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# RADIO TELEVISION AND AMERICAN POLITICS



Edward W. Chester



## **Radio, Television and American Politics**

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**Edward W. Chester** ☒ ☒

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## PREFACE

In recent years few subjects have aroused greater public interest than the impact of television on politics. Not only has the style of political campaigning been changed to fit the new medium, but the selection of candidates for public office has been affected. Recent years have witnessed this impact reach its zenith with the election of a former actor, Ronald Reagan, as Governor of California in 1966, after Senator John Kennedy had edged Vice-President Richard Nixon in the Presidential race of 1960, thanks largely to his superior television performance during the first Great Debate.

Yet there is far more to the relationship between broadcasting and politics than whether a candidate possesses an irresistible television image. Among those aspects of this entire problem that are discussed most frequently are the following questions, to some of which only specialists in this field are likely to have adequate answers ready:

Precisely what qualities made Franklin Roosevelt the great radio speaker that he was?

How has the role that television has played in the last five Presidential elections differed from campaign to campaign?

What use has been made of radio and television in state and local elections?

Why has news commentary in the age of television been less overtly biased than it was in the age of radio?

How successful have broadcast editorials been?

What has been the nature of the radical right's invasion of the radio over the last two decades?

Why have American governmental propaganda broadcasts for overseas consumption enjoyed a checkered career?

How has Congress attempted to regulate the broadcasting industry over the years?

What types of ideas have censors most often barred from the airwaves?

How does Section 315 differ from the Fairness Doctrine?

In what ways have predictions over the years, relative to the political impact of radio and television, been in error?

In what ways are political radio and political television similar and in what ways are they different?

This book represents the first comprehensive attempt to answer these and related questions. Aside from historians, political scientists, officeholders, candidates for office and radio and television personnel, it is hoped that this book will enlighten many an American whose main function as a citizen is simply to vote.

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## **Radio, Television and American Politics**

# **Introduction: A Brief History of American Broadcasting**

On November 2, 1920, station KDKA in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania broadcast the results of the Presidential election of that year, this being the first scheduled, pre-advertised radio program in American history. The following year, in 1921, the Department of Commerce licensed 32 radio broadcasting stations in this country, and thereafter the number of stations in operation here began to mushroom. By August 28, 1922, the first commercial program had been broadcast over WEAF in New York City; the American Telephone and Telegraph Company established this station for the express purpose of selling time to sponsors. In October 1923 the first hookup for the broadcasting of a program took place, joining station WEAF in New York City and WJAR in Providence, Rhode Island. The trend towards chain broadcasting accelerated in 1924, the national political conventions stimulating coast-to-coast hookups.

The first national radio network made its appearance in the fall of 1926, when RCA purchased station WEAF from A. T. and T. and set up the National Broadcasting Company. Its first program was carried over 24 stations in 21 cities, from the East Coast to Kansas City. On the first of January, 1927, a second NBC network went into operation; the two networks came to be known as the Red and the Blue. The Columbia Broadcasting System went into operation shortly thereafter, on February 18, 1927, with a basic network of 16 stations, while the Mutual Broadcasting System of 4 stations made its appearance in 1934. When Mutual began to complain that CBS and NBC were freezing it out of certain communities, the Federal Communications Commission instituted a thor-

ough investigation of network business practices. During World War II, in 1943, the FCC broke up NBC, the Blue Network subsequently becoming the American Broadcasting System.

In 1927 Congress passed the Federal Radio Act, the first comprehensive piece of legislation of its type ever enacted. This has survived in modified form as the Federal Communications Act of 1934. One of the most important features of the latter is Section 315, the equal time provision, which has aroused controversy down to the present day. Two years previously, in 1932, the Nebraska Supreme Court had handed down a ruling in the Sorenson case in which it held that broadcasting stations were open to libel suits in the event that political candidates or spokesmen for those candidates made libelous remarks over their facilities, but that they could not censor such remarks. In the years that followed, a number of demagogues such as Father Charles Coughlin and Senator Huey Long made increasing use of the airwaves, while that most gifted radio speaker of all, President Franklin Roosevelt, used the medium most effectively to win re-election in 1936 over heavy newspaper opposition. Another important development of the 1930's was the emergence of the full-fledged radio commentator.

While the number of radio sets in use, the number of radio homes, and the per cent of total American homes with a radio set increased steadily over the years, the number of standard radio broadcasting stations fell from 677 in 1928 to 612 in 1931 and to 591 in 1934, thanks to the depression, before again rising. There was a pronounced growth in the number of stations following World War II, partly because there had been a "freeze" on the construction of new stations during the war, the total increasing from 940 in 1946 to 1,867 in 1949. Of the approximately 80 million sets in use here at the beginning of 1949, approximately 12 million were in automobiles; by this year 94 per cent of all American homes had radio sets. As of 1949 the number of stations affiliated with each of the major networks was Mutual, 519; ABC, 272; CBS, 179; NBC, 170.

The decade from 1939 to 1949 was a critical one from the standpoint of the regulation of broadcasting. In 1939 the National Association of Broadcasters banned the purchase of air time for the presentation of programs dealing with controversial public issues;

six years later the NAB reversed this edict. Even more important were the activities of the Federal Communications Commission. In 1941 this body forbade broadcast editorials in the *Mayflower* case, not lifting its ban until 1949. From the standpoint of policy formulation, 1948 and 1949 were perhaps the most important ones in the history of the FCC. In 1948 this body handed down the *Port Huron* decision which freed stations from liability for defamation but at the same time prohibited them from censoring; in 1949 it promulgated its Fairness Doctrine, which involved speeches by a political candidate's representatives and editorials delivered by a broadcasting station on behalf of a political candidate. From the standpoint of the regulation of broadcasting, most of the precedents had been established by the time that television went into wide use, so that the past two decades have been ones of modification rather than innovation.

Since about 1948, radio and television have been serious rivals, competing with each other for advertising revenue. During 1952 and 1953, many critics were predicting the demise of radio, this medium having declined in importance for several years as television was gaining wider and wider use. But as radio network time sales decreased, local time sales went up; Mutual was the first network to tap this source of income extensively. While many local radio stations have fallen back on the primitive news and music format, national radio networks have attempted to cater to relatively large but specialized audiences, the mass audience having defected to television. Radio time, of course, is less expensive than television time, a basic fact which has been largely responsible for the continued existence of the former medium. One of the most significant radio innovations in recent years has been the NBC program, "Monitor," first introduced in 1955; this abandoned the standard practice of programming all radio time into fifteen-minute units, thus allowing each feature to be given as much or as little time as that feature might be worth. By 1961 there were 3,539 AM stations in operation in the United States, a 70 per cent increase over 1950, while an additional 815 FM stations were also in operation. This continued mushrooming in the number of radio stations is as good a proof as any that radio is not a defunct medium.

In contrast to radio, television initially enjoyed a relatively slow

growth in the United States. Actually the first long distance telecast occurred on April 7, 1927, Secretary of Commerce Herbert Hoover speaking from Washington; this postdated the first scheduled, pre-advertised radio program in this country by only six years. Between 1928 and 1931, General Electric, NBC and CBS began experimental television broadcasts, but it was not until 1939 that NBC began regularly scheduled programming over an experimental station. By the following year several rival systems for public telecasting had made their appearance, the FCC finally accepting the recommendations of the National Television Systems Committee in 1941. During the same year, on July 1, the FCC licensed NBC's New York station, now called WNBT, and CBS's station, WCBW, as the first commercial stations in America. World War II quite naturally delayed the growth of television, although six stations remained in operation during this conflict in New York City, Philadelphia, Chicago, Los Angeles, and Schenectady.

Following World War II the dispute between adherents of black-and-white television and color television became more and more rancorous. In 1947 the FCC gave a boost to the former by rejecting all previously proposed color systems, leaving the field at least temporarily wide open to the black-and-white proponents. To most people in the television industry 1948 was the year in which television finally obtained complete public acceptance; by September of that year the FCC had authorized the construction of 160 stations. At that time, however, the FCC placed a "freeze" on further station construction which lasted until April 1952 for the purpose of allowing engineers to study such imperfectly resolved questions as channel allocation. At that time the FCC authorized 12 VHF and 80 UHF channels. Two years previously, in 1950, that body had approved a color system proposed by CBS, but it later withdrew its approval of this, instead adopting in December 1953 the system advocated by the National Television Systems Committee.

At one time television networks were limited to the northeastern seaboard, with the Midwest later being linked to the Northeast. It was not until 1951 that the first transcontinental television service went into operation. The Presidential campaign of 1952 was the first to enjoy wide television coverage. In September of this year KPTV of Portland, Oregon began operations as the pioneer

commercial UHF station. With the exception of Mutual, all of the major radio networks (ABC, CBS, and NBC) had established VHF television networks by this time; a fourth network, Du Mont, had no radio affiliations, but it withdrew from the field in 1955. Most commentators are of the opinion that television played a decisive role in the 1960 Presidential campaign, Senator John Kennedy beating Richard Nixon in the first Great Debate and thereby attracting sufficient voters to ensure his victory at the polls in November. By 1961 the number of television stations in operation had reached 531, a 440 per cent increase over 1950. During the Kennedy Administration, Newton Minow, the new chairman of the Federal Communications Commission, characterized television as a "vast wasteland" and introduced a number of reforms, including laws requiring that new television sets provide channels in the UHF range and the appropriation of money with which to finance federal aid to educational television.

Between 1963 and 1967 the percentage of television households increased slightly from 92.1 to 94.5. More significantly, the number of homes with a color television set soared from 2.3 million in 1964 to 12 million in 1967. While there has been a slight growth in the number of VHF stations in recent years, there has been a mushrooming in the number of UHF stations; UHF stations stand in much the same relationship to VHF stations as FM stations stand to AM stations. One innovation which has yet to blossom as its original sponsors intended is pay television. Examining the structure of network television programming today, a study of the programs presented throughout the 1967-8 season revealed a wide variety of categories, including western, feature films, variety, situation comedy, suspense, adventure, general drama, and science fiction. Such a programming structure obviously is quite at variance with the news and music format of many local radio stations, which enables them to schedule political broadcasts with little advance notice. Nevertheless, politics continues to play an important role in television programming, as the chapter on television and politics demonstrates.





# 1/Radio and Politics

## *Introduction*

Although Warren Harding was the first President to use the radio, Calvin Coolidge was the first chief executive to use it really effectively, Harding being more oriented to platform speaking. What use Woodrow Wilson would have made of this medium is a matter of speculation; one also wonders how such prominent political personalities as Abraham Lincoln and Theodore Roosevelt would have fared as radio performers. The conservative Coolidge employed radio as the conservative Eisenhower was later to employ television, reinforcing general public approval of his administration. Unfortunately, political analysts often neglect Coolidge's proficiency as a radio performer, falling back instead on the old cliché that he mirrored the times in which he lived.

As for the Democrats, the broadcasting of their 1924 convention proved a disaster rather than a blessing to their party. Not only was there a division of opinion over personalities (Smith v. McAdoo) and issues (the Ku Klux Klan among others), but the length of the convention (103 ballots to nominate a Presidential candidate) alienated many people. One hero of the age of oratory, William Jennings Bryan, performed poorly on the radio, while one hero of the age of radio, Franklin Roosevelt, gave evidence in his speech of the powers that he was to exercise so remarkably during his Presidency. The Democratic Presidential nominee, John Davis, did not prove the match of Coolidge as a radio performer. On the other hand, third party candidate Robert La Follette's charge of discrimination became a minority party chant over the years, being

one of the reasons why Congress included Section 315 with its equal time provision in the Federal Communications Act. Coolidge and the Republicans appeared far more often on the air than either Davis and the Democrats or La Follette and the Progressives, winning an easy victory at the polls; in the next four Presidential elections the most exposed party and candidate were to go down to defeat. Most of the broadcasting stations in 1924 were in the hands of conservatives who favored Coolidge, although the Republicans did take the step of setting up a broadcasting station of their own.

During his second term as President, "Silent Cal" continued to use the radio extensively, although opposing "fireside chats," while Secretary of Commerce Herbert Hoover played a major role in regulating the industry. Hoover eventually became the Republican Presidential nominee in 1928, despite the fact that as a radio performer he was only mediocre. The Democratic candidate, Alfred Smith, labored under the handicap of an East Side accent; this may have helped him in the big cities of the North and East, but it probably hurt him in the South and in rural areas. Smith, moreover, overexposed himself on the radio, in contrast to Hoover, whose broadcasts were less frequent. During this campaign the five-minute talk, vaudeville, and dramatizations made their appearance as political aids, foreshadowing later innovations. Radio audiences were at least ten times greater in 1928 than in 1924, but both major parties spent only a relatively limited portion of their war chests for radio broadcasts. Hoover did win the election decisively but, shortly after assuming the Presidency, was confronted with a gigantic depression. During his administration he and other federal officials increasingly took to the air; unfortunately, however, the severity of the economic collapse was such that the people were unable to grasp the fact that the inarticulate Hoover was indeed attempting to do something about it. Often speaking on trivial topics, the disillusioned President restricted himself to generalities.

By 1932 a number of state and local candidates and officeholders had begun to employ the radio effectively. Many of these—John Hylan, Harry New, Arthur Capper, Hugh Ike Shott, Henry Field, even Dr. Brinkley—are largely forgotten names today. Yet Alfred Smith and Franklin Roosevelt both used the radio to their advantage while serving as Governor of New York. Despite the

existence of such leftist stations as WEVD in New York and WCPL in Chicago, labor, Socialist, and radical groups experienced difficulty in getting their ideas before the people. Unquestionably the most progressive state from the standpoint of political broadcasting was Wisconsin; stations there broadcast speeches by numerous political candidates, summaries of governmental activities, and meetings of the state legislature. Wisconsin, one must remember, was the home of Robert La Follette.

Franklin Roosevelt would have won the Presidency in 1932, regardless of his powers as a radio orator, but the latter obviously helped him maintain his hold upon public opinion once he had won office. Aside from his excellent speaking voice and his ability to create a rapport with his listeners, his speeches must be rated highly as literary productions, both emphasizing key points and unravelling complex issues. Apparently his Harvard accent alienated fewer voters than Alfred Smith's East Side accent. Curiously, the Democrats, the party of the silver-tongued Roosevelt, spent less money on radio time than the Republicans, the party of the tongue-tied Hoover. Limited Democratic expenditures, though, were doubtless attributable to a shortage of money due to the depression rather than to a lack of confidence in their radio speakers.

As President, FDR quickly took his case to the people through his "fireside chats," while other New Deal officials also saturated the airwaves with their comments. These "fireside chats" were generally reports to the public rather than "plugs" for bills. Quite naturally, Democrats monopolized radio time since most elected officials in 1933 were Democrats; even business groups were sponsoring programs on behalf of such governmental agencies as the NRA. It did not prove necessary for Roosevelt to stifle radio criticisms of him, since the latter were frequently lost in the sea of New Deal propaganda. At times radio critics of FDR did make their presence felt, such as Senator Huey Long of Louisiana, who might have challenged Roosevelt for the Presidency in 1936 had he not met a violent death the year previously. Potential Republican candidates—among them William Borah, Frank Knox, Arthur Vandenberg, and Hoover—showed little indication of being in either Roosevelt's or Long's league as radio performers.

Even less gifted in this connection was Alfred Landon, the 1936

Republican Presidential nominee, one of the few members of that party to win office in 1934. Thus handicapped in the area of radio, the Republicans turned to such gimmicks as Arthur Vandenberg's phony debate with FDR and the "Liberty at the Crossroads" radio drama. The famous "radio priest," Father Coughlin, did speak on behalf of the Union Party candidate, William Lemke, but Lemke polled less than a million votes in the general election. Both major parties employed foreign language broadcasts, the Democrats obtaining far better results than the Republicans. Renominated for a second term, Franklin Roosevelt won re-election with ease over heavy newspaper opposition; aside from Coughlin, he also had to do battle with such antagonistic radio commentators as Edwin Hill and Boake Carter. Despite the inadequacies of their Presidential candidate as a radio performer, the Republicans spent more on radio time than did the Democrats.

During Franklin Roosevelt's second term as President, New Deal radio propaganda accelerated. By this time pollsters had become fairly active. It was discovered that those most likely to listen to FDR were those most in favor of him; conversely, it was found relative to a broadcast by Senator Hugo Black, Roosevelt's appointee to the Supreme Court, that the indifferent and undecided were the least likely to tune in. At the state level a onetime flour salesman, W. Lee O'Daniel, was revolutionizing Texas politics by his use of the radio in his gubernatorial campaign, while in New York City the people were enjoying the privilege of listening to sessions of the city council over station WNYC.

In 1940 the Republican nominee for President, Wendell Willkie, fared better on the radio than had either Hoover or Landon, but he was still unable to defeat FDR at the polls. Willkie unfortunately suffered during most of the campaign from an ailing voice. During this campaign, the passage of the Hatch Act placed limits on political expenditures, including those for radio time, while the Republicans again outspent the Democrats, but by a more narrow margin than in 1936. As chief executive, FDR was able to command free air time on occasion. A study conducted in Erie County revealed that, at least in this part of Ohio, radio was a more important source of political information to the voters than the news-

papers, partly explaining why the general opposition of the latter did not hurt Roosevelt enough politically to defeat him.

As a wartime President, FDR quite naturally spoke frequently over the radio, emphasizing foreign relations far more than domestic affairs. In 1944 he did not feel the need to engage in heavy campaigning, although he faced a formidable radio rival in Governor Thomas Dewey of New York. The original Republican campaign strategy called for a series of projected dramatizations, but the radio chains rejected these, so that the GOP then turned to one minute and chain break announcements. Likewise, the Democrats employed spots, including some of five minutes' duration. Roosevelt did defeat Dewey at the polls in a close contest, Republican and Democratic radio expenditures being approximately equal. The findings of the Erie County investigators of 1940 were substantiated by the National Opinion Research Center, which found that those interviewed obtained their "most accurate news about the Presidential campaign" from the radio rather than from the newspapers.

Harry Truman, who replaced Franklin Roosevelt as President upon the latter's death early in his fourth term, employed the radio on numerous occasions to set his ideas before the people. At first a mediocre performer, HST attempted to improve his delivery. Curiously, his broadcast ending price controls on most items attracted almost twice as large an audience as his broadcast vetoing the Taft-Hartley labor law. During the 1948 Presidential election Truman, who was then suffering from a lack of popularity, successfully overcame the challenge of Thomas Dewey, who earlier had disposed of his Republican rival, Harold Stassen, in an Oregon debate that was the precursor of the Kennedy-Nixon confrontation of 1960. The overconfident Dewey vetoed five-minute personal spots, the Republicans employing thirty or sixty-second party spots; on the other hand, the Democrats relied on such gimmicks as a disk jockey show. Employing a technique which his critics thought to be more appropriate for nineteenth-century campaigning, Harry Truman barnstormed across the nation, attempting to reach as many voters as possible personally. Ironically, Dewey did no better at the polls against Truman than he did against Roose-

velt, despite the fact that the latter was a much more formidable radio performer. It is also significant that the Democrats outspent the Republicans in purchasing radio time, even though Dewey made effective use of this medium. The Wallace Progressives placed an increasing reliance on radio during the campaign.

With the emergence of television, radio's significance as a political instrument has declined, but it still plays a by no means negligible role. In 1952 Dwight Eisenhower apparently attracted more votes by his radio than by his television performances, although he had an excellent television image, while in 1960 Richard Nixon actually defeated John Kennedy in the Great Debates, according to those who heard them only on the radio. Barry Goldwater, the Republican Presidential nominee in 1964, was a ham radio operator. From the standpoint of innovations perhaps the most significant development to emerge in recent years has been the talkathon, which was used successfully by Francis Cherry in Arkansas and by others. That radio may conceivably decide an election today is attested by John Lindsay's victory in the New York mayoralty election in 1965 after he had participated in a post-midnight broadcast over a Negro radio station. In recent years the broadcasting of state legislative sessions has become a more frequent occurrence, even though the radio remains a stranger to the halls of Congress.

### *The Harding-Coolidge Administration*

The first political use of radio—technological progress—ironically coincided with the election of Warren Harding as President—political reaction. Some historians have theorized that, had radio come into wide use only a half-decade earlier, Woodrow Wilson would have carried his case for the League of Nations to the American people and been victorious. Henry Turner has written: "If Wilson had been able to speak to the people via television, or even radio, the course of world history might have been vastly different." As it was, the President was forced to make an 8,000 mile train tour that contributed to his physical breakdown without changing the mind of the Senate. Four years later, when Warren Harding was on his western tour, this equally tragic figure presented a series of broadcasts on the "stewardship of the Administration." Like Wilson,

Harding was on the verge of political disaster, only in this case the crux of the matter was the exposure of scandals, not the rejection of the Versailles settlement. A peaceful death mercifully freed him from facing the consequences of the disclosure of corruption.

Among the first important broadcasts of President Harding was the one inaugurating the new super-high power RCA station at Port Jefferson, Long Island, on November 5, 1921. Intended for world consumption, his message was received abroad by set-holders in such nations as Norway, Germany, France, England, Italy, Canada, Belgium, Sweden, Hawaii, Japan, Australia, New Zealand, Colombia, Costa Rica, Nicaragua, Honduras, Panama, and Cuba. On February 8, 1922, the Bureau of Engineering of the Navy Department reported that it was installing a radio receiver in the White House for the President's use; the Secretary of the Navy had made this offer at a recent cabinet meeting, and Harding had eagerly accepted. According to this press release, the latter "thoroughly appreciates the great benefits to be derived by keeping the world in common touch through communications, particularly in the matter of better understandings which was so much dwelt upon in the Disarmament Conference, and realizes the great possibilities of radio communication towards accomplishing this end." Thus the President desired to operate the apparatus himself so as to gain firsthand information about the new medium.

Throughout his administration Harding spoke periodically over the radio, but the first address of his to be broadcast over a large part of the country was the one he made in St. Louis on June 21, 1923. On this occasion the President spoke about the World Court, an organization to which he was not favorably disposed because of his isolationist orientation. His speech from Kansas City was also carried by a network of radio stations. As for the quality of his performances, a number of commentators have expressed the sentiment that Harding was more successful in his platform addresses before a live audience than over the radio. In this connection the *New York Times* observed that: "He is dominated by the restraining influence of the radio-telephone amplifiers, into which he has talked in making all his set addresses. The mechanical contrivance worries him . . . and he is tempted at times to revert to the old style of direct oratory, more stimulating to both orator and audi-

ence." Actually the most important radio address of Harding was one which he did not deliver because of his fatal illness; this was the projected speech at San Francisco on July 31 in honor of his homecoming. Among the stations scheduled to participate in this program were ones in San Francisco, Omaha, Chicago, New York, and Washington.

Early in August, Calvin Coolidge was sworn in as President by his father in a little Vermont farmhouse. Most analysts have attributed his success as chief executive to the fact that he mirrored the mood of the times, but few have properly stressed the extent to which Coolidge used the radio to shape public opinion. That "Silent Cal" was made for radio is indisputable. Presidential Secretary C. Bascom Slep observed in this connection that "His voice is perfectly adapted to its use in an enunciation clear and distinct," while Democrat Charles Michelson complained that "The advent of radio must be listed as one more item in the total of Coolidge luck or destiny, or whatever it is that seems to make things come out right for him politically." The President, in fact, placed fourth in a poll of American radio personalities conducted in the mid-1920's; he ranked ahead of the inimitable Will Rogers and behind only John McCormack, Walter Damrosch, and Madame Schumann-Heink. According to Senator James Watson of Indiana, Coolidge once made the observation that "I am very fortunate that I came in with the radio. I can't make an engaging, rousing, or oratorical speech as you can . . . but I have a good radio voice, and now I can get my message across to them without acquainting them with my lack of oratorical ability."

Significantly, the President made no speech on the radio whatsoever between August and December, when Congress met. Shortly thereafter "Silent Cal" delivered the first Presidential message to Congress ever to be broadcast; this was heard in such cities as Washington, New York, Providence, St. Louis, Kansas City, and Dallas. The reception appears to have been almost uniformly favorable, as even the turning of the pages of the manuscript came across clearly. Four days later, on December 10, Coolidge broadcast a speech from his study in the White House that took the form of what the *New York Times* described as a "touching eulogy of President Harding." Following his State of the Union message, the

President took to the airwaves on the average of once a month up to the Republican convention. Among these occasions were a Lincoln Day Dinner, the birthday of George Washington, a meeting of the Daughters of the American Revolution, a convention of the Associated Press, and Memorial Day. This, of course, was a mere prelude to the upcoming campaign for which the Coolidge managers were laying plans to use the airwaves to the utmost. As the Republican Vice-Presidential candidate in 1920, "Silent Cal" had been a doubtful asset to his party, radio not being in wide use as yet. One wonders how he would have fared four years later as the Presidential nominee had he been forced to rely mainly on barnstorming.

In contrast, the Democrats had no easy access to the radio as the Republicans did by virtue of their holding the Presidency. The one exception—Woodrow Wilson—broke his long silence to broadcast to the nation for ten minutes on Armistice Day, 1923. On this occasion the ailing ex-President criticized the United States for having deserted the Allies at the close of World War I, charging that this abandonment of responsibility had resulted in an agreement between France and Italy which had abrogated the Versailles Treaty. Wilson, of course, had hopes that the Democratic Party would make the League of Nations the main issue in the 1924 campaign.

### *The 1924 Campaign*

Unfortunately, the Democrats encountered perplexing problems other than international organization at their nominating convention that June at Cleveland. It took them 103 ballots to nominate a President, an unprecedented record. As the *New Republic* commented, "The Democrats have a well-grounded suspicion that the broadcasting of their Donneybrook Fair in Madison Square Garden may have done them more harm than good." First of all there was a bitter fight over the Ku Klux Klan that resulted in the exoneration of that organization by a razor-thin margin. Then came the standoff battle between Alfred Smith, a Catholic and a Wet, and William Gibbs McAdoo, a Protestant and a Dry, for the Democratic Presidential nomination which eventually led to the compro-

mise ticket of Wall Street lawyer, John Davis, for President and Nebraska Populist, Charles Bryan, for Vice-President. It was McAdoo rather than Davis, however, who had applied to the Department of Commerce in 1924 for a broadcasting license so that he could set up transmitting equipment at his home in Los Angeles; McAdoo planned to speak over the radio at different hours instead of undertaking long speaking tours. One prominent feature of this convention was the constant repetition of the phrase, "Alabama, twenty-four votes for Underwood." Oscar Underwood, of course, was the favorite son candidate of Alabama, and Alabama was the first on the list of states which were polled on the Presidential nomination over one hundred times. Among the worst performances on radio was that of the hero of the 1896 convention, William Jennings Bryan, who lost his audience several times as he wandered over the speaker's platform importuning the convention. A less publicized occurrence was the speech made by Franklin Roosevelt nominating fellow New Yorker, Al Smith, for the Presidency, an address which Helen Lowry praised in the *New York Times* as one of the best suited for radio.

As a radio speaker John Davis did not prove the match of Calvin Coolidge. In relation to the former, Charles Michelson observed "Mr. Davis . . . has a voice which to the direct auditor has that bell-like quality of his delightful rhetoric. Via radio, however, this muffles and fogs to some extent." In any event, Davis and Bryan campaigned largely by train. The Presidential nominee delivered his acceptance speech at his home town of Clarksburg, West Virginia, on August 11; this talk, which was carried by thirteen radio stations including some in the deep South, came across poorly because a driving rainstorm adversely affected the microphone pickup. Beginning on Labor Day, Davis started a Western tour in a railway car which was equipped with loudspeakers and radio jacks. One of the highlights of this was the stop at Bunceton, Missouri, on September 15, at which Davis made a radio address that was transmitted throughout the Middle West; 13,000 pounds of beef, 3,000 pounds of mutton, and 14,000 watermelons were consumed during the accompanying festivities. On November 1 he broadcast over a six-station hookup from Carnegie Hall. Despite his modest talents as a radio performer, Davis was well aware that this new

medium was bringing about a political revolution; in this connection he stated that "It will make the long speech impossible or inadvisable . . . the short speech will be the vogue. . . ." His prophecy did come true, but in the age of television rather than in that of radio. Davis likewise erred in his judgment that "Almost everyone has a good radio voice if he remembers to speak slowly and does not shout."

Perhaps even more utopian in his sentiments relative to the political impact of this medium was the Progressive candidate, Robert La Follette, who wrote in his weekly that radio "will undoubtedly serve to minimize misrepresentation in the news columns of the press." La Follette had announced his candidacy while the Democratic convention was still in progress; generally speaking, he conducted a vigorous campaign that emphasized traditional Progressive ideas mixed with pacifist and isolationist sentiments. His Labor Day address was the first political speech ever delivered exclusively over the radio without a live audience, while he generated so much enthusiasm when appearing at a Madison Square Garden rally that it required ten minutes for the audience to quiet down after the Wisconsin Senator had been introduced prior to his broadcasting. Near the end of the campaign a disillusioned La Follette charged that one of the broadcasting companies was discriminating against him; for La Follette, its refusal to put some of his speeches on the air was part of a plot to keep his ideas from the people. On October 15, radio station WHO denied La Follette the use of its Des Moines facilities, with the result that he charged that monopoly interests were conspiring to keep him off the air. Here, however, the Wisconsin Senator had failed to reserve radio time sufficiently in advance, a prerequisite that likewise had prevented a Republican Senator from Pennsylvania from broadcasting. When La Follette spoke over radio station WGY in Schenectady, the home of General Electric, on October 29, there was no attempt at censorship despite the fact that he referred bitterly to the waterpower trusts and General Electric. Subsequently he toned down his references to the "radio trust."

The Republican convention, unlike that of the Democrats, proved to be a relatively tame affair, as Calvin Coolidge obtained the Presidential nomination with ease. In July the party's national chairman

announced that the President would remain in Washington rather than barnstorm, using the radio to get his ideas across to the American people. Among the more important addresses that "Silent Cal" delivered was one to the U.S. Chamber of Commerce on October 23, which was carried by 22 stations; on November 3, a record number of stations (26) broadcast his last speech of the campaign. Coolidge's efforts were reinforced by those of Vice-Presidential candidate, Charles Dawes, various members of the cabinet, lesser officials, and a 15-station network airing a rally from the Metropolitan Opera House on November 1 featuring Charles Evans Hughes.

An interesting series of documents which throws considerable light on the Republicans' use of radio during the 1924 campaign is to be found in the Coolidge Papers. Everett Saunders, Director of the Speakers' Bureau of the Republican National Committee, asked Bliss Albro at this time to prepare a memorandum setting forth his ideas on radio publicity. In this document Albro pointed out that "To plan the details of this campaign in advance is futile, unless such a plan is so flexible that it can meet any emergency," and that "The 'big push' naturally must come near the end, and, with radio, it can be nearer the end than with any other method." Relative to the subject matter of speeches (which he regarded as "the real thing over the radio"), Albro noted that "Broadcasting requires a new type of sentence. Its language is not that of the platform orator"; he added that "Speeches must be short. Ten minutes is a limit and five minutes is better, except on special 'big stuff.'"

As far as President Coolidge's actual use of radio in this campaign is concerned, Edward T. Clark, his secretary, wrote on September 24 to James Francis Burke of the Republican National Committee (who apparently wanted the chief executive to make more speeches) that the President was by necessity required to give each address the most careful consideration, so that it is "clear cut, individual and well thought out." In the opinion of Clark, the President's hold on the electorate would not be strengthened by "neighborly talks," "offhand remarks," or "casual speeches"; a "rear platform" approach to speaking would not suffice for the electorate as a whole. Other spokesmen for the Republican cause, however, felt no inclination to limit their appearances on radio, as

the Republican radio campaign in the Eastern district was the most complete and extensive conducted by the three major parties anywhere.

Returning to Coolidge, William Allen White summed up the President's role in this campaign succinctly in his remark that ". . . over the radio, he went straight to the popular heart. During the campaign he had little to say and said it well." Well enough, in fact, to win 382 electoral votes and 15,725,000 popular votes compared to Davis' 136 electoral votes and 8,386,000 popular votes; La Follette carried only his native Wisconsin, but he did amass nearly five million popular votes. There is little question, moreover, that the Republicans received much more extensive radio exposure than did the Democrats or the Progressives during the campaign. Radio expenses of the Republican national committee totalled \$120,000, those of the Democrats, \$40,000; the *New Republic* estimated that Republican orators were heard on the airwaves at least three or four times as often as Democratic ones and probably eight to ten times as frequently as the La Follette spokesmen. Another important factor which one must take into consideration is that most of the radio stations then in operation were in the hands of conservative businessmen who quite naturally tended to be sympathetic to candidates of the Coolidge stripe. The Republicans, in fact, opened their own radio station in their eastern campaign headquarters in New York City, broadcasting morning, noon, and night from October 21 until Election Day. Among the titles of some of the addresses delivered over this station were: "Matters of Special Interest to the Home Woman in the National Campaign," "Vicissitudes of a Practical Politician," and "Foundation of the Constitution."

One experiment not tried during 1924, but which bore fruit at a later date during the era of television, was a radio debate among the leading Presidential candidates. William Harkness, Assistant Vice-President of the American Telephone and Telegraph Company, proposed this in March at a Congressional hearing on the regulation of radio broadcasting. Despite its merits, it is unlikely that President Calvin Coolidge, already widely exposed on radio, would have consented to allow his opponents, especially John W.

Davis, to become better known. Senator Robert La Follette had previously established a national reputation but, being a third party nominee, his chances of victory were slim.

As one might expect, not every evaluation of the impact of radio on politics during the 1924 campaign was favorable. This was especially true of liberal commentators. "Politics by radio," commented the *New Republic*, "began in curiosity and ended in disillusionment," adding that "The result was one to dismay the most hardened political cynic. The public did listen in, most extensively. Furthermore, it was fascinated, horrified, and finally amused. The abysmal emptiness of the nominating speeches seems to have been amplified, in transmission, beyond the endurance of human ears." Equally derogatory was the *Nation*, which observed that: "Something will have to be done, before another Presidential year, to teach politicians the art of radio oratory and of radio demonstration. It was exciting enough, for the privileged few, to see the delegates march like crazy schoolboys about the hall, juggling their standards as they danced; it was anything but thrilling to the radio-hearers. A dull, confused blah emerging from a radio horn punctuated now and then by a second of silence. . . ." It is not surprising, therefore, that Radio Corporation of America officials not only suggested that a one-hour-a-day limit be placed on the broadcasting of political addresses but also proposed that individual speeches be restricted to a quarter-hour in length and deal with national issues only.

But such criticisms were not representative of future trends, for radio came to play an increasingly important role in American political life. Perhaps radio addresses did not change many votes, but it unquestionably attracted millions of listeners to convention proceedings and other phases of the campaign. And as Lewis Weeks has more recently pointed out, "The effect of the election on radio was more important than the effect of radio on the election result," since "Coast-to-coast broadcasting was proved practicable through the use of long distance telephone lines for the interconnection of radio stations across the country." One must remember that as late as the beginning of 1924, many radio engineers were convinced that the networks of stations that sprang up during the following campaign would remain a dream, and had it

not been for the political wars, coast-to-coast broadcasts might not have become a reality for a number of years.

### *The Second Coolidge Administration*

The inauguration of Calvin Coolidge as President on March 4, 1925, proved to be the greatest triumph that radio had thus far attained. No less than twenty-one stations across the country carried his address, and possibly as many as 15 million people heard his speech. So successful was the coverage of Coolidge's inauguration that a great deal of discussion took place as to the desirability of broadcasting sessions of Congress, a suggestion which has yet to bear fruit. During this year (1925), "Silent Cal" spoke an average of 9,000 words a month over the radio; all in all, he spoke to more people than any previous President in history, if not all of them combined. For this reason the legend that Coolidge was a man of few words is paradoxical, because it is questionable whether any other public official in American history used so few words so effectively.

Equally paradoxical is the fact that the President who did the most to promote the development of radio was perhaps the least effective performer of all those chief executives who employed this medium. As Secretary of Commerce under Coolidge, Herbert Hoover for a while had supervisory powers over the radio industry, and thus it was only natural that he had an "inside track" with most of the broadcasters, regardless of party affiliation. As we point out in the chapter on regulation, Hoover encouraged the industry to regulate itself, but a 1926 court decision deprived him of much of his power in this area, making necessary the passage of a federal radio act the following year.

Despite the important role that radio played in establishing him as President in his own right as well as electing him to a full term, Calvin Coolidge felt that "fireside chats" were neither necessary nor desirable. In this connection he stated at a press conference in February 1925 that "I don't think it is necessary for the President periodically to address the country by radio. The newspaper reporters do very well for me in that direction." Consequently he limited his use of the radio to the broadcasting of general speeches or fixed

policy pronouncements like the State of the Union message. "Silent Cal," too, rarely spoke extemporaneously, reading from a manuscript instead; he seldom departed from the text of the latter except to offer a few introductory remarks. Thus restricted, Coolidge almost never employed gestures in his delivery, an omission which apparently did not adversely affect his radio image.

### *The 1928 Campaign*

Early in May, before the Republican Party assembled in its national convention, Hoover adviser Alan Fox announced that, if nominated, Hoover would conduct his campaign largely by means of the radio and films. This strategy, Fox emphasized, was based on the supposition that Alfred Smith would be the Democratic nominee. In any event the Republicans selected Hoover as their Presidential candidate over relatively weak opposition, Charles Curtis gaining the Vice-Presidential nod. At this Republican convention, apparently for the first time, members of individual delegations began to demand roll calls when the clerk reached their states during the balloting. Some of these obviously had the ulterior motive of speaking over a coast-to-coast radio hookup, aside from any legitimate need to poll the delegation.

