EQUAl TIME ON RADIO AND TV:

THE PRESENTATION OF CONTRASTING POINTS OF VIEW

Thousands of extreme right-wing radio and television broadcasts are made daily in this country. One research group estimates that 35 thousand broadcasts are being made weekly. For example:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program</th>
<th>No. Stations Carrying</th>
<th>Daily/Weekly</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dan Smooth</td>
<td>133</td>
<td>W</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Howard Kershner</td>
<td>145</td>
<td>W</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Billy James Hargis</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Life Lines</td>
<td>324</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marion Forum</td>
<td>313</td>
<td>W</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rev. Carl McIntyre</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These figures do not include such "moderate" commentators as Fulton Lewis, Jr., or the sometimes even more vicious radical right programs of local origin.

The Federal Communications Commission (FCC), in a public statement issued July 26, declared that "if one viewpoint of a controversial issue of public importance is presented," the radio or television station involved is obligated to make a responsible effort to present the other opposing viewpoints or viewpoints. The Commission states that "it is immaterial whether a particular program or viewpoint is presented under the label of 'Americanism,' 'anti-communism,' or 'states' rights,' or whether it is a paid announcement, official speech, editorial, or religious broadcast."¹

In a case in which the Citizens Committee for a Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty requested free time for broadcasting a tape in which the "Life Lines" position on the test-ban would be disputed, the Commission stated:

"...where the licensee has chosen to broadcast a sponsored program which for the first time presents one side of a controversial issue, has not presented (or does not plan to present) contrasting viewpoints in other programming, and has been unable to obtain paid sponsorship for the appropriate presentation of the opposing viewpoint or viewpoints, he cannot reject a presentation otherwise suitable to the licensee -- and thus leave the public uninformed -- on the ground that he cannot obtain paid sponsorship for that presentation."²

The FCC views radio and television stations as community public service institutions. Thus, stations are obligated to include all aspects of community life in their broadcasting.

If a local radio station broadcasts community announcements for white groups or broadcasts white church services, the station is obligated to do the same for Negro groups and Negro church services. If the local radio or television station is neglecting a "responsible" minority viewpoint or refuses to include minority community life in its programming, individuals or organizations can file a complaint with the FCC. All radio and television stations must be licensed by

1. FCC, 63-734, 36372; Public Notice B; July 26, 1963
2. FCC letter to WKUL, Cullman, Ala., and WARP, Jasper, Ala.; September 19, 1963
the FCC. If a station refuses to cooperate with Commission rulings, then the
FCC can refuse to renew the station's license.

HOW TO FILE A COMPLAINT AGAINST AN UNFAIR BROADCASTER

1. Obtain a program schedule from the station in question. The station's broad-
cast schedule (log) must be exhibited to the public, on request. Note when the
station presents editorials, or programs by right-wing or segregationist groups.
Also note if the station is adequately performing community service for local
minority groups.

2. If possible, tape recordings should be made of programs in dispute. Otherwise,
two people should listen to the programs and prepare affidavits on the one-sided
nature of the presentation.

3. A letter should be sent to the station involved and the station manager should
be asked to comply with FCC regulations. If the station refuses to allow you or
any other group to present contrasting views on the subject, or if the station
continues to ignore community activities of minority groups, then a formal com-
plaint should be filed with the FCC.

4. A complaint to the FCC should include the previously mentioned affidavits, a
written refusal by the broadcaster to negotiate, and a listing by date of the
disputed program to establish the one-sided nature of the station's programming
(a week's listing of disputed programs is adequate.) The complaint should be
sent to the FCC, Washington, D.C. 20034. Send a courtesy copy to the Chairman
of the FCC.

N.B. If a station presents one point of view on a controversial question, the
station can be asked to present all points of view on the question.

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For further information or assistance, contact:

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