

Ervin Says Press Must Be 'Free'

Raleigh, North Carolina

The nation's press must keep itself "intellectually free by denying to government and advertisers alike control of the information they present and the views they express," Senator Sam Ervin (Dem-N.C.) said.

Speaking at a forum on "Mass Media and Political Decision-making" here over the weekend, Ervin said journalists have been charged with "great responsibilities" as "interpreters between the government and the people.

"To discharge these responsibilities right, the press must uncover and bring to light information which is accurate, present that information objectively and interpret it as fairly as the humanity of editors and commentators permits," he said.

The media, Ervin added, must "seek to engender in the public mind confidence that they are fair as well as free by affording reasonable opportunities for reply to those who disagree with their editorializing and those whom they chastise."

At the session, NBC news correspondent Edwin Newman defended much of the coverage of Watergate and its related incidents but said journalists have an "unhealthy preoccupation" with Washington affairs.

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