Unlike 1924, when it took the Democrats 103 ballots to nominate a President, in 1928 Alfred Smith became his party's candidate with relative ease. The "Happy Warrior," though, alienated a large segment of the voting public, especially in the South, by his advocacy of Catholicism and his hostility towards prohibition. Even the best radio technique in the world would not have recaptured these votes. Smith was no stranger to this medium, since as Governor of New York he had used the radio in 1924 to exert public pressure on Republican leaders who opposed a reduction in the state income tax. During the campaign of 1928, Smith made many more speeches than Hoover did, and every time he spoke it was deemed necessary for him to have an expensive national hookup; nevertheless, the Smith radio campaign lagged badly following his acceptance speech, which was delivered indoors because of the rain.

Evaluating Hoover as a radio performer, Samuel Blythe ob-

served of the future President that "At best, Mr. Hoover is not much of a public speaker. He has a depressing mannerism of looking down when he is speaking, and that does not help the general effect of his addresses any. Hoover's radio managers provided for this habit by elevating the microphone so that Mr. Hoover had to raise his head to it and thus remedy the looking-down mannerism." Unfortunately there were times when this was not possible, as at Boston, where Hoover's speech received a poor reception; when he spoke at Madison Square Garden, his managers placed the microphone so high that he almost had to stand on tiptoe to speak into it. Thus this technical deficiency was correctable on most occasions, but not Smith's East Side accent. His pronunciation of radio as "raddio," to cite merely one example, may have endeared him to the immigrant element in New York City and other large metropolitan areas, but it hardly made him popular in the South where he needed to pick up votes.

Commenting on the Hoover and Smith candidacies following visits by both to Boston, F. Lauristen Bullard proclaimed that "The best friend Mr. Hoover has in the present tense times is the radio, and . . . per contra the radio may be doing Governor Smith an amount of harm." Bullard added that "It is now recognized that the radio has converted a poor platform speaker into an effective campaigner and has nullified the influence of the master of assemblies." As we have seen, if Hoover inspired few through his radio addresses, he also alienated few. An analyst for the *New York Times* was of the opinion that Smith's personality was present in every speech, while Hoover's broadcasts lacked emotional warmth. Here one encounters an early expression of the dichotomy between the warm, private Hoover and the cold, public Hoover. In this connection J. Andrew White also noted that "Hoover deals with a subject in much the same way that a technical textbook would handle it, whereas Smith utilizes the novelist's method." This assessment seems quite appropriate, as Hoover was trained to be an engineer, while Smith had been interested in drama as a young man.

Aside from being a hard-hitting campaign, the political wars of 1928 witnessed the introduction of several innovations relative to the radio. As for the Republicans, John Calvin Brown and his Minute Men prepared thirty-five minute talks which covered 30 of the

main points of the campaign; these were delivered over 174 local stations by an individual well known to the citizens there, be he butcher or grocer. In contrast, the Democrats relied on vaudeville, stars of stage and concert hall campaigning for their nominee to the tune "East Side, West Side." On a more serious level was the radio play based on the "Happy Warrior's" life which was heard over CBS on October 20. A bipartisan series of programs designed to help shape public opinion was the Voter's Campaign Information Service. Sponsored by the League of Women Voters in cooperation with the National Broadcasting Company, this was broadcast to approximately 20 million listeners over a twenty-two station hookup. In theory—if not always in fact—this service "provided a weekly (non-partisan) accompaniment to the campaign; gave the necessary background for the issues; demonstrated the widely different viewpoints of equally conscientious leaders; clarified the strategic development of issues in Congress in advance of the campaign; taught nominating and election machinery; mitigated the heat of partisanship by the fresh and cooling air of disinterested discussion."

Both Presidential candidates addressed the voters on the eve of the election, Hoover from Palo Alto, California, and Smith from New York City. When the final results had been tabulated, it was confirmed that Hoover had defeated Smith, 444 electoral votes to 87, amassing 21 million popular votes to the latter's 15. For the first time since the end of Reconstruction, the Republicans carried a Southern state, although Smith did make inroads into the big city vote in the North which Franklin Roosevelt capitalized on four years later. During this campaign the Democrats outspent the Republicans vis-à-vis radio advertising, \$650,000 to \$435,000; if one includes local spots, though, the total for both parties was closer to two million dollars than one million. Citing some other figures for purposes of comparison, it cost the National Broadcasting Company \$105,000 to broadcast the Democratic national convention, \$75,000 to broadcast the Republican one. Nevertheless, in 1928 radio accounted for only 18 and 10 per cent, respectively, of the expenses of the Democratic and Republican National Committees. One might argue that these relatively limited appropriations for radio campaigning were a mistake, for by this time radio was

capable of reaching 40 million people compared with only a few million in the previous Presidential election. In 1928, 42 stations carried the Democratic convention and 44 the Republican one; in 1924 there had been only 24 stations operating in the entire country. Unfortunately for candidates for public office, the practice of charging them for radio time once they had given their nomination acceptance speeches began during this campaign.

### *The Hoover Administration*

Six months following the close of the campaign, in May, 1929, Senator Gerald Nye of North Dakota made the suggestion that Congress set up a radio station in Washington for universal political use. Nye predicted that future political campaigns would be conducted mainly via the radio, barnstorming largely being a thing of the past. Since commercial radio stations and networks favored those political candidates with bulging coffers, preferring not to donate free time to them, he suggested that no charge be made for delivering addresses over this station. In the final analysis Nye's plan proved impractical, since one station would not blanket the nation, while a network would prove too costly. Similar plans have surfaced occasionally since then.

Despite the failure of Nye's scheme, his colleagues in the Seventy-first Congress established a record by broadcasting over a hundred speeches, every important piece of legislation having its spokesman or protagonist. Even President Hoover succumbed to the trend, making 10 addresses on the radio in 1929, and 27 in 1930. Unfortunately these did not restore the crumbling faith of the American people in his leadership, the depression having set in by this time. Hoover's cabinet, too, made a number of radio speeches during this period. In 1932, one hundred federal officials spoke 171 times over the NBC network alone prior to the conventions.

All in all, Herbert Hoover spoke over the radio no less than 95 times during his Presidency. This was only nine times less than FDR during his first term. A study of the broadcast addresses of Hoover collected in the Myers edition of the *State Papers*, however, reveals that 12 of the 21 were little more than "glorified greetings"; the President presented brief talks to national meetings

of such organizations as the 4-H Club, the YMCA, Christian Endeavor, and the Methodist Church. Of the remaining nine speeches, four were narrowly political, while two did deal with public business (a Governors' Conference and the London Naval Treaty). Only three were addressed to the nation at large, two being appeals for charitable contributions to relieve unemployment distress, one being a plea to the people not to hoard money. Consequently, it is no wonder that Hoover's impact as a radio speaker did not match his exposure.

Yet if any public official was aware of the enormous political possibilities of radio, that individual was Herbert Hoover. In a statement prepared for inclusion in a special radio supplement published by the *Brooklyn Standard Union* in April 1929, Hoover observed that "Radio has become a social force of the first order . . . it is revolutionizing the political debates that underlie political action under our principles of government . . . (It) physically makes us literally one people upon all occasions of general public interest." Perhaps the unfortunate consequences of the great depression soured the President on making broadcasts to the American people; three years later, in February 1932, he responded to a suggestion from Wallace Alexander that he take to the airwaves for ten minutes each week that "it is very difficult to deal with anything over the radio except generalities, without embarrassing actual accomplishments which are going forward." Nevertheless, regardless of his relative lack of success as a radio speaker during his Presidency, both Henry Ford and General Motors expressed an interest in sponsoring him on weekly broadcasts once he had left office.

### *State and Local Developments, 1920-1932*

At this point in the narrative we might pause briefly and examine the political use of radio at the state and local levels during the 1920's and early 1930's. Probably the first elected official to make wide use of this medium was Major John Hylan of New York City, who delivered his first radio address on November 6, 1921; Hylan continued to broadcast until September 5, 1925, on which date New York Supreme Court Justice Aaron Levy granted a temporary stay which forbade the use of the radio for political purposes.

During the same year, Hylan went down to defeat in the mayoralty primary at the hands of an even more controversial figure, the colorful Jimmy Walker. At the state level one of the first elected public officials to broadcast was Senator Harry New of Indiana, who addressed his constituents from Washington for the first time on March 30, 1922. The *New York Times* rated this broadcast a success, commenting that "There wasn't a shred of doubt in the minds of radio enthusiasts that plans for radio campaigning were practicable and they would be distinctly the vogue before many weeks had gone by." Within a few years, in fact, many members of Congress were broadcasting from their own radio stations. In 1932, for example, Senator Arthur Capper of Kansas was speaking over WIBW in Topeka, while Representative Hugh Ike Shott of West Virginia was speaking over WHIS in Bluefield. As for the defeat of Senator Brookhart of Iowa in that year's primary at the hands of Henry Field, political analysts noted that the latter owned a radio station, whereas Brookhart did not. Two years previously the nationally noted "goat gland" broadcaster, Dr. Brinkley, had lost a closely contested Kansas gubernatorial election in which he was counted out in the canvassing of the vote. Two broadcasting outlets of a more radical hue were WEVD in New York, a Socialist-oriented station named in honor of Eugene V. Debs, and WCFL in Chicago, the mouthpiece of that city's federation of labor; representatives of these two groups often experienced difficulty when they attempted to obtain time on most commercial stations.

At the state level, however, Wisconsin probably has done more than any other state to bring the government to the people via the radio. In 1932 station WHA in Madison called a meeting which was attended by representatives of the five leading political groups of the state. As a result of this gathering, the parties involved agreed that the Democrats, the Republicans, the Progressive Republicans, the Socialists, and the Prohibitionists were to have free access to the radio facilities of WHA before both the primary and the general election. Perhaps the most unusual feature of this plan was the equal representation given to each party regardless of its relative strength. This innovation, too, did not prove to be a mere passing fad; during the 1960 campaign, WHA broadcast political talks by state candidates twice a day for three weeks prior to the

election in November, having also furnished free time to all contenders in that year's primary election. The year 1932 likewise witnessed the inauguration of "Your Wisconsin Government," a radio program that furnished information relative to government and taxation. Scripts for this program, which was presented over WHA, were prepared by the research and editorial staff of the Wisconsin Taxpayers Alliance, an independent, nonpolitical, fact-finding organization. By 1942 these talks were being carried independently by ten local stations in the state. When the legislature was in session, the emphasis was quite naturally on legislative matters, but when it was not, the talks covered a wide variety of topics; periodical appeals to vote were broadcast prior to elections, while occasionally listeners were urged to submit questions to be answered over the air.

Wisconsin, too, began broadcasting sessions of the state legislature at this time. Not only were the governor's inaugural address and budget message to that body carried over the radio but some of the debates on the floor were also aired. The originating station likewise extended the privilege of using its facilities to every assemblyman and senator; each day during the session, some legislator prominent in the news at that time appeared on a daily broadcast. Finally, once a week the Women's Legislative Council of Wisconsin presented a program summarizing and explaining important capital developments.

### *The 1932 Campaign*

Returning to Presidential politics, the severity of the depression that broke out in 1929 made a Democratic victory in 1932 almost inevitable, regardless of whom that party selected as its Presidential nominee and regardless of his abilities as a radio performer. Governor Franklin Roosevelt of New York, who defeated Alfred Smith for this honor after a bitter convention fight, did happen to be an outstanding speaker; he had effectively addressed both his party's national convention as a supporter of his current rival, Smith, and the people of his state as governor. In an address to the Tammany Speakers' Bureau in January 1929, Roosevelt theorized that American politics had passed from an era in which "silver tongues" had swayed many votes through a period of newspaper domination to

the present age in which radio was king. Nevertheless, it was not until he had actually become President that Roosevelt really emerged as a radio charmer. During the 1932 campaign his most original innovation came at the very beginning, when he broke a long-standing precedent by flying to Chicago to accept his nomination before the convention had even adjourned; prior to this time it had been customary for a time lapse of one month to intervene. Roosevelt opened his formal campaign for the Presidency in late July—quite an early start—when he elaborated on the Democratic platform in a radio address from Albany.

The reasons why FDR was such an outstanding radio performer have long attracted the attention of political analysts. One of the earliest of these was ASD, who wrote in the ill-starred *Literary Digest* that "His ability to create a feeling of intimacy between himself and his listeners, his skill in placing emphasis on key words, his adroitness in presenting complicated matters in such simple terms that the man in the street believes he has a full mastery of them, have won him admiration from even his political enemies." Broadcasting officials, who selected Roosevelt as the best political speaker in the nation, placed special emphasis on his "personality, sincerity, and excellent voice." Cyrus Field did warn in the *Forum* during the campaign that "His sponsors might suggest that he watch his Harvard accent," yet this cultivated tone no more alienated FDR from the voters than it did Kennedy, perhaps even less so. Like Smith, Roosevelt tended to be a dynamic speaker, in contrast to Hoover, "whose method of giving practically every word the same stress was not copied since his debut on the air."

Despite his unpopularity due to the depression, Herbert Hoover was again the Republican nominee for President. He launched his campaign for re-election on August 11 over the largest political radio hookup in history, 160 stations. Hoover may have stacked up relatively well as a radio performer against Alfred Smith, but running against Roosevelt he received such accolades as "The tonal characteristics of his voice approximate the effect of an old-fashioned phonograph in need of winding." Historians now see in retrospect that Hoover indeed did have a program for dealing with the depression, but his radio delivery obviously did little to rally the American people behind him.

On Election Day, Roosevelt trounced Hoover, 472 electoral votes

to 59, 23 million popular votes to 16. This defeat was not attributable to a lack of effort radiowise on the part of the Republicans; the Grand Old Party used 73 hours of network time in 1932 compared with 42½ in 1928. In contrast, the Democrats employed 51½ hours in 1932, actually one hour less than in 1928. Nevertheless, despite the fact that they were forced to cut their projected radio schedule because of a scarcity of money, expenditures for radio still constituted the largest single item in their budget. One source has estimated that the two major parties spent a total of 5 million dollars during this campaign, while another has claimed that the Democrats, Republicans, and Socialists spent \$1,250,000 on national hookups alone. The National Broadcasting Company allotted 57 hours of air time to the conventions, and 89 hours to the campaign, the 160 broadcasts it carried establishing a record. Beginning around this time both NBC and CBS inaugurated the policy of donating about three periods a week for political addresses, but they both refused to sell time for Presidential campaigning to either party before it officially picked its candidate.

### *The First Roosevelt Administration*

As President, FDR quickly endeared himself to the public through his "fireside chats." Actually he had gone to the people over the airwaves as an elected official first as Governor of New York in April 1929, at which time he charged that the Republican Party had failed to live up to its platform, especially the Republican chairmen of legislative committees. (This speech and the ones that followed were aimed especially at upstate New Yorkers who received most of their information through the Republican press.) According to Robert Trout, Washington radio station WJSV was instructed by the White House to prepare two types of introduction for the President—a regular, formal one and a more folksy type. Roosevelt eventually approved the latter, which happened to include the term "fireside chat." The first of these was delivered on the day before he terminated the bank moratorium; in it he asked the people not to make a run on the banks when they reopened. Crossley, Inc., estimated that the address proclaiming a bank holiday reached 64 per cent of the radio sets in operation, an all-time

record. During his first ten months in office, FDR spoke over the radio 20 times, Mrs. Roosevelt 17 times, and Roosevelt's cabinet 107 times. In addition, on March 12, May 7, July 24, and October 22, the President made what he described as "reports to the nation" totalling roughly 12,000 words.

To properly assess Franklin Roosevelt's "fireside chats," it is necessary to examine them for the duration of his entire Presidency rather than for a single term. It is noteworthy that the great majority of these addresses fell into the "report, review, explain" category rather than being "plugs" for pending legislation. (FDR's broadcast of March 9, 1937, supporting the "court packing" bill, of course, would be a prime example of the latter.) During his first two terms as President, no less than half of his "fireside chats" were delivered during the lulls between Congressional sessions. In this connection Roosevelt wrote to Frank Walker in February 1936 that "Congress while in session is a sounding board—when it is away the President is a sounding board."

Actually there were only 28 "fireside chats"—8 during FDR's first term, 8 during his second, and 12 during his third. They varied in length from 1,200 to 4,500 words; although some lasted as long as 45 minutes and some as short as 15, their average length was approximately a half-hour. Almost invariably Roosevelt chose to speak between 9 and 11 p.m., E.S.T., three-fourths of his addresses taking place on the first three days of the week. According to Stephen Early, "the President wanted to go on the radio many more times than we would allow him." FDR, though, was himself aware of the dangers of overexposure. When Ray Stannard Baker wrote him in 1935 urging more frequent broadcasts, he replied that "The public psychology and, for that matter, individual psychology, cannot, because of human weakness, be attuned for long periods of time to a constant repetition of the highest note in the scale. . . ." The year previously, in 1934, the White House had requested the "March of Time" radio program to discontinue simulating the President's voice because otherwise it would have been heard so frequently on the air that it would have become routine.

In 1934 Republican Senator Arthur Vandenburg charged that the Roosevelt Administration controlled the airwaves and was stifling criticism. By this time, of course, conservatives had started

to become disillusioned with the New Deal. In any event, during the following year NBC and CBS together furnished Senators with free time on more than 150 occasions, Representatives on 200, and governors in excess of 50. If most of these public officials spoke in favor of the New Deal, it was at least in part attributable to the fact that voters had elected candidates favorable to its philosophy. Significantly, many business sponsors used some of their commercial time to propagandize on behalf of the NRA; Johns-Manville, General Electric, and Sherwin Williams paid for advertisements on behalf of the Federal Housing Administration.

Another public official who had begun to attract considerable attention as a radio performer prior to his assassination in 1935 was Senator Huey Long of Louisiana, a onetime supporter of FDR and later a dangerous rival. In the spring of 1935, Paul Hutchinson observed, "When you discover how enormous is the radio audience which Huey Long has already reached, it is difficult to believe that he has spoken only four times over a national hookup." Combining earthy figures of speech with quotations from the Bible, Long won converts by the score to his "Share Our Wealth" philosophy. The cornerstone of Long's program was the assumption that wealth was unequally distributed in this country; his remedy was a heavy capital levy on the wealthy, the proceeds from which were to be distributed to the lower class. This was to make "every man a king." Some of Long's ideas, it should be noted, had been put into effect earlier while he was serving as Governor of Louisiana. Together with Franklin Roosevelt and Father Charles Coughlin (whom we analyze in a separate chapter), Long ranks as one of the leading political broadcasters of the New Deal era.

In 1953, Ernest Bormann cast a retrospective glance at Long in a rhetorical analysis of the national radio broadcasts that "the Kingfish" delivered between March 1933 and July 1935. Bormann concluded, on the basis of mail response and the growth of the "Share Our Wealth" movement, that these national broadcasts were effective; the political boost which these gave to Long nationally was doubtless a factor in FDR's move towards the left around this time, a step which cut into the strength of the Louisiana demagogue. Bormann also observed that "Considered as speeches, in

terms of organization, development of ideas, and the use of rhetorical techniques, some of the broadcasts were exceptional performances, some were fair to good, and some were mediocre." As for the above-mentioned "earthy figures of speech," the self-educated but by no means uneducated Long deliberately violated the canons of good usage in grammar, articulation, and pronunciation so as to appeal more effectively to the masses. Long's analysis of current economic conditions may have been grossly oversimplified and highly exaggerated, but from the standpoint of psychology he was successful in attracting the attention and support of a considerable segment of the voting public. Bormann may be correct in his assumption that the philosophy which underlay the "Share Our Wealth" plan was basically cynical, but Long was not the first and certainly will not be the last politician to further his own interest through the scapegoat and panacea approach to economics.

Another political figure whose radio broadcasts during this period were highly influential was William Lemke, later to run as the Union Party's Presidential candidate in 1936. An advocate of bankruptcy legislation, Lemke obtained the financial support of the Farmers Union for his broadcast speeches during the first years of his Congressional career; one of these resulted in requests for no less than 6,000 reprints. Lemke not only obtained free time by mailing transcriptions of his talks to small radio stations but also obtained time on national networks frequently. Thanks to Lemke's efforts, the House of Representatives was forced to consider his bankruptcy measure in 1934 after he had obtained the signatures of 145 Representatives on a discharge petition, a rare event. Once Congress had approved the bill, FDR signed it with reluctance, having indirectly opposed it. This proved to be the greatest accomplishment of Lemke's Congressional career.

By the end of the first Roosevelt Administration, several potential Republican Presidential nominees had also emerged as rivals of FDR. In evaluating their microphone techniques, the *Literary Digest* ranked Senator William Borah of Idaho highly, but with qualifications: "As a trained, polished orator, he, along with Charles Evans Hughes, was the radio speechmaking bulwark of the first Hoover campaign. But lately his voice has grown somewhat cold, although his speeches are clear and incisive, and a loss of old-time

vigor is detectable." While observing that "Herbert Hoover has at least added human appeal to his speeches," the *Literary Digest* found that Frank Knox, "another whose voice does not sound natural over the radio . . . lets himself be carried away by flights of his own oratory." In the case of Senator Arthur Vandenberg of Michigan, the *Literary Digest* suggested that his "speeches are so well thought out and prepared that some radio observers think he is losing much of his potential effectiveness by failing to take lessons in what they call microphone technique." Other publications, of course, assessed these potential candidates somewhat differently as radio performers. Thus the *New York Times* found that "Knox falls more into the preacher class," while "Borah is an effective broadcaster of the forensic type," and "Senator Vandenberg is a natural speaker with a clear, resonant voice."

### *The 1936 Campaign*

Despite the availability of such prominent political figures as Borah, Knox, Hoover, and Vandenberg, the Republican Party chose as its Presidential standard-bearer in 1936 Governor Alfred Landon of Kansas, the only Republican chief executive at the state level to win re-election in 1934. (Frank Knox was chosen for the second spot.) Perhaps the most revealing assessment of Landon as a radio performer is found in a campaign biography theoretically sympathetic to him. After the author of this had declared that "I like personally the straight natural way of his speeches," he then admitted that "There may be an advantage in talking in council better than he speaks in public and even thinking better than he talks." Ironically, one of the two candidates that Landon had defeated in a three-way race for governor was the radio station owner and "goat-gland" broadcaster Dr. Brinkley; this apparently gave his supporters hope that sincerity of utterance might prevail over an unsurpassed radio technique in a Landon-Roosevelt confrontation. In any event, Landon did establish a precedent by submitting to a lengthy radio interview prior to the holding of the Republican national convention.

Shackled to an uninspiring radio advocate of its cause and faced with a seemingly unbeatable opposition candidate, the Republican

Party turned to exploring new radio techniques. In the process it came up with a radio campaign that it has rarely, if ever, matched in inventive power. The highlight of this was the "debate" presented over CBS on the evening of October 17 which featured a live Senator Arthur Vandenberg and a recorded President Franklin Roosevelt; this "debate" emphasized the degree that the latter had digressed from his campaign promises of 1932. Of the 66 stations that were scheduled to carry the program, 21 cut it off, while 23 carried it, and the remaining 22 vacillated. Technically the eighteen-minute dialogue violated a CBS rule against the use of phonograph records; officials of that network apparently learned of the nature of this "debate" only at the last moment. While Democratic political mastermind James Farley charged "dirty campaign," Bill Blackett, public relations director for the Republican National Committee, cried "federal censorship."

The Republicans also employed spot announcements on behalf of their Presidential candidate, "Make it brief and people will remember what you've said," was the dictum which has even more relevance in the era of television. Still another Republican innovation was the "Liberty at the Crossroads" radio drama which appropriately originated over Roosevelt-hater Colonel Robert McCormick's station WGN in Chicago. (The leading networks had turned the program down on the grounds that no time could be leased to political parties until after their national conventions.) Among the characters that appeared in this play were Thomas Jefferson, Samuel Adams, John Smith, Mary Jones, two farmers, a husband, a butcher, and the Voice of Doom; without exception the sketches were highly critical of the New Deal. In assessing the wisdom of banning this program, David Lawrence observed, "If the broadcasting companies ever attempt to separate fiction from fact in respect to political speeches, they will have to employ censors far more skillful in the separation of truth from untruth than the Justices of the Supreme Court themselves."

In this election, for the first time since 1924, a third party—the Union Party—took part in the campaign. Although William Lemke was its Presidential candidate, its real spokesman was the famous "Radio Priest," Father Charles Coughlin, whom we analyze at greater length in the chapter on propaganda. On August 15 Cough-

lin bluntly asserted: "If I cannot swing at least 9,000,000 votes to Mr. Lemke I will quit broadcasting educational talks on economics and politics"; although Lemke polled closer to 900,000 votes than 9,000,000, the "Radio Priest" failed to keep his pre-election pledge. Another splinter group was the Constitutional Democrats, whose anti-New Deal convention at Macon, Georgia, in January was boycotted by the major networks. At the other end of the political spectrum, Dr. Francis Townsend, the precursor of social security, had to negotiate with Mexican stations in September because several Chicago stations had rejected a series of educational broadcasts on his pension plan by imposing impossible terms on him. Among the latter were the stipulations that he was not to mention politics or to appeal to his followers for funds. Nevertheless, the Communists succeeded for the first time in obtaining a free national hookup on the evening of March 5, at which time General Secretary Earl Browder spoke over CBS on "The Communist Position in 1936." Despite this success, that fall the Communists charged that stations in Indianapolis, Pittsburgh and Minneapolis were discriminating against them.

Turning to the Democrats, early in 1936 the Cooperative Analysts of Broadcasting conducted a study which helps explain FDR's overwhelming victory at the polls later that year. In comparing the drawing power radiowise of FDR, Senator Joseph Robinson of Arkansas, and anti-Administration Democrat Alfred Smith, it had found that the President enjoyed the largest radio audiences in the vote-rich metropolitan centers. As for the Democratic convention at which Franklin Roosevelt won renomination overwhelmingly, in the words of the *New York Times*, it was a radio convention rather than a delegate's convention. While touring the country (as did Landon) on a month-long barnstorming expedition, FDR made 23 formal speeches, many of which were widely broadcast. An extreme adverse reaction was that of Harrison Holloway, executive manager of two radio stations in Los Angeles, who labelled the President's "fireside chats" as "nothing more than campaign speeches," refusing air time to the Democrats without payment. One of the highlights of the Democratic campaign occurred when four Democratic governors answered Alfred Landon's acceptance speech, each from his own statehouse; requests for copies of their

addresses were more numerous than any other except for those of the President.

During 1936 both political parties placed great stress on foreign language broadcasts, perhaps making 2,000 in all. The Democrats used Italian, German, Jewish, Polish, Hungarian, and Greek radio messages in a dozen key cities, while the Republicans employed 29 languages in presenting everything from one hundred word spots to thirty-minute talks. By 1936, though, the minorities-immigrant vote had drifted into the Democratic camp, being largely responsible for the margin of FDR's victory during this year.

Not surprisingly, the flood of abuse that poured over the airwaves was distasteful to many who preferred their political dialogue to be on a more rarified level. One of the more thoughtful speeches on this subject broadcast during 1936 was that on radio responsibility delivered by Owen Young on the occasion of his receiving an honorary Doctor of Literature degree at Rollins College. Although this event took place in February prior to the actual inception of the campaign, pro and anti-Roosevelt speeches had already begun to poison the ether. Actually the "intemperate" remarks that Young quoted from the addresses of Herbert Hoover, Alfred Smith, and Senate Majority Leader Joseph Robinson, were far milder than many others he might have cited, especially certain ones of Father Coughlin and Huey Long. Perhaps Young's most caustic evaluation was that of Smith, who commented in attacking FDR that "There can be only one atmosphere of government, the clear, pure, fresh air of free America, or the foul breath of communistic Russia. There can be only one flag, the Stars and Stripes, or the flag of the godless Union of the Soviets. There can be only one national anthem, 'The Star-Spangled Banner' or the 'International.'" Robinson's remark was a part of his rebuttal of Smith, while Hoover's was on the subject of a managed currency. "To these great men, and even to the President of the United States, all held in such high esteem," Young pleaded, "may we not appeal for the choice word and the measured phrase, spoken with malice toward none and charity toward all?"

When the smoke had cleared on Election Day, Franklin Roosevelt had been re-elected by one of the greatest margins in American history, polling 27.8 million votes to 16.7 for Landon, and humili-

ating him in the Electoral College 523 to 8. Despite the Kansas governor's shortcomings as a radio speaker, it is unlikely that even Demosthenes could have beaten FDR. Historians frequently place heavy emphasis on the opposition of the newspapers to the President; no candidate since William Jennings Bryan in 1896 had to overcome such a phalanx of hostility. Among those opposing Roosevelt were the Hearst chain, the *Baltimore Sun*, the *St. Louis Post Dispatch*, and 71 per cent of the newspapers in the fifteen largest cities. Nevertheless one must not forget the fact that prior to FDR a number of Presidents had been elected over newspaper opposition, including Jefferson, Madison, J. Q. Adams, Jackson, Van Buren, Polk, Pierce, Lincoln, Hayes, Garfield, B. Harrison, and Wilson. Democratic Presidential nominees between 1940 and 1960, in fact, enjoyed even less newspaper support than the 26 per cent (by circulation) which Roosevelt received in 1936; the percentages are as follows: FDR, 1940, 23; FDR, 1944, 18; Truman, 1948, 10; Stevenson, 1952, 11; Stevenson, 1956, 15; Kennedy, 1960, 16. (Lyndon Johnson, in contrast, won in 1964 with heavy newspaper backing, a factor which makes his triumph seem less remarkable in retrospect than Roosevelt's in 1936.) Thus the significant thing about FDR's triumph over Landon was not that he won without newspaper support but that he won by a landslide. One must not forget, too, that Roosevelt had to contend with such popular anti-New Deal radio commentators as Edwin C. Hill, whose last sponsor had been one of the oil companies, and Boake Carter, who found his acceptance speech a call to an immediate class war. Even more formidable radio critics were Father Charles Coughlin and Huey Long; the latter, assassinated before the campaign had begun, still exerted a powerful influence on many minds. Roosevelt's triumph over his radio opposition was an achievement no less significant than his victory over his newspaper foes.

Moreover, FDR received the ballots of 60 per cent of those who voted in the Presidential election, even though the Democrats bought less radio time than did the Republicans, 97½ hours to 70. Although one would tend to attribute the limited radio expenses of the former to an overwhelming confidence, few recall that some of the radio bills that the Democrats had incurred during the 1932 campaign had yet to be paid. Including 1936, for three elections

in a row the party buying the most radio time lost the election; if anything, this proves that it is the quality rather than the quantity of radio addresses that counts. Radio time, too, had progressively increased in cost. In 1936 the broadcasting of the national conventions of the major parties cost NBC \$265,000, and that network (as well as the others) obviously incurred numerous other expenses during the political wars of that year. Curiously, the major networks found that the mail response to their convention coverage was much less than in 1932.

As the extent of political coverage on radio grew, so did the vote in the Presidential election, from 26 million in 1920, to 29 million in 1924, to 36 million in 1928, to 39 million in 1932, and to 45 million in 1936. That there was a correlation is easy to assume, impossible to prove. A survey which appeared in the April issue of *Fortune* did reveal that 15.8 per cent of those interviewed were in favor of more political broadcasts, 38.0 per cent the same, 27.9 per cent less, and 18.3 none; this seemingly indicates that political broadcasts were becoming an irritant to a sizeable minority of the population. The American Institute of Public Opinion also discovered that of these factors, speeches and incidents that led the interviewee to vote for either Roosevelt or Landon, in both cases 14 per cent made their decision on the basis of their campaign speeches, a most curious commentary in light of the differing levels of speaking ability.

### *The Second Roosevelt Administration*

During FDR's second term as President, New Deal officials continued to bombard the public with a deluge of radio addresses, while the Republicans enjoyed more limited access to the airwaves. In 1937, for example, NBC carried 22 Presidential broadcasts, 29 by Vice-President Henry Wallace, 18 by Postmaster General James Farley, and 203 by an assortment of other federal officials. As for the heavily Democratic Congress, 118 speeches were made by members of the House and 149 by members of the Senate. This bombardment, moreover, merely represents the portion of the iceberg above water; many governmental agencies sent their propaganda in recorded form or as scripts to local radio stations. Thus the

Department of the Interior authored around 3,000 local programs during 1938 alone, 332 stations in 47 states also carrying its "Farm Flashes" six days a week. Between 375 and 425 local stations, too, used Federal Housing Authority material, 450 using that of the Works Progress Administration. Theoretically no governmental agency was without its spokesman on the radio, since the National Economic Council's radio director, Robert Berger, furnished more than a hundred stations with weekly broadcasts that covered the work of 43 governmental bureaus and departments which did not already have time on the air.

Polls conducted during Franklin Roosevelt's second term as President threw some additional light on FDR as a radio performer. One taken in 1939 found that 24.1 per cent of those interviewed generally listened to him, 38.6 per cent sometimes listened, and 37.3 per cent never listened; the more frequently that one tuned in on him, the more likely one was to have a favorable opinion of him. Despite the fact that over 60 per cent of the population listened to Roosevelt on the radio at one time or another according to the above poll, audiences for a specific speech might be relatively limited, as his April 14, 1938 address on governmental spending reached only 34 per cent of those polled. Significantly, the public was almost evenly divided in 1940 on a proposed debate between FDR and the Republican Presidential nominee, 49 per cent favoring such a confrontation and 51 per cent opposing it.

Another interesting poll was taken following a radio address by Senator Hugo Black on October 31, 1937. Black, a former member of the Ku Klux Klan, was appointed by Roosevelt to the United States Supreme Court. It was discovered that the interest in such a broadcast increased with age and with the socio-economic status, although people on relief listened more than did the employed. Significantly, those *without an opinion* listened to the broadcast in lesser numbers than those with either a favorable or unfavorable opinion of Justice Black. This finding was one of the earliest indications that those who have not made up their minds in regard to an issue or personality, or simply don't care, often reject the opportunity to become further informed.

By this time state and local candidates, too, were relying more and more on the radio as a springboard to public office. One of the

most prominent examples was W. Lee O'Daniel, who once made his living by selling flour to country stores in Texas. Early in the 1920's the Burris Mills began the practice of advertising on radio; an interesting innovation which Burris Mills employed was the introduction of their route salesmen over the airwaves. Originally, a different salesman appeared every day, so that within a relatively short period of time salesmen from every nook and cranny of the state had been heard from. But in the case of O'Daniel, his radio delivery was so outstanding that he was given a permanent job emceeding the program. By 1938, O'Daniel had become so well known that he decided to enter the gubernatorial race. His two major opponents, William McCraw and Ernest Thompson, had both received a great deal of newspaper exposure during their political careers but were far less prominent as radio personalities than O'Daniel. Thus while O'Daniel may have been a political unknown, he was certainly by no stretch of the imagination an unknown. O'Daniel, in fact, won over 50 per cent of the vote in the Democratic primary despite the fact that he had a dozen opponents, going on to win the governorship in both 1938 and 1940. It has been observed that, with O'Daniel's entry into the governor's race, radio made its debut in Texas politics.

During the same year (1938), New York City began broadcasting its city council sessions over the city-owned Municipal Broadcasting System station, WNYC, after the latter's director found the opening ceremonies on January 1 so interesting that he ordered the continuation of the broadcast. The sessions were aired "gavel to gavel" without censorship or editing until April 3, 1939, at which time the council passed a resolution which forbade the presence of any broadcasting equipment on the floor at its meetings. These city council programs, one might add, proved highly popular among the citizens both as news and as entertainment.

### *The 1940 Campaign*

By 1940 the Republicans' thirst for victory had become so great that they turned their backs on such established party regulars as Herbert Hoover and Alfred Landon, nominating instead for President of the United States the onetime President of Commonwealth

and Southern and critic of the Tennessee Valley Authority, Wendell Willkie. Until recently Willkie had been a Democrat. As a radio performer Willkie was perhaps the superior of his party's last two Presidential nominees. One analyst observed of Willkie in this connection, "A good general American voice, but a speech pattern with elements of Southern and Eastern coloring. His Middle West background is evidenced by his nasal coloring of such words as 'any,' 'many' and 'on.' His voice is particularly good for radio because it is so conversational, although he has not the vocal finesse of President Roosevelt." More critical was Orrin Dunlap, who complained that ". . . the Willkie voice lacks the Roosevelt punch, and he slurs words . . .," observing that "like Al Smith (Willkie) so far has been best at ad libbing and extemporaneous speech-making." One might add that the Republican Presidential nominee attracted wide national attention through his appearances on such radio programs as "America's Town Meeting of the Air." But immediately after his triumph at the Republican convention, Willkie began faltering as a speaker. During his acceptance speech at Elwood, Indiana, which was delivered in 102-degree heat, he tightened his throat, shouting from the latter instead of from his lungs; the result was that his voice cracked no less than eight times. Radio star Walter O'Keefe advised Willkie to take lessons on how to save his voice, but it eventually deteriorated to the point where the Republicans had to enlist the services of a Hollywood voice specialist, Dr. Harold Gray. Willkie, who was torn between the contradictory techniques of addressing a live audience and a radio one, further aggravated his voice through extensive stumping tours.

Among the other prominent political figures active during this campaign was the former director of the National Recovery Administration and current foe of Franklin Roosevelt, General Hugh Johnson. Johnson probably did the Republican cause more harm than good by his remark over Mutual, on the eve of the election, that Jews were for Roosevelt because he was against Hitler; to make matters even worse, Johnson mimicked Yiddish dialect unflatteringly. As for Dr. Francis Townsend, who was blacklisted by Chicago stations during the 1936 campaign, the NAB Code Committee ruled that his supporters could advertise during the 1940 campaign, but that the ban against paid broadcasts for the Townsendites would be imposed again following the election.

