publishing any of

## F.Y.I.

space limitations, we also feel profoundly that a certain rationing must be imposed in order to speed the opportunity of being published as widely as possible. That is to say, we discourage repeaters; an interval of at least several months between letters from the same correspondent seems only fair.

This last criteria brings us back to AIM and the

## WASHINGTON POST - MARCH 16, 1973 A Correction

In an editorial in this space last week, we said that Accuracy in Media (AIM) "calls itself an 'educational organization,' which is to say a lobby." AIM advises us that, while the first part of this identification is right, the organization "does not take positions on legislation"—which is the strict definition, for legal purposes, of a lobby. The distinction is valid and we regret the misnomer.

The cost to Accuracy in Media to bring this information to the readers of the Post is approximately \$1,800, or about three-tenths of one cent per copy. You can help us keep the readers of the Post better informed by assisting us in paying the cost of this message. A contribution of only \$10 (tax deductible) enables us to reach at least 3,000 readers (more than one reader per copy) through an ad like this in the Post. We think it is worth it. If you and 179 others agree with us, sending us a \$10 contribution, we can pay the cost of this ad and run more like it in the future.

Accuracy in Media, Inc. is a non-profit, educational organization. All contributions are fully tax deductible.

ACCURACY IN MEDIA, INC.  
1232 Pennsylvania Bldg., 425 13th St. N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20004



MEET JOHN E. TILTON, member of

Accuracy in Media's National Advisory Board, former President of the Suburban Press Foundation and author of *Blind Behemoth*, a critical study of News media performance, published in 1972. In that year, Mr. Tilton retired after 50 years as an active newspaperman. In 1954 he bought three weeklies in the Twin Cities suburbs of Minnesota and built them into 26 newspaper groups which he sold in 1968. He has since been writing a weekly column for that group.



In a recent talk, Mr. Tilton said:

"Two basic errors in news policy imperil the First Amendment, the news media and the Republic itself. The first, is an over-emphasis of the "Adversary Philosophy". This is the notion the news media must be forever opposed to and critical of every facet of society, government, business, church, education. The second error is the "advocacy theory", the practice of shaping news content to conform to editorial policy. Often this error is unintentional, tracing to fundamental failures in the selection (and rejection) of news data and the interpretation placed thereon. But always it misleads the public.

While news media distortion is one price we must pay for First Amendment liberties, the nation in the past has always been able to discount news bias. Today, however, the country is twisted and tortured by vast, tidal changes (population explosion, racing technology and scientific progress of revolutionary import) which demand the public have a balanced, objective view of its problems if it is to reach proper conclusions and chart a sound, future course.

Only news media leadership itself can meet the problem through a new and more responsible emphasis on basic goals. Two devices might assist: organization of a national press council (since achieved) and establishment of a national news service, patterned after the British Broadcasting service.

The First Amendment is not the exclusive preserve of newspapers and electronic media, but applies to individuals as well. Attacks on the news media by leading public figures, jailing of newsmen and agitation for broadcasting controls are evidence of a credibility gap pointing directly at the media.

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USEFUL ADDRESSES FOR AIM SUPPORTERS

Please write to broadcasters and publishers in support of AIM's complaints. The key people are:

CBS, 51 W. 52nd St., New York, NY 10019; Wm. S. Paley, Chairman; Arthur R. Taylor, Pres.; Robert D. Wood, Pres., TV Network

CBS News, 524 W. 57th St., New York, NY 10019; Richard S. Salant, Pres.

NBC, 30 Rockefeller Plaza, New York, NY 10020; Julian Goodman, Pres.; Reuven Frank, Pres.

NBC News, Robert W. Sarnoff, Pres., RCA (parent corporation)

ABC, 1330 Avenue of the Americas, New York, NY 10019; Leonard Goldenson, Chairman; Elton H. Rule, Pres.

ABC News, 7 W. 66th St., New York, NY 10023; Elmer W. Lower, Pres.

Assoc. Press, 50 Rockefeller Plaza, New York, NY 10020; Wes Gallagher, Gen. Manager; Rene J. Cappon, Gen. News Editor

United Press Intl.; 220 E. 42nd St., New York, NY 10017; H.L. Stevenson



The second complaint concerned two programs broadcast by public TV station WNET of New York City in May 1972 which featured some of the most extreme critics of U.S. policy in Vietnam--Jane Fonda, Tom Hayden, David Dellinger and others. AIM could find no evidence that any effort had been made to balance the extremist criticism of the bombing policy aired by this station with equally strong defense of that policy during the same general time period.

William B. Ray, Chief of the Complaints and Compliance Division of the F.C.C., used his delegated authority to reject both of these complaints without even requiring the broadcasters to present a defense. AIM had pointed out that the issue involved in both of these cases was the wisdom of American policy in resuming bombing of North Vietnam in response to the open North Vietnamese invasion of the South in April 1972.

There was, of course, a concerted campaign of condemnation of President Nixon's decision to bomb the North and mine the harbors. This campaign was designed to turn public opinion against U.S. policy. It appeared to AIM that the programs about which we complained were a part of that campaign.

Mr. Ray of the F.C.C., however, delayed action on these complaints until the cease fire agreement made this matter a dead issue. He then decided that the programs in question had been concerned with the broad issue of "Vietnam" and that public TV and WNET had broadcast enough programs over a long period of time on both sides of the Vietnam issue to satisfy the requirements of the fairness doctrine.