The Democrats renominated Franklin Roosevelt for a third term as President despite the opposition of such onetime supporters of FDR as James Farley and John Nance Garner. In analyzing his superiority as a radio performer one critic pointed out that: "Unlike the other candidates, the President represents what speech authorities in technical jargon call a 'class dialect,' a type of speech which probably comes closest to a universal 'ideal' speech equally acceptable in England and the United States. But unlike most 'class' speakers, the President's voice is not affected." Yet one must not overlook the structure of the speeches themselves in attempting to determine why FDR was the great radio speaker he was. There is no question that his use of the technique of pause and reiteration was largely responsible for the appeal and impact of his addresses; one might cite the manner in which he employed the terms "perception of danger" and "worldwide area" in his Charlottesville speech as evidence of this. From a comparative point of view, one should add that the President's radio voice was much more easily recognized than that of Willkie, while the smoothness of his delivery generally proved more appealing than Willkie's irregular decibel level. The proof of the pudding is to be found in the ratings. When FDR spoke on the radio, he received CAB ratings of 36 to 38, while the Republican nominee fluctuated between 16 and 30, his best effort audiencewise being his Madison Square Garden speech. Towards the end of the campaign, the President caused a furor by continually asking for free air time as chief executive rather than purchasing this. The Hatch Act, one may remember, restricted the amount of money that a political organization could spend during any one campaign, and the Democrats obviously were approaching this limit as the election drew near. The National Association of Broadcasters ruled in August that rival political candidates had to prove that FDR's "fireside chats" were of a partisan nature before they could receive free and equal time on the radio, a task which at times proved highly difficult.

Even before the last ballot had been counted on Election Day, it had become evident that the President's margin of victory over Willkie was less than it had been over his opponents in the two previous elections, but it still was clear-cut, 27.2 to 22.3 million in the popular vote, 449 to 82 in the electoral college. Thanks largely to the Hatch Act, the total amount of national radio time consumed

by the Republicans fell off from the 125 hours of 1936 to 68, that by the Democrats from the 85 hours of 1936 to 58. Here again the party purchasing the most radio time lost. As for costs, the passage of the Hatch Act resulted in a fragmentation of expenditures which make an overall accounting difficult; it has been estimated that the Democratic radio bill was around \$500,000, the Republican probably less, both divided equally between the two major broadcasting systems. We do know more specifically that the Democratic convention cost the latter \$233,942, the Republican one \$364,700. If a survey taken in Erie County, Ohio, was accurate, moreover, the money allocated for the purchase of radio time during this campaign was well spent. Here Lazarsfeld, Berelson, and Gaudet found that 38 per cent of the respondents regarded the radio as their most important source of information, while only 23 per cent so regarded the newspapers. This survey also indicated that Willkie's speeches were as likely to boomerang against him as they were to operate in his favor, while FDR's addresses were almost universally well received. Not surprisingly, the Republicans, who on the average were better educated than the Democrats, turned more frequently to the newspapers for their political information, while the Democrats relied mainly on the radio, a somewhat more impartial medium. According to a national poll conducted by the American Institute of Public Opinion, the radio out-distanced the newspapers as the chief source of political information, 52 to 38 per cent, a figure which compares favorably with that for Erie County.

### *The Third Roosevelt Administration*

On December 7, 1941, the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor. Quite naturally President Roosevelt thereafter devoted a considerable amount of radio time to expostulating on the war, in theory a non-partisan issue. It has been estimated that FDR's radio audiences for the war years averaged 60 million in 1941 for 5 speeches, 43 million in 1942 for 10 speeches, and 38 million in 1943 for 12 speeches. The number of listeners to any given speech, though, fluctuated greatly; the President attracted 80 million listeners when he spoke over the air following Pearl Harbor, but only 20 million when he twice addressed the nation late in the summer of 1942.

This wide divergence indicates that the subjects of his addresses and the psychological need of the country had as much an impact on the size of his audiences as FDR's personal charisma and speaking ability. The domestic phase of the New Deal, of course, had faltered by 1938, so this was only of limited importance during the war years as a radio topic to either the President or his critics.

Nevertheless, several "fireside chats" were devoted to domestic affairs. Thus on April 29, 1942, the President broadcast a message entitled, "The Price for Civilization Must be Paid in Hard Work and Sorrow and Blood," a plea for wartime economic stabilization, and on September 7, 1942, he warned that "If the Vicious Spiral of Inflation Ever Gets Under Way, the Whole Economic System Will Stagger." The following month Roosevelt presented a report on the home front. Another domestic crisis which inspired a "fireside chat" was the federal seizure of the coal mines. On May 22, 1943, FDR delivered an address captioned: "There Can Be No One Among Us—No One Faction—Powerful Enough to Interrupt the Forward March of Our People to Victory."

### *The 1944 Campaign*

Faced with the almost insurmountable task of dislodging a popular (but aging and ailing) President during wartime, the Republicans in 1944 turned to the youthful Governor of New York and onetime "racket-busting" district attorney, Thomas Dewey. Eugene Roseboom has observed, "Dewey's deep voice and clear diction made him the strongest opponent the old Democratic master of air technique had faced"; NBC commentators at the Republican convention predicted that "Governor Dewey should give President Roosevelt his first real competition in radio appeal during the 1944 campaign." In analyzing the factors underlying Dewey's success as a radio performer, Louis Foley found that the New York Governor projected "ringing tones . . . not marred by rough edges or fuzzy overtones," although he was guilty of "a degree of monotony in intonation," adding that "He has the knack of breaking his sentences at the right places and his syllabification is above reproach." During the campaign Dewey toured the nation, broadcasting from a number of cities; the Republican national committee hired vet-

eran announcer Ford Bond to introduce Dewey and to fill in at the end of the programs if any free time remained. Many of the ideas that the GOP employed relative to the radio during this campaign were the brainchildren of Henry Turnbull, an advertising agency radio expert.

In contrast, FDR did little campaigning, as his deteriorating physical condition and the running of the war left him little time for this. During September the radio research organization C. E. Hooper, Inc., found that the President was still "the top radio speaker"; he generally gained listeners as he went on, while Dewey's audience often dwindled as he proceeded. According to Hooper, the highest rating that Dewey had yet obtained in terms of his radio audience was 25.3 per cent, a full 10 points below the rating (35.2 per cent) that the President had obtained for a recent radio address. Nevertheless, a poll taken by the American Institute of Public Opinion in October revealed that 1,617 interviewees out of a total of 2,630 had heard one of Dewey's campaign speeches on the radio. James Bender, too, was of the opinion that while the quality of Roosevelt's radio speeches remained constant, those of his opponent showed steady improvement. In comparing FDR and Dewey as radio speakers, Bender found a number of differences. The latter, for example, spoke more rapidly than the former, averaging 120 to 140 words a minute compared with 102 to 128 words a minute for the President; Roosevelt's voice also was more light in timbre than Dewey's, the New York Governor having the more powerful voice. If Dewey was placed second to the President in the September Hooper study, it was at least in part attributable to the fact that at the start of the campaign the New York Governor had not enjoyed much national radio exposure up to that time, so that it was almost impossible for him to surpass FDR as a radio performer in the eyes of the public within a three-months' span. A poll conducted in July by the American Institute of Public Opinion revealed that 58 per cent of those interviewed regarded Roosevelt as a better speaker than Dewey, while only 18 per cent felt that Dewey was superior. It is also significant that those supporters of the President who had considered switching their vote to the New York Governor failed to do for two reasons which ran neck-to-neck in importance: the war effort and Dewey's attitude while making speeches.

One Republican innovation which "fizzled" was the series of projected half-hour radio dramatizations. The GOP had originally planned to buy several thirty-minute segments of air time and to bring to life again with the aid of professional actors the experiences (especially the unfortunate ones) of millions of citizens with various war agencies. The radio chains squashed this scheme on the grounds that it would lead to counter-measures, name-calling, and assorted undesirable and illegal demonstrations. According to the "1944 Republican Radio Report to Hon. Herbert Brownell, Jr.," one of the major objectives of the Republican radio campaign was "Through one-minute and chain break announcements to set before the electorate, to pound home, drill in and instill by repetition, strong and irrefutable reasons to vote for Thomas E. Dewey, or against Franklin D. Roosevelt." The New York Governor also struck a blow for freedom of the airwaves by stating that he was opposed to any censorship by the Federal Communications Commission, and that he favored a revision of the pertinent legislation so as to restrict its powers of regulation.

On the other hand, the Democratic National Committee enlisted the aid of Hollywood in developing a series of one-minute spots for use over the radio, such as the one about the "Hoover depression"; "Buy an apple, Mister"; "We never should have elected Dewey." This emphasis on Republican sins of the past contrasted sharply with Republican promises for a better future, "End the war quicker with Dewey and Bricker." The Democrats also employed a series of five-minute spots presented at the beginning or end of popular radio programs and featuring such speakers as Vice-President Henry Wallace and Vice-Presidential Candidate Harry Truman.

In this, his fourth Presidential campaign, FDR's margin of victory over his Republican opponent was the narrowest to date, 25.6 million popular votes and 432 electoral votes to 22 million popular votes and 99 electoral votes for Dewey. Despite the fact that both the President and the Governor were excellent radio performers, the total vote cast was two million less than it had been in 1940, thanks largely to the fact that several million members of the armed forces did not take the trouble to vote. Approximately \$1,500,000 was spent for political broadcasts on the major networks; approximately \$700,000 was set aside by both the Republicans and the

Democrats for this purpose. A survey conducted during the campaign disclosed that 56 per cent of those interviewed thought that the radio was the most accurate source of political information, while only 27 per cent cited the newspapers and 6 per cent the magazines. These figures should be compared with those set forth in the Erie County study made four years previously.

### *The Roosevelt-Truman Administration*

As FDR entered his fourth term as President, Democratic domination of the airwaves continued. This was only natural since the Democrats were the party in power, but the war effort was also a contributing factor. During 1945, 56 Democratic Congressmen and governors and 63 members of the Administration appeared on NBC, while during the same period only 47 Republican Congressmen and governors broadcast over this network. An even greater imbalance existed in ABC programming. Included among the prominent figures who appeared on ABC during the last three months of 1945 were the President (five times), Secretary of State James Byrnes, Secretary of Commerce Henry Wallace, Secretary of Labor Lewis Schwellenbach, Secretary of Agriculture Clinton Anderson, Secretary of the Treasury Fred Vinson, Assistant Secretary of State Spruille Braden, and Director of the Office of War Mobilization and Reconversion John Snyder. Throughout 1945, moreover, Price Administrator Chester Bowles spoke once a month on the activities of his office. In contrast, no representative Republican leaders received the opportunity to present their views on such subjects as foreign policy, reconversion, financial policy, labor, and agriculture. Administration leaders also made their opinions known on a number of programs over MBS during this year. Even when a network did offer time for a rebuttal, as CBS did in presenting Republican John Foster Dulles following a broadcast by Secretary of State James Byrnes, the scheduling called for Dulles to appear on the poorest radio night of the week, and the speech was made available only to those who wanted to carry it.

Franklin Roosevelt, of course, died shortly after his inauguration in 1945, and Harry Truman, the Vice-President and former Senator from Missouri, took over as chief executive. It has frequently

been pointed out that Truman suffered prestigewise from the fact that he followed Roosevelt as President; this also was true of him as a radio performer. From October 1945 through March 1948 Truman preempted all the radio networks on a number of evenings to deal with a variety of subjects, including price inflation, welfare programs, strikes, the Marshall Plan, and the Czech coup d'etat. His Hooper ratings for these eight programs were 43.8, 49.4, 34.4, 31.8, 57.6, 30.7, 34.3 and 31.0 per cent, respectively. Significantly the President attracted his largest audience for his speech ending price controls on meat, only his address proclaiming V-E Day surpassing this rating. FDR, one might add, achieved a rating higher than 57.6 per cent on only six occasions, and all of these were during the seventeen-month war period from May 1941 to November 1942. When Truman vetoed the Taft-Hartley Act in 1947, his audience was only 30.7 per cent according to Hooper, the lowest of the eight ratings cited; this relative lack of interest is quite surprising, as this labor measure aroused both fervent praise and bitter antagonism.

Harry Truman was under no illusion that he was the equal of Franklin Roosevelt as a radio speaker. He himself is quoted by a biographer as replying to a letter analyzing his delivery, "I don't think there is anybody in the country who had as rotten a delivery as I to begin with, but thanks to good friends like you, who have been honestly helpful in their criticism, I think there has been some improvement." One reason for his progress in this area was Leonard Reinsch, later a television advisor to John Kennedy, whom HST added to his roster of consultants upon assuming office in 1945. In addition to superintending technical arrangements and evaluating speech texts in the light of the needs of radio, Reinsch also made tape recordings of the President's speeches in advance of their official delivery for the purpose of improving their presentation. Some of the negative qualities of Truman's style that were never totally remedied were a note of formality and the speed of delivery.

During the off-year Congressional elections of 1946, the Democratic Party suffered the most severe defeat it has experienced since the inauguration of Franklin Roosevelt as President in 1933. Ironically, one of the most comprehensive analyses of any radio cam-

campaign currently available is that of the Democrats for that year. (A copy is deposited in the Harry S. Truman Library.) One highlight of this was the tailor-made spot announcements for sixty-one candidates. In the words of Bryson Rash, these were "well-written, excellently produced and ably performed." Then there were the three nine-minute tapes of excerpts from speeches by Franklin Roosevelt and Harry Truman dealing with veterans' benefits, business prosperity, and price control, there being 135 copies each of the first two and 150 of the last. It was intended that local candidates would speak afterwards for six minutes, thus completing a fifteen-minute segment of air time. The Democratic National Committee and the Political Action Committee later collaborated on four one-minute spots on the cost of meat.

Significantly, the Democrats limited their national network efforts to four speeches over MBS (Speaker Rayburn, Majority Leader Barkley, Chairman Hannegan, and Secretary of Agriculture Anderson), and one over ABC (Mrs. Roosevelt). The Democratic National Committee also sponsored three regional network speeches, one over the Yankee Network in New England (Majority Leader McCormack), and two over the Missouri State Network (Governor Kerr and Speaker Rayburn). A series of proposed three-and-a-half minute transcribed talks by Administration leaders and/or national political figures on behalf of individual candidates stimulated little response from either group, Senator Pepper, Secretary of Labor Schwollenbach, Hannegan and Rayburn eventually donating their services in this connection. Those seeking the major reasons for the Democratic Congressional debacle of 1946 might well examine the relative absence of a national radio campaign as a possible contributing factor.

On September 2, 1947, the Democratic Party opened its drive to win the next year's elections by broadcasting a political meeting coast-to-coast over ABC. On this occasion county chairmen, national committeemen, and women's clubs were encouraged to hold listening parties; at least one was held in every county, while in Ohio there was one in each of the 8,800 precincts there. Instead of presenting lengthy addresses, the Democrats instead offered six three-minute speeches by Representative Helen Gahagan Douglas of California, Mayor William O'Dwyer of New York City, and

others, each speaking from his home territory. The climax of the meeting was a nonpolitical talk from Washington by Senator Brien McMahon of Connecticut dealing with the role of the United States as a world leader in the atomic age. The following day this innovation received page one publicity in newspapers throughout the country.

### *The 1948 Campaign*

In 1948 the leading contender for the Republican Presidential nomination was Thomas Dewey, but former Governor Harold Stassen of Minnesota was also a serious challenger. During May a debate took place between the two men over a Portland, Oregon radio station which was a precursor of the Kennedy-Nixon debates a dozen years later. The idea for this debate originated in the Stassen camp, but Dewey refused to take part unless it was held in private without a live audience and he was allowed to make the closing argument. The final format provided for twenty-minute opening arguments and eight-minute and thirty-second rebuttals. Although Stassen had challenged Dewey to debate on a variety of issues, including atomic energy, the Taft-Hartley law, strengthening the United Nations, and hydroelectric development, Dewey wisely chose the problem of whether the Communist Party should be outlawed or not, taking the negative position. During the debate Stassen proposed that Dewey support the anti-Communist Mundt-Nixon bill; Dewey, who had a better legal mind than the tired and somewhat ill-prepared Stassen, argued that the proposed measure was un-American and probably ineffective. The Mundt-Nixon bill did become law as the Internal Security Act of 1950, but Stassen lost to Dewey in the Republican Presidential preference primary by 9,000 votes out of a total of 225,000. A poll taken by *The Oregonian* found that Stassen's strength was approximately the same on the eve of the election as it had been before the debate, but it also revealed a temporary drop following the latter. Some observers believe that if Stassen had won in Oregon and had stayed out of Ohio, he would have emerged as the Republican Presidential nominee.

Once nominated as his party's standard-bearer, Dewey confi-

dently set forth upon his campaign, vetoing a scheme to sell himself to the voters through five-minute spot announcements. Instead, the Republican national committee deluged the voters with thirty- or sixty-second spots urging everyone to vote Republican. Dewey, who had run a strong race against the formidable Franklin Roosevelt in 1944, took it for granted that he would win the Presidency, especially if the Democrats nominated the rather unpopular incumbent President, Harry Truman. Polls taken during the campaign seconded Dewey's belief. Other factors working on Dewey's behalf were that he had compiled an outstanding record during his two terms as Governor of New York, as well as being an excellent radio speaker.

Despite the fact that a considerable minority of the party would have preferred some other candidate, such as Dwight Eisenhower, the Democrats did nominate Harry Truman as their Presidential candidate. A poll taken by the American Institute of Public Opinion revealed that 1000 out of 1527 persons interviewed heard most or part of the Democratic convention on the radio, a percentage almost identical with the percentage obtained from the inquiry as to whether the respondent had read about it in the newspapers. The Democratic campaign, which was more colorful than its Republican counterpart, had its unique characteristics. Despite the pressure of his duties in Washington, the President decided to undertake a whistle-stop tour of the nation, an effort which was ridiculed by the Republicans but which nevertheless proved highly successful. Perhaps his best effort radiowise was delivered in St. Louis at the end of October, an occasion on which he threw away the prepared text and spoke extemporaneously. A speech which Truman did not deliver involved a plan to send Fred Vinson to Moscow in a final attempt to reach an understanding with the Russians; the President vetoed this spectacular move after conferring with General George Marshall. But the Democrats did employ a number of innovations, including a disk-jockey show for housewives conducted by actor Les Griffith, who called himself the "Democratic Record Man." This was presented three times a week in the afternoons during the last month of the campaign from 3:45 to 4 p. m. A characteristic occurrence was the interruption of a recording of "My Blue Heaven" by Griffith's comment that "That's

the dream which has been shattered for our veterans and their families by the Eightieth Republican Congress"; on the opening program, Republican Senator Kenneth Wherry of Nebraska won "A Headache to Housewives" prize for his statement that "I'm the fellow that knocked out meat control." Another device that the Democrats used during this campaign was the radio appeal to foreign-born elements. Thus Mayor Tommy D'Alesandro of Baltimore reported in Italian on his trip to Italy, observing that in the southern part of that nation women prayed in the streets for Truman as the savior of Italy. Unlike the Republicans, though, the Democrats largely abandoned spot announcements.

In comparing Truman and Dewey as radio speakers, Eugene Roseboom has observed that: "(Dewey's) deep voice, excellent for radio, poured out polished, faultless sentences, correctly inflected and uttered with a confident assurance that carried conviction. Truman appeared as an inept fumbler beside him; but the Republican candidate's speeches seemed to flow over his audience, not into them." A survey of each candidate's western speaking tour, conducted in September and October, revealed that at least 50 of the President's 115 addresses were covered by local radio stations, and at least 34 of Dewey's 69. Although the percentage of Truman's speeches broadcast was less than that of Dewey's, despite their greater number, 54 per cent of his addresses were carried on a sustaining basis in comparison with only 27 per cent for Dewey.

Third parties also were active at the Presidential level during 1948. Henry Wallace and the leftist Progressives set aside \$250,000 for radio time, mostly local and regional. On the other hand, Strom Thurmond and the rightist Dixiecrats appropriately left most of their radio planning to state organizations. As for Norman Thomas and the Socialists, they spent a mere \$750 for a few transcribed speeches. One interesting sidelight of the 1948 campaign was the refusal of the Communists to debate Thomas following the Dewey-Stassen encounter on the subject "Is Communism a Threat to American Democracy?"; the Communists maintained that the Socialist leader was not a "suitable opponent."

Analyzing the Wallace radio campaign in more detail, it is noteworthy that, prior to the Philadelphia convention, the national networks provided the Progressive Party with considerable free time.

Thus its nominee's pre-convention reply to a Truman attack on the party as a "Communist front" received a full airing. During the last six weeks of the campaign, the Progressives sponsored seven fifteen-minute addresses over the airwaves; the national headquarters even agreed to pay 30 per cent of the costs incurred by state and local groups for radio time. At first Wallace placed only supplemental emphasis on the medium, but by mid-October he had downgraded his original "grand tour" strategy, his campaign managers apparently feeling that personal appearances were not attracting as many potential voters as they should.

As for Thurmond, out of some 89 campaign speeches and "whistle-stops," the Dixiecrat candidate spoke over the radio 16 times. Of this number, 8 were carried over local or sectional radio hook-ups. Also included in this number was one "Meet the Press" program conducted by two-way telephone from Austin, Texas, to New York City, one speech and press conference for radio and newspaper correspondents in Washington, and one prepared speech for broadcast overseas on station WRUL, Boston. Significantly, Thurmond did not carry a single state in which he originated a radio address; he gave 5 in Texas, 3 of them being state-wide broadcasts during the last week of the campaign, yet still ran third behind Truman and Dewey. As one might expect, all of Thurmond's addresses, whether broadcast or not, were devoted to a defense of states' rights and an attack on the President's civil rights program.

When the smoke cleared following Election Day, the popular and electoral vote totals stood: Truman, 24.1 million and 303; Dewey 21.2 million and 189; Thurmond, 1.1 million and 39; Wallace, 1.1 million and 0. For once the party that spent the most for radio time won the election. Totally accurate figures are not available, but the Democratic radio budget of \$600,000 to \$700,000 approximated expenditures for this purpose four years previously, most of this going for October broadcasts. It has been claimed that Louis Johnson had the President cut off the air on purpose in the middle of his speeches to dramatize the meager funds of the Democrats, although on some of the occasions the abrupt termination was truly the consequence of an impoverished treasury. As for the Republicans, their spending was down \$200,000 from the \$700,000 that they had set aside for broadcasting in 1944. Being highly confident, they obviously did not feel that they had to spend more.

*Since 1948: The Decline of Radio*

During his first full term as President, Harry Truman's most significant innovation relative to the political use of radio was to authorize the recording of his press conferences, beginning early in 1951, for the purpose of assisting the White House press in checking their notes. At first, standard office dictating machines were employed; thereafter more elaborate Signal Corps equipment was used. That summer the White House began to permit the broadcasting of portions of these recordings. Before dismissing this innovation as of minor importance, one must take into consideration the fact that FDR never allowed the direct quotation of more than a phrase.

As for the Democratic Party as a whole, its National Committee took note in March 1949 that the Republicans were taking advantage of the joint recording facilities in Washington at which Representatives and Senators recorded programs for broadcast by stations in their district or states. At this time there were seventeen states in which only Republicans were using such recordings, compared to eleven for the Democrats. Nevertheless, exclusive of addresses by President Truman, Democrats participated in 104 national broadcasts (consuming 34 hours plus) from February 1 to September 30, 1949, while the Republicans were featured in only 65 (consuming 24 hours plus). The following year, in 1950, individuals advocating the Democratic point of view appeared on 394 national network radio and television programs totalling more than 184 hours. (Unlike the previous figures, debate type shows which also presented the Republican point of view were included here.) The commercial value of this time—which was donated—was in the neighborhood of \$2,500,000, hardly a trivial sum.

The campaign of 1952 was the first national Presidential contest in which both radio and television played an extensive role. The impact of the latter is analyzed at length in the chapter on television and politics; here we will attempt to determine whether Dwight Eisenhower or Adlai Stevenson performed more effectively on radio or television. In conducting a nationwide survey shortly after the election, Angus Campbell, Gerald Gurin, and Warren Miller found that of those polled who regarded television as their

most important source of information, 43 per cent voted for Eisenhower and 38 per cent for Stevenson, while of those who named radio, 40 per cent voted for Eisenhower and 25 per cent for Stevenson. Morris Janowitz and Dwaine Marvick also calculated on the basis of this data that of those who switched to Stevenson during the campaign, 43 per cent considered television to be their main source of information, while of those who changed their allegiance to Eisenhower, only 32 per cent considered television to be their main source of information. These statistics seemingly indicate that Eisenhower—the non-orator—achieved better results while employing a medium that is much more conducive to oratory than television. A parallel conclusion was reached by the Miami University-Crosley Broadcasting Corporation investigators. Upon being confronted with the inquiry as to which medium they had relied on most in following the campaign, of those naming television, 66 per cent also indicated that they voted for Eisenhower and 32 per cent for Stevenson, of those picking radio, 73 per cent voted for Eisenhower and 25 per cent for Stevenson, of those selecting newspapers, 75 per cent voted for Eisenhower and 23 per cent for Stevenson. This study also concluded that Eisenhower made his gains during the campaign among the radio and newspaper audiences, while Stevenson made his among the television audience. Nevertheless, Ithiel de Sola Pool insists that those Democrats who heard Stevenson on the radio were more favorably impressed than those who saw him on television, observing that “The radio impact of Stevenson was therefore exceptional, his TV impact only ordinary.” It is possible, of course, that Stevenson was a better radio than television performer, but this was a television-conscious campaign, and it was through this medium rather than through radio that many Americans came to know a figure who, prior to his nomination, was not a national celebrity.

By 1956, television definitely had become a more important source of information during the Presidential campaign than radio. Unfortunately no studies exist of the political impact of the latter to complement the above-mentioned studies of the 1952 campaign. During the 1960 campaign the decisive factor was probably the impressive performance of John Kennedy and the disappointing performance of Richard Nixon on television during the first Great

Debate. Yet on radio, Nixon projected far better than Kennedy; not only did a majority of those who merely heard these four confrontations select Nixon as the overall winner, but they also picked him as the victor in the first meeting by a two-to-one margin. Perhaps the fact that Nixon was more of an orator than Kennedy helped him to project a better radio image, although, as we have seen, the non-orator Eisenhower did well on radio in 1952. In any event, Nixon did best in those areas which had the largest radio audiences for the debates, winning the West generally while losing the East generally, where television coverage was greater. The fact that Nixon was a westerner (at least then) and Kennedy an easterner probably also affected this voting pattern. Obviously, one might theorize at length on whether Nixon would have won the election, even with the Great Debates, had television not been in wide use. As for 1964, Barry Goldwater was a ham radio operator, but it is unlikely that he would have won this election had America still been in the age of radio. The overwhelming majority of national political broadcasts during that year were geared to the television rather than the radio audience.

Nevertheless, on May 21 of that year the Democratic National Committee did introduce an innovation of at least minor consequence, making available sound actuality tapes of prominent Democratic figures to any radio and television station willing to place a call to the party's new automatic tape-telephone system in Washington. Systems of this nature had previously been established at the state level in California, New Jersey, and Indiana. During the 1964 Presidential campaign, fresh material was made available every day; in January 1965 the Democratic National Committee decided to make its voiced news service permanent. The Republican National Committee and the Republican Congressional Committee did not follow suit until March 31, 1965, nearly a year later, at which time the numerous requests that had been made to their Democratic counterpart had established beyond doubt that there was a considerable demand for such a service.

In the most recent Presidential election in 1968, radio played a major role in the primary efforts of a leading anti-administration candidate, Senator Eugene McCarthy of Minnesota. Most of his \$126,000 advertising budget for the New Hampshire primary went

into radio: there were 7,200 pro-McCarthy spots on some 23 radio stations within a three-week period, the most complete radio saturation campaign in the state's history. Later, prior to the California primary, more than 100 persons—average citizens rather than celebrities—wrote, paid for, and presented spot testimonials for McCarthy over stations in Los Angeles, Riverside, and San Bernardino. A Texas critic of Lyndon Johnson, Gordon McLendon, also presented a series of editorials over his nationwide network of radio stations (Dallas, Houston, Los Angeles, Oakland-San Francisco, Buffalo, Detroit, and Chicago), calling for the defeat of the President.

At the state level, radio has been responsible for a few political innovations during the last two decades. In 1949 Senator Wayne Morse of Oregon, then a Republican, sat himself down before a microphone in station KERG in Eugene and answered questions telephoned in by listeners for an hour and a half; in terms of a marathon broadcast this proved to be a far more effective format than a set speech. By 1952 Judge Francis Cherry was answering questions (five thousand of them) for an entire day over a Little Rock radio station, on his way to an upset victory in the Arkansas Democratic gubernatorial primary. Cherry, moreover, engaged in twenty more talkathons before the end of the campaign, none lasting less than three hours. On the other hand, the talkathon device did not win Brailey Odham the Florida Democratic gubernatorial primary during this year, nor did it enable Leonard Schmitt to wrest the Republican Senatorial nomination in Wisconsin away from Joseph McCarthy, who was the focal point of two television episodes in 1954. Another innovation which was in common use by 1955 involved phony "dialogues" between high Administration figures and members of Congress. Cabinet members such as the Secretary of the Treasury or the Secretary of Commerce recorded answers to a set of questions, following which individual Congressmen dubbed in the questions so as to make the exchange seem like a face-to-face interview. As the Republicans were in power at this time, the participants in these broadcasts were all Republicans.

In the years that followed, significant innovations relative to the political use of radio became rarer and rarer. One experimental program worth noting was the 32 hour long "Partython" which

station KTSM of El Paso, Texas presented as a public service on October 15 and 16, 1960. During the course of this broadcast, approximately six hundred individuals called in to present their opinions over the air; these were divided evenly between local and national issues, and between Democrats and Republicans. (El Paso is traditionally Democratic.) There were also interviews during the "Partython" with local and state candidates from the area, as well as taped speeches by national political figures. Among the subjects discussed were party platforms, the Quemoy-Matsu issue, welfare, education and religion, the most violent expressions of opinion centering around a local political race. The Democratic and Republican parties, which were not charged for the program, gained financially as a result of it, since listeners telephoned in to pledge a thousand dollars to their treasuries.

Even today, in a decade which belongs to television rather than to radio, there have been political campaigns in which radio has played a decisive role. In the Florida Democratic gubernatorial primary of 1964, for example, Mayor Robert High of Miami spent \$27,500 out of his \$35,000 advertising budget on radio spots over 44 stations; of the six candidates, High had the smallest reported campaign chest, but he still made the gubernatorial run-off. The High radio spots were broadcast during the heavy auto traffic hours of 8 to 9 a. m. and 5 to 6 p. m., Monday through Friday, High receiving 10 per cent or more of the vote only in those counties where a radio station carried his spots. Unfortunately, High lost out to another mayor, Haydon Burns of Jacksonville, in the run-off; High did win the Democratic gubernatorial nomination in 1966, but went down to defeat in the general election at the hands of the first Republican Governor of Florida since Reconstruction, Claude Kirk. Turning to the North, radio also played an important role in the victory of Republican Congressman John Lindsay in the hotly contested New York mayoralty election of 1965, although the bulk of Lindsay's spending was for television. The Lindsay radio campaign, in the words of his chief radio-TV producer, was aimed at "Negro, Puerto Rican and European language minorities"; its climax came after midnight on the eve of the election, when a one-hour talkathon was organized and presented over Negro oriented broadcasting station WWRL. This program may

have swung thousands of Negro votes to Lindsay. In addition, two hundred pro-Lindsay Spanish language spots were presented on the radio. Whether Lindsay could have been elected mayor without employing radio as he did is highly debatable.

The broadcasting of legislative sessions or programs dealing with state legislatures has also become more common during the last two decades. Admittedly Connecticut did abandon its "Meet Your Legislature" series in 1948 after setting up a radio room in the capitol building that was open to representatives of any station in the state, but other states have moved in a forward rather than a backward direction. Among those states that have broadcast parts of their legislative proceedings have been Arkansas, Georgia, and Virginia. As for committee hearings, broadcasting practices have varied from state to state. California, for instance, banned the carrying over the radio of the sessions of an interim crime investigating committee set up in 1951, while Texas took a diametrically opposite position under similar circumstances. The use of a tape recorder seemingly would afford an ideal method of enabling radio stations to carry legislative highlights, but some purists will invariably object to any selecting or editing whatsoever. As we shall see in the chapter on television and politics, some states now telecast their legislative sessions.

### *Congress and Radio*

Over the years, periodic attempts have been made to persuade Congress to broadcast its regular sessions, none of which have been successful. One of the first of these was that of Senator Howell of Nebraska, who introduced a bill effecting this end in 1924. At this time *Radio Broadcast* magazine observed, relative to the implementation of such an innovation: "Probably the outcome will be a wholesome increase in the potency of party leadership . . . each party will tend to gravitate about one leader or a small group of leaders. . . ." Howell's bill failed to pass. The first concrete development relative to the broadcasting of Congress did not take place for another fifteen years, in 1939, when radio correspondents obtained gallery facilities. Individual members of Congress, of course, did take to the air on their own initiative; between 1928 and 1940,

Senators spoke over CBS 700 times, Representatives 500. During World War II, in 1944, Senator Claude Pepper of Florida introduced a joint resolution calling for a Congressional debate on the national networks. Although station WMCA in New York offered the use of its facilities, Senator Pepper's measure died in the Senate Rules Committee, not even making the Senate floor.

The broadcasting of Congress was one of the more important matters dealt with during the 1945 hearings before the La Follette-Monroney Joint Committee on the Organization of Congress. Among the major questions raised there were: (1) Should the listener have the option of tuning in to different stations in order to hear the separate proceedings of the Senate, the House, and the various committees of both? (2) Would a government-owned station be required to insure an always available outlet for this type of broadcast? (3) Would it be desirable to make some prior announcement of legislative program content for the information and convenience of listeners? (4) Should AM, FM, or shortwave channels be used? (5) Should these programs be financed by the broadcasters, by Congress, or by some blend of public service broadcasting and commercial advertising? (6) Should coverage of the proceedings be complete or selective? If selective, should selection be a preliminary process, perhaps through the more careful planning of legislative proceedings, or should it take place *ex post facto*, perhaps by having transcripts edited by a bipartisan committee? (7) What would be the best hours for broadcasting? (8) Should commentators and professional actors be used? Taking these and other questions into consideration, it is apparent that the devising of a satisfactory arrangement for the broadcasting of Congress is a formidable one.

Shortly thereafter, Robert Coor established the Joint Radio Information Facility, a recording studio set up for the purpose of recording Congressional speeches and question-and-answer sessions for local consumption. This represents the closest step that Congress has ever taken towards broadcasting its sessions. During the 1948 election not one Republican was defeated who used Coor's service, a fact which sent many other members of Congress scurrying to Coor's studio in the years that followed. Unfortunately, however, Representatives from the large cities have experienced more

difficulty than their rural counterparts in getting their material on the air, mainly for the reason that rural stations are in greater need of broadcast material. In recent years the Joint Recording Studio has begun making films for use on television as well as recordings for use on the radio; we will have more to say about the former in the chapter on television and politics.

In 1955 Robert Summers completed a study of the role of Congressional broadcasting in a democratic society, the most comprehensive study of its type ever undertaken. Admittedly, it appeared several years after the invasion of politics by television, but it still deals almost entirely with the age of radio. In this work Summers traced the historical development of the concept of public information as a governmental responsibility, evaluated the political contributions made by the broadcasting media since 1922, explored the development and rejection of legislative broadcasting proposals, and outlined a proposal designed to meet various objections to Congressional broadcasting as a permanent part of the democratic process. According to Summers, most members of Congress seem willing to allow the bulk of Congressional information to be handled by the press, rejecting the numerous proposals for the broadcasting of Congress during the prior thirty years on the basis of "political and practical considerations." As a solution, Summers suggested that Congress adopt a formal policy on public information and establish a responsible agency, such as a Joint Committee on Public Information, which would implement the Congressional information policy. Admittedly, his proposal might not win the unanimous support of the broadcasting industry, but half a loaf is better than none, and such a scheme might prove a stepping-stone rather than a final resting place.

#### NOTES ON SOURCES

The most comprehensive study of radio and politics in print prior to the appearance of this volume was Samuel L. Becker and Elmer W. Lower, "Broadcasting in Presidential Campaigns," in Sidney Kraus, ed., *The Great Debates*. Sketchy in spots, this article contains much material not brought together elsewhere; its footnotes also serve as a bibliographical point of departure. Various items of pertinence that appeared in the *New York Times* during the radio era are listed in the bibliography of the present volume, as are ones from unpublished Presidential papers from Calvin Coolidge through Harry Truman.

Not much material is available on Woodrow Wilson and Warren Harding as radio broadcasters, but there is some data on both Presidents, as well as Coolidge, in Samuel L. Becker, "Presidential Power: The Influence of Broadcasting." A book that deals with the early period is Gleason Archer, *History of Radio in 1926*. For Coolidge, consult especially Elmer Cornwell, "Coolidge and Presidential Leadership."

An important article on the 1924 campaign is David G. Clark, "Radio in Presidential Campaigns: The Early Years (1924-1932)." Even more comprehensive is Lewis E. Weeks, "The Radio Election of 1924." Among the contemporary accounts are "Electioneering on the Air"; "Radio—Convention Year"; Mark Sullivan, "Will Radio Make the People the Government?" Material on the second Coolidge Administration is found in Arthur Fleser, "Coolidge's Delivery: Everybody Liked It."

For the 1928 campaign, again see the article by Clark. Contemporary accounts include Graham McNamee, "Elephant and the Donkey Take the Air"; Katherine Ludington, "New Political Factor"; "Radio Debunking the Campaigns"; Samuel G. Blythe, "Political Publicity." There is material on Hoover as President in the above-mentioned article by Becker, and in Elmer Cornwell, *Presidential Leadership of Public Opinion*.

State and local developments in radio broadcasting between 1920 and 1932 are dealt with in such articles as "Welkin-ringing by Radio" and "Defeat of Senator Brookhart." One may find data on the leading state in this connection, Wisconsin, in Elton D. Woolpert, "Wisconsin's Broadcasting System" and C. K. Alexander, "Wisconsin Taxpayers' Radio Program in Eleventh Year."

The use of radio during the 1932 Presidential campaign was overshadowed by the depression, despite the golden radio voice of Franklin D. Roosevelt. Here again the Clark article is pertinent; a contemporary account is Cyrus Fischer, "Radio Reviews: Political Static." FDR's "fireside chats" are treated at length in Waldo Braden and Ernest Brandenburg, "Roosevelt's Fireside Chats" and the above mentioned book by Cornwell, and touched upon in "It's the 30th Anniversary of 'Fireside Chats.'" One may find material on the extensive nature of New Deal broadcasts in the above-mentioned article by Becker; A. S. Draper, "President Employs Air, Press to Educate Nation"; "Radio Pays the Bill to Accommodate the President." For Huey Long, another gifted radio speaker, see Paul Hutchinson, "Heretics of the Air," a contemporary article, and the retrospective doctoral dissertation of Ernest C. Bormann, *A Rhetorical Analysis of the National Radio Broadcasts of Senator Huey P. Long*. The definitive work on William Lemke is Edward C. Blackorby, *Prairie Rebel: The Public Life of William Lemke*. A contemporary assessment of various Republican radio rivals of FDR is "To Presidency via Air."

Not surprisingly, much has been written on the 1936 Presidential campaign, as Franklin D. Roosevelt won a landslide victory despite heavy newspaper opposition, thanks in part to his radio speeches. A retrospective assessment is found in Arthur Schlesinger's multi-volume study of FDR; a contemporary treatment of one of the candidates in Frederick Palmer, *This Man Landon*. Among the numerous articles penned during the campaign are Heywood Broun, "Broun's Page: New Deal Fares Badly at Hands of Radio Commentators"; "Campaign Clash: Vandenberg Uses President's Voice on Phonograph for Air Debate"; "Democrats and Reds Suffer from Private Censorship"; "Fortune Survey: Politics on the Air"; "Liberty Loses Liberty in the

Air"; "Republican Drama." New Deal broadcasts during the second Roosevelt Administration are discussed in Stanley High, "Not-so-free-air," the reaction to them in Hadley Cantril, *Public Opinion 1935-1946*. For public reaction to a radio address by Supreme Court appointee Hugo Black, see Paul F. Lazarsfeld, "Change of Opinion during a Political Discussion." There is material on the colorful W. Lee O'Daniel of Texas in Will Wilson, "The Adversary Process in Political Programming."

The 1940 Republican Presidential nominee, Wendell Willkie, is treated in Joseph Barnes, *Willkie*. More important is the classic study by Paul F. Lazarsfeld, Bernard Berelson, and Hazel Gaudet, *The People's Choice: How the Voter Makes up His Mind in a Presidential Campaign*; this investigation of Erie County, Ohio voting habits compares radio, magazine, and newspaper effects. Two contemporary articles are Sherman Dryer, "Air Power: Here's What Makes a Good Radio Campaign Speaker" and "Election on the Air"; there is material in the above-mentioned Cantril book on polls relating to radio and politics. During his third term as President, Franklin D. Roosevelt often spoke in a nonpolitical role. One should again refer to the above-mentioned Braden and Brandenburg article for materials on his "fireside chats," and consult "Radio and the Election" for measurements of the radio audiences for various FDR speeches.

The election of 1944 featured two gifted radio speakers, Franklin D. Roosevelt and Thomas Dewey, but here the war effort was the overshadowing consideration. A contemporary account is "Professional Touch," a retrospective assessment, Eugene Roseboom, *A History of Presidential Elections*. Again the best source for the polls is the above-mentioned book by Cantril. New Deal radio broadcasts during 1945 are covered in Rolf Kaltenborn, "Is Radio Politically Impartial?"

A good assessment of Harry Truman as a radio broadcaster is in the above-mentioned book by Cornwell. There is data on the audiences for his broadcasts in Richard E. Neustadt, *Presidential Power: The Politics of Leadership*. The upset victory of HST over Dewey in the 1948 campaign is chronicled by Jules Abels in his *Out of the Jaws of Victory*, and by Alfred Steinberg in his *The Man from Missouri* as well as in "Jockeying for Votes." One may find material on the third parties in "Voices and Voters: Election via Radio," and on Henry Wallace specifically in the biography of Karl Schmidt. For Harry Truman's second term as President, again see Cornwell.

The use of radio in the various Presidential campaigns from 1952 on is analyzed *passim* in the two chapters on television and politics, the bibliographies of which should be consulted in this connection. One may find data on the recent national tape-telephone service for radio broadcasters, inaugurated by the Democrats, in recent issues of *Broadcasting* magazine. At the state level, see, for the radio talkathons that flourished in the late 1940's and early 1950's, "Meet the People" (Wayne Morse, Oregon); "Campaign by Talkathon" and "Political Perorations" (Francis Cherry, Arkansas and Brailey Odham, Florida); "Some Votes Are Made This Way" (Leonard Schmitt, Wisconsin). There is material on the El Paso "Partython" of 1960 in "32-Hour Political Show Proves Public Interested in Politics," and on the 1964 Florida gubernatorial primary in "It Happened in Florida: Burns High, High Burns." As for broadcasts of state legislative sessions, even in recent years they have been relatively uncommon, and thus commentaries in this area are quite scarce. Among those available are Jessie A. Arndt, "Know Your Legis-

lature: Connecticut's State Radio Programs," and William L. Day, "Legislative Broadcasting and Recording."

Aside from Presidential messages and a few other isolated events, there has been a ban on the broadcasting of the sessions of Congress. Committee hearings, though, have been broadcast on occasion, especially those of the Senate. In this connection consult Ralph M. Goldman, "Congress on the Air"; "In the Groove" (which deals with the Joint Radio Recording Facility); and the doctoral dissertation of Robert E. Summers, *The Role of Congressional Broadcasting in a Democratic Society*.



## 2/Television and Politics: 1928-1959

### *Introduction*

From the first there has been disagreement as to the television effectiveness of prominent political personalities. Nevertheless, it is questionable whether such a national figure as Estes Kefauver could have emerged as a Presidential possibility without this medium. Equally important, as Richard Mall has demonstrated, radio and television stations have always had different attitudes towards political broadcasting. This is true in regard to such matters as paid time, free time, restricted time, and the cancellation of commercials for politicals. While FDR used television most sparingly, HST employed the medium more and more, and Thomas Dewey introduced the talkathon to television.

In 1952 one party, the Republican, nominated its most tele-genic figure for President, while the other, the Democratic, selected a relative political unknown instead of a proven television personality. (Estes Kefauver, of course, had incurred the wrath of the Democratic bosses.) At the Republican convention the failure to televise the National Committee hearings hurt one candidate, Robert Taft, politically. The coverage of the Democratic convention, on the other hand, demonstrated how each network's treatment of events often differs widely from that of the others. From an intellectual point of view, Adlai Stevenson's speeches on television were the high point of the campaign, while Dwight Eisenhower's spots were the low point; yet the latter apparently swung more votes than the former. As for Richard Nixon, the success of his Checkers speech may have made him overconfident of his capa-

bilities as a television performer. Despite the relative brevity of the Eisenhower-Stevenson confrontation, interest fell off between the conventions and the election. Studies conducted in various states (Iowa, Ohio, and California) differed somewhat in their conclusions, but Campbell, Gurin, and Miller did demonstrate that the audience for television surpassed the number of sets in operation. Nevertheless, in 1952 some states had a high television density as compared with a low television density in others, a divergence that was reflected in the political expenditures for television in various states. In 1952 radio still was a more important political medium than television from the standpoint of universal use.

Aside from being a forceful television personality, Dwight Eisenhower was a noteworthy television innovator, holding televised press conferences, participating in televised cabinet meetings, and engaging in a televised keyhole conversation with John Foster Dulles. James Hagerly and Robert Montgomery were his leading television advisers. Despite constant Democratic criticisms, the first rival who emerged to challenge "Ike" as a television personality was a fellow Republican, Senator Joseph McCarthy. Controversy surrounds even this aspect of McCarthy's career; more than one poll disputes the common misconception that the televised Army-McCarthy hearings destroyed him politically. In retrospect, moreover, Edward R. Murrow's "See-It-Now" program on McCarthy seems a one-sided attack rather than an objective analysis.

The 1956 Presidential campaign on television generated less excitement than its predecessor, partly for the reason that the same candidates were running again. Television saturation of the nation, however, had become complete by this time, television displacing radio from its former ascendancy. As for the conventions, perhaps the most significant performance was put on by an unsuccessful contender, Senator John Kennedy of Massachusetts, who failed to capture his party's Vice-Presidential nomination. During the campaign proper the Democrats employed spots more often than they had four years previously. As important as the television campaign was, it obviously did not begin to compare in impact with the Suez Crisis which brought Dwight Eisenhower votes, thus hurting the candidacy of Adlai Stevenson.

The second Eisenhower Administration witnessed the televising

of the labor racketeering hearings, but despite their importance they did not pivot around a key personality like Estes Kefauver or Joseph McCarthy. At the state level television continued to grow in importance; one of the most comprehensive studies ever made of a political contest revealed its importance for Nelson Rockefeller in his race for the New York governorship against Averill Harriman, the Democratic incumbent. Grant Sawyer in Nevada and J. Howard Edmondson in Oklahoma, among others, also used television to their advantage, but debates did not elect Paul Bagwell in Michigan, nor did the telethon elect William Knowland in California. In 1958 the Indiana Broadcasters' Association held a "Conference on Hoosier Politics," the first such gathering in any state.

### *The Early Years*

Although television did not assume a prominent role politically until the 1952 election, the first tentative steps towards its use in political campaigns occurred as early as 1928. On August 22 of that year Governor Alfred Smith faced the television cameras on the steps of the state capitol in Albany in accepting his party's Presidential nomination; the General Electric station in Schenectady carried this address. Four years later, on October 11, 1932, the stage and screen division of the Democratic National Committee produced a program over W2XAB in New York. It was not until 1940, however, that television coverage of a political convention took place; during this year somewhere between 40,000 and 100,000 people watched the Republican gathering over stations in Philadelphia and New York. Little progress was made between that date and 1944 in advancing political television, thanks largely to the war, but approximately 50,000 people did watch the Republican convention during the latter year, largely on film.

Despite his enthusiastic alliance with radio, Franklin Roosevelt was hardly an outspoken booster of the newest electronic medium, if the pertinent papers in the Franklin D. Roosevelt Library are a reliable guide. On December 16, 1938, S. Lee Barkas of the American Television Corporation wrote Marvin H. McIntyre, a White House aide, that his firm would install a television receiver at the executive mansion. An unsigned White House memorandum dated

December 19, however, noted that "I called the television man and told him to hold everything up until he hears from you. He did not ask me the reason why, so I did not tell him anything"; an unsigned note to Stephen Early the following day observed that ". . . because (the American Television Corporation) gave out publicity on this yesterday, Henry (Kannee) doesn't think Mr. McIntyre is going to permit the installation." On January 3, 1939, Curtis Mitchell, editor of the *Radio Guide*, in criticizing the ATC for its publicity efforts, wrote Early that: "Television is liable to become a great big racket. It's no more around the corner today than it was five years ago." Mitchell added that, since Washington lacked a television station, "putting those receivers down there now is like giving your best girl a beautiful box with no candy in it." On January 7 Early replied, "Permit me to advise you, confidentially, that due to certain unexpected developments which occurred, it was definitely decided some time ago not to permit the installation of the television sets at the White House."

On January 29, 1941, Early was informed that William Roberts, then a Du Mont attorney, desired to install a television set for the President, hooking it up with one of the big hotels so that Roosevelt could watch the Inaugural Ball. FDR's response was "I think this is a mistake. I will not have time to watch it anyway." Even as late as March 5, 1945, one month before the President's death, Administrative Assistant Jonathan Daniels wrote J. H. Carmine of Philco that it was not feasible to allow Philco to televise Roosevelt's addresses from the White House, since ". . . we have never departed from the rule to give exact parity to all newspapermen, photographers, and radio networks." Thus to permit a telecast by Philco, Daniels wrote, ". . . would put us in the position of denying the right of competitors to cover their own story," although "There is no doubt in anyone's mind that when the art emerges from its experimental status, arrangements will be made on the basis of equal opportunity for all television licensees to participate."

In the course of his Presidency, Franklin Roosevelt occasionally did appear on television, but it was Harry Truman who first really experimented with this medium. The first televised broadcast from the White House took place on October 5, 1947. On this occasion

the chief executive and the chairman of his Food Conservation Program requested that the American people cooperate in implementing this. Shortly thereafter the policy was adopted of televising all of Truman's major addresses. In 1962 television critic Jack Gould went so far as to assert that "Among Chief Executives past and present, Harry S. Truman is the best TV commentator. For clarity of expression, he has not been matched; right or wrong, he is no one to leave doubt as to where he stands. He thrives on controversy and a viewer turns on the set with a sense of anticipating excitement over what he may say."

One observer has commented that 1948 was to television what 1924 was to radio. In 1948 there were 37 television stations on the air and 350,000 receivers in operation. Another authority places the total at 700,000; even this was only 3.5 per cent of the number in use in 1952. There being no national television networks in 1948, the most extensive coverage of the political campaign occurred in the eastern states, roughly from Philadelphia to Cleveland. Among the televised highlights were: (1) various "Presidential timber" programs featuring such potential candidates as Harold Stassen, Earl Warren, Henry Wallace, and Norman Thomas; (2) a Republican National Committee rally from Madison Square Garden; (3) a Truman rally from the same location, as well as a later speech by the President. Coverage of those events was sectional rather than national. There also was local coverage of the proceedings of the Republican, Democratic, and Progressive conventions; it has been estimated that ten million people saw some part of these on television. At the end of the campaign *Newsweek* pessimistically observed, "As for television, the new medium—highly touted as a perfect campaign device—has been almost entirely ignored. The politicians found video too expensive, too limited in audience, and too unpredictable as to results." One scientific study, the Goldberg survey of television set owners in New York during the political conventions, revealed that Republicans tended to watch the Republican convention and Democrats the Democratic one.

Among the first broad assessments to appear in print of the effectiveness on television of leading Presidential possibilities was that of Edwin H. James. President Harry Truman was judged to be

"pretty good," thanks largely to the impression of sincerity and determination which he projected, but Senator Robert Taft was found to be the "shakiest" performer among the Republicans, mainly for the reason that he was often boring and did not always project his integrity. On the other hand, Governor Thomas Dewey's image bore too close a resemblance to the man on top of a wedding cake, although it was difficult to fault his speaking. Former Governor Harold Stassen may have seemed too young. (John Kennedy also seemed too young a dozen years later, and he won the Presidency.) As for General Douglas MacArthur, his voice and bearing were so commanding as to impress even his critics, but the General unfortunately had lost a great deal of his hair. Another candidate who projected a dignified image was Senator Arthur Vandenberg, of whom it has been said, "He looks like what you think the President of the United States ought to look like." General Dwight Eisenhower, not yet a politician, won praise for his "interesting, mobile face," while former Vice-President Henry Wallace, who had a good face for television, spoke well and seemed sincere.

A collection of opinions evaluating the telegenic qualities of the prospective Presidential candidates published during 1948 presented a somewhat different picture. When asked the question, "If the next President of the United States were to be elected by viewers only, who would he be," a group of television authorities and radio newsmen concluded that he would be either Dwight Eisenhower or Harold Stassen! In sizing up the latter, Taylor Grant of ABC made reference to his "impressive stature and general good appearance, the youthful vigor he exhibits . . . his forthright manner of speaking directly to the listeners." As we pointed out in the chapter on radio and politics, Stassen lost to Thomas Dewey in the Oregon Presidential preference primary in 1948 by a narrow margin after the two had engaged in a radio debate; one wonders what the result would have been had television been in as wide use in 1948 as it was to be in 1952, when the number of sets in operation was far greater. As for the other candidates, Edward R. Murrow of CBS found Senator Arthur Vandenberg to be "solid, safe, and statesmanlike," but George Hicks of ABC complained that he had a "too flabby, crooked, soft mouth, and wandering eyes. Has too

much the professional politician's speech and mannerisms." Senator Robert Taft was also an object of controversy. While George Hicks of ABC felt that, as a television performer, Taft was "too tight, stiff, and stubborn. Irritates people. Has no graciousness," Richard Harkness of NBC thought that "Television does more for Taft than it does for any other candidate." If experts were so wide apart in their assessments, it was only natural that there also would be a sharp division of opinion among the public.

Probably the earliest attempt to analyze the impact on an audience of a Presidential address on television took place the following year when Harry Truman made a "nonpolitical" speech in St. Paul on November 3, 1949, which was telecast in the Twin Cities area. During this telecast two pairs of observers watched the reactions of a white-collar and a blue-collar group to the speech; the former was congregated in a television bar in a high-rental district and the latter in a television bar in a low-rental area. The reports of the two pairs of observers indicated that "The two groups selected or rejected President Truman's message in terms of how they related its content to their predispositions. In this instance the message was of greater importance to selection than the medium, television." The blue-collar group, which tended to favor the chief executive, discussed his address in favorable terms once it had ended, while the white-collar group, which was generally hostile to him, did not even bother to discuss the speech among themselves. With the development of television there has occurred a blossoming of sophisticated analyses of this sort which supplement the old-fashioned polls which monopolized the field during the heyday of the radio.

During the Eisenhower Administration, televised cabinet sessions unquestionably attracted a larger audience, but in May 1950 the Truman Administration established the precedent for telecasting these gatherings. On this occasion, unfortunately, the most important cabinet members—Secretary of State Dean Acheson, Secretary of the Treasury John Snyder, and Secretary of Defense Louis Johnson—were absent for various reasons. Vice-President Alben Barkley, who presided over the meeting, introduced each Secretary, or his stand-in, in turn, who then spoke on topics relating to his particular department. The program was of one hour's duration,

being broadcast over CBS. Credit for conceiving this telecast must go to the Democratic National Committee which at that time was staging a national rally in Chicago.

The first real landmark in White House telecasting occurred that summer when Harry Truman addressed the nation following the outbreak of the Korean War. In this connection Jack Gould wrote that "For the first time in a period of national emergency, the person at home not only heard the fateful call for sacrifices to preserve his freedom, but also saw the grave expressions of the President as he explained to the country what it would mean." This performance was typical of the Truman era in that the only "props" employed were the flag and the seal; HST spoke standing up, focusing his eyes on the manuscript more than on the camera. Elmer Cornwell has observed that the President made no special effort to adapt to the peculiar requirements of television, noting that Truman approached television in terms of radio.

As television was beginning to have a political impact nationally, it also was making its influence felt at the state level, first of all in New York. In 1950 Thomas Dewey successfully employed the talkathon in seeking the Governorship of New York; since that date numerous other candidates for public office at the state and local levels, both there and elsewhere, have employed this medium. John Crosby summed up Dewey's performance as follows, "Dewey threw the script away. He answered questions, as it were, from the floor. . . . He spoke extemporaneously; he moved from spot to spot, picking up state reports and documents; he sat on the edge of his desk (never once did he sit behind the desk); he scratched his head, put his glasses on, took them off, wiped them. . . . Essentially, though, he answered questions—hundreds of them—questions about state taxes, housing, veterans' benefits, hospitals and a dozen other complex questions. He answered them in awe-inspiring detail, spouting figures and facts without hesitation, and rarely—except in obvious slips of the tongue—making mistakes." Dewey's performance appears even more remarkable when one considers that he spent eighteen hours in the television studio; his margin of victory (560,000 votes), however, makes it difficult for one to single out the talkathon as the one factor responsible for his victory.

Another state where television played an important political role

during the 1950 political campaign was Connecticut. Here Republican challenger Prescott Bush successfully employed the audience participation show device in taking Democrat William Benton's Senate seat; Benton and his Democratic colleague, Governor Chester Bowles, had once been partners in the advertising business. Less successful in employing the medium was Senate Majority Leader Scott Lucas of Illinois, who used a fifteen-minute film in his reelection campaign which included a plug from Vice-President Alben Barkley as well as shots of Lucas presiding over the Senate. Lucas' Republican opponent on this occasion was the inimitable Everett Dirksen. Other Senatorial candidates who employed television in their campaigns this year included Robert Taft in Ohio and Richard Nixon in California; television also played an important political role in Pennsylvania and Missouri.

The first elected public official, though, who really capitalized on television to advance himself politically nationwide was Senator Estes Kefauver, Chairman of the Senate Crime Investigating Committee. Kefauver's crime hearings were first broadcast from New Orleans in January 1951. Although the telecasting idea originated with WDSU-TV rather than with Kefauver, the Senator was so pleased with the result that he decided that henceforth the committee would use the medium. Truly full-scale coverage of the sessions began at Detroit in February, Senator Kefauver being absent. When the committee reached St. Louis, "betting commissioner" James J. Carroll refused to testify about gambling in the area over television. After a trip to Los Angeles and San Francisco, the Kefauver Committee met in New York in mid-March. It has been estimated that 20 to 30 million persons witnessed some portion of the hearings on television, with both the ABC and Du Mont networks giving it wide coverage.

Six weeks after the hearings ended in New York City, Gerhart Wiebe analyzed the reactions of 260 New Yorkers who had witnessed them on television. The sample's slant was in the direction of male, white collar, and professional people under thirty-six years of age. When asked the question, "How did you feel about the conditions that were brought to light?" 51 per cent of the interviewees gave emotional responses, 39 per cent favorable but unemotional responses, and 10 per cent cynical ones: "Good political

publicity for Kefauver," "Real conditions weren't told," "Higher-ups weren't brought to light." Upon being confronted with the inquiry as to whether they personally would like to play a role in improving conditions, 46 per cent replied yes, 12 per cent yes with qualifications. Only 25 per cent, however, seemed ready to play a practical role, as distinguished from a wishful thinking role, in solving the problem of crime in America. In the final analysis only 18 per cent actually did something, and only 14 per cent felt that what they had done had actually made a difference. As Wiebe observed, "The phenomenal impact of the Hearings dwindled to rather minor productivity insofar as it was mirrored in the reported behavior of our respondents and in their own opinions of the significance of what they did." When asked whether the Kefauver hearings would improve conditions in the long run, only 21 per cent thought so definitely, while 21 per cent thought so hopefully, and 49 per cent thought they would remain about the same. Perhaps the greatest gainer politically, aside from Kefauver, was Chief Counsel Rudolf Halley, who won election on the Liberal ticket six months later to the office of President of the City Council of New York. Halley, however, later failed to win the mayoralty election.

Let us now examine the state of political broadcasting in America at this time. Beginning in September, 1951, Richard Mall began sending out questionnaires to nearly every AM station and to all TV stations in the country; he received responses from slightly over 30 per cent of these. Mall discovered that during campaigns nearly all radio and television stations sold time, but between campaigns the figure dropped to 53 per cent for the latter and 81 per cent for the former. As for free time, during campaigns 24 per cent of television stations and 20 per cent of radio stations donated free time, but between campaigns the figures increased to 31 per cent for the latter and 50 percent for the former. In addition, the amount of available political time was restricted by twice as many television stations as radio stations during campaigns, and by three times as many between them. Mall likewise found that during campaigns only one-third of television stations cancelled regular commercials for sustaining politicals (58 per cent for commercial politicals), while during campaigns only one-fifth of radio stations did so for sustaining politicals (43 per cent for commercial politicals). One

of Mall's most interesting findings pertained to the attitude of radio and television stations towards political broadcasts by Communists during campaigns; almost none was willing to give free time, while a limited number would sell time. Still another discovery was that 36 per cent of the television stations and 22 per cent of the radio stations carried some form of political liability insurance. Having assembled all of this data, Mall suggested that the Federal Communications Commission draw up a set of rules after having evaluated reports on political broadcasting activities from every station.

### *The 1952 Campaign*

In the winter of 1951-2 the various television networks and stations announced that from that time onwards they would sell time to political candidates rather than donate it prior to the national conventions. The significance of this revolutionary decision is so obvious that it hardly requires comment; lest one criticize the decision, it must be pointed out that television time is far more valuable than radio time. By 1952 there were 108 television stations on the air, while the number of television receivers had increased to eighteen million. This fact in itself guaranteed wide television coverage of the Presidential campaign.

This coverage began with the New Hampshire primary and continued through to the election. With regard to the former, *Broadcasting-Telecasting* pointed out that "If a viewer watched a reasonable percentage of the nightly newsreel programs, the discussion forums, and special primary presentations, the chances are that he saw a great deal more of the principal campaigners than the New Hampshire resident without TV. But even more important, the home viewer had a better understanding of the mechanics of the campaign as a whole." In New Hampshire there was a sharp competition for votes among Senator Estes Kefauver, Harold Stassen, Senator Robert Taft, and spokesmen for President Truman and Generals Eisenhower and MacArthur. On the Democratic side the highlight of the primary campaign was the votes rolled up by the crime-busting Senator from Tennessee; unfortunately for Kefauver, his string of victories here and in later primaries proved in vain, as his party's Presidential nomination eventually went to the relatively

unknown Governor of Illinois, Adlai Stevenson. On the other hand, General Dwight Eisenhower and Senator Robert Taft waged a bitter fight for Republican votes, with Eisenhower winning several primaries (including New Hampshire), and Taft also winning several. A 1952 study conducted by Miami University of Ohio found that, among all prospective Presidential candidates, Eisenhower ranked first and Kefauver second in having made a favorable impact over television; thus one party nominated its most telegenic candidate, while the other did not. One feature of the pre-convention campaign which brings to mind the "Liberty at the Crossroads" radio drama of the 1936 campaign was "The Case for a Republican Congress," a show televised in May during which various Republican Congressional leaders and professional actors placed the Democratic Party on trial.

Despite his victories in the New Hampshire and other primaries, General Dwight Eisenhower was in Europe tending to his North Atlantic Treaty Organization duties during most of the pre-convention maneuverings. When he did return to Abilene, Kansas to announce his candidacy, the reception was below expectations; as Charles Thomson has pointed out, "The telecast of his homecoming to Abilene was unfortunate, to say the least." The following morning "Ike" made something of a recovery at his press conference, but this was telecast over the objections of his managers only because the television industry reported his reluctance to use this medium. Nevertheless, prior to the conventions, the NBC network alone carried nine broadcasts for various Eisenhower sponsors—the Eisenhower Bandwagon Committee, the Citizens for Eisenhower Committee, and the Michigan for Eisenhower Committee—that originated from New York, Washington, Boston, Detroit, and Denver. Conversely, not a single Democratic Presidential candidate or sponsor bought time during this period, aside from a tentative attempt by the Russell for President Headquarters to present a program on July 14. What impact all these Eisenhower broadcasts had in swinging previously committed or uncommitted convention delegates into the Eisenhower camp is not known.

The Republican convention met first, at Chicago. According to *Newsweek*, fifty-one million persons tuned in on the Taft-Eisenhower contest at one time or another, although the keynote address

of General MacArthur by itself attracted twenty-one million. Republican propagandists quite naturally quoted somewhat higher figures. Herbert Hoover's speech also drew a large audience. Aside from the major candidates, two of the leading television personalities were Senator Everett Dirksen and Governor Thomas Dewey. Unquestionably, one of the dramatic moments of the convention came when Senator Dirksen—in full view of the television audience of tens of millions—pointed his finger during his address at a smiling Governor Dewey and charged that the latter had led his party down the road to defeat twice. Even the Eisenhower supporters expressed admiration for Dirksen as an orator. In contrast, Dewey (who was no more a politician than Dirksen) was judged by many viewers solely in terms of his political role which his critics regarded as Machiavellian. Senator Joseph McCarthy also addressed the convention on the afternoon of July 9 but, despite his use of such audio-visual aids as red-herring placards labelled Hiss, Lattimore, and Acheson, he did not draw a large audience or even keep what he had originally.

One of the highlights of the Republican convention was the meeting of the National Committee—which was not televised. Television cameras were on hand at the opening session, but the committee decided that it would be preferable to meet elsewhere, and the television cameras were not invited along. The Dewey faction did challenge the Taft faction on this issue, but the Taft faction, which controlled the National Committee, pushed through an anti-television ruling by a 60 to 40 vote. CBS radio did manage to tape some of the proceedings, however, and later presented a thirty-minute program focused on the bitter debate over the seating of the Texas delegation. On the other hand, when the credentials committee met, it voted unanimously to open its proceedings to television. As a result, on the afternoon of July 9, ABC and CBS telecast the proceedings of the credentials committee rather than developments on the convention floor. Perhaps the real loser was Senator Taft who, once the decision to televise was made, issued a statement repudiating the action of his supporters; this move came too late to counteract the impression that the Taft faction was attempting to stampede the convention and was willing to resort to clandestine tactics, if necessary, to effect this end.

Strangely, the clamor for the televising of these committee meetings was not matched by the audiences for these once they were carried, as the low point for the entire convention in terms of viewers came on the afternoon of July 8, at which time the credential committee proceedings were being televised.

With regard to the Democrats, *Time* found that at their convention the television commentators were less talkative and more informative, thanks to bird-dogging floor reporters with walkie-talkies who frequently were able to funnel the news out before the delegates themselves were informed. The Democrats, moreover, vetoed the profile views that had characterized the telecasts of the Republican convention, and in general refrained from using the teleprompter that the Republicans had employed. (The teleprompter was a device which rolled a copy of the scheduled address in large letters before the speaker.) Paid paraders were also dispensed with.

One of the most dramatic moments of the Democratic convention occurred on the evening of July 24 when Louisiana challenged the loyalty pledge; after a ruling from the chair that the three non-conforming states might not participate, a roll call of the entire convention seated them following a move for adjournment on the part of Senator Paul Douglas. A study of the coverage of this evening's happenings by the three major networks revealed striking dissimilarities. Network A, for example, centered its telecast around the chairman, Representative Sam Rayburn, emphasizing action, while Network B showed initial confusion as to what was going on, and Network C adopted a highly analytical approach. Thus television, like art, does not reproduce reality blindly, but may employ a highly individualized perspective.

As for the making and unmaking of political fortunes, Adlai Stevenson's address obviously did a great deal to enhance his standing with the voting public, especially since his acceptance speech upon receiving his party's Presidential nomination contained memorable rhetoric. On the other hand, Robert Montgomery has observed that another speaker—"a brilliant politician" with a "career of many years' standing"—irreparably damaged his image with an "ill-prepared, ill-conceived and ill-tempered speech" bubbling over with "obvious insincerity and crudity of expression," failing to win

re-election to the office that he then held. One suspects the reference was to Governor Paul Dever of Massachusetts. Among the speeches which attracted large audiences were those of Sam Rayburn and Alben Barkley, but both of these prominent figures were near the end rather than at the beginning of their political careers. Some commentators have adjudged the Democratic convention to have been rather dull, yet at no time did its television audience drop as low as the Republican television audience at its lowest; its nadir came during the credentials committee meeting at which the Mississippi delegation was up for consideration.

At this point some comparative figures relative to the television audiences for the two conventions are in order. A. C. Nielsen reported a total of 185,500,000 home hours of listening to the Republican convention, compared to 257,000,000 for the Democrats. Significantly, the conventions attracted a larger daytime audience than normal but did not outdraw the most popular evening entertainment programs. On the other hand, the Pulse index, which sampled 12,500 households in the greater New York Metropolitan area, revealed that at least in New York the Republicans proved more attractive than the Democrats, both day and night. Aside from personalities and issues, the structuring of the two conventions differed somewhat; Charles Thomson has pointed out that the Republicans devoted twice as much time to formalities, substantially more time to debate, about the same amount of time to other speeches, less time to ovations, and a third as much time to voting as did the Democrats. But whatever the structuring of each convention may have been, an unpublished study of the responses of sample audiences in New York, made for NBC shortly after each convention, revealed that both conventions increased preferences for the Republican Party as well as enlarging interest in voting both in amount and degree. Significantly, too, with the exception of Estes Kefauver, supporters of every other major candidate for his party's Presidential nomination rated television behind the newspapers as the most important sources in helping them make up their minds. As for personalities, Elmo Roper found that the best-liked Republican was Herbert Hoover and the best-liked Democrat was Sam Rayburn, and that at the Republican convention both Governor Thomas Dewey and Senator Everett Dirksen

ranked high in both the "like" and "dislike" columns, an inevitable consequence of the bitter Eisenhower-Taft contest.

Rating the two major party Presidential candidates as television performers at greater length, Jack Gould has written of the Republican nominee that he is "the strongest example of naturalness on TV. The crinkly face, the speech straight out of every-day America and the magnetism that is extraordinary because it is never too dazzling are qualities of which a TV casting director might dream." According to a California survey conducted by Ithiel de Sola Pool, the favorable qualities most mentioned by those who saw him on television and voted for him were that he was good-natured, sincere, honest, cheerful, and clear-headed. Television, in effect, humanized the General, making him more than just a military figure to the public. Perhaps the most controversial aspect of Eisenhower's television role during the campaign were the numerous twenty-second spots which he filmed. Approximately \$1,500,000 was spent on these. A critic complained that "while political dialogue is supposed to clarify issues, the Eisenhower spots merely obscured them," charging that the spots were too brief to enlighten the voter. Admittedly many were not on a high intellectual level, "Mr. Eisenhower, what about the high cost of living?" "My wife, Mamie, worries about the same thing. I tell her its our job to change that on November fourth." But these spots did not seem to alienate the voting public, perhaps suggesting that an image of concern, sincerity, and trustworthiness has more appeal than one of great intellectual brilliance.

In contrast, Adlai Stevenson was openly the candidate of the intelligentsia. Although he did not win, analysts have dissected his role as a television performer at great length. In this connection Gilbert Seldes has observed that Stevenson "was effective on television only if he stood before an audience; at home . . . he was ill at ease and hurried and basically uncommunicative." Despite his great gifts as an orator—far greater than those of Eisenhower—Ithiel de Sola Pool found during the course of a series of interviews in California that these gifts led a minority who saw him on television to view him as snobbish and domineering. Seemingly Stevenson projected an image of superiority which the masses found distasteful, despite the fact that those who voted for him generally

found him to be clear-headed, sincere, brilliant, likeable, honest, and refined. A more unfavorable picture of Stevenson emerged from a study conducted by Miami University of Ohio and the Crosley Broadcasting Corporation; those interviewed regarded Stevenson as superior to Eisenhower in only two traits—humor and speaking ability. Unlike Eisenhower, Stevenson did not attempt to influence the voting public through flash appearances on television, instead preferring to employ the more traditional and more intellectual approach of the full-length speech.

Aside from Eisenhower and Stevenson, a number of other public figures made television appearances during the campaign in support of their party tickets. These included Robert Taft, Philip Murray, Clare Boothe Luce, Walter Reuther, Herbert Hoover, and Wayne Morse. In contrast, a number of individuals who played a major role at the national conventions—such as Douglas MacArthur—played only a minor role as television personalities after the Presidential nominees had been selected. Red-baiting Senator Joseph McCarthy made a rather spectacular television appearance on the night of October 27 in which, during an attack on the Democratic candidate, he twice referred (either by accident or on purpose) to Stevenson as Alger rather than Adlai. The reference, of course, was to Alger Hiss, the convicted perjurer and alleged Communist. The theme of this address was the Illinois Governor's alleged "aid to the Communist cause and the extent to which he is part and parcel of the Acheson-Hiss-Lattimore group." Two weeks previously Richard Nixon had observed in a television address, "If Stevenson were to be taken in by Stalin as he was by Alger Hiss, the Yalta sellout would look like a great American diplomatic triumph by comparison." On election eve Adlai Stevenson was joined on television by President Harry Truman, Vice-President Alben Barkley, and Vice-Presidential candidate John Sparkman, having defended himself against the Nixon attack by affirming that he had testified favorably as to the reputation of Alger Hiss on the grounds that it "was 'good' so far as I had heard from others."

It was, however, Richard Nixon's immortal "Checkers" speech that stands as the highlight of the campaign. On September 18 the *New York Post* charged that a group of wealthy California admirers had established an \$18,000 fund for Nixon's personal use. The

Democratic National Chairman now demanded that Nixon get off the ticket; Nixon replied that the funds had been used for mailing and other political expenses. Fortunately for Nixon, news leaked out of Chicago that Adlai Stevenson also had established a fund, consisting primarily of money left over from his gubernatorial campaign, for the purpose of supplementing the salaries of certain officials in the Illinois state government. Meanwhile, Nixon had won approval of a plan to take his case to the people, going over his proposed address carefully with Edward (Ted) Rogers, his television advisor during his 1950 Senatorial campaign. Three years later the Vice-President admitted to the Radio and Television Executives Society that he had put off the speech for several days to create suspense as well as to permit him to prepare for it thoroughly.

On the evening of September 23 Richard Nixon broadcast to the nation from Los Angeles. A detailed analysis of this address is in order here, since it was one of the most important events in the history of political television. After disposing of the fund with the observation that "Not one cent or any other money of that type ever went to me for my personal use," he cited the audit made by Price Waterhouse and Co. and the legal opinion of Gibson, Dean, and Crutcher to prove his innocence. In this part of the address Nixon duly noted that his Democratic counterpart, Senator John Sparkman, had placed his wife on the payroll and kept her there for the previous ten years. Next of all Nixon stated, ". . . what I am going to do—and incidentally this is unprecedented in the history of American politics—I am going at this time to give to this television and radio audience a complete financial history; everything I've earned; everything I've spent; everything I owe." Pointing out (in reference to petty corruption in the Truman Administration) that his wife had a Republican cloth coat rather than a Democratic mink coat, he attacked the assumption that only a rich man should run for the Senate. At this point came the reference to Checkers—the most famous dog in American politics since FDR's Fala. After challenging Stevenson and Sparkman to make their financial history public, Nixon dragged in a reference to Alger Hiss, declaring that he had "no apologies to the American people for my part in putting Alger Hiss where he is today." This led to a

final peroration in which he attacked the Truman Administration for its record vis-à-vis the Korean War, corruption and Communism. As for the matter of whether he should resign from the ticket, Nixon stated that this was the concern of the national committee; shortly thereafter, Dwight Eisenhower announced in Wheeling, West Virginia, that Nixon had been fully vindicated.