AIM has appealed Mr. Ray's ruling to the full Commission, pointing out that this device of broadening the issue made a shambles of the fairness doctrine. We said that a balanced discussion on the question of, say, withdrawing ground forces from Vietnam, could not be considered an offset to an unbalanced discussion of the wisdom of bombing the North. Since the purpose of the fairness doctrine is to insure that the public is informed of all sides of controversial issues of public importance, the object of the doctrine is defeated when an important and specific issue such as the bombing of North Vietnam is viewed by the Commission as not existing as an independent issue. This would suggest that broadcasting facilities could be used to air one-sided attacks on the strategy and tactics employed to fight a war as long as they broadcast both the pros and cons of participation in the war. Such an approach could not be considered conducive to enlightened public participation in the formulation and execution of vital decisions.

#### FCC Sees Nothing Unfair About NBC's Maoist View of Chinatown

The FCC staff broke all records for speed in dealing with AIM complaints in ruling on our complaint about NBC's January 2, 1973 program on San Francisco's Chinatown. (See AIM REPORT, Feb. 1973, p. 6). AIM wrote detailed letters to NBC and the Commission demonstrating that this portrayal of Chinatown through the eyes of two young radicals was distorted and one-sided. Moreover, we showed that NBC affiliates had not presented any other view of Chinatown. We wrote to 175 NBC affiliates asking about this, and not one said that it had presented a program showing the other side of the issues in the NBC program.



The FCC staff was therefore unable to say that the program was internally balanced or that it had been balanced by other programs on the same subject. We thought we had an ironclad case, but Mr. William B. Ray, Chief of the FCC's Complaints and Compliance Division, quickly found an escape for NBC. He said AIM, in listing over a dozen extremist statements that conveyed the tone and theme of the entire program, was merely citing "isolated remarks." He said AIM had failed to define a controversial issue of public importance--as if slandering an entire community was not controversial and not important.

NBC never provided any substantial response to AIM's criticisms of this program, and the FCC never asked them to do so. There is no evidence that anyone at the FCC saw a transcript of the program before the decision was made.

It took Mr. Ray only a month to make this incredible decision. This compares with five months for his previous fastest decision. AIM has asked the full Commission to review this complaint.

#### Is Alger Hiss Controversial?

Not according to NBC. On December 13, 1972, the NBC flagship radio station in New York City aired a 90-minute interview with Hiss, giving him an opportunity to proclaim his innocence without anyone bringing up facts that would contradict him or cause him any embarrassment.

NBC has informed AIM that it does not intend to offer any time for anyone to give the true facts about Alger Hiss, his espionage activities and his conviction for perjury for denying that he engaged in such activities. NBC explains that since these events occurred more than twenty years ago, the program was of "historical interest." NBC says that "it did not involve the discussion of any current controversial issue of public importance."

AIM filed a fairness doctrine complaint about this program on March 4, 1973. We pointed out that Mr. Hiss is currently appearing on radio and TV to promote his recently republished book, which is a white-wash of his past. Since there is strong evidence against Mr. Hiss, his claims of innocence are highly controversial. AIM told the FCC that this is an issue of current importance, because the Hiss claims cannot be accepted without casting grave doubt on our system of justice, the fairness of Congressional investigations, and the judgment and integrity of the man who now holds the post of President of the United States, Richard Nixon.

Moreover, we informed the FCC that Herbert Philbrick, an expert on the Communist Party, had recently stated over WTTG, a Washington TV station, that the rehabilitation and vindication of Alger Hiss is an important objective of the Communist Party. Mr. Philbrick said that if the public can be convinced that Hiss was innocent, it will be easier to argue that penetration of the government by Communist agents in the past was just a myth. Mr. Philbrick points out that this will be useful to the Communists in their campaign to abolish the House Internal Security Committee, the Senate Internal Security Subcommittee and to eliminate security safeguards in the Federal Government.

Mr. Philbrick was invited to appear on WTTG precisely because that station agreed with AIM that the appearance of Hiss on one of its interview programs should be balanced by the appearance of someone who could give the facts on the other side. This Metromedia station had no trouble recognizing its obligations under the fairness doctrine, in sharp contrast to the attitude of NBC.

It remains to be seen whether the FCC staff will be able to see the matter as clearly as WTTG, or whether it will agree with NBC that there can be nothing important or controversial about something that happened twenty years ago.

#### WHAT YOU CAN DO

The FCC's performance on AIM fairness doctrine complaints remains abysmal. In a year and a half we have filed ten complaints. In six cases out of ten, the FCC staff did not even notify the broadcaster that a complaint had been filed and require him to reply. In two cases in which the broadcasters were required to reply, the FCC then sat on the cases for over a year before ruling against AIM. In the other two cases, the decisions are still pending.

Thanks to your letters, several senators and congressmen have already given assurances that they will try to get the FCC to enforce the fairness doctrine fairly. If you have not written to your senators and congressmen on this matter, we urge you to do so. We will send them the AIM REPORT if you ask us to do so.

#### ARE AMERICAN BUSINESSMEN BEING CONNED?

This is a question which AIM has directed at officers and directors of many of our largest businesses which sponsor TV programs to the tune of millions of dollars annually. AIM has sent releases to the leading businessmen's publications to report that it has been receiving a steadily increasing volume of complaints from individuals and groups about inaccuracies in various TV programs.

Such programs do a disservice to the public. They may be sowing widespread animosities and distrust throughout society. They may also offend potential customers of the program's sponsor.

AIM officers who communicated with some sponsors of such programs were surprised to learn that it is against company policy to view programs before they are aired. Said one company official, "We were advised by our public relations people never to look at programs we sponsor. If we did, we would not be able to disclaim responsibility."

AIM strongly recommends that all officers and directors of businesses take the responsibility to see that the programs their companies sponsor over the air waves, meet the highest standards of accuracy. A sponsor of a TV or radio program should insist on seeing the text of the program before it is broadcast. He should also insist that if the program deals with controversial issues, it should do so fairly by presenting both sides equally.



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