In summarizing the various television innovations employed during the campaign, most observers agree that the use of spots was the most significant. Three of the most important themes were corruption, high prices and high taxes, and war. The Republicans concentrated these in the regions of the country that were deemed crucial in swinging the electoral college to Eisenhower; they invariably preceded or followed the most popular television programs. For some time the Westinghouse Radio Stations maintained the policy of not accepting such spots, using the excuse that no political issue could be discussed properly in one minute, while early in October the National Volunteers for Stevenson charged that the National Citizens Committee for Eisenhower was planning a \$2 million saturation campaign featuring the spots during the three weeks preceding the election. In this connection the Democratic group complained to the FCC that such a plan would deny the equal time principle. Nevertheless, the Democrats spent \$77,000 on a spot campaign of their own, many of which featured the theme that the Republicans were responsible for the depression of 1929: "Shhh. Don't mention it to a soul, don't spread it around . . . but the Republican Party was in power back in 1932 . . . 13,000,000 people were unemployed . . . bank doors shut in your face. . . ." An idea first set forth by Senator Blair Moody involved a series of debates between the two major Presidential candidates. Dwight Eisenhower vetoed this suggestion, while the equal time principle also stood in its way. One might also cite the practice of both the Republicans and the Democrats of buying the last five minutes of popular entertainment programs, a practice which aroused widespread resentment among the fans of these productions.

According to the Miami University-Crosley Broadcasting Corporation study, political viewing fell off following the conventions and did not revive until ten days or so before the end of the cam-

paign. One exception to this rule was Richard Nixon's "Checkers" speech. Interest stirred towards the end of the campaign when, on October 24, Dwight Eisenhower made a speech in Detroit in which he promised to go to Korea if elected. Following this there was an upswing in television audiences for political programs, but they did not come close to matching those for the nominating conventions. Unfortunately for Adlai Stevenson, most of his telecasts took place during September and the first half of October, while Dwight Eisenhower spoke on several occasions during the last few weeks of the campaign.

On election day the returns confirmed that Dwight Eisenhower had maintained the lead which he had held over Adlai Stevenson throughout the campaign. Eisenhower carried thirty-nine states with 442 electoral votes, while Stevenson carried only nine states with 89 electoral votes; the popular vote was 33.9 million for Eisenhower and 27.3 million for Stevenson. The precise influence of television upon this outcome is difficult to pinpoint. One somewhat negative finding relative to Iowa was that of Herbert Simon and Frederick Stern. They concluded that "the data do not reveal any reliable difference either in the voting turnout or in the percentage of the vote cast for the Republican candidate between HTD (high television density) and other (low television density) areas. On the other hand, the Miami University-Crosley Broadcasting Corporation survey of Ohio voters affirmed that Republican programs were more popular than Democratic ones, a trend reflected in the election returns. Yet this preference was attributable to personalities more so than to issues. Turning to California, Ithiel de Sola Pool discovered among the television viewers of this political campaign a phenomenon which he labelled as "partisan polarization," or the tendency to exaggerate the virtues and faults of the candidates. Regardless of its precise influence, television was a costly item in the budget of both political parties. A census of 110 television stations revealed a total expenditure for political television of nearly three million dollars, of which the Republicans accounted for 55 per cent, the Democrats 44 per cent, and other parties one per cent. Since the Republicans relied heavily on spots, Democratic program time slightly exceeded Republican program time; approxi-

mately 40 per cent of the total program time featured broadcasts by spokesmen. Dwight Eisenhower's election eve program, incidentally, cost \$267,000.

If one correlates the television density (the percentage of the population in a television area) of each state with its performance in the electoral college, one might well conclude that the Republicans spent this money well. Dwight Eisenhower carried every state whose television density was 50 per cent or more, in contrast with Adlai Stevenson, who carried only those states whose television density was less than 50 per cent. Only in fifteen states did more than half the population live within range of television signals, but a number of these states had large blocs of electoral votes. Before concluding that television was responsible for Eisenhower's victory, however, we should turn to some earlier polls analyzing "Ike's" popularity, polls that date from the pre-television era before anyone knew his political affiliation. In May 1948 the National Opinion Research Center Poll in three states revealed that Eisenhower was the most frequent Presidential choice, and he also outran President Harry Truman in a 1947 Gallup Poll. One sometimes wonders whether the reason that "Ike" did so well on television was that most of the voters had already made up their minds that they liked him, and thus were simply reinforcing a prior judgment.

One of the significant studies of the general role that television played during this campaign was that conducted by Angus Campbell, Gerald Gurin, and Warren Miller, a study which involved nation-wide sampling. At the beginning of the campaign only 40 per cent of the homes in the United States had television sets, but 53 per cent of the population at one time or another saw programs of a political nature on television. In contrast, 80 per cent of the population took daily newspapers and had radio, yet in each case the percentage that followed the campaign through that medium was smaller than the total audience. As the source of most information, television made its strongest showing in the Northeast and the weakest in the South, while with radio the exact opposite was true; the performance of newspapers throughout the nation was more constant. Of the entire sampling, 31 per cent named television as the source of most information, with radio following

closely behind at 27 per cent and newspapers third with 22 per cent. We have already compared the television and radio performances of Dwight Eisenhower and Adlai Stevenson in the chapter on radio and politics.

Two of the more esoteric—but also two of the most significant—analyses of the political role of broadcasting during 1952 are Herbert Rush Craig's, "A Rhetorical Criticism of the Principal Network Speeches on the Issues of Corruption and Subversion in Government in the 1952 Presidential Campaign," and Ben Clifford Markland's "Evasiveness in Political Discussion Broadcasts During the 1952 Election Campaign." In his study, Craig examined speeches by Eisenhower, Nixon, McCarthy, Luce, and Stevenson, concluding that "both sides failed to take advantage of their assets. Stevenson failed to stress his record as reform governor, but Republican spokesmen also failed to cite specific evidence of corruption; on the other hand, the Democratic nominee did face squarely his role in the Alger Hiss deposition, while the Republicans (other than Senator McCarthy) failed to present a unified front on the subversion issue." According to Craig, 43 of the 67 major arguments were arguments by generalization. Stevenson, Eisenhower, and Nixon made the most effective use of introductions, in that order, while Nixon's organization was the most superior, Stevenson not always isolating his central idea. Another interesting finding was that "Language usage by Stevenson and Eisenhower was not essentially different"; Stevenson employed literary allusions extensively and Eisenhower favored metaphorical expressions and connotations. This will doubtless shock those *literati* who inevitably rank Stevenson's speeches in a different literary league than those of Eisenhower. Making some final comparisons, McCarthy's language tended to be the most repetitive, while Nixon's addresses had more of an extempore character than did those of the other principals.

Ben Markland, on the other hand, examined 25 radio and television discussion programs broadcast between September 7 and November 2, including "Meet the Press," "American Forum of the Air," and "Keep Posted," in an attempt to pinpoint evasiveness in political discussion broadcasts. During his investigation, Markland noted every evasive answer "without regard for the speaker's mo-

tives, and whether the evasion seemed to be intentional or unintentional"; he employed the assistance of both recognized speech authorities and graduate students in speech. The evasion-counters uncovered no less than 221 evasions, an average of 8.9 per program, the Republicans out-evading the Democrats 128 to 93. The most common "dishonest tricks in argument" were "ambiguity, vagueness or meaninglessness," "extension by contradiction or misrepresentation," "false attribute of prejudices or motives," "diversion," and "appeal to more authority." It is noteworthy that more evasions occurred in the area of federal taxes, fiscal policy, and the status of the national economy than in any other; evasions were also common in the areas of foreign policy, the Korean conflict, campaign fund policies, and corruption in government. Despite the high degree of evasiveness detected relative to economic issues, these were of less importance in the campaign than Communism, corruption, and Korea.

By 1952 television was being used politically in a number of states. One was Massachusetts, where experts judged that Congressman John Kennedy battled Senator Henry Cabot Lodge to a draw in a series of television debates. Then there was Ohio, where Miami University and the Crosley Broadcasting Corporation made a study of the gubernatorial contest between Democrat Frank Lausche and Republican Charles Taft, and the Senatorial race between Democrat Michael Di Salle and Republican John Bricker; on election day Democrat Lausche and Republican Bricker, the two more conservative candidates, were victorious. Bricker fared the worst among television viewers and the best among radio hearers, while for Di Salle the exact opposite was true. In the case of the two gubernatorial candidates, the television viewers were almost equally divided, although Taft held an edge over Lausche among the radio hearers. At least in Ohio, it would seem, television did not give the winning gubernatorial and Senatorial candidates the boost that insured their victories. Turning to the costs of political television, Irving Merrill discovered while conducting a study of contested campaigns for twenty Senate seats in eighteen states where television was available, that the total television expenditure for each of 11 contests was in the neighborhood of \$2,500,

for each of 4 contests \$12,500, for each of 3 contests \$27,500, and for each of 2 contests \$37,500. This furnishes proof that the political role of television at the state level in 1952 varied widely from state to state, the medium not yet having thoroughly saturated the nation.

*The First Eisenhower Administration*

In January 1953 Dwight Eisenhower was inaugurated as President, the first Republican chief executive to hold office in two decades. Aside from his charismatic television image, one must not overlook the innovations for which "Ike" was responsible. In the first place, Eisenhower was the first President to allow the telecasting and broadcasting of parts of Presidential press conferences. Secondly, "Ike" was the first chief executive to take part in televised "cabinet meetings," an innovation which aroused much criticism following its adoption in 1954. Then there was the "keyhole" conversation between Eisenhower and Secretary of State John Foster Dulles that was televised on May 17, 1955. One columnist favorably commented vis-à-vis this innovation, "The convincing thing about their performance was that it didn't seem like a performance at all."

One of the more severe critics of the televised press conference was Emory Bogardus. In analyzing its negative aspects, Bogardus referred to the tendency of these gatherings to be superficial because of a lack of follow-up questions, the frequent interjection of tangential issues into the discussion, the widespread practice of couching answers in general and non-committal terms to satisfy the various viewing publics, the occasional attempt to place the chief executive on the spot or to trick him into an answer that might be used against him, and the inability of the President to recall an answer once it was uttered. Among possible reforms Bogardus suggested the limiting of the conference to one major governmental activity or policy at a time, the taping and "correcting" of the questions and answers, and the prior submission of written questions which would give the President time to prepare an answer. Finally, one might point out that too frequently held

press conferences will make the chief executive seem commonplace and reduce his status rating even when he is a highly gifted performer.

Fortunately for Eisenhower, the public reaction to these televised press conferences was far more favorable than that of Bogardus. The *New York Herald Tribune* commented editorially on May 19, 1955, that "In the hands of President Eisenhower the new form of the press conference is a means of giving information to the public, of bringing the President closer to the people, and enhancing that legitimate authority which is possessed by the Chief Executive as the representative of the entire nation." Although at this time only the Du Mont stations in New York and Washington were carrying the President's press conferences on film in their entirety, both NBC and CBS regularly presented excerpts on their news programs. ABC had been telecasting these press conferences in toto, but afterwards discontinued this practice, while MBS continued to carry the verbal portions on its 300 station plus radio network. As for the response to specific programs, A. C. Nielsen Company calculated that the total audience for the first televised press conference following "Ike's" illness, held on February 15, 1956, was 11,864,000 homes. Significantly, each of the three major networks' news telecasts drew 300,000 more homes than they usually did on other Thursday nights during this period, a testimony to national interest in the recuperating President.

Although it is not generally known, an examination of the pertinent papers in the Eisenhower Library reveals that United Nations Representative Henry Cabot Lodge was one of the most vigorous advocates of "Ike" using television to sway public opinion. In a letter to the President dated October 30, 1953, Lodge referred to "the value of your becoming the 'TV' President"; two weeks later he wrote White House Special Assistant Wilton Persons that it was his goal to "establish the General as our first television President, just as Roosevelt was our first radio President, and to do it in a way which, while not dinosaur, is equally not a carbon copy of the New Deal." Two individuals who helped effect this end were White House Press Secretary James Hagerty who (rather than the networks) determined whether a given Presidential statement was to be televised, and actor-producer Robert Montgomery, who sub-

stituted brief notes for the teleprompter and cue cards after the teleprompter conked out in the midst of one of the President's addresses. Despite some negative judgments, a typical assessment of "Ike" as a television performer was generally favorable. Thus noted correspondent Merriam Smith was of the opinion that Eisenhower had taken "the Roosevelt radio 'fireside chat' and converted it to the audio-visual field," being "the chief executive who really broke the ice on television."

By 1954 a rival had emerged to challenge "Ike's" domination of the political scene—Senator Joseph McCarthy. The two episodes that we will examine in this connection are the Edward R. Murrow program dealing with the Wisconsin Senator and the Army-McCarthy hearings. The Murrow "See-It-Now" program of March 9, which preceded the televised hearings by one month, aroused a storm of furor in that it constituted an unbridled attack on the noted Red-baiter. Among other highlights of his "career," Murrow presented edited films of McCarthy belching, laughing at his own jokes, contradicting himself, and ignoring witnesses before his subcommittee. During the course of this program the CBS commentator observed that "It is necessary to investigate before legislating, but the line between investigation and persecuting is a very fine one and the junior Senator from Wisconsin has stepped over it repeatedly. His primary achievement has been in confusing the public mind. . . ." Telephone and letter responses ran heavily in favor of Murrow, but rival commentator Fulton Lewis, Jr. took to the radio the next evening and indignantly assailed Murrow. In the words of Lewis, "I have long been sick in the stomach of the sanctimonious, self-righteous pretext that Mr. Murrow . . . is objective, that he sticks strictly to unbiased fact, and such rot. . . Mr. Murrow is, and always has been, heavily slanted on the left side." McCarthy himself appeared on Lewis' program the following evening, observing that he had slept through the "See-It-Now" program in question, "I never listen to the extreme left-wing, bleeding-heart elements of radio or television." Murrow's smug rebuttal to McCarthy the following evening was, "If the Senator means that I am somewhat to the left of his position and of Louis XIV, he is correct."

Nevertheless, several criticisms of the Murrow program were voiced in traditionally anti-McCarthy quarters. The liberal Catholic

*Commonweal*, for instance, attacked the presentation as having set a "potentially dangerous" precedent; not only did it rely on pictures rather than on a spoken text, but it also presented only one side of the controversy. Likewise disturbed was Gilbert Seldes, who observed in the *Saturday Review* that ". . . it was *not* a report. It was an attack, followed by an appeal for action." Seldes elsewhere commented that "Unless something better than the formula of equal time is discovered, I believe that the tremendous engines of communication must not be used for attacking an individual." Perhaps, Seldes suggested, the Senator from Wisconsin should have been given fifteen minutes on the original program for a rebuttal; then there would have been fewer objections to it. Just prior to the Murrow program, moreover, Adlai Stevenson had delivered an antiadministration address and McCarthy had requested equal time. In the fall of 1953 the three major networks had granted equal time to the Senator from Wisconsin to answer ex-President Harry Truman's explanation of his Administration's handling of the Harry Dexter White case. On this occasion, though, the networks gave rebuttal time to the Republican National Committee rather than to McCarthy. Actually it was not legally mandatory under these conditions to provide equal time to the Republicans, since Stevenson was not a candidate for public office.

During the spring and summer of 1954 (April 22 to June 17) there took place the Army-McCarthy hearings, which perhaps rank with the Kefauver hearings as the most significant Congressional hearings ever telecast. The background of the Army-McCarthy hearings was quite complex, but in essence the Army charged that the Wisconsin Senator had used improper influence to obtain favors for an Army private, his associate G. David Schine, while McCarthy accused the Army of attempting to short-circuit his investigation of subversives in the radar research project at Fort Monmouth. As was to be expected, the Democratic and Republican members of this committee filed separate reports after the close of the hearings. A common interpretation of these hearings was that they had an adverse effect politically on the Wisconsin Senator, but Gerhart Wiebe, who conducted a series of interviews in Maine and Kansas in their aftermath, found that they had relatively little effect on public attitudes towards McCarthy. This finding was confirmed by

the Gallup Poll. On the other hand, the hearings did have an impact on the daytime television audience, which for this period was 53 per cent over normal. According to Wiebe, the most common theme to emerge from the interviews was that of the Lone Hero, ". . . he is right because he is selfless, dedicated, courageous, sincere, direct, determined, blameless. He sticks to his convictions, stands ready even if alone in a good cause." McCarthy was most frequently cast in this role, but others were, too. Perhaps such issues as freedom of speech and a man's innocence until proven guilty—at least in the context of the Army-McCarthy hearings—proved too complex for the average viewer and so he reacted in terms of personalities. In any event, by the end of the year the Senate had censured the Senator from Wisconsin for having brought disrepute to that body, and he dropped from sight as a leading political television personality.

One might also cite in this connection a survey conducted by Percy Tannenbaum in Lansing, Michigan, following televised sessions of the House Committee on un-American Activities there in May 1954. (Senator McCarthy, of course, had nothing to do with these.) As expected, those who witnessed the proceedings on television increased their knowledge of the hearings far more than did those who had not been exposed to them. But far more important, the viewers became less favorable in their opinion of the presiding Representative, Kit Clardy, and of Congressional investigating committees in general; they also became slightly more critical of the use of the Fifth Amendment by witnesses, and even somewhat less favorable to the general idea of televising such hearings. It would seem that Representative Clardy, a far less controversial figure than Senator McCarthy, was affected far more adversely than the Senator from Wisconsin by the televising of hearings which he chaired.

The public, of course, was being exposed to television appearances by political figures other than President Eisenhower and Senator McCarthy at this time. A *Public Opinion Survey on Political Issues 1954*, prepared for the Republican National Committee by Batten, Barton, Durstine, and Osburn, sampled attitudes towards political television in general four times during the fall in California, Illinois, Iowa, Kentucky, Massachusetts, Michigan,

Minnesota, Montana, New Jersey, and Ohio. This survey disclosed that more independents felt that television had been the most important source in helping them make up their minds than had been the case with Democrats and Republicans (42.6 per cent, 36.8 per cent, and 36.2 per cent, respectively). Aside from "Ike," television campaign broadcasts by Vice-President Richard Nixon impressed nearly three times as many people as those by Adlai Stevenson; telecasts by cabinet members of the Eisenhower Administration had only a minor impact. Unfortunately for the Republicans, the Democrats picked up seats in both houses of Congress in 1954.

One of the first exhaustive studies of the political impact of television at the state level was that of Hubert Victor Cordier who analyzed the speeches of Senator Paul Douglas of Illinois which Douglas delivered during his successful re-election campaign in 1954. Between September 8 and November 2 Douglas campaigned on television over ten hours; spot announcements made up approximately one-half of this time, panels and forums approximately a quarter, and speeches, interviews, and a documentary film the remaining quarter. Excluding the spots, television station program directors estimated that Douglas' average television audience was 140,000 voters, a number probably equal to the total live audience for his personal campaign appearances during the entire campaign. The cost of these twenty-one telecasts was one-tenth of a cent per capita, assuming that the total television audience was slightly over three million. A widespread belief that television leads to a more superficial treatment of political issues is substantiated by the finding that Douglas dealt with an average of 9.75 issues in each of his twenty-one television speeches, as compared with an average of 5.8 issues in his platform addresses. As a television speaker Douglas averaged 161.2 words per minute, generally delivered in an animated and conversational tone. Cordier found Douglas far superior to his Republican opponent, Joseph Meek, as a television campaigner, despite the fact that one might point out flaws in the introductions, discussions, and conclusions of his television addresses.

Two Congressional races that also took place during 1954 further illustrated how the use or non-use of television may influence a campaign. In a New Jersey district, Democrat Harrison Williams

won election by the largest plurality ever attained by a candidate of his party in predominantly Republican Union County, having assigned his television campaign to a professional advertising man from Benton and Bowles. His opponent, "Friendly Fred" Shepherd, a conservative state assemblyman, did not even use the medium at all. Of course both candidates may employ television, but one may do so far more effectively than the other. This was the case in a Wisconsin district where Democrat Henry Reuss defeated Republican Charles Kersten in a vigorous campaign which included ten television appearances. While Kersten was delivering prepared speeches on television, Reuss was shown talking with the postman, with spectators at a baseball game, with factory workers, and with his family. The fact that both Williams and Reuss were relatively young men doubtless contributed to the dynamic impression which they made on television.

By this time, too, television was being used by city governments for the purpose of furnishing citizens with information. Cincinnati, Ohio, produced a weekly show, "The City Manager Reports," while Kansas City, Missouri, sponsored a thirteen-week series, "Municipal Report"; more spot-oriented was Los Angeles County, California, which made one-minute newsreels on municipal activities. Among the other cities employing television were Phoenix, Arizona; Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; Des Moines, Iowa; Greensboro, North Carolina; Toledo and Dayton, Ohio; and Milwaukee, Wisconsin. St. Petersburg, Florida, went so far as to set up its own television station and devoted part of the broadcasting schedule to municipal interest shows. Formats, of course, varied widely from city to city. An example of an informal approach was Bangor, Maine's, "This Is Your City," presented every Sunday from 12:45 to 1:00 p. m.; no regular script was used and the discussion was off-the-cuff. Some of these programs were devoted to the answering of questions which listeners had sent in.

### *The 1956 Campaign*

The number of television stations in this country had increased by 1956 to approximately 500, as compared with 125 in 1952, while the number of television sets had doubled over the number four

years previously to 40 million. In 1952 there had been fifteen states without a television station, but in 1956 every state had at least one. Nevertheless, the role of television in this political campaign was perhaps less consequential than it had been four years previously, since the two major candidates were President Dwight Eisenhower and Adlai Stevenson, both of whom had been Presidential candidates in 1952. Eisenhower's health, though, made him a doubtful starter for a while. As for the Democratic standard-bearer, he held early meetings with organization leaders in a number of states in the hope of uniting his party behind him. Unfortunately, as Charles Thomson has pointed out, "The candidate got bored with many of the ideas he should have reserved for his major addresses to the country, as he used them in his organizational efforts; and his subsequent lack of fresh news and verve contrasted sadly with the favorable impression he made on many of the voters—especially the uncommitted variety—in 1952." Stevenson did engage in a nationally televised debate from Miami on May 21, but this innovation did little to freshen his image and convert voters. In contrast, the Republicans were most concerned with projecting the image of a healthy Eisenhower. Recovery from a heart attack and major surgery might well have prevented "Ike" from standing for re-election had he not had television at his disposal to make his burden easier.

Early in 1956, Pulse, Inc. interviewed 1,000 television set owners in the Metropolitan New York area in an attempt to sound out public sentiment on four important political questions. The first of these was, "In your opinion, should there be more time, less time, about the same time devoted to political campaigning on television next fall, as compared with the 1952 campaign?" Over half (54.6 per cent) opted for the same amount of time, while a quarter (24.5 per cent) preferred more time; a fifth (20.9 per cent) actually desired less time. On the other hand, the American Institute of Public Opinion discovered in November that 855 out of a total of 1502 that had been interviewed favored a suggestion that candidates for the Presidency be limited to six major speeches, televised nationally, during the election campaign. Perhaps more interesting was the response to the Pulse inquiry, "If a speech by a Presidential candidate was shown on television at the same time as a program

you like to watch, would you watch the speech or the regular program?" Again over half (54 per cent) voted in favor of the speech, but a strong minority (34.8 per cent) cast their ballots for the regular program. (11.2 per cent were not certain.) These figures demonstrate the dangers of preemption for the political candidate, since the practice may make him enemies as well as friends.

Pulse's third question—"Which, if any, of these men have you ever seen on television?"—indicates the impact of the Kefauver Crime Commission hearings in that more interviewees had seen the Tennessee Senator on television than the much-exposed Richard Nixon. Percentage figures for the leading Presidential and Vice-Presidential possibilities were: Eisenhower, 100 per cent; Nixon, 78.4 per cent; Knowland, 44.8 per cent; Stevenson, 90.3 per cent; Kefauver, 81.5 per cent; Harriman, 68.2 per cent. Even more significant were the responses to the fourth question, ". . . would you say that after seeing X on television, you like him more, less, or about the same as you did before you saw him on television?" Relatively speaking, Eisenhower gained the most from exposure, followed in order by Stevenson and Kefauver, while Nixon, Knowland, and Harriman suffered as a result.

	<i>Like more</i>	<i>Like less</i>	<i>Like the same</i>
Eisenhower	36.4	3.4	60.2
Nixon	21.3	24.8	53.9
Knowland	14.1	16.7	69.2
Stevenson	34.0	14.5	51.5
Kefauver	29.1	12.8	58.1
Harriman	16.3	17.4	66.3

Compared with 1952, the national conventions of 1956 were far less exciting, since this time there was no Eisenhower-Taft rivalry or Stevenson draft, although primary-winning Estes Kefauver again unsuccessfully challenged Adlai Stevenson. Nevertheless, the television audience for the conventions was enormous. These were viewed by 34,000,000 homes for an average of 16 hours and 18 minutes per home, according to A. C. Nielsen data. Interest in the Republican and Democratic conventions was even in terms of the numbers of homes reached; in terms of time spent in viewing,

the Democrats held an edge over the Republicans, 9 hours and 39 minutes to 7 hours and 22 minutes. The Democratic civil rights debate was watched by only 4 million homes at 2:30 a. m. of the evening that it took place, while the arrival of the President at San Francisco for the Republican convention at a more accessible hour was viewed by over 19 million homes. This differential shows that the time of day affects the number of television viewers of convention proceedings as much as the intrinsic significance of the events going on. In any event, over 50 per cent of the respondents in an Elmo Roper survey followed the conventions on television, compared to 23 per cent who read about it in the newspapers and 13 per cent who heard it on the radio. These figures differ significantly from similar ones for the 1952 conventions, in that radio was more important at that time.

Probably the best study of the 1956 political conventions was that of Elmo Roper. Among the favorable comments vis-à-vis the Republican gathering collected by him was that it was well conducted, well organized, and well planned, that there was no mud slinging, and that it was dignified. On the other hand, critics complained that the outcome was known in advance, that there was too much talk, and that it was dull and boring. One unexpected highlight of the Republican convention was the abortive move by Terry Carpenter of Nebraska to place "Joe Smith" in nomination for Vice-President, an episode which constituted a rather humorous counterbalance to the earlier, more serious attempt on the part of Harold Stassen and others to drop Richard Nixon from the ticket. As for the Democratic convention, Roper found the attitudes of those that he interviewed to be generally favorable. Among the more frequent compliments were: there was open discussion and arguments; the Vice-Presidential nomination was wide open; it was full of spirit and pep; the speeches were good, especially the keynote address. On the other hand, a negative impression resulted from "Harry Truman, his actions, and his influence"; too frequent and often unjust criticisms of the Republicans; a lack of order; mud-slinging and name-calling. Here the biggest argument over television coverage came when CBS failed to carry a filmed history of the Democratic Party narrated by John Kennedy, whose spectacular attempt to capture the Vice-Presidential nomination was in

many ways the most exciting moment of the convention. In this instance CBS's excuse was that the film had poor video qualities.

During the campaign proper there were few innovations as far as the political use of television was concerned. The Democrats did make much more extensive use of spots in 1956 than they had in 1952. By reserving specific periods as far as a year in advance, the major parties escaped the payment of preemption costs. Five-minute programs were common, as there was a movement away from half-hour presentations, partly because of resentment at the cancellation of such shows as "I Love Lucy." The Republicans paid special attention to the Negro vote, buying approximately 150 spot announcements per market on Negro radio stations for the nine-week period preceding election day. As for special programs, on October 12 a Citizens for Eisenhower press conference featured the President answering "planted" questions, while a Democratic broadcast narrated by Senator Estes Kefauver documented Republican "corruption." According to Adlai Stevenson, some of his advisors urged him to challenge the President to a debate, but Stevenson rejected this proposal on the grounds that he "feared the challenge would be misunderstood, would be taken as a 'gimmick.'" By 1956, too, the advertising agency had come to play an increasingly important role in national politics, perhaps to the detriment of the latter. As the Brookings Institution observed, ". . . the emphasis on brevity, repetition, and half-statement so common to business advertising is carried over almost automatically into the political arena. When dealing with contemporary politics, advertising agencies tend to stress personal qualities rather than issues. There is also the temptation to stage events." Such devices obviously do not lead to mature deliberation on the part of the voter.

During and following the 1952 campaign there were a number of comparative analyses of Dwight Eisenhower and Adlai Stevenson as television performers. The subject having been largely exhausted, little new was set forth by political commentators in 1956. One exception was Herbert Knepprath, who investigated the elements of persuasion in the nationally broadcast speeches of both men. In general, Eisenhower (like Lyndon Johnson in 1964) adopted what one might describe as a "let's not rock the boat

approach," devoting little time to discussing key issues and offering fresh solutions to national problems. On the other hand, Stevenson, in attacking the administration's record, devoted a great deal of time to national and international problems, but failed to capitalize on public opinion which favored his draft and farm proposals. Eisenhower, however, tended to stress economic motives more than Stevenson, although both men appealed extensively to American traditions and value systems. As for the interjection of emotion into the campaign, it is perhaps not surprising that Eisenhower employed more emotionally loaded terms than did the more analytical Stevenson, who increasingly appealed to safety motives as the campaign progressed. Knepprath concludes that "Eisenhower's delivery reinforced his public image," while "Stevenson's delivery was generally effective, but he fell short of his best in the rally speeches." This opinion is particularly noteworthy in light of the widespread belief that Stevenson was superior to Eisenhower as a television performer.

A survey of CBS programming from Labor Day to Election Day disclosed that approximately 20 per cent of the total newscast time was devoted to the Presidential campaign, with Eisenhower and Stevenson appearing approximately twice as often as Nixon and Kefauver. As for purely political broadcasts, the most popular speech by Adlai Stevenson in terms of the size of his television audience were his addresses of September 26 and 30, while that of Estes Kefauver was his aforementioned "Rogue's Gallery" effort of October 20. Surprisingly, the best Republican draw was ex-President Herbert Hoover, whose five-minute appearance on October 29 reached 13.8 million television homes; the largest television audiences for both Dwight Eisenhower and Richard Nixon did not match those of their Democratic counterparts. Unfortunately for the Democrats, most voters apparently had made up their minds for whom to vote by the time the conventions had ended, as they had done in 1952. This finding is borne out by further A. C. Nielsen figures which reveal that in 1956 political programs consistently attracted smaller television audiences than even the less popular commercial telecasts.

On Election Day, Dwight Eisenhower's margin of victory over Adlai Stevenson was nearly 10 million (35.6 to 26), while he over-

whelmed the former Illinois Governor in electoral votes, 457 to 73. Stevenson did propose an end to the draft and to nuclear testing, but neither suggestion apparently won him many votes; in contrast, the Suez crisis near the end of the campaign clearly benefitted Eisenhower. There was some talk of a "changed" Stevenson during this campaign, although it is difficult to pinpoint the exact nature of this change other than to note that his television image by 1956 had lost the freshness that it possessed during the 1952 campaign. But even though the outcome was reasonably predictable, both parties splurged heavily on television time. Thus Presidential and Congressional campaign broadcasts cost the Republican Party over \$4,000,000, three-fourths of this for television, while the Democrats spent nearly \$3,000,000, of which over \$2,100,000 went for television. For the first time in a political campaign, television expenditures exceeded radio expenditures, although total broadcasting expenditures were up only slightly. Minor parties, which had made little use of television in 1952, were spending almost as much for television as for radio by 1956.

Turning to general studies of the relationship of television to this political campaign, we might cite first the Merrill surveys conducted in Lansing, Michigan, in March, April, September, and November. It was discovered that high political participation was related to heavier viewing of political broadcasts; individuals who belonged to a political party viewed more political programs than did independents. Not surprisingly, strongly leaning Democrats watched more Stevenson broadcasts than did weakly leaning ones, as was the case with the Republicans vis-à-vis Eisenhower; partisan viewers were more likely to recall programs of their own party than non-partisan political broadcasts, or broadcasts by the opposition. These findings, if anything, demonstrate that television usually reinforces existing political preferences rather than creates new ones. Then there was the Roper Poll conducted in October which demonstrated that, as a result of 1956 being an election year, a greater percentage of those interviewed (149 out of 381) were spending more time watching news programs or political discussions on television than reading newspapers (85 out of 381) or listening to news programs or political discussions on radio (95 out of 381). In regard to the relative significance of the various

mass media, a survey which Samuel Eldersveld conducted in Wayne County, Michigan, revealed that television and the newspapers ranked equally high (38 per cent apiece) as the leading source of political information, with radio lagging far behind (9 per cent); a University of Michigan study conducted after the campaign placed television first with 48 per cent, while newspapers were placed second with 36 per cent and radio third with 6 per cent. These figures should be compared with their 1952 counterparts.

One race at the state level in 1956 which was subjected to careful analysis relative to the political role of television was the Oregon Senatorial contest between the controversial incumbent Democrat (and former Republican) Wayne Morse and Dwight Eisenhower's Secretary of the Interior, Douglas McKay. *Time* rated this contest "next only to the Presidential contest as the fight of the year," but neither Morse nor McKay revolutionized their campaigning to take advantage of television. While McKay observed that television was not an adequate substitute for face-to-face campaigning, Morse stated that "The availability of television in 1956 did not really cause me to campaign differently than I did in 1944 or 1950, except that I also campaigned through the medium of television as well." Both McKay and Morse spent in the neighborhood of \$38,000 on television. Turning to the approach which each employed, McKay attacked Morse on personal grounds on a number of occasions, while Morse tended to stick more with the issues; not until two and a half weeks before the election did he devote a program exclusively to tearing down his opponent, and this was only of five minutes' duration. One indication that McKay was not an outstanding television performer was the decision of the Gerber agency to limit him to five-minute appearances on television, since after five minutes on the air he tended to become tense, losing his more ingratiating traits. In comparing the two candidates as television performers, Duane Tucker found that Morse was decidedly superior, although both he and McKay used similar techniques such as the five-minute talk and the employment of spokesmen. McKay "could not successfully adapt to the demand for versatile extemporaneous and impromptu speaking skill made by television, nor could he make the most of the verbatim manuscript as an oral reader." As a result of this

factor, and others of a more ideological nature, until 1969 Wayne Morse represented Oregon in the United States Senate. He was a highly controversial and even widely disliked figure there, but the strong image he projected frequently won the praise and admiration of even his detractors.

### *The Second Eisenhower Administration*

Comparing Dwight Eisenhower's use of television during his second term as President with that during his first, one finds fewer innovations. Aside from his State of the Union messages and "farewell address," the audience or subjects of "Ike's" televised speeches from 1957 to 1961 included mutual aid, the sending of troops to Little Rock, science and security, the Oklahoma Centennial, the American Society of Newspaper Editors, the Republican National Committee, the American Management Association, the Canadian Parliament, Congress, the United Nations, the National Press Club, the Berlin crisis, the labor reform bill, talks with allied leaders in Europe, peace and understanding at home and abroad, national defense, his Latin American tour, the Paris summit conference, and his trip to the Far East. Thus during his second term as chief executive, President Eisenhower spoke to the nation on both foreign and domestic matters, as he had done during his first term.

Despite his effectiveness as a television performer, "Ike" was not unaware that there were topics that could not be discussed effectively via this medium. Thus in a letter to R. Douglas Stuart on January 31, 1959, the President remarked that "I agree with you completely that it is difficult to dramatize the dangers of inflation and while I am willing to resort to television in an effort to talk to the people of the country as a whole, I find it very hard, even using that media, to get much coverage or interest." Noting that he had prepared a three-minute talk for use on the news programs, Eisenhower complained that it was not used to any degree. Apparently, he concluded, the networks were of the opinion that the public would not be interested.

The last four years of Dwight Eisenhower's Presidency did not witness any spectacle equal to the Army-McCarthy hearings of 1954, but the hearings of Senator John McClellan's Select Com-

mittee to Investigate Improper Activities in Labor-Management Relations in 1957 did strike a few sparks. Among those who testified at these hearings were James Hoffa, Vice-President of the Teamsters' Union, and Johnny Dio, a convicted extortionist. The Du Mont Broadcasting Corporation televised the entire hearings, live and unsponsored, over a period of three-and-a-half weeks; in the East approximately 12 million families tuned in on the hearings daily. (In contrast, the three national networks carried only filmed highlights.) Both Senator John Kennedy and Robert Kennedy, then a counsel, played an important role in these hearings, during which some of the witnesses hid behind the Fifth Amendment on fifty or more occasions, Dio invoking it no less than 137 times. The real forerunner of these hearings, of course, was not the Army-McCarthy imbroglio but rather the Kefauver extravaganza of a half-dozen years previously.

In 1958 the 96 members of the United States Senate were asked the question, "If you were to single out just one thing which you did during your most recent election, which would you say got your message across best?" The responses were as follows: television, 53 per cent, newspapers 38 per cent, radio 3 per cent, outdoor advertising 3 per cent, and direct mail 3 per cent. Significantly, Senator Barry Goldwater, triumphantly re-elected to the Senate during that year's election, ignored the above-mentioned media categories and wrote in personal appearances as being the one most effective means of reaching voters; this may in part explain why his television appearances during the 1964 Presidential race did not win him more votes. On the other hand, Senate Majority Leader Lyndon Johnson made no choice, while Senator John Kennedy selected television. Despite this enthusiasm for television, most Senators used more than one medium in their most recent campaign, 94 per cent employing radio advertising, 92 per cent newspaper advertising, 89 per cent television advertising, 83 per cent direct mail, 75 per cent billboards, 72 per cent distributed literature, 72 per cent posters, 64 per cent campaign buttons, 58 per cent mobile public address systems. Not a single Senator regarded either television or radio advertising as unimportant.

The following year Senator John Kennedy set forth his ideas on political television at greater length in a magazine article en-

titled "A Force That Has Changed the Political Scene." Appearing as it did in *TV Guide*, it perhaps escaped the attention of the more scholarly-minded, but it nevertheless remains an important document meriting close scrutiny. In this article Kennedy made the point that Woodrow Wilson experienced a breakdown during his cross-country tour while taking the League of Nations question to the people; in 1959, on the other hand, Dwight Eisenhower had only to go before the television cameras to obtain a nationwide audience for whatever issue he might want to discuss. Kennedy felt that the new medium did affect a candidate's image. Thus "the slick or bombastic orator, pounding the table and ringing the rafters, is not as welcome in the family living room as he was in the town square or party hall." Political office seekers, Kennedy noted prophetically, are frequently rather young today. The Massachusetts Senator, hardly at a loss for campaign funds, did stress that "The time has come when a solution must be found to this problem of TV costs," while he also warned against the invasion of political campaigns by public relations experts. "Political success on television," he bluntly stated, "is not, unfortunately, limited only to those who deserve it. It is a medium which lends itself to manipulative exploitation and gimmicks. It can be abused by demagogues, by appeal to emotion and prejudice and ignorance." Rarely has a national political figure offered such a hard-hitting assessment of this medium for public consumption.

That significant ties do exist between politics and television (as well as radio) was underscored by the Indiana Broadcasters' Association's "Conference on Hoosier Politics" held in Indianapolis on September 5-6, 1958. This apparently was the first meeting of its kind ever sponsored by a state radio-TV group. Aside from the speaker from Indiana, such prominent figures in the broadcasting field addressed the convention as Sig Mikelson of CBS, Sam Sharkey of NBC, John Secondari of ABC, and Vincent Wasilewski of the NAB. News conferences featuring the two Senatorial candidates, Democrat Vance Hartke and Republican Harold Handley, were filmed and recorded for distribution throughout the state, while a session on television included the discussion of such issues as tower heights, newsfilm exchange, editorializing, uniform time standards, and restricted access to news. So successful was the two-

day gathering that the Indiana Broadcasters' Association made tentative plans to hold one every two years during each off-year election.

Continuing our analysis of politics at the state level, one of the most comprehensive studies ever made of the role of television in an election was that by Cunningham and Walsh of the 1958 New York gubernatorial race between the incumbent, Democrat Averill Harriman, and the challenger, Republican Nelson Rockefeller. This involved a sample of 537 voters in four counties. Newspapers and television rated almost equal as sources of political information during this campaign, a tribute to the relatively high level of literacy among New York voters; radio was the most important source of information for the older ones. The consensus of those interviewed was that Rockefeller not only made a better impression on television than did Harriman, he also made a greater one. Here we have an example of saturation campaigning, as the challenger appeared on television almost twice as often and twice as long as the incumbent. However, it was the quality rather than the quantity of Rockefeller's appearances which apparently had the greatest impact on the voters. Voters' impressions of Rockefeller were almost universally favorable, 84 per cent to 5 per cent; 52 per cent praised his personality, 14 per cent his general impression, and 11 per cent his speaking. On the other hand, voters' impressions of Harriman were almost equally divided, 35 per cent pro, 33 per cent con. Eighteen per cent lauded his personality and 11 per cent his general impression, while 22 per cent criticized his speaking and 8 per cent his personality. Voters' impressions of Rockefeller tended to become more favorable during the campaign because of television, while for Harriman the reverse was true, even among those who eventually voted for him. Cunningham and Walsh did not go so far as to claim that television was responsible for Rockefeller's victory over Harriman, but one conjectures that it has been his television image as much as his record which has kept him Governor of New York to this day.

Five other state races where television played an important role during 1958 might be cited also. First, there was Minnesota, where Democrat Eugene McCarthy challenged incumbent Republican Edward Thye for his Senate seat. While McCarthy campaigned exten-

sively on television, Thye largely ignored it except for some one-minute spots; employing both the question and answer format and the panel show, the challenger defeated the incumbent to become the first popularly elected Catholic Senator in Minnesota history. As for Michigan, here the Republican candidate, Paul Bagwell, challenged the five-term Democratic Governor, G. Mennen Williams, to a debate. Bagwell did not win the election, but other relative political unknowns such as Grant Sawyer of Nevada and J. Howard Edmondson of Oklahoma (both Democrats) were successful in their gubernatorial races, thanks largely to television exposure. Finally, one might cite the telethon which Senator William Knowland of California employed several days before the election in his disastrous attempt to win the governorship of that state. In this case we have a poll taken four days after the program which enables us to measure its impact, if imperfectly. It was found that Republicans were twice as likely to watch the program as Democrats, although no less than 60 per cent of the sample tuned in the program by accident; the average Republican home not only watched the telethon longer than did the average Democratic home but also thought it more worthwhile, higher in quality, and more impressive generally. California, it would seem, has proved to be a graveyard for more than one political hopeful.

#### NOTES ON SOURCES

The first widely televised Presidential campaign, that of 1952, has been the subject of several monographs. Among these are Miami University, Department of Marketing, *The Influence of Television on the Election of 1952* and Charles A. H. Thomson, *Television and Presidential Politics: The Experience in 1952 and the Problems Ahead*. Unfortunately, no extensive study has ever been published on the role of television in the Eisenhower-Stevenson re-run of 1956. For 1960, Sidney Kraus, ed., *The Great Debates* and Paul T. David, ed., *The Presidential Election and Transition, 1960-1961* are invaluable, as is Milton E. Cummings, *The National Election of 1964*, for that year. Works dealing with both these elections are Bernard Rubin, *Political Television* and the two volumes by Theodore White, *The Making of the President*. Material on all four elections is scattered throughout the *New York Times*, but the examination of all of it is a task for only the most devoted scholar. There is some data on Franklin D. Roosevelt, Harry Truman, and Dwight Eisenhower's use of television in their unpublished Presidential papers, and the pertinent items appear in the bibliography of this volume; those of John Kennedy and Lyndon Johnson are not yet open to the public.

For the use of television politically prior to 1952, one must rely on scat-

tered data. There is perhaps more material in Samuel L. Becker and Elmer W. Lower, "Broadcasting in Presidential Campaigns" in the Kraus *Great Debate* book than elsewhere, but this, too, is fragmentary. Early assessments of political figures as television performers are found in Edwin H. James, "Is Your Candidate Telegenic" and "Telegenic Who's Who." One may discover information on Harry Truman and his administration in this connection in Charles E. Swanson, James Jenkins, and Robert L. Jones, "President Truman Speaks: A Study of Ideas vs. Media"; "Glamorous Cabinet"; Elmer Cornwell, *Presidential Leadership of Public Opinion*. Truman's Republican rival, Thomas Dewey, is analyzed in "Has a New Type of Political Campaign Arrived?" relative to his use of the telethon. A comprehensive survey of the 1950 election is "Politics: TV's Latest Feature." For the first political television "star," Estes Kefauver, consult Ivan Doig, "Kefauver versus Crime: Television Boosts a Senator" and Gerhart D. Wiebe, "Responses to the Televised Kefauver Hearings." As for political broadcasting in general, "How Stations Handle Politics—A National Survey" is of seminal importance; this study, conducted by Richard Mall beginning in September 1951, was the first of its kind.

The above-mentioned article by Becker and Lower is a convenient source for background information on the Presidential campaign of 1952. For the conventions, see the above-mentioned book by Thomson, as well as Emory S. Bogardus, "Television and the Political Conventions" and Kurt and Gladys Lang, "Television and the Intimate View of Politics." A representative study of the candidates is Jack Gould, "Candidates on TV—The Ideal and Others"; more comprehensive is Stanley Kelly, Jr., *Professional Public Relations and Political Power*, which analyzes Richard Nixon's "Checkers" speech, the television performances of political figures other than the Presidential and Vice-Presidential candidates, and the employment of various techniques and innovations televisionwise. One may read the "Checkers" speech for himself in Reo M. Christenson and Robert O. McWilliams, *Voice of the People: Readings in Public Opinion and Propaganda*. The rise and fall of interest in the campaign is traced in "Television and Politics: How They Mixed in 1952," campaign costs in Irving R. Merrill's doctoral dissertation on *Campaign Expenditures and Their Controls: A Study of Expenditures for Television Time in the 1952 Federal Election*.

One of the best studies of the general use of political television during the 1952 Presidential campaign is that of Angus Campbell, Gerald Gurin, and Warren E. Miller. This is discussed in Clarence Schetter, *Public Opinion in American Society*; Leo Bogart, *The Age of Television: A Study of Viewing Habits and the Impact of Television on American Life*; their own "Television and the Election." One might also consult two doctoral dissertations, Herbert R. Craig, *A Rhetorical Criticism of the Principal Network Speeches on the Issues of Corruption and Subversion in the 1952 Presidential Campaign*, and Ben C. Markland, *Evasiveness in Political Discussion Broadcasts during the 1952 Election Campaign*. Fascinating material on television set density per state and the national electoral vote pattern is contained in Bernard Rubin's book on *Political Television*. For specific states, see Herbert A. Simon and Frederick Stern, "The Effect of Television Upon Voting Behavior in Iowa in the 1952 Presidential Election"; Miami University, Department of Marketing, *The Influence of Television on the Election of 1952* (Ohio); Eugene Burdick and Arthur J. Brodbeck, eds., *American Voting Behavior* (California).

Dwight Eisenhower's use of television during his two terms as President is examined in Elmer Cornwell, *Presidential Leadership of Public Opinion*, and Samuel L. Becker, "Presidential Power: The Influence of Broadcasting." A convenient check list of "Ike's" telecasts is "Presidents on TV: Their Live Records." See for the McCarthy-Murrow controversy and the Army-McCarthy hearings of 1954, "Scorched Air: Murrow vs. Senator McCarthy"; Ivan Doig, "Did TV Camera Help Shatter McCarthy Image?" Warner Muensterberger and Sidney Alexrad, eds., *Psychoanalysis and the Social Sciences*. The campaign of Senator Paul Douglas of Illinois for re-election in 1954 is treated in the doctoral dissertation of Hubert V. Cordier, *Campaigning in Television: The Speaking of Senator Paul Douglas in the 1954 Campaign*, other campaigns elsewhere in the nation in Walter Goodman, "Television and Politics." There is data on the contemporary use of television by municipal governments in "Increasing Number of Cities Have Own TV Shows."

Early in 1956, Pulse, Inc. conducted a survey of television set owners in the metropolitan New York area relative to their attitudes on political questions. The findings are set forth in this organization's "How Viewers Vote: A Special Pulse Study Checks before and after Effects of TV on Attitudes toward Candidates." One might turn to Charles A. H. Thomson, *Television, Politics, and Public Policy* for Elmo Roper's study of the conventions, and to the above-mentioned Kraus book and Herman Land, "Television and the Elections" for the employment of various techniques and innovations television-wise. A pertinent doctoral dissertation is that of Herbert E. Knepprath, *The Elements of Persuasion in the Nationally Broadcast Speeches of Eisenhower and Stevenson during the 1956 Presidential Campaign*. For campaign costs see, in addition to the above-mentioned book by Bogart and the Thomson pamphlet cited in this paragraph, Alexander Heard, *The Costs of Democracy*. General studies of the impact of television politically are found in the Bogart book and Richard Salant, *The 1960 Campaign and Television* (the title of which is slightly misleading), an individual study of Wayne Morse's successful campaign for re-election in Duane E. Tucker, "Broadcasting in the 1956 Oregon Senatorial Campaign."

During the second Eisenhower Administration a leading television highlight was the 1957 Senate investigation into unethical labor practices. This is chronicled in Marya Mannes, "Dio ex Machina" and "Smash Hit on TV Sets." For Senatorial attitudes towards political television as of 1958, see "When a Senator Turns Salesman"; for those of John Kennedy in particular, consult "A Real Pro." Cunningham and Walsh, *Television and the Political Candidate*, treats Nelson Rockefeller's successful gubernatorial campaign of 1958 in New York; Wilbur Schramm and Richard E. Carter, "Effectiveness of a Political Telethon" details Senator William Knowland's unsuccessful try for the California governorship. There is data on the 1958 Indiana Broadcasters' Association "Conference on Hoosier Politics", the first meeting of its kind ever sponsored by a state radio-television group, in "Politics Spice Hoosier Meet."



## 3/Television and Politics: 1960-1967

### *Introduction*

As the West Virginia primary was the most generally significant primary in 1960, Catholic Senator John Kennedy triumphing over Protestant Senator Hubert Humphrey in an overwhelmingly Protestant state, so it also was the most important in terms of political television. Kennedy's appearances on this medium proved far more successful than Humphrey's. At the Republican convention it was Senator Barry Goldwater who stole the show; withdrawing his name from consideration as a Presidential candidate, Goldwater attracted national attention, just as Kennedy had four years earlier at the Democratic convention. On the other hand, such important events as the selection of Lyndon Johnson as the Democratic Vice-Presidential nominee and the Richard Nixon-Nelson Rockefeller meeting did not receive any television coverage at all. During the campaign proper, the Democratic Presidential candidate, John Kennedy, used television far more effectively than his Republican opponent, Richard Nixon. This was not true just of the first Great Debate on television. Nixon may have out-performed Kennedy in some of the later debates, but Kennedy's victory in the first apparently had a decisive impact on the election. As Stanley Kelley has pointed out, perhaps the most valuable feature of these widely analyzed debates was that they forced the candidates to deal in specifics. Michigan's little debates continued the debating movement at the state level. Nationally, by 1960 there had emerged in political television trends in the direction of a declining use of spokesmen in Presidential contests, a reduction in the mean length

of party telecasts, and an increasing use of innovations. Nevertheless, national committeemen of both parties were of the opinion that newspapers were the most important source of political information; they felt, moreover, that news and editorial coverage were equally or more important than political advertisements.

John Kennedy's televised press conferences were the backbone of his career as a Presidential television personality, despite his occasional reports to the nation. His crackdown on the steel companies occurred at one of the former. In his set speeches, JFK preferred to employ HST's "fire brigade" technique instead of FDR's "fireside chat." Kennedy's appointment of Newton Minow as Chairman of the Federal Communications Commission did a great deal to improve the quality of television. The Republican's answer to Kennedy on television, the "Ev and Charlie" show, won as much criticism as praise. At the state level the debating craze continued to mushroom, a number of candidates who refused to debate suffering defeat. Some of these confrontations proved quite stormy, such as the 1962 exchange between Edward Kennedy and George Cabot Lodge in Massachusetts, and William Scranton and Richardson Dilworth in Pennsylvania; in some states joint appearances took the place of debates. Proportionately, more was spent on political television in 1962 than in 1960, leaving the Presidential race out of consideration. Lyndon Johnson, who became President late in 1963, fared less well as a television performer than either Dwight Eisenhower or John Kennedy, nor was he as significant a television innovator. Despite this, he probably overexposed rather than underexposed himself on television. Television programs dealing with Congress during this period examined such topics as the Billie Sol Estes and Bobby Baker scandals, civil rights, the income tax, and medicare. The Porter study of 1963, like the Mall study of 1952, revealed significant differences between television and radio stations in such areas as network v. local programs, length of spots, donation of sustaining time, as well as in others.

In 1964 two candidates for the Presidential nomination, Lyndon Johnson and William Scranton, either once held or currently held stock in a television station, while Barry Goldwater was a ham radio operator. As for the primaries, Nelson Rockefeller outspent

Barry Goldwater ten to one on television time in attempting to win the California Presidential preference primary but still lost. The Republicans experienced a series of unfortunate television happenings—William Scranton's improvised non-candidacy address, the booing of Nelson Rockefeller at the convention, and Barry Goldwater's extremist speech there. At the Democratic convention severe flare-ups over civil rights and Robert Kennedy were avoided. Lyndon Johnson doubtless would have won anyway, but the national Republican television campaign left much to be desired. Spots proved more effective than speeches during this campaign, especially the hard-hitting Democratic ones; there was no debate between the Presidential contenders, Lyndon Johnson preferring to coast to victory. In at least one case—the controversial film *Choice*—the Republicans pulled their punches. There was less donated time for political television in 1964 than in 1960, thanks to the failure to suspend Section 315. Despite all the furor that televised computer predictions caused, their impact was obviously exaggerated; various attempts to restrict these through legislation, however, constituted a real threat to free speech.

The aftermath of the 1964 campaign witnessed the appearance of several in-depth studies dealing with political television. William Glaser pointed out that television was perhaps the most important medium in conveying reminders to vote, but that the different media have varied effects on the actual turnout since they reach different audiences. Elmo Roper, in contrast, found that most people regard television as the most politically neutral medium, and that it is the chief source of political information at the national level. Finally, in a study of the last three sets of conventions, A. C. Nielsen found that there had been a slight decrease in average viewing time, but that convention audiences had consistently been lowest in the Northeastern and Pacific Coast sections; the number of hours broadcast at Democratic conventions had steadily declined, while the number broadcast at Republican ones had steadily increased.

Democratic officeholders monopolized television during 1965, thanks to the lopsided majorities this party enjoyed at every level of government. Both Republicans (Nelson Rockefeller and Ronald Reagan) and Democrats (Milton Shapp) made effective use of

television during the 1966 campaign. Even more important, a larger proportion of money was spent for political spots on television during this year than ever before. Political expenditures for television surpassed those for the last off-year election, 1962, \$32 million to \$20 million, almost equalling the 1964 Presidential year total of \$34.6 million. An increasing concern over questionable broadcasting practices led the American Advertising Federation to draw up an "Advertising Code of American Politics," a code whose adoption has been unfortunately far from universal.

### *The 1960 Campaign*

By 1960 the American people had come to favor the conducting of political campaigns wholly via radio and television by a five-to-four margin. As the Republican nominating convention drew near, it became apparent that Vice-President Richard Nixon would be the Republican Presidential candidate, despite a strong challenge from New York Governor Nelson Rockefeller. Nixon, if anything, had been overexposed on television. In contrast, the Democratic nomination was up for grabs. Two-time Presidential candidate Adlai Stevenson had removed himself from the running but still remained a definite possibility; his two leading rivals were Senator John Kennedy of Massachusetts, whose attempt to obtain the Vice-Presidential nomination four years previously had caused quite a stir, and Senator Hubert Humphrey of Minnesota.

One curious precursor of the 1960 Presidential campaign was John G. Schneider's novel, *The Golden Kazoo*. This fictional work, in the words of Herman Land, "satirized the trend to agency use in politics by projected 1960 election campaigns, depicting them as nothing but standardized merchandising packages designed to sell Presidents, much as one would sell any TV-advertised product." Its hero was Henry Clay Adams who dramatically reversed his ebbing political fortunes by conducting a gigantic television giveaway program during which he promised to turn over the nation's farm surplus to the people. It may be difficult to identify Adams with an actual Presidential candidate in the sense that one might identify Orson Welles' movie character, Charles Foster Kane, with William Randolph Hearst, but there is no denying that advertising agencies

have come to play a crucial role in politics, especially its television phase.

Looking first at the primaries, John Kennedy's most important primary victory unquestionably came in heavily Protestant West Virginia, where he decisively defeated Hubert Humphrey in a contest marked by the use of television. As Harvey Wheeler has pointed out, "Humphrey has the disadvantage of looking like Cassius. He has a lean and hungry look. But Kennedy happens to look like a composite picture of all the good stereotypes television has created." Theodore White regards the address which the Massachusetts Senator made to the people of West Virginia on May 8 as "The finest TV broadcast I have ever heard any political candidate make." This thirty-minute effort paid special attention to the religious issue, Kennedy upholding the separation of church and state. On the other hand, the Humphrey telethon proved far less effective as there was no screening of questions. Thus one of the earliest calls was from a lady who loudly proclaimed: "You get out! You get out of West Virginia, Mr. Humphrey! You get out, you hear! You can't stand the Republicans getting ahead of you! Why don't you get out?" Equally upsetting was the interjection from some unknown source, "Clear the wires, please, clear the wires, this is an emergency." If anything, the telethon hurt Humphrey's image, and this was reflected in a paucity of votes for the Minnesota Senator when the final returns were in.

Not unexpectedly, the Democratic convention with its sharply contested Presidential nomination proved more exciting than its Republican counterpart. Nevertheless, the largest home audience (20 million homes) was attracted by Senator Eugene McCarthy's nominating speech for Adlai Stevenson, a first-rate effort, rather than by Presidential nominee John Kennedy's acceptance address. Charles Thomson has written in this connection that "The Democrats failed to get the most out of their convention broadcast audiences by failing to compress their convention proceedings and to run smoothly through their various routines, (but) they nevertheless presented to the faithful viewers more conflict than had been predicted over the Kennedy nomination." Of course, the most intriguing aspect of the Democratic convention—the selection of Senator Lyndon Johnson as the Vice-Presidential nominee—received

no inside television coverage. In fact, there still is no agreement as to what actually happened in this connection eight years after the convention.

There likewise was no inside television coverage of the meeting between Nelson Rockefeller and Richard Nixon at which these two leading contenders for the Republican Presidential nomination worked out a program for the Republican Party. It was, however, Senator Barry Goldwater's address to the Republican convention withholding his name from consideration as a Presidential possibility which stands as the real highlight of this gathering. In this address, Goldwater called for a future rallying of conservatives but also urged their support of the 1960 nominee as well. Predictably, the largest television audiences were the speeches of Dwight Eisenhower and Nixon, with the latter's acceptance speech not quite matching his Democratic opponent's in drawing power. One rating service came up with the unexpected finding that the percentage of the total potential audience who viewed the conventions and the amount of time spent by the average home in watching them fell off very slightly between 1956 and 1960. As the latter campaign was stormier than the previous one, this finding is difficult to explain.

So much attention has been paid to the Great Debates that the remainder of the 1960 campaign has been somewhat neglected. This is unfortunate, because not only did John Kennedy use television to his advantage during the Great Debates, but he also did so throughout his entire Presidential bid. Shortly after winning his party's nomination, the Massachusetts Senator approached J. Leonard Reinsch, executive director of the Cox stations, and invited him to become his television advisor. Significantly, Kennedy observed to Reinsch at the time that television might prove to be the decisive factor in the campaign; it was Reinsch who recommended acceptance of the projected series of television debates between Kennedy and Nixon. During the three-month campaign, Reinsch criss-crossed the nation with Kennedy, sometimes going on ahead to serve as the communications advance man. In contrast, Richard Nixon seemingly ignored the advice of his personal television advisor, Ted Rogers, and the equally imaginative Carroll Newton. Among other things, they suggested that Nixon should not face the camera directly and talk in his customary ad-lib, wide-roving manner; they

also proposed a series of programs, including "Khrushchev As I Know Him," "You and Your Family in 1960," two programs covering his campaigning, and a climactic telethon. Nixon, though, largely ignored his television advisors, continuing to speak on television in his old-fashioned manner and reverting to the telethon idea only at the last moment. Confronted with a number of creative ideas, Nixon hesitated to employ the proposed innovations, perhaps fearing that he would be accused of "Madison Avenue" campaigning.

Aside from the Kennedy debates, Republican officials who were asked agreed that Nixon's acceptance speech at the convention was his most "prominent and telling" effort. This, of course, constitutes a backhanded slap at his campaign for the Presidency following the convention. As for Kennedy, when many prominent Democrats were asked, they were of the opinion that the Massachusetts Senator reached his campaign peak when he answered the questions of clergymen regarding his views on religion and the Presidency. During the last twelve days of the campaign the Republicans unleashed an expensive television blitz featuring a Nixon rally, an Eisenhower speech, a joint Eisenhower-Nixon-Lodge program, a live Nixon show of fifteen-minutes duration every night of the last week, and a four-hour afternoon telethon the day before the election featuring the Vice-President. The latter was obviously designed to win the feminine vote. Many observers believe that Nixon "caught up" in the last weeks of the campaign; the only two half-hour political programs on television during the last two weeks of the campaign which clearly dominated the entertainment shows which they were up against were ones on which Nixon spoke. Significantly, President Dwight Eisenhower fared far worse as a television attraction than either Nixon or Kennedy, which leads one to challenge the common assumption that Nixon would have won had Eisenhower campaigned harder for him.

No episode in the history of political television has been the subject of more discussion than the Great Debates. Here we will attempt to set them in the context of political television in general, hopefully throwing some new light on them by bringing in some new comparisons and contrasts. It is a well-known fact that these debates were the first such encounters in American history; Abra-

ham Lincoln and Stephen A. Douglas were seeking a Senate seat, not the Presidency, at the time of their immortal debates in 1858. But as we have seen, the idea had been advanced—if only half-heartedly—during the Eisenhower-Stevenson contests. Thus it is not surprising that the former Illinois Governor wrote in March 1960 that “I would like to transform our circus-atmosphere Presidential campaign into a Great Debate conducted in full view of all the people.” On this occasion, of course, the incumbent was not a candidate, and thus there would be less danger that state secrets might be blurted out during the heat of a debate.

CBS was the first television network to indicate an interest in the proposed debates, the *Christian Science Monitor* the first newspaper to give its editorial endorsement to them. Both of these events occurred in February. In April, Robert Sarnoff of NBC announced, “Beginning eight weeks before Election Day, NBC will enable the Democratic and Republican nominees for President to appear together side-by-side before the American television audience in regular weekly sessions. The vehicle for these historic appearances will be ‘Meet the Press,’ television’s oldest news interview series. We propose to expand it to a full hour.” But whatever the format might be, there was far more enthusiasm in the Kennedy than in the Nixon camp; the professional politicians in the latter opposed the debates, arguing that they would inevitably give Kennedy needed publicity, while Nixon’s public relations men insisted that he debate. It is not known whether it was his past television successes, such as the Checkers speech, or his downgrading of Kennedy as a television performer which eventually led the Vice-President to consent to the debates, but almost every authority is in agreement that the decision probably cost him the election.

The four debates were held on September 26, October 7, October 13, and October 21, 1960. It will be noted that they did not begin until nearly halfway through the campaign, a point by which most voters had at least in theory made up their minds for whom they were going to vote. Figures estimating the number of viewers who watched each debate vary somewhat, with the television industry totals being somewhat higher than those of the political pollsters. According to the American Research Bureau, the number of viewers for each debate was as follows: number one, 75 million;

number two, 61 million; number three, 70 million; number four, 63 million. On the other hand, the Nielsen Index estimated the total number of homes watching to be: number one, 26.9 million; number two, 24 million; number three, 24.9 million; number four, 24.2 million. The one point of agreement is that the first debate drew the largest audience, and it was during this debate that John Kennedy attracted the most voters to support his candidacy. As a whole, the television audiences during the four debates never fell below 50 per cent of the nation's adult population. The debates were also carried on the radio; as we have pointed out in the chapter on radio and politics, Nixon fared better here than did Kennedy.

Returning to the first debate, it is tragic that Richard Nixon apparently made an unfavorable impression on a number of viewers not because of what he said or did not say but because he looked tense, haggard, and anxious. Had the debate been strictly on radio, this would not have been the case. John Kennedy spoke first, followed by Nixon; a question and answer session took up the remainder of the program. Kennedy set the pace by asserting that the country was not moving ahead rapidly enough, a charge which Nixon denied, defending the record of the Eisenhower Administration against that of the Truman Administration. During the question and answer period, Kennedy was forced to confront an inquiry as to whether he was immature, while Nixon was forced to confront the even more embarrassing one of what proposals he had made that the Eisenhower Administration had adopted. Lang and Lang found that 89 per cent of those who watched or heard the first debate thought that Kennedy had outshone Nixon or at least fought him to a draw; Charles Thomson thus concludes that the first debate was the turning point in the campaign and that it won the election for Kennedy. His image as an unbeatable television debater shattered, Nixon saw his 47 to 46 per cent lead over Kennedy in a national Gallup poll prior to the first debate give way to a Kennedy lead of 49 to 46 per cent following it. Nixon may have narrowed the gap between then and the election but he never completely closed it.

By the time of the second debate, Nixon was back in top form again, effectively debating Kennedy on a series of issues including

the Cuban problem, the U-2 incident, and the Quemoy-Matsu controversy. According to a press room survey immediately following this debate, eleven newsmen thought that Nixon had won, five felt that Kennedy had won, and eleven opined that it had been a draw. The third debate saw Nixon speaking from Los Angeles and Kennedy from New York, foreign policy again being a major consideration, but such domestic issues as the role of labor unions and a tax depletion allowance also arose. Most authorities agree that this was the most boring debate; Albert Sindlinger found that "38 per cent of those who watched or listened . . . tuned out while the two men were on the air." Perhaps the most interesting exchange came when former President Harry Truman's use of profanity was discussed. Kennedy asserted that Mr. Truman was not going to change his vocabulary at the age of 76, regardless of what he might say, while Nixon sanctimoniously observed that a President or former President "has an obligation not to lose his temper in public." (The Vice-President later ignored his own advice in the aftermath of his defeat for the governorship of California in 1962.) The fourth debate returned to the format of the first, but by this time the issues had been hashed over to the point that this was perhaps the least enlightening debate. Another factor was the rather inept questioning. Proposals for a fifth debate early in November were advanced as early as the second debate, but this scheme eventually collapsed amidst charges and countercharges of bad faith by both candidates.

Examining the Great Debates from a more sophisticated point of view, Stanley Kelley has observed that "The specificity with which Kennedy described what he would do about various problems in the debates contrasted sharply with his discussion of programs in his speeches," while "Nixon's speeches spelled out his programs in somewhat more precise terms than did his rival." If this generalization is true, then debates between rival Presidential candidates do indeed inform the electorate, despite the tendency of some viewers and listeners to focus on images rather than issues. In analyzing the logic employed during the Great Debates, Edwin S. Schneidman found that "Kennedy's logical style is meandering and loose-knit and tends to be top-heavy and impulsive," while "Nixon's logical style is cohesive, balanced and univocal." On the other hand,

in pinpointing unequivocation in the Great Debates, Larry Samovar discovered that one or both candidates treated ambiguously such issues as farm policy, civil rights, Quemoy and Matsu, and United States prestige. In other words, one might assign more than one meaning to their remarks.

In assessing the political impact of the Great Debates as a whole, those who have examined this subject in depth are in almost total agreement that they increased political interest among voters. According to one public opinion poll, the percentage of those "very much interested" in the campaign rose from 45 per cent before the debates to 57 per cent after it. Elmo Roper is of the opinion that 6 per cent of the voters (over four million) made their decision on the basis of the first debate alone, of which 72 per cent voted for Kennedy, while the *New York Times* declared that the debates were "the really decisive factor" in the election. Challenging Roper's claim, John McLaughlin charged that Roper projected 180 responses out of a total of 3,000 into 4 million votes nationally, adding that "It is one thing to say that the debates 'made the voters decide' and quite another to say that the voters cast their ballots 'on the basis of these debates *alone*.' Lang and Lang likewise detected an increase in voter support for Kennedy after the first debate, but their study also indicated that this had come more from undecided voters than from Nixon supporters. Significantly, prior to the debates only a small majority of the Kennedy supporters thought that he would out-debate Nixon. The Gallup Poll discovered that the "Regular Democrats were slightly more impressed by Kennedy's performance than the Regular Republicans were by Nixon's, but among the 'waverers' Kennedy picked up 16 per cent support during the debate, while Nixon gained only 4 per cent." This finding is reinforced by a Sindlinger survey of voter opinion as to who would win the election conducted on the day after each debate; Nixon did not lose, but Kennedy gained after the first debate.

Let us now examine some more localized studies. First, one might cite the study conducted by Bradley Greenberg and Fred Silverman of the Mass Communication Research Center at Wisconsin involving a sample of 200 women residents of a university housing unit. Following the first debate, judgments on Kennedy as

a television personality were significantly more positive, while judgments on Nixon were significantly more negative. The findings vis-à-vis the two as Presidential figures were similar but not quite so consistent. Turning to the South, a sampling of white and Negro sentiment in Tallahassee, Florida, between the last debate and the election revealed that the debates played an extremely important role in the decisions of one registered voter out of eight. Russell Middleton was in charge of this survey. As for the West Coast, Richard F. Carter and the Institute for Communication Research of Stanford University conducted a survey among 60 Republicans and 60 Democrats in four neighboring California cities. It was found that the Republicans liked the third and fourth debates the most, the Democrats the second and fourth; ironically, the first debate—which may have won the Presidency for Kennedy—ranked a poor third among Democrats. The most frequent suggestions for future debates among members of both parties were (1) make them longer; (2) eliminate the interviewers; (3) limit each debate to one topic.

Several mid-Western states were the site of more than one study, including Michigan. In the Lansing-East Lansing area, for example, 170 registered voters were interviewed before and after the September 26 debate. The most striking conclusion reached was that those who most avoided the debates were lower class Protestants who thought that religion was the most important issue in the campaign. Apparently, many were so prejudiced that they refused to expose themselves to Kennedy, even though Nixon was appearing on the same program. A somewhat different approach was used by Paul J. Deutschmann in interviewing a sample of telephone households in Lansing and East Lansing, Michigan. Deutschmann discovered that political attitudes were far more likely to change as a result of exposure to the mass media, while they were more likely to hold constant following conversation; this conclusion seems quite reasonable, as many people refuse to let another individual change their minds, yet are far more flexible when confronted with a television program.

Like Lansing and East Lansing, Indianapolis, Indiana, was the site of more than one study. Here Sidney Kraus and Raymond Smith sampled two hundred telephone households in an attempt

to link issues with images. Kraus and Smith found that "Catholicism, Federal Aid to Education, and the United Nations were issues associated with the Democrats' image of Kennedy. For Republicans, the Taft-Hartley Labor Law, Our Military Preparedness, and the United Nations were linked to the image of Nixon." Those issues towards which Republicans and Democrats had similar attitudes were Our Military Preparedness, the United Nations, Civil Rights for Negroes, and Runaway Inflation. On the other hand, Mehling, Kraus, and Yoakam, after surveying 140 Indianapolis citizens, concluded that "Television viewing, in both time and subject matter, appears to be a better prediction of campaign interest than is time spent reading the daily newspaper or the newspaper items read—with the exception of editorials." These three students of the mass media also discovered that Catholic Republicans watched the Great Debates less than Catholic Democrats.

In the case of neighboring Illinois, one project was conducted in Chicago, the other downstate. The study in the Chicago area was undertaken by the psychological and market research firm of Creative Research Associates Incorporated. Here Saul Ben-Zeiv and Irving White found that during the debates Kennedy gained public support steadily and continuously, while Nixon lost support initially which he never was able to recoup; public opinion in the Chicago area favored Kennedy by 64 to 36 per cent following the fourth debate, while on Election Day the actual vote distribution was 66 to 34 per cent. The downstate study, that of John Rider, was based upon personal interviews, telephone calls, and a self-administered questionnaire in the town of Charleston. Rider found that the Great Debates were only of "nominal interest" to its citizenry; there was great interest at the time of the first debate, a decline of interest at the time of the second and third debates, and a revival of interest for the final debate. In general there was a direct correlation between both the educational level and the "media activity" of those interviewed and their interest and knowledge of the debates. The Great Debates apparently changed few votes in Charleston, but they did result in more people seeing the opposing candidate in a better light; consequently Rider concluded that "The Great Debates had a 'phenomenistic' rather than a 'hypodermic'

effect." Relating television to politics in general, Rider suggested that, by themselves, television programs are less effective in changing opinion than when used in conjunction with print media, especially when controversial issues are at stake. The latter, in his opinion, serve as an interpretive agent for the impressions received from television.

Reactions to the Great Debates might be cited ad infinitum. Edward W. Barrett has summed up both the positive and negative opinions neatly in his observation that "they were not really debates, that they were not great, but that they were historic, bold and, on balance, beneficial." After the first debate Kennedy stated that he thought that the exchange had been "useful," while Nixon observed that it had been a "good sharp exchange." Turning to newspaper reaction, the *New York Herald Tribune* noted that neither candidate "could resist opening a can of corn here and there," while the *New York Times* declared that "They offered an, at times, interesting but at no times inspiring picture of two capable young efficiency experts proposing to oil up the same machine—with different quantity and grades of oil." Significantly, many papers complained that the debates were not heated enough. A highly critical appraisal by an unnamed but "high ranking diplomat and political leader of a friendly nation," which appeared in *U. S. News and World Report*, evaluated the debates as "wrong and dangerous," charging that: (1) they did not give a true picture of the men; (2) the answers were short and often misleading; (3) the candidates showed no humor; (4) the wrong things were talked about. There is, of course, considerable truth in each of these adverse judgments.

In terms of the popular vote, the 1960 Presidential election was the most closely contested race in American history. Kennedy's margin of victory was only 100,000 votes out of 68.3 million cast; actually he only won a plurality of the popular votes, as there were third party candidates in the field who polled a number of votes. The standing in the electoral college was not so close, 303 to 219, with 15 votes going to Senator Harry Byrd of Virginia. Costwise, this was obviously the most expensive campaign in American history. No less than \$14.2 million was spent between September 1 and Election Day by political parties and candidates for political

broadcasting at all levels, the Republican share being \$7.6 million and the Democratic portion \$6.2 million. In contrast, the comparable total in 1956 was only \$9.8 million. Despite this heavy outlay for television in 1960, the Democrats reportedly reduced their paid prime network time schedule from seven hours to two and a half hours after October 1, while on September 14, Republican National Chairman Thruston Morton reported a lack of funds with which to put on a scheduled Nixon telecast.

Examining finances in broader perspective, *Sponsor* estimated in November 1960 that the net cost to the television stations and networks for convention, debate, and campaign coverage was approximately \$20 million. This figure breaks down as follows: conventions, \$9 million; debates, \$2 million; special programs, \$1.5 million; election night, \$1 million; spots, \$6.5 million. This total, moreover, does not include the net loss in paid political advertising funds incurred during the campaign. Thus many network and station executives place the total as high as \$30 million, an indication that the first figure is a conservative rather than a liberal estimate. Those who accuse television executives of being coldly indifferent to the public interest in their search for increased profits might also take into consideration the fact that the industry's fight to suspend Section 315 in 1960, which succeeded, resulted in a decrease in expenditures by both the Republicans and the Democrats for their spots and programs compared to 1952 and 1956. During 1960 television stations and networks gave more free time than ever before.

At this point in the narrative we might insert some comparative data on certain trends in the use of television in Presidential campaigns. First of all, Presidential and Vice-Presidential candidates and the incumbent President came increasingly to monopolize the longer telecasts; in 1952 they accounted for 73 per cent of the time, in 1956, 90 per cent, and in 1960, 88 per cent. Secondly, the mean length of party telecasts declined radically, from 29 minutes in 1952, to 13 minutes in 1956, to 14 minutes in 1960. This phenomenon is partly attributable to the increased use of five-minute trailers. In the third place, the later television campaigns tended to employ more innovations than did the earlier ones, including visual aids, film clips, panel discussions, interviews, entertainment,

telethons, and press conferences. We have already touched on many of these during the course of our chronological survey, although their increasing significance may have been partially lost in the shuffle.

As for the mass media in general and their use in the 1960 campaign, Rulon Bradley, in preparing a full-length study of this topic, surveyed the opinions of Democratic and Republican national committeemen, editors of major daily newspapers, television news directors, radio news directors, television and radio network newsmen, and magazine editors. One of Bradley's most interesting findings was that the national committeemen regarded newspapers as the most important source of political information on which voters based their election choices; this conclusion was reached despite the numerous polls showing television to be the most important source of political information in the eyes of the voting public. It was generally agreed, however, that personal appearances have become of lesser importance since the advent of television. Not surprisingly, in light of Richard Nixon's defeat, most of the Republican national committeemen thought that the Great Debates should not become a permanent institution, but there also was widespread anti-debate sentiment among the Democratic national committeemen as well. There was a widespread divergence of opinion among committeemen of both parties as to what factor (television, etc.) was responsible for the increase in the popular vote over 1956. Bradley's sample also tended to feel that paid political advertisements were less influential in shaping the voter's choices than are news and editorial coverage; moreover, "the average American is less likely to be influenced by regular news coverage than he is by columnists and commentators." One sees why Senator Barry Goldwater was as concerned about his treatment at the hands of television newscasters as he was about what the Democrats thought of him.

Of all the state races in which television played an important role in 1960, perhaps those for a Senatorial seat and the governorship of Michigan have the most relevance, since in both cases there were debates between the major candidates. The individuals involved here were incumbent Democratic Senator Pat McNamara and his Republican opponent, Congressman Alvin Bentley, and

gubernatorial nominees Democrat John Swainson and Republican Paul Bagwell. The Senatorial debate took place on October 12, the gubernatorial ones on October 20 and 27; in the election both Democratic candidates were successful. Although the McNamara-Bentley debates largely followed the pattern of the Kennedy-Nixon encounter, the Swainson-Bagwell ones abandoned the time limit on the candidate's reply to a newsman's question, narrowed the discussion during the second debate to Michigan's fiscal policy, and allowed the candidates to ask each other questions instead of relying on the newsmen. It was generally felt that the second gubernatorial debate was the best.

A somewhat different pattern unfolded in Iowa, where Democratic Governor Herschel Loveless rejected Republican Senatorial nominee Jack Miller's challenge for a televised debate. Miller, who eventually won the election, then presented a series of solo telecasts in which he "debated" against an empty chair representing Loveless. On the other hand, in Utah the polls showed Democratic gubernatorial contender William Barlock leading the Republican incumbent George Clyde prior to an encounter between the two over educational station KUED early in the campaign. Clyde, who won this debate in the eyes of most observers, then attacked his reluctant-to-debate-again opponent with newspaper ads ("What Are You Dodging, Mr. Barlock?"), going on to victory in the general election.

By 1960, television coverage of state and local government had become commonplace. KYW-TV of Cleveland, Ohio, for example, telecast the year's first city council meeting, one featuring a battle over the election of a council president; on the other hand, WHAS-TV of Louisville, Kentucky, presented twelve programs covering that year's session of the state legislature in a series entitled, "Eye on Frankfort." In New York City, Mayor Robert Wagner was appearing regularly on WNBC-TV's "Direct Line," giving on-the-spot answers to questions phoned in by viewers, while in Lexington, Kentucky, the mayor was acting as a program moderator on a series presented over WKYT, with various city department heads participating from time to time. More acrimonious was the series, "The Mayor Reports" over WGR-TV of Buffalo, New York. Here Mayor Frank A. Sedita engaged in a heated exchange with the

local afternoon newspaper over alleged corruption in the Buffalo police department. At the state level, Ohio Governor Michael Di Salle was seen in a once-a-month report over WLW-TV in Cincinnati, while Governor Edmund Brown of California presented his views on capital punishment and Governor G. Mennen Williams of Michigan offered his plan for revising state taxes over stations in those states. More regional in scope was the series, "Your Senators Report," presented by WGN-TV of Chicago, Illinois; on these broadcasts various Midwestern legislators regularly discussed major bills currently before Congress.

### *The Kennedy-Johnson Administration*

Television analysts have probably devoted more space to analyzing our youngest elected President's press conferences than to any other aspect of his video activities. Because of their impact this emphasis is quite justified. According to a survey conducted in 1962, 8.6 per cent of the interviewees had witnessed one of these, 18 per cent 2, 18.4 per cent 3, 16.4 per cent 4, 10 per cent 5, and the remainder 6 or more. This wide exposure is not surprising, since Kennedy took part in no less than 63 televised gatherings of this nature. Of those interviewed, 90.6 per cent replied that they favored the televising of Presidential press conferences; 7.4 per cent preferred them to be shown during the daytime, 37.6 per cent during the early evening, and 38.8 per cent during the late evening. Kennedy, who was the first President to allow his press conferences to be broadcast live, adopted a policy of opening each broadcast with a prepared statement and then answering questions from reporters. Significantly, 66 per cent of the sample were of the opinion that Kennedy was easier to understand on television than former President Dwight Eisenhower had been. Tom Wicker has observed that "Ike" conveyed the impression of "calm, fatherly competence," Kennedy being "the keen executive of the computer generation." In comparing the length of the questions asked at Franklin Roosevelt's press conferences with those at Kennedy's, it was discovered that the former averaged 14 words, while the latter averaged 50 words, 53 by a later count; this tends to indicate that Presidents are being confronted with more sophisticated, com-

plex inquiries today than previously. Nevertheless, there is evidence that Kennedy avoided press conferences during times of crisis, such as his 1961 Vienna meeting with Nikita Khrushchev and the 1962 Cuban missile crisis.

One of the best examples that one might cite of John Kennedy using television to attain political objectives was his crackdown on the steel companies in April 1962 when they attempted to raise steel prices. In the five-minute opening statement of his press conference of April 11, telecast live, Kennedy unleashed his polemic against a "tiny handful of steel executives." These remarks, of course, were printed in full in many newspapers the following day, but they were also heard and seen instantaneously on a maximum of 13 million television sets by a maximum of 35 million people free of editorial comment. Within twenty-four hours the steel companies had capitulated to Kennedy. Had it not been for the direct blast at them on this telecast, it is far less certain that they would have backed down.

The Republican answer to Kennedy on television was the "Ev and Charlie Show," a term applied—in some quarters sarcastically—to the weekly press conference held by the House Minority Leader, Charles Halleck of Indiana, and the Senate Majority Leader, Everett Dirksen of Illinois. While some viewers waxed enthusiastic over the efforts of the two, in particular Dirksen, a critic described them as "that old ruin of a Shakespearean actor and W. C. Fields." Unlike the Great Debates of 1960, the "Ev and Charlie Show" mixed humor in with the facts in generous proportions. Thus Dirksen once commented, "I thoroughly approve of the President's playing golf. . . . I want him to tee off on Khrushchev whenever it is necessary," while Halleck once observed, "As far as I'm concerned, I think we've been having too much government by leak. The only trouble is too many of these leaks are real blowouts. . . ." Since that time Gerald Ford of Michigan has replaced Halleck, but Everett Dirksen is still going strong. As Jack Gould has written, "His style may be hopelessly out of date, but when those words come pouring out in measured cadence, there is no confusion over the identity of the actor."

In terms of television, John Kennedy's most important political appointment was that of Newton Minow, an old associate of Adlai

Stevenson, as chairman of the Federal Communication Commission. It was Minow who made the headlined remark about television, "I can assure you that you will observe a vast wasteland." During the next two years, Minow obtained laws requiring that new television sets provide for channels in the ultra-high frequency range, and the appropriation of money with which to finance federal aid to educational television. Minow also encouraged broadcast editorializing. When Minow resigned in 1963, his place was taken by E. William Henry, a protégé of Robert Kennedy. The Attorney General, incidentally, showed a special concern for the quality of children's programs.

An interesting project which was never carried out involved a television exchange between Kennedy and Nikita Khrushchev. According to an agreement reached early in 1962, each was to make a film without limitation as to subject matter. Kennedy's script, which Arthur Schlesinger, Jr. wrote, set forth the American position on disarmament, wars of liberation, and similar issues, emphasizing the American desire for peace and for the friendship of the Soviet people. Khrushchev, though, backed out on the grounds that he had been offended by the President's address a few days previously, announcing that we would be resuming full-scale nuclear tests. Actually, Khrushchev left the door open for a later television exchange, but this was never held.

On November 22, 1963, John Kennedy was assassinated. Reviewing the political use of television throughout his Presidency, one must point out that aside from the innovation of the live, televised press conference, he made nine televised reports to the nation from the White House in a little less than three years. As Franklin Roosevelt made approximately twenty-eight fireside chats over the radio in twelve years, it is apparent that our martyred President took his case to the American people even more frequently than did FDR. Since the time of Theodore Roosevelt we have had no greater Presidential stylists than Roosevelt and JFK, and it is only appropriate that each would become master of the newest medium of his day. Still, one must add that John Kennedy favored the Truman "fire brigade" set television speech rather than the broad policy review effort which FDR favored. The subjects of his nine video efforts were his return from Europe and the Berlin crisis (1961),

nuclear tests and disarmament, the national economy, integration in Mississippi, Soviet missiles in Cuba (1962), integration in Alabama, the test ban treaty, and tax legislation (1963). On each occasion, be it noted, JFK dealt with a single subject or policy area.

At the state level, television continued to exert a decisive influence on many elections during the early 1960's. In 1961, for example, the Republican candidate for governor of New Jersey, former Secretary of Labor James Mitchell, refused to debate his Democratic challenger, Richard Hughes, not because he felt inferior to Hughes as a debater but because he did not want to give Hughes this free exposure. Like Nixon who did debate, Mitchell, who did not debate, lost. A similar situation occurred in Los Angeles, where the incumbent, two-term Republican Mayor Norris Poulson also refused to debate his challenger, the maverick Democratic Congressman Sam Yorty. Faced with this rebuff, Yorty exposed himself on television in every possible way, coming in second in the primary and edging Poulson in the general election. According to one authority, 20 per cent of the voters remained undecided up to the last week, but 70 per cent of these eventually voted for Yorty. The main reason was that on television Poulson had appeared nervous, uncertain, evasive, and "looking as if he had something to hide," while Yorty seemed direct, forthright, dynamic, and "looked you right in the eye and answered straight out."

The 1961 campaign also witnessed a debate between New York City Mayor Robert Wagner and his Republican challenger, New York State Attorney General Louis Lefkowitz, over WPIX-TV and three radio stations on October 10. Lefkowitz had desired additional debates, but Wagner had refused to consent to more than one. Not only was the format of the Kennedy-Nixon debates followed closely during this hour-long program, but some of the same furniture and podiums were also employed. Perhaps more consequential than the actual debate was the controversy over whether radio stations in the area should have the right to carry excerpts from such a program without the prior permission of the originating station and the participants. Both WMCA and WNEW later admitted that they had used recorded excerpts from the program; the original "ground rules" for the debate were eventually modified to permit the rebroadcasting of "complete sequences"

which contained a question, an answer, and a rebuttal. Significantly, the Wagner-Lefkowitz encounter received a Nielsen rating of 8.1 per cent (1.3 million homes), approximately double the rating for the programs usually presented at that time.

Likewise, the elections held the following year, 1962, were noteworthy in that many centered around the dilemma of debate or not debate. Perhaps the most dramatic took place in Massachusetts, where Edward McCormack, nephew of the Speaker of the House of Representatives, debated his rival for the Democratic Senatorial nomination, Edward "Ted" Kennedy. McCormack's bitter attack on Kennedy backfired; the latter won not only the primary but also the general election, triumphing over George Cabot Lodge, son of former Senator Henry Cabot Lodge. Again there were televised debates in Michigan, where Republican George Romney successfully challenged the incumbent Democrat, John Swainson, for the gubernatorial office, as well as in Pennsylvania, where Republican William Scranton defeated Democrat Richardson Dilworth for the governorship. More elaborate was the television schedule in Connecticut; here debates were held featuring the rivals for six Congressional seats, a Senate seat, and the chief executiveship. There were no debates in either New York or California, but in both instances the two major party candidates (Nelson Rockefeller and Robert Morgenthau, Richard Nixon and Edmund "Pat" Brown) took part in "joint appearances" on television. The number of confrontations between the candidates ranged from a single one to the forty-seven between the two candidates for Superintendent of Public Education in California, Ralph Richardson and victor Max Rafferty. While there may be some question as to which debate was the most significant, unquestionably the nastiest was the Scranton-Dilworth collision in Pennsylvania, where a barbed, on-camera exchange degenerated into a shouting match offstage.

For purposes of comparison one might examine those races where the candidates refused to debate or to make a so-called "joint appearance." In Arizona the venerable Democratic Senator Carl Hayden—a fixture in Congress since statehood—turned down a challenge to debate his opponent with the comment, "I never acknowledge that an opponent even exists," while in Illinois, Repub-

lican Senator Everett Dirksen likewise refused to debate his challenger. Both incumbents were victorious, as was Democratic Senator Frank Lausche in Ohio, whose little-known challenger created a synthetic debate on film by splicing his own arguments between clips of Lausche speaking. Two Ohio stations refused to carry this. On the other hand, in Pennsylvania, Democratic Senator Joseph Clark, running for re-election against Republican Representative James Van Zandt, futilely challenged the latter but was still victorious at the polls. One incumbent Senator who refused to debate and lost was the aging Republican Alexander Wiley of Wisconsin, who went down to defeat on Election Day at the hands of the Democratic Governor, Gaylord Nelson. Unfortunately, in some contests the reluctance or refusal of one candidate to debate caused the campaign to degenerate into a discussion of debates rather than issues.

According to a survey conducted by the Federal Communications Commission, political parties and candidates spent over 20 million dollars for broadcasting in 1962 during the primary and general election campaigns. Of this sum, approximately 12 million dollars was spent during the general election, 8 million dollars during the primaries; expenditures for both parties were about equal during the former, but the Democrats outspent the Republicans by a four to one margin during the latter, thanks largely to numerous intraparty contests in the South. Third party expenditures totalled 700 thousand dollars for the primary and general election campaigns combined. Making a comparative analysis, the total of 12 million dollars expended for political broadcasting during the general election period in 1962 compares very favorably with the 14.6 million employed for this purpose in 1960, if one omits the 3 million dollars spent on network broadcasts by Presidential candidates and their spokesmen in 1960—an expense which had no counterpart in 1962. As the FCC did not survey radio and television expenditures for the primaries in 1960, no comparative data is available against which to match the data for 1962 in this area.

One of the most important developments of the 1962 campaign was the application of the Vote Profile Analysis created by Louis Harris, IBM, and CBS, to thirteen races in eight states. The purpose of the VPA is to predict the outcome of an election before all

the returns are in on the basis of a sampling of representative precincts. In the words of Milton E. Cummings, "It rests upon the assumption that 'people tend to vote in patterns by groups,' that precincts can be found to represent political components, and that a 'recipe' can be constructed to reflect the overall mix of voting groups within a state." In 1962, VPA correctly picked George Romney over John Swainson in the Michigan gubernatorial race at a time when Swainson was leading by 75,000 votes; it also forecast the winner of a Kentucky race one minute after the last polls closed. Two years later, in the California Presidential preference primary, such predicting techniques were to cause a furor when the machine affirmed the triumph of Barry Goldwater over Nelson Rockefeller even before all the polls had closed.

As was the case in 1961, there were only a handful of elections in 1963. In an incident bringing to mind Senator Arthur Vandenberg's "debate" with a phonograph recording of FDR's voice in 1936, the Fair Campaign Practices Committee pointed to the Republican use of a doctored television tape recording of a Presidential news conference during the 1963 Kentucky gubernatorial campaign, observing, "Convincing and seemingly real, this blatant distortion shows the deceit that is possible with contemporary technology." The Republicans eventually withdrew this film, but not before many stations had carried it; it gave the impression that John Kennedy favored racial mixing by deleting the first twelve lines of a civil rights comment and placing the last three lines, uttered many minutes earlier, after the opening statement of the press conference. The result was "Good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen. (Deleted material.) I would say that over the long run we are going to have a mix. This will be true racially, socially, ethnically, geographically. That's really the best way." On this occasion the Republican gubernatorial nominee, Louie Nunn, lost the election by a narrow margin, but four years later he successfully introduced the Vietnam issue into the campaign and became the first Republican chief executive of his state since early in World War II.

Despite its universal use today in state election campaigns, television remains a stranger to the legislative chambers. When sessions of the Oklahoma legislature were telecast in 1951, this inno-

vation was greeted with considerable disapproval. One of the state's leading dailies editorialized that the legislature wouldn't attract large audiences until it was decided who the heroes and villains were; one House member observed that it was the silliest thing that he had ever heard of, adding that "One man can get up and make a fool of himself, and the people back home would think we were all that way." Twelve years later, in 1963, a debate in the Missouri House of Representatives over a proposed sales tax increase was broadcast, but in neighboring Kansas live radio and television coverage of a debate over making the University of Wichita a part of the state college system was vetoed by the speaker after he had granted permission because of some legislators' objections.

Returning to the national scene, on Thanksgiving Day, 1963, Lyndon Johnson made his first televised address as chief executive. Like his predecessor, Johnson appeared frequently on television—perhaps to the point of overexposure—but with less success. Compared with Kennedy, Johnson projected a less appealing physical image, and his slow drawl did not compare favorably with Kennedy's lightning responses. This in no way implies that Johnson's record as President was inferior to Kennedy's, or that he was any less capable of handling the Presidential office. But whatever effectiveness he once had as a television performer largely evaporated. In the words of Bernard Rubin, "The audience cannot separate a critical address from one that merely *sounds* critical, because he is on their screens so often." In this connection Johnson might have taken a lesson from those prominent figures in the entertainment field who have gone off television because the public tired of regularly viewing them. Fortunately for Johnson, his opponent in the 1964 Presidential race struck fear in the hearts of many people, so that his shortcomings as a television performer did not hurt him much.

During his first full year as President following his election in 1964, Lyndon Johnson appeared live on television more often than John Kennedy had in the three years that he had been chief executive, and during his first two years as President more frequently than Dwight Eisenhower had in the eight years that he had been chief executive. Aside from his State of the Union messages and

news conferences, the topics of his addresses in the foreign relations area included the war in Vietnam and the crisis in the Dominican Republic, as well as the Alliance for Progress; domestically he stressed the achievements of the astronauts and the space program, and the related subjects of Governor George Wallace, civil rights, the Ku Klux Klan, and voting restrictions. Significantly, LBJ appeared live on television more frequently during the year following his election than he had during the year in which he served out John Kennedy's term, a somewhat curious record in that during his second full year in office he was not actively courting the support of the electorate, as he had been during his first.

Nevertheless, LBJ had his moments as a television performer. On April 23, 1964 he made an announcement of the settling of the protracted railroad work rules dispute less than a half-hour after he had received word that an agreement had been reached. Doubtless it has been such moments as these which, later that year, led William S. White to express the judgment that "Today there is no more effective man on television, just as today there is no more purely 'American' figure. Johnson in a fighting mood on TV comes through with the spare, clean-cut, laconic virility of a Gary Cooper at High Noon." Yet, White also admitted that "there was between his highly individualistic, private personality and the great, glowing and highly impersonal personality of TV no real oneness."

His shortcomings as a television performer aside, Lyndon Johnson's contributions to the evolution of political television have been of decidedly minor importance. As innovators, both Dwight Eisenhower and John Kennedy far surpassed him. Johnson's use of the Presidential press conference is a case in point; he did not hold his first one until February 1, 1964, over two months after taking office, and this with only two hours' notice. Rather than being held in a large auditorium, the conference took place in the White House movie projection room which had an estimated seating capacity of approximately one hundred persons. It was not until April 16 that Johnson ventured to hold a previously announced press conference in the same auditorium that Kennedy had used. To the end Johnson preferred the off-the-cuff approach to formal televised press con-

ferences; he more frequently expounded his ideas to more non-journalistic groups than his predecessor. Johnson's political wizardry, of course, was much more effective among small groups.

During 1963 a comprehensive study of election campaign broadcasting, similar to the Mall study of 1952, appeared in print. Its author was Richard Porter. This 1963 study, however, was a sampling rather than a blanket survey; questionnaires were sent to every third commercial television station and every tenth commercial AM radio station listed in two national directories. Responses were received from only 19.6 per cent of the stations contacted. More than 90 per cent of these reported substantial local time sales for political purposes, the median being five hours. A definite trend was evident towards the employment of short segments for election campaign broadcasting in both television and radio, with the median figure for five-minute programs on radio being ten and for television being twelve. Significantly, a larger percentage of network affiliated television stations (78 per cent) than network affiliated radio stations (48 per cent) carried more hours of network paid political broadcast time than of local paid political broadcast time. In regard to spots, those of sixty-second duration exceeded those of all other durations combined on radio; minute spots were also common on television. Twenty-second spots were more frequent on television than on radio, while the reverse was true of thirty-second spots. One radio station sold as many as 1750 spots, one television station as many as 430. Generally speaking, radio stations were able to schedule paid political broadcasts with less disruption of regular programming than were television stations, although a large majority of the latter were able to do so without displacing regular advertisers. On the other hand, more television stations made sustaining time available to candidates than did radio stations, which may be the reason why only 60 per cent of television stations found campaign broadcasting financially profitable, compared with 87 per cent of radio stations. Almost identical favorable percentages were obtained for the question as to whether political advertising and broadcasting were generally an asset or a liability to their public relations efforts.

Before proceeding with an analysis of the 1964 campaign, we might survey the programming of the three major television net-

works between 1960 and 1964 to determine how many scheduled shows were political in nature. The following survey does not include NBC's "Meet the Press," ABC's "Issues and Answers," or CBS's "Face the Nation"; nor does it include the CBS series, "Slatery's People," which dramatized the work of the minority leader of a state legislature. Perhaps the most sensational series of Congressional programs were those dealing with the Billie Sol Estes investigation (1962) and the Bobby Baker investigation (1964). The political issue that most frequently was the subject of television programs during this period was civil rights. The income tax and medicare also inspired a glut of programs, while such issues as migratory labor, the tariff, deceptive packaging, and federal aid to parochial schools were featured on at least one broadcast. Studies of Congress focused on the body as a whole (the eighty-eighth), specific committees (House Rules), and its more influential leaders (Sam Rayburn, etc.). There were also programs dealing with Congressional and legislative reapportionment; specific analyses were broadcast dealing with the latter in Vermont, New York, Pennsylvania, and Georgia. Aside from the inevitable surveys of national politics, there were also surveys of politics in specific states (such as Illinois) and at the precinct level. Curiously, the Great Debates did not trigger off a string of lesser debates between leading political figures on national television, aside from such isolated exceptions as the civil rights debate between Senator Jacob Javits of New York and Senator Russell Long of Louisiana in 1960. Television programs centering on the Presidential office obviously were legion during the period under consideration, but this survey did not cover these.

### *The 1964 Campaign*

Had radio and television never been invented, the outcome of the 1964 Presidential election doubtless would have been the same, even though this generalization would not hold true for 1960. Nevertheless, the leading candidates for the Presidential nomination in 1964 had a much greater personal involvement with both media than had John Kennedy and Richard Nixon. Governor William Scranton of Pennsylvania, for example, held stock in WARN-

AM-TV in Scranton prior to its sale to Transcontinent Television in 1958, while President Lyndon Johnson's family ownership of KTBC-AM-FM-TV in Austin, Texas, was well known. On the other hand, Senator Barry Goldwater was a ham radio operator, spending his leisure time talking with his counterparts across the nation. None of the three, however, made any significant innovations in political broadcasting during the 1964 campaign. As there was no contest for the Democratic Presidential nomination, there is little to comment on relative to the role of television in this connection.

In contrast, there was a great deal of internal skirmishing among the Republicans. Several candidates and non-candidates clashed in such primaries as New Hampshire, Oregon, and California. Barry Goldwater recovered from poor showings in New Hampshire and Oregon to squeak through to a narrow victory over Nelson Rockefeller in California which sewed up his party's Presidential nomination for him. It is a little-known fact that the Rockefeller outlay for television there was perhaps ten times that of Goldwater; one highlight of the Rockefeller television campaign was a five-minute condensation of the biographical film, "The Rockefeller Story." On the other hand, Goldwater adopted the tactic of appearing in person, mainly before well-organized rallies made up almost exclusively of his own precinct workers. A tremendous furor erupted on Election Day when Louis Harris predicted a Goldwater victory over CBS at 7:20 p. m., forty minutes before the San Francisco area polls closed, the largely pro-Goldwater Los Angeles vote deciding the outcome. We will examine the question of whether such predictions affect the outcome of elections following our discussion of the 1964 campaign.

The following week witnessed one of the most disastrous political performances on television in recent American history, that of William Scranton at the Governor's Conference at Cleveland. Chosen by moderate and liberal Republicans to head an anti-Goldwater offensive, Scranton had the rug pulled out from under him just before he faced the nation at 12:30 p. m. Sunday, June 7, by Dwight Eisenhower who telephoned that he would not join an anti-Goldwater conspiracy. Consequently, instead of announcing his candidacy as originally planned, Scranton haltingly asserted that he was dedicated to traditional Republican principles, but

that he would not fight for his party's Presidential nomination. Having humiliated himself, Scranton later openly declared himself to be a candidate, but it was too late. In June, CBS attempted to arrange a face-to-face two-hour debate between Goldwater, Scranton, and Rockefeller, but Goldwater refused to accept, obviously unwilling to give the Pennsylvania Governor an opportunity to recoup his dwindling political fortunes. Later in the campaign Lyndon Johnson turned the tables by refusing to debate Goldwater.

Although Barry Goldwater went into the Republican convention with a clear lead in delegates, it was the supporters of Ambassador to South Vietnam Henry Cabot Lodge who had made the most impressive use of television during the Presidential preference primaries. In winning the New Hampshire contest for the absent Lodge, they had shown a five-minute campaign film from 1960 narrated by Dwight Eisenhower no less than 39 times between February 17 and March 10 over WMUR in Manchester, then the only commercial television station located in the state. According to James Reston, the film clips "of Lodge in action, fighting Communists in the UN and Nazis in Africa" cost only \$3000, a sum so ridiculously low that it seems totally out of place in this age of million dollar television campaigns. Significantly, Lodge, upon his return to the United States shortly thereafter, did not win any more Presidential preference primaries; his live appearances seemingly project a less flattering image of the man, as in person he exudes a quality which various critics have described as arrogance.

San Francisco was the site of the Republican convention, which met before that of the Democrats. Television personnel outnumbered the delegates, 1,825 to 1,308; Dwight Eisenhower appeared in the curious, dual role of convention speaker and television commentator for ABC. In addressing the convention, Eisenhower managed to pinpoint an enemy without the party. "Let us," he said, "particularly scorn the divisive efforts of those outside our family, including sensation-seeking columnists and commentators who couldn't care less about the good of our party and our entire economic structure." William Scranton again blundered, a member of his staff sending an unbelievably insulting letter to Barry Goldwater; the Goldwater camp gleefully reproduced this unfortunate document for mass distribution. As for Nelson Rockefeller, his

speech on behalf of several minority resolutions was continually interrupted by boos and by cries of, "We want Barry," an outburst which probably originated in the galleries rather than with the delegates. Rarely has a televised five-minute talk aroused such a furor; Rockefeller fed the fire with references to "anonymous midnight and early morning telephone calls, unsigned threatening letters, smear threats and bombings." In the final analysis, this episode probably did more than anything else to create an unfavorable impression of the Republican Party among voters. Yet the highlight of the convention occurred during Barry Goldwater's speech accepting his party's Presidential nomination in which he observed that "Extremism in the defense of liberty is no vice. Moderation in the pursuit of justice is no virtue." This observation unfortunately backfired, as it enabled his critics to label him as an extremist.

The most watched event at the Republican convention was not the Arizona Senator's famous acceptance speech, but rather Milton Eisenhower's address nominating Governor Scranton. Seventeen million homes watched the former, only 15 million the latter. In contrast, Everett Dirksen's dinner hour nomination of Goldwater reached only 10 million homes. Despite its relatively late hour (just before midnight, EDT), Nelson Rockefeller's frequently interrupted speech attracted a larger audience than did Dirksen's, slightly over 12 million homes. As for the number of "hard core" watchers of the convention, 5 million homes (less than 10 per cent of all American television homes) stayed up to watch the critical vote on the civil rights amendments to the platform that came at 2 a. m.

The Democrats met at Atlantic City. Aside from the question as to who would receive the Vice-Presidential nomination, there was little suspense, but on every evening the Democratic convention attracted a larger audience than its Republican counterpart, reaching 41.1 million viewers on Wednesday according to one count. The highlight of this evening was the unveiling of Senator Hubert Humphrey as Lyndon Johnson's Vice-Presidential choice. As their keynote speaker, the Democrats selected John Pastore of Rhode Island, who stressed the issue of responsibility. More dramatic was the acceptance speech of Hubert Humphrey who pointed out a number of areas in which there was agreement among the

Republicans and the Democrats, evoking the repeated chant from the convention, "But not Senator Goldwater." In contrast, Lyndon Johnson assumed a highly monarchical posture, delivering a rather dull but broad address philosophizing about the Great Society. Considering the enormous lead which the Democrats enjoyed over the Republicans according to the polls, it was only natural that the crafty President would refrain from rocking the boat, figuratively speaking. One of the lesser-known episodes relating to the Democratic convention was the abortive attempt to sell the rights to televise the gathering to a single network, a plan suggested by Democratic National Committee public relations director Wayne Phillips.

Several potential conflicts did threaten at the Democratic convention but, thanks to adroit managing, none exploded, in sharp contrast to developments at the Republican convention. A contest for seats arose between the regular Mississippi delegation favoring states' rights, and the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party standing for civil rights; by breaking tradition and appearing before the convention in person to propose a Vice-Presidential nominee, Lyndon Johnson diverted attention away from the squabbling over the contested seats. A compromise had been drawn up Monday night which provided that no Mississippi regular delegate could take his seat unless he pledged allegiance to the ticket, and that two of the Freedom Party leaders would sit as delegates at large, but on Tuesday night a number of Mississippi Negroes entered the hall on purloined passes and badges and seated themselves illegally as the Mississippi delegation. As for the potential Vice-Presidential candidacy of Robert Kennedy, LBJ had the showing of a film tribute to the late President John Kennedy rescheduled so that it would take place after rather than before the selection of a nominee. Thus a possible outburst of delegate and gallery support for RFK was sidetracked in advance. Fortunately for the Democrats, relations between the television networks and Democratic officials were friendly, unlike those between the former and Senator Goldwater who charged CBS with "constant harrassment."

Perhaps the most comprehensive study of the two 1964 conventions was that of A. C. Nielsen. Nielsen discovered that the number of hours telecast at recent Democratic conventions had steadily

declined (1956, 37; 1960, 29; 1964, 23); while the number at recent Republican ones had steadily increased (1956, 22½; 1960, 25½; 1964, 36). As for television usage during the prime evening hours of the convention weeks, Nielsen found that it was approximately 10 per cent below television usage during the prime evening hours of an average non-convention week, a significant commentary on the intellectual interests of the average American. In 1964 (as in 1956 and in 1960), convention audiences were generally lowest in the Northeastern and Pacific Coast sections of the country. According to Nielsen, total television exposure tended to increase with the age of the head of the household and with his income and education; from the standpoint of occupation it was, curiously, equally high among professional and white collar workers and those *not* in the labor force. It should be added that there was a slight decrease in average viewing time for both conventions from 1956 through 1960 to 1964, but this phenomenon perhaps should be attributed to the streamlining of conventions rather than to a loss in interest.

Shortly after the Republican convention, L. Richard Gurley, the director of advertising and public relations for the Republican National Committee, made the statement that Barry Goldwater would rely heavily on television during the campaign, "Because we think this is his medium." Gurley added that "We think it isn't Johnson's. . . ." In terms of the election results, this assessment does not hold water; nevertheless, more than 100,000 replies were received after the Republican national chairman, Dean Burch, made an appearance on NBC on October 19 appealing for contributions. Of course, one might take the position that Johnson had won the election before the campaign even started, for which reason the \$4.5 million the Republicans spent on television was wasted. But it must be added that the employment of an advertising agency that was unfamiliar with political accounts did not further the mounting of a political offensive against Lyndon Johnson; obviously, the agency made little headway in shattering the negative image of Goldwater that had developed in the minds of many voters.

In general, the Republicans relied on full-length television programs nationally more than the Democrats, but they employed

few, if any, network spots for their ticket, concentrating their efforts instead on 131 selected local markets. According to one Republican spokesman, the party pinpointed its campaign, tailoring one approach to one area and another to another; local spots fitted in with this scheme nicely, since they were flexible and afforded tie-ins with local candidates. One must not forget that Goldwater did not have strong party backing in several areas, especially the Northeast, and the type of appeal designed to swing Dixie votes might prove repulsive in a state like New York. Among the main themes of the Goldwater commercials in the foreign relations area were: (1) Goldwater is a man of peace, not a warmonger; (2) give foreign aid only to those countries willing to help themselves; (3) the United Nations is good, but its members must pay their share of the costs. Domestically, the Goldwater commercials emphasized social security, medicare, and income tax reductions. One survey conducted late in October found that interviewees had seen more Goldwater than Johnson commercials (46 per cent to 39 per cent) but that not much vote-changing had resulted from this exposure.

Perhaps the most publicized of the longer Goldwater television efforts was the half-hour conversation between the Senator and Dwight Eisenhower broadcast on September 22. This, it was hoped, would counteract the charge that Goldwater was a nuclear maniac. In comparing this program with John Kennedy's meeting with various Protestant ministers in Houston four years previously, one must point out that Kennedy fielded hostile questions, while Goldwater faced a friendly interrogator. A survey conducted during the campaign indicated that a smaller portion of the viewing public watched the longer Goldwater efforts, but the latter did more to establish what Goldwater stood for than the spots. One explanation for this phenomenon is that the half-hour shows tended to attract those who were sympathetic to the Senator's cause.

The most famous Republican television program, however, was never presented. This was the controversial movie, "Choice," a half-hour exposé of the seamier side of American life whose showing Senator Goldwater vetoed. Among the highlights of this film were clips of a strip-tease, a fig-leaved male, and a girl wearing a topless bathing suit; its producer was Mothers for a Moral America, an

organization associated with Citizens for Goldwater-Miller, and the Los Angeles advertising agency of Anderson, Morgan, De Santis, and Ball. According to one hostile Democratic critic, "Choice" was "the sickest political program to be conceived since television became a factor in American politics." Nevertheless, this reaction may be an indication that the film was highly effective, and one wonders what a Gallup Poll would have revealed had it been shown. The refusal to televise "Choice" is but another instance of the Republican failure to wage a truly hard-hitting campaign and to take advantage of every crack in the Democratic armor; apparently many highly placed Republicans leaned over backwards to make certain that the Democrats couldn't charge that they were waging a dirty campaign or smearing their opponents.

In his book *What Happened to Goldwater?*, Stephen Shadeeg, who was the Senator's political advisor from 1952 to 1962 and his Regional Director for Western States during the 1964 Presidential campaign, reports the results of a questionnaire which he sent to the 1,308 official delegates to the Republican convention. Of those who replied, 70 per cent believed that Goldwater was effective in person, but only 55 per cent felt the same way about his television appearances. According to this panel, Goldwater's most effective and convincing telecast was his role in "The Job of the Presidency" (in which Richard Nixon also appeared), his approval score being 72 per cent; in contrast, only 20 per cent of the responding delegates expressed a favorable opinion of the *Conversation at Gettysburg* with former President Eisenhower. If anything, these figures indicate that the Goldwater television campaign fell short of its full potential.

While the Republicans may have pulled their punches in the case of such full-length programs as "Choice," the Democrats employed some of the most abusive spots ever conceived. Many of these one-minute commercials were presented over ABC by the Doyle, Dane, Bernbach advertising agency at a reported expense of \$750,000. This marked the first time that a major political party had used a network spot campaign in attempting to elect a President. At the local level, more spots (1,345) were presented in Texas than in any other state, with California (823) and New York (410) ranking second and third among those states in which the Democrats concentrated their spots.

One of the most humorous Democratic spots showed the United States being sawed apart at the Mississippi River and set adrift in the Atlantic Ocean. This was in response to Senator Goldwater's unfortunate comment that "Sometimes I think this country would be better off if we could just saw off the Eastern seaboard and let it float to sea." Republican non-support of their party's Presidential nominee was mirrored in a campaign poster of Nelson Rockefeller crashing to the floor, accompanied by the observation, "Remember him? Governor Rockefeller. He said Barry Goldwater's positions can spell disaster for the party and for the country." More unfair was the unforgettable social security spot which featured a pair of hands tearing up a social security card; this obviously did little to endear the older voters to Goldwater.

But the spots which enraged the Republicans most were the ones showing a child picking petals from a flower and counting 1-2-3-4-5-6-7-8-9-10, followed by the countdown for a nuclear explosion 10-9-8-7-6-5-4-3-2-1, and one with a little girl eating an ice cream cone, also followed by an atomic blast. Both were shown over NBC; the daisy spot on "Monday Night at the Movies" on September 7, the ice cream one on "Saturday Night at the Movies" on September 12. The obvious implication was that Barry Goldwater as President would be reckless in the use of nuclear weapons. Shortly thereafter Republican National Chairman Dean Burch requested that the Fair Campaign Practices Committee challenge these spots, while Senate Minority Leader Everett Dirksen complained to the National Association of Broadcasters. In reply, NAB Vice-President Vincent Wasilewski wrote Dirksen that his letter had been forwarded to the television code authority, but that the association had not made it a practice to pass judgment taste-wise on political commercials because of their unique character. Wasilewski further observed that "Any decision in a matter of this kind can best be made at almost any time rather than the present, when we are in the middle of an intense emotion-filled political campaign." Later that week, code director Howard Bell asserted that he was not going to pass judgment on any spot, either Republican or Democratic, since this was an issue for the electorate to decide. The Democrats further confused the question by charging that a five-minute Goldwater commercial, shown over CBS deceitfully implied that a re-elected Johnson Administration would

emasculate America militarily, a charge which Democratic National Chairman John Bailey suggested should be labelled as science fiction.

As the campaign neared its end, Republican and Democratic television programming diverged. Barry Goldwater was scheduled to make five prime-time network television appearances, in contrast to the Democrats who restricted themselves to purchasing an hour on NBC on the eve of the election. A more detailed breakdown shows that the Republicans purchased 2 five-minute segments on ABC, 17 five-minute segments and 3 half-hour programs on CBS, and 13 five-minute segments and 2 half-hour programs on NBC, while the Democrats bought 9 sixty-second spots and 5 five-minute segments on ABC, 18 five-minute segments and one sixty-second spot on CBS, and 2 sixty-second spots and one hour on NBC. Each party spent approximately one million dollars on network television time during the last four weeks of the Presidential campaign.

One highlight of the 1960 campaign, or perhaps *the* highlight which did not recur in 1964, was the debate between the Republican and Democratic Presidential nominees. President John Kennedy stated on no fewer than three occasions that he would be willing to debate his Republican opponent in 1964, but his untimely death prevented him from carrying out this commitment, which was in no way binding on Lyndon Johnson. A survey taken in the spring of 1964 by George Gallup indicated that 71 per cent of the American people wanted debates in 1964, as compared with 20 per cent who did not want them. Republicans were highly critical of President Johnson for refraining from debating although, as we have seen earlier, Barry Goldwater refused to debate Nelson Rockefeller and William Scranton; certain pieces of Republican campaign literature quoted the two nominees on such topics as "Wasted Aid to Communist Countries," "A Solution to Poverty: Government Dole or Real Jobs," "The ADA and LBJ," "Civil Rights and Responsibilities," and "Government Spending—Our Children's Debt." At one time both NBC and CBS considered separate proposals to create an artificial debate, using material from news footage of both candidates. This scheme was eventually abandoned, partly for the reason that some of the remarks had

been made in formal settings and some in informal ones, partly for the reason that Section 315 (which was not suspended during the 1964 campaign) required the suitable representation of fringe candidates. An indication of how important such debates may be in terms of reaching a large audience is to be found in the statistic that the largest television audience for either Presidential candidate in 1964 (7 million homes) was a fifth or a fourth of that for the first Nixon-Kennedy debate in 1960. American Institute of Public Opinion Polls, conducted in August and November, showed that a majority of those interviewed were in favor of the suggestion that, in lieu of a nationwide speechmaking tour, the Republican and Democratic nominees for President be given television and radio time to make six speeches of one half-hour each, during which period all other programs would have to go off the air.

In 1964, for the first time, NBC, CBS, and ABC joined together to reduce the enormous cost of reporting the general election, AP and UPI also joining the combine as junior partners with no voice in how the election was to be covered. (CBS had set up the first permanent network Election Unit in 1962.) The executive board assigned 23 small states and the District of Columbia to the two wire services, with the three networks taking 9 states each. When the final results were in, there were few surprises. Lyndon Johnson was re-elected President with 43 million popular votes to 27 million popular votes for Barry Goldwater, receiving 61 per cent of the total vote; even though this was the largest percentage ever received by a winning candidate (surpassing the marks set by Warren Harding and Franklin Roosevelt), it still was slightly below the level predicted by many pollsters. Barry Goldwater carried only five states in the South and his native Arizona in the electoral college. As for the other races, the Democrats built up a two-to-one margin in both houses of Congress, but the Republicans curiously registered a net gain of one in the gubernatorial races.

Despite the fact that radio and television broadcasts obviously had only a minor impact on the Presidential election, money for this purpose was spent at a more furious clip than ever before. During 1964 total expenses for paid political broadcasts on both networks and stations were in the neighborhood of \$35 million, including both nominating and general election campaigns. Since

total expenditures for political activities at all levels of government was around \$200 million, radio and television expenses constituted about one-fifth of these. During the general election period, total network and station charges were \$24.6 million. This constituted an increase of 73 per cent over 1960 and 150 per cent over 1956; basic rates in network and spot radio and television, of course, were on the increase during this period. In 1964, 73 per cent of charges by television stations were for spots. As for the nomination period, the Democrats with their hotly contested state primaries in the South spent two-thirds of the total broadcasting expenditures, despite the bitter fight among Republicans over their party's Presidential nomination. Returning again to the general election period, network charges for political broadcasts (mainly Presidential and Vice-Presidential) were \$3.25 million in 1956, \$3 million in 1960, and \$3.925 million in 1964, the drop in expenditures in 1960 being largely attributable to the donation of free time for the Great Debates. In 1960 the television networks donated 39 hours and the radio networks 43 hours for political purposes, but in 1964 the comparable totals fell to a mere 4.5 hours and 21 hours, respectively, Section 315 being in operation during the latter year. Very little of the donated time went to the major party candidates themselves, and the minor party candidates received only thirty minutes on radio.

During an undisclosed week in the 1964 campaign, Broadcast Advertising Reports, Inc. surveyed spot-program activity in each of the top 75 television market areas. The leaders in spot placement were San Diego (516), South Bend-Elkhart, Milwaukee, Little Rock, Green Bay, Fort Wayne, Indianapolis, St. Louis, and Portland, Oregon. In contrast, only 13 spots were placed in Boston, 40 in Chicago, 56 in Philadelphia, 87 in Detroit, 170 in New York City, and 184 in Los Angeles. Nevertheless, politically sponsored programs were frequently telecast in major cities, the leaders being Boston, Fort Worth, South Bend-Elkhart, and Portland, Maine. As for specific regions of the country, there was a paucity of spots in such Southern cities as Birmingham, Atlanta, Richmond, Roanoke-Lynchburg, and Shreveport. On the other hand, the week in question saw no politically sponsored programs at all in such geographically diverse communities as Birmingham, Cleveland,

Fresno, Kansas City, Norfolk, Peoria, Youngstown, and Los Angeles. This study, if anything, proves that political television activity throughout the United States varies widely from place to place for a specific, limited period.

While in 1960 it was the Great Debates which triggered off a series of scholarly analyses dealing with the political impact of television, in 1964 it was the question of whether televised election predictions affect those who have yet to go to the polls. One such study was conducted by students at Willamette University in Salem, Oregon; they discovered that out of 2,961 voters interviewed in 40 Oregon precincts between 5 p. m. and the time the polls closed, only 19 stated that they had changed their vote because of what they had heard on the air. Approximately 40 per cent of those interviewed stated that they felt the early returns broadcast did have an impact on people's decisions on whether to vote or not. In the words of Director John Rademaker, the precincts surveyed included "rural and urban; Negro, white and mixed precincts; Republican, Democratic and mixed precincts; and upper, upper-middle class precincts, middle class precincts and working class precincts," which indicates that the sample was representative. Another survey conducted on the same day at Palo Alto, California, by Nathan Maccoby of Stanford University reached the conclusion that the turnout was so heavy that it was impossible to locate enough non-voters to make a thorough analysis.

One might also cite in this connection two studies made by Douglas Fuchs of the University of California at Berkeley. The first of these, conducted in October, tested the theoretical reaction of 1,200 Californians to a prediction of victory in the Presidential contest prior to their voting. Twenty interviewees stated that they would stay at home if Lyndon Johnson was predicted as the winner on the basis of the early returns, while 20 also took a similar position in the event that Barry Goldwater was declared elected by the Vote Profile Analysis or one of its counterparts; 10 individuals were found in both groups. The percentage here is slightly higher than in the Rademaker study but still only of minor consequence. One month later—on Election Day—Fuchs interviewed 344 voters in the Berkeley area in an attempt to determine actual voting behavior. Approximately two-thirds of those interviewed reported that

they were aware of network predictions or projections of a Johnson victory. When asked whether hearing a computer prediction made them more or less interested in voting, 10.6 per cent replied that they became more interested, 5 per cent stated that they became less interested, and the overwhelming majority—84.4 per cent—commented that these predictions or projections made no difference. Quite expectedly, awareness of a Johnson victory increased among those interviewed as the day progressed. On the other hand, there was a sharp division of opinion on the question, "Some people have suggested that a law be passed to prevent the announcement of election results until people all over the country have finished voting. Would you favor such a law . . . and why?" Of the sample, 47 per cent asserted that they favored such a measure, including 43 per cent of the Johnson voters and 58 per cent of the Goldwater voters, mainly on the grounds that some might be influenced by hearing early returns. A curious sidelight to this study was that a number of people claimed to have voted (8.3 per cent), although an examination of the public records revealed them to have stayed at home.

But it was the prediction of Barry Goldwater's victory over Nelson Rockefeller in the hotly contested California Presidential primary in June which triggered off the most significant investigations dealing with this question. One of these was the brainchild of Harold Mendelsohn of the University of Denver. Here a sample of 1,724 California voters were interviewed on the day before the election and re-interviewed either on election day after the polls had closed or on the day following the election. Usually a longer time span intervenes between interviews than was the case here, but Mendelsohn ordained a brief time span so that he could measure more precisely possible alteration in the implementation of voting intentions because of exposure to broadcasts on Election Day. It was discovered that, of the 1,212 voters who expressed an intention to vote for a specific candidate during the first interview, no less than 97 per cent acted out this decision at the polls; approximately one per cent changed their minds at the last moment and voted for the opposing candidate. Curiously, of the 14 individuals who switched, 12 cast their ballots for Goldwater and 2 for Johnson—a phenomenon that seemingly runs counter to the band-

wagon principle. (The twelve votes that Goldwater picked up were cast at regular intervals throughout the day rather than being bunched at an early or late hour.) As for the last day deciders who made up their minds on Election Day, 58 per cent of these voted by 2:30 p. m. California time and thus had no opportunity to hear election broadcast predictions. Of the last day deciders, 31 per cent voted after 4:30 p. m. California time, but only 36 per cent of these heard or saw election reports before voting. Here again the data downgrades the importance of televised election predictions as a major factor in shaping the vote on Election Day.

Mendelsohn's data was assessed independently by Ira Cisin of George Washington University, who found that initially it gave the impression of a possible bandwagon effect vis-à-vis those undecided about whom to support, and a possible underdog effect vis-à-vis those who refused to reveal a vote intention. Nevertheless, in combining the two groups, Cisin found that the proportion of votes that Johnson and Goldwater received was almost uniform during the three basic time periods he had set up and between the exposed and unexposed vote. As a result, Cisin came to the conclusion that neither Goldwater nor Johnson derived any benefit from Election Day network broadcasts.

Somewhat different in focus was the study conducted by Kurt Lang and Gladys Lang, both of the State University of New York. The Langs had interviewed 364 registered voters in the East Bay area of California who had yet to vote at 4 p. m.; for purposes of comparison they had also interviewed 116 registered voters in the Greater Cleveland, Ohio, area who also had yet to vote at 4 p.m. In both states the sample consisted of roughly equal numbers of Democrats and Republicans and represented all levels of the economic strata. It was discovered that interviewees who obtained information about the election directly from radio and television were more certain about the outcome than were interviewees who obtained their information from other sources, but "When respondents were asked which elements of election broadcasts were most helpful in giving them an idea of how the race was going, 65 per cent mentioned either the vote count or the tally of electoral vote, and only 16 per cent mentioned computer predictions." One might observe, of course, that since Lyndon Johnson's victory in

the Presidential contest was of landslide proportions, people could figure out who was going to win without the assistance of predictions. Yet computers did manifest a greater effectiveness than the other sources in crystallizing certainty of outcome, despite the fact that they were cited less often as a source.

Such studies may indicate that there is little cause for concern, but many politicians seemingly are fearful of the impact of televised computer predictions. In this connection Senator Jacob Javits of New York introduced a bill into Congress in August which would stagger the closing time of polls during Presidential elections so that they would close at the same moment all over America; in the Eastern Standard Time Zone this would be 11 p.m., in the Central, 10 p.m., in the Mountain, 9 p.m., and in the Pacific, 8 p.m. Javits also proposed that the polls be open for at least twelve hours everywhere. Generally speaking, this bill seems a more plausible answer to the problem than other measures which would place restrictions on televised predictions. One of the latter was that of Senator Pierre Salinger of California, whose concurrent Senate resolution provided that the broadcasting networks and other news-gathering agencies "refrain from broadcasting or distributing predictions based on electronic computations . . . until after the latest official closing time of any polling place." Salinger, it should be noted, was primarily concerned with local races rather than with national ones. More severe was the bill introduced by Senator Winston Prouty of Vermont, who wanted to make it a crime either to release election results or to conspire to obtain this information before all polls had closed, the penalty being a fine of up to \$1,000 and imprisonment of up to six months. Still another bill was that of Senator Karl Mundt of South Dakota, who would prohibit network broadcasts before the polls had closed. Among those commentators unsympathetic towards these efforts was *Editor and Publisher*, which observed in an editorial that "We doubt that Congress has the authority to restrict the publication or broadcast of election returns or election forecasts any more than it has the right to limit the dissemination of any other kind of information. The framers of the Bill of Rights . . . did not foresee the day when the transmission of news from coast to coast would be instantaneous, but that speed in no way alters the validity of the guarantee that Congress shall make no law . . . abridging the freedom of speech or of the press."

Nevertheless, it was not until the summer of 1967 that the Senate Commerce Committee reported that early election calls posed no menace and that legislation consequently was not needed.

Among those newly elected public officials who credited television with a large share of their success in the 1964 election were Senators George Murphy of California and Robert Kennedy of New York. In this connection Republican Murphy observed that his opponent, Pierre Salinger, "Made a bad tactical error in agreeing to debate me on television. I was anxious to let the public see us side by side. I was amazed how short Mr. Salinger looked beside me and I knew then I had the advantage." At the other end of the continent, Democrat Robert Kennedy stated that he was greatly helped by his own use of television commercials and by the lock out which he suffered at the hands of Senator Kenneth Keating when he appeared on the scene to answer his opponent's challenge to debate. (In fairness to Keating, it must be pointed out that Kennedy had not accepted the station's debate proposal by the fixed deadline, and that Keating had then purchased a half-hour of time.) In Texas, on the other hand, loser George Bush created a furor by his "empty chair" debate with the Democratic incumbent, Senator Ralph Yarborough. This technique, which the FCC upheld, involved the use of tapes of Yarborough speaking on various subjects interspersed with Bush's views on these issues.

Another highlight of this campaign from the point of view of political television was the marathon telecast staged in August under the auspices of WLAC-TV in Nashville, Tennessee. Other cities represented in the network that carried the telecast were Johnson City, Knoxville, Chattanooga, Jackson, and Memphis. Not only was this show a major television effort but it was also a commercial success, various products being advertised during the program; the two major sponsors were Sterling Brewers of Evansville, Indiana (50 per cent) and Lion Oil of Arkansas (25 per cent). Harry Reasoner of CBS was invited down to interview candidates in the primary contest, but the six-hour telecast also featured high school bands and majorettes as well as country music star Eddy Arnold. This demonstrates that political television at the state level does have its lighter moments.

It is not always the major league political personalities, however, who ride to victory on the television wave. A lesser-known

figure whom one might cite in this connection is Don Tabbert, a thirty-six year old Indianapolis attorney who won as the non-organization candidate in the Republican Congressional primary there; Tabbert overcame local newspaper opposition through the almost exclusive use of radio and television. Significantly, his advertising agency (Caldwell, Larkin & Sidner-Van Riper) had never handled a political account previously. Tabbert's campaign strategy was to saturate the ether during the last two weeks of the campaign, employing spots frequently on both television and radio. The television spots, which ran 64 times, featured a crescendo of bongo drums; the commentary took the form of printed words superimposed on the picture. As for the radio spots, they ran on seven stations, 105 times the first week and 210 times the second, and employed four types of voices, "One network style, one heavy and folksy, one young and one housewife-type voice." The cost of this saturation campaign was \$18,000, \$14,000 for television and \$4,000 for radio. His opponent also employed television, but in the conventional way with his voice-over history.

Unfortunately for Tabbert, his television technique did not prove the match of his Democratic rival's drawing power in the November general election. He lost in a close contest.

### *The Second Johnson Administration*

The aftermath of the 1964 campaign witnessed the publication of several studies evaluating the relationship of television and the other mass media to politics. One of these, by William Glaser, was largely based on a series of previously unpublished and unreleased Gallup surveys. Glaser came to the conclusion that television may have "A more lasting impression than newspapers and radio when conveying reminders to vote," but that "Newspaper reading may be more effective than television watching in affecting turnout and in affecting the fulfillment of intentions to vote." But he also added that newspapers and television are connected with somewhat different modes of life and with different political patterns, and that in conjunction they usually will stimulate a very high level of turnout. According to Glaser, the critical factor is not the amount of time spent reading or viewing but whether there is any reading or

viewing at all or not. As for radio listeners, he hypothesized that radio listening has become independent of turnout. All of these generalizations, though, were based on surveys conducted during Presidential election periods; what the result would be for some other period is anybody's guess.

Another study, that of Elmo Roper, was based upon surveys conducted during the previous (1964) year. Some of Roper's conclusions are discussed in the chapter evaluating radio and television. In assessing the relative importance of various media in local, state, and national elections, Roper found that newspapers led television as the chief source of information about candidates for city, town, and county offices, while in the case of state offices, newspapers had a slight lead in the June survey and television in the November survey. At the national level, television enjoyed a clear lead. In June, 61 per cent of those interviewed were of the opinion that there should be Great Debates between President Johnson and the then unselected Republican Presidential nominee, but in November, 51 per cent of those interviewed were of the opinion that televised debates between LBJ and Senator Barry Goldwater would *not* have helped them gain a greater understanding of the issues and the personalities. Still another pertinent discovery of Roper was that the American people felt, by approximately a three to one margin, that television programs dealing with candidates and issues generally do not favor one party at the expense of the other; an even larger percentage reached a similar conclusion relative to network programs. This significant finding largely explains why so many people turn to television as their leading source of political information, obviously feeling that it is more neutral and less slanted than the other mass media.

Nevertheless, it is customary for television networks and stations to give greater coverage to the party in power. As the Democrats enjoyed large majorities at every level of government, thanks to the 1964 election results, it is not surprising that, during the first six months of 1965, television programs featured Democrats far more often than Republicans. According to Representative Catherine May of Wisconsin, during this time span CBS presented only one Republican and 14 Democrats on "Face the Nation," NBC presented 5 Republicans and 12 Democrats on "Meet the Press,"

and ABC presented 6 Republicans and 19 Democrats on "Issues and Answers." Mrs. May, who is a veteran news broadcaster, did not attack editorializing or regular news programs in her remarks but rather opinion-shaping public discussion shows such as those mentioned above. Accordingly, her comments did not lead to any radical rescheduling, but they merit attention because they raise the question as to whether the balance between Republicans and Democrats on such programs as "Face the Nation" should be equal, should reflect the division in Congress, or should follow some other criteria.

During 1965, Lyndon Johnson appeared regularly (36 times) on live television, continuing the saturation exposure that had characterized the first year of his Presidency. A permanent television crew was established in the White House theater to facilitate LBJ's use of the medium. As his popularity began to decline, though, President Johnson began to reduce his television appearances, which totalled only six in 1966 and seven in 1967. As a result, the permanent television camera crew was cut back to an intermittent operation. Among LBJ's outstanding television performances from the late years of his Presidency was a pre-scheduled news conference in November 1967, where he reinstated the wide-open televised conference technique that he had abandoned two years previously.

By 1966 the Republicans had begun to recoup their strength politically, thanks to such unsolved problems as Vietnam, civil disobedience and inflation, as well as to the candidacies of various telegenic personalities. But the most remarkable use of television during the off-year campaign was by a wealthy Democrat, Milton Shapp, who won the Democratic nomination for Governor of Pennsylvania by 50,000 votes over the organization's candidate, State Senator Robert Casey. Shapp, the chairman and founder of Jerrold Electronics Corporation in Philadelphia, spent between \$800,000 and \$1,200,000 in his race for the nomination. The highlight of his television campaign was a thirty-minute documentary chronicling his life that was shown at least once on every television station in the state; during the last two weeks before the election, the Shapp forces presented over 7,500 spots of varying length on 90 radio stations in 38 cities, and 550 spots of varying length on 16 tele-

vision stations. Actually, the fact that Shapp made such extensive use of television is not surprising, since Jerrold Electronics Corporation is one of the nation's leading manufacturers of community antenna equipment. This Cinderella story, however, had a rather unhappy ending, as he went down to defeat at the hands of his Republican opponent, Lieutenant Governor Raymond Shafer, despite the fact that he continued his extensive use of television and radio during the general election campaign.

In contrast, in New York, Republican Governor Nelson Rockefeller was successful in winning a third term in a campaign during which the Republicans outspent the Democrats by a ten to one margin. This gubernatorial contest featured Rockefeller; Democrat Frank O'Connor, president of the New York city council; Liberal Franklin Roosevelt, former attorney general of New York state; and Conservative Dr. Paul Adams, an up-state college administrator. On October 29, ten days before the election, a four-way debate took place in New York City among the candidates. It was shown on television. The Democrats would have preferred a two-man debate between Rockefeller and O'Connor, or a six-man debate including the Socialist Worker's Party and Socialist Labor Party candidates, but to no avail. As for the campaign in general, the Rockefeller commercials presented on television beginning in July stressed the record of his administration rather than Rockefeller personally. Among the highlights of these were the narcotics law ("With these tools the junkie destroys his life"), the new medical bill ("We hope you never need it"), the highway program ("If you took all these roads . . . end to end, they'd stretch all the way . . . to Hawaii"), and the efforts to combat air pollution ("Just breathe for 24 hours and you get what you'd get from two packs of cigarettes every day"). In contrast, the Democratic commercials were designed to establish O'Connor as a person, since he was largely unknown outside of New York City. At least one of the O'Connor spots was an attack on a Rockefeller spot, "Perhaps the Rockefeller TV commercial about the roads that his administration built to Hawaii and back was supposed to be funny, but actually, to many people of New York state, they were far from it." Heavy expenditures for radio and television may not have won Nelson Rockefeller the 1964 California Presidential preference primary

but they were an instrumental factor in gaining Rockefeller a plurality of the votes in New York in 1966.

During the 1966 California gubernatorial campaign, the evolution of political television reached its logical conclusion with the election of a television personality and movie actor, Republican Ronald Reagan, who two years previously had made several video appeals for Barry Goldwater. Not only had Reagan's movies been shown on television—like Senator George Murphy's—but he also had served as host for the television series, "Death Valley Days." Although Reagan did not employ any new techniques in winning the governorship from the Democratic incumbent, Edmund "Pat" Brown, he is an obvious master of the medium. The significance of Reagan's victory is enhanced by the fact that he is a possible Presidential nominee. It is too early to make an objective assessment of Reagan from the standpoint of political television, just as it is too early to rate him as a Governor, but his unfolding administration promises to be one of critical significance both for the student of politics and government and for the student of television.

From the standpoint of the 1966 campaign as a whole, perhaps the most interesting statistic is that candidates and their supporters spent four times more on spot announcements than on program time on television; on radio the ratio was a staggering 22 to 1. In 1962 the former ratio had been 3 to 2, the latter 11 to 1. The implications of this trend are enormous, as it signals a movement away from meaningful political discourse. Significantly, too, over half the total expenses for political broadcasting was concentrated in a handful of states, the Southern one-party states of Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Tennessee, and Texas, and the Northern and Western big electoral vote states of California, Illinois, Michigan, New York, and Pennsylvania. As for the former, the primaries proved far more expensive than the general election. More money was spent in California than in any other state, with New York placing second; this was to be expected, as these are the two most populous states.

Throughout the nation as a whole, Democrats outspent Republicans by a 3 to 2 margin in the primaries and the general election combined, but in the general election alone the latter outspent the former by a 5 to 4 margin. The total political broadcasting expend-

itures of \$32 million during the 1966 campaign almost equalled the \$34.6 million spent during the Presidential election year of 1964, and far surpassed the \$20 million spent during the last off-year election, 1962. But despite the sharp rise in expenditures for both media, radio's share of the total political broadcasting budget increased from 38 per cent in 1962 to 41 per cent in 1966. Whether this trend is of major consequence remains to be seen. In regard to sustaining time, a considerable minority of broadcasting stations set aside none whatsoever. An examination of broadcasting stations which gave free time to candidates in races in which there were third-party candidates further reveals that the average amount of sustaining time donated was approximately the same, regardless of whether third-party candidates were involved or not. This finding contradicts the widespread contention of many broadcasters that Section 315 prevents them from giving free time to major party candidates, since they would be forced to donate a corresponding amount of time to minor party candidates.

Quality of performance, of course, is just as important if not more so than the extent of exposure. In this connection we might cite various rules for a candidate to follow when appearing on television set forth in the "Democratic Campaign Handbook" for 1966, as these reflect the seasoned advice of professional politicians and help explain certain tendencies that have emerged recently in political television. "Always try to video tape or film the candidate's television appearances, that way if he makes a slip of the tongue or the photography isn't particularly good, the sequences can be junked and shot over again. Do not be hesitant about repeating good films. If there is a good one-minute or five-minute spot, don't hesitate to use it again and again. Campaign workers may complain about seeing it so often, but they are not typical voters and will go out of their way to watch a film whenever it is shown. Conversely, junk a poor film. One-minute and five-minute spots probably are the most useful types of campaign television films. Fifteen-minute and thirty-minute films have limited use and, unless they are exceptionally well-produced, will not hold the viewer's attention. Ten-second and twenty-second spots are useful, too, particularly for saturation coverage over a limited length of time." One point brought out above and not previously emphasized is the

importance of filmed presentations to avoid slip-ups; not every candidate has the alertness and poise of a John Kennedy or a Richard Nixon engaging in a live debate.

That Democratic candidates invariably followed these suggestions is unlikely, but in any event their efforts did not incur the abuse which two Republican programs did during the campaign. One of these, reminiscent of the doctored tape of a John Kennedy press conference used by the Republicans in the 1963 Kentucky gubernatorial campaign, featured an edited tape of an address by Lyndon Johnson in which the President advised persons who were worried about high prices and inflation to vote Republican. Omitted was Johnson's reference to high wages. Not only did Democratic National Committee Chairman John Bailey brand this "the most flagrant example of deliberate distortion that I have seen in all my years of political campaigning," but the Fair Campaign Practices Committee also reprimanded the GOP. The other program, reminiscent of the never-presented Republican film, "Choice," during the 1964 Presidential campaign, reputedly showed American soldiers being struck by Viet Cong gunfire, and coffins of U.S. troops killed in Vietnam, accompanied by excerpts from President Johnson's speeches opposing any enlargement of the war. After John Bailey had protested again to the FCPC, the Republicans announced that the film was still unfinished, and several high Republican officials, including Senator Thruston Morton and Republican National Chairman Ray Bliss, repudiated it. Slightly more ludicrous was the complaint against a film in which Democrat Edmund "Pat" Brown, running for re-election as Governor of California, made the remark that "Remember it was an actor who shot Lincoln." The slap, of course, was at his victorious Republican opponent, Ronald Reagan. One candidate for a state legislature, too, used the sound of a howling dog in the background when referring to his opponent in radio spots; one might speculate whether the canine would have actually materialized had this been a television spot.

It is perhaps because of questionable political practices such as these that the American Advertising Federation drew up an "Advertising Code of American Politics." Among the provisions are: political advertising shall tell the truth; advertising agencies,

candidates, and political parties shall be willing to provide substantiation for claims made; political advertising will be "free of statements, illustrations or implications which are offensive to good taste or public decency"; disparagement is to be avoided, specifically, "unfair or dishonest statements about competing candidates"; and "political advertising shall make only those promises to which a candidate or party is fully committed and shall avoid 'pie in the sky' promises which are impossible to keep." How extensively such a code will be followed on a voluntary basis, of course, is highly debatable.

### *Congress and Television*

The subject of Congress and television permeates this chapter, but we have yet to examine the paradox of why a body whose individual members rely so heavily on this medium has failed collectively to allow the telecasting of its sessions, aside from some committee hearings. By 1964, 70 per cent of the members of the Senate had become regular users of television, as had 59 per cent of the members of the House. In terms of political affiliations, the percentages were 50 for the Democrats and 50 for the Republicans in the House, 60 for the Democrats and 40 for the Republicans in the Senate; since the Republicans were decidedly the minority party in both houses, they made a better showing proportionately than the Democrats as far as using television is concerned. One reason for this phenomenon was the considerable number of solidly entrenched Democratic Representatives and Senators from the one-party South, most of whom did not have to rely heavily on this medium to maintain themselves in office.

In the chapter on radio and politics, we referred to the establishment of the Joint Recording Facility in 1948. By 1952 this office was making television films as well; thus television is readily available to any member of Congress who desires to use it. These recording facilities were reorganized in 1956 under Public Law 624 of the Eighty-fourth Congress. Another important advantage of this office is that recording and filming costs are quite low. For this reason they are within the budgetary capacity of the least affluent member of Congress. Representative Robert Michel, a

Republican from Illinois, once did observe that the time consumed and the amount spent were "not worth the benefits," but this is hardly a representative opinion.

Examining the attitude of individual members of Congress towards political television at greater length, in June 1964, Bernard Rubin sent questionnaires to members of that body, receiving answers from 41 Representatives and 14 Senators. The three questions contained therein were: (1) "What is your opinion regarding the influence of television on American political campaigning? (2) What have been your own experiences which reflect the significance of television? (3) What do you recommend by way of maintaining or improving the present television-political situation?" Responses, of course, varied greatly. No less than three Representatives stated that they regarded television as basically a detrimental influence. Those factors most often raised by respondents were personality, costs, network versus local station opportunities, and fairness to minority party candidates. One of the more positive responses was that of Representative Clement Zablocki of Wisconsin, who wrote that ". . . the amount of correspondence which I receive following a TV appearance by far exceeds the response . . . from any other contact with the people, such as speeches, newsletters, radio programs or newspaper stories. . . . The people who write following a TV appearance have grasped the issue better than those responding to some other media."

As for televising Congress itself, the Senate has allowed to be telecast such significant investigations as the Kefauver crime hearings, the Army-McCarthy hearings, and the labor racketeering hearings, although it has refused to sanction the broadcasting of its regular sessions. On the other hand, the House of Representatives has only permitted the telecasting of committee sessions on rare occasions. Attempts have been made (in 1952 and 1961, to cite two instances) to adopt a more liberal attitude, but without success. In 1952, Speaker Sam Rayburn observed that "There is no authority, and as far as the chair knows, there is no rule, granting the privilege of television of the House of Representatives, and the chair interprets that as applying to these committees or subcommittees, whether they sit in Washington or elsewhere." Nevertheless, prior to this 1952 ruling there had been televised hearings

in the case of the Madden select committee and the Katyn massacre, the Hebert subcommittee and armed service procurement, and the Un-American Activities Committee and alleged Hollywood Communists. The Republicans, moreover, permitted the televising of committee sessions when they controlled the House during the first two years that Dwight Eisenhower was President; we have already referred to public reaction to placing the Un-American Activities Committee on the air in Lansing, Michigan, in 1954. Whether such telecasts will resume when and if the Republicans regain control of the House remains to be seen.

Perhaps the most violent reaction to the non-broadcasting of Congressional committee hearings occurred on February 15, 1966, when Fred Friendly, president of CBS News, resigned because of his network's policies in this area. Explaining his action, Friendly observed in a letter to William Paley and Frank Stanton that "I am resigning because CBS News did not carry the Senate Foreign Relations Committee hearings (on February 10) when Ambassador George Kennan testified on Vietnam." Ironically, Friendly had previously taken a stand favoring selective rather than gavel-to-gavel coverage of such events as political conventions. The position of John A. Schneider, Friendly's superior, relative to the February 10 telecast was that (1) the hearing contained much repetitive material; (2) its audience was relatively low; (3) CBS would perform a greater service by telecasting highlights for the evening audience. Friendly, however, charged that Schneider's decision had been based on business rather than news considerations, that the action had made a "mockery" of CBS's campaign for live coverage access to Congressional proceedings, and that in general the CBS news division had been subjected to a "form of emasculation."

When the opportunity to broadcast Senate Vietnam hearings—this time with Secretary of State Dean Rusk testifying—arose again in March 1968, CBS restricted itself to an hour-long summary (twice the length of that of ABC), while NBC decided to carry the testimony live during the two-day hearings. Fred Friendly commented, "It's the same thing all over again. This situation is a small tragedy." Although NBC was forced to give up about \$550,000 in commercial fees, Nielsen ratings in the New York City area revealed that the Rusk hearings outdrew the competing entertain-

ment shows on CBS, a statistic which stands as a hopeful sign that the public sometimes does place enlightenment ahead of entertainment.

#### NOTES ON SOURCES

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## 4/Commentary, Editorializing, and Propaganda

### *Introduction*

Unlike television, news analysts did not proliferate rapidly following the widespread introduction of radio. The slow development of radio commentary was attributable more to newspaper hostility than to political pressure, while advertisers showed little interest in news. During the New Deal some conservative commentators such as Boake Carter did suffer because of the latter, but by no stretch of the imagination was every right wing spokesman forced off the air. The National Association of Broadcasters, an industry organization, dealt radio commentary a severe blow in 1939 when it placed news commentators under its restrictions relative to the discussion of controversial public issues, CBS going so far as to abolish radio commentary as such. Yet, such free spirits as H. V. Kaltenborn and others joined forces to organize the Association of Radio News Analysts and, by the end of World War II, news commentators reflecting the entire spectrum of political opinion were expressing their ideas over the airwaves. Significantly, those with the best reputations did not always attract the largest audiences. Following World War II, liberals raised the complaint that news commentators of their persuasion were being forced off the air, but liberal voices continued to be heard, just as conservative voices had been heard during the New Deal. Admittedly, after that date networks did adopt different policies toward staff commentators, ABC and MBS employing a grab-bag approach, NBC and CBS tending more towards neutrality; perhaps the most significant innovation relative to radio commentary in

recent years has been NBC's "Monitor," with its flexible programming. Scholarly analysis of news commentary during the radio years has revealed that listeners are not always able to discriminate between straight news and personal opinion, and also that commentators, aside from their political philosophies, vary widely in their literary styles and "pet" subjects. Unfortunately, television commentary has not been analyzed as thoroughly as radio commentary, but it is obvious that, apart from such outspoken advocates as Edward R. Murrow and Howard K. Smith, there is a definite trend toward moderation or, more cynically, toward overt neutrality masking hidden prejudices which occasionally bubble to the surface. The presence of a visual image, of course, reduces the need for commentary; in addition, the advocacy of extremist political views tends to alienate sponsors.

During the 1930's the activities of radio commentators, together with the hostility of newspapers, stifled the development of radio editorializing. Whereas the National Association of Broadcasters set back news commentary with its 1939 restrictions on the discussion of controversial issues, it was the Federal Communications Commission that limited radio editorializing with its 1941 Mayflower ruling, against which the NAB fought. Although Colonel Robert R. McCormick and a few others defied the Mayflower decision, the FCC did not reverse it until 1949. As commentary declined as a vital force, editorializing gained, even winning the active support of the FCC. Still, as Mary Cusack has pointed out, stations have held back from full-fledged editorializing; here again, as with news commentary, there is the fear that one might offend potential or actual sponsors. There also has been some Congressional opposition to editorializing, especially from Senator Ralph Yarborough of Texas. Those stations who do editorialize, moreover, generally concentrate on state and local issues rather than national ones and ordinarily refrain from endorsing candidates. Various local studies dealing with broadcast editorials have reached widely differing conclusions; the New Orleans study tended to be positive and optimistic, the Baton Rouge study, negative and pessimistic. In general, the unfortunate trend towards brevity in political addresses has been mirrored in a corresponding terseness and compactness in broadcast editorials. If rebuttals are rarely offered, it is

partly because they are not always requested. Obviously, a number of editorial campaigns have borne fruit, but one must admit objectively that a number have been duds, and these the stations prefer to sweep under the rug. This makes an overall assessment of the effectiveness of broadcast editorials difficult. At times editorializers have been greeted with ostracism, even violence. Broadcast editorials may or may not be longer than those in newspapers, depending upon the circumstances, although the repetition of an editorial is a much more frequent occurrence on radio and television than it is in the newspapers.

Compared with the radio commentators of the 1930's, the most significant thing about Father Charles Coughlin was that he changed his position on a number of personalities and issues, yet retained his audience. It has been said, partly as a result of this, that Coughlin would never have been Coughlin without the radio. Franklin Roosevelt and Huey Long, his two chief radio rivals, were not always consistent either, but they probably did fewer flip-flops than he. Historians have had difficulty categorizing Coughlin relative to his political philosophy, and perhaps he preferred it this way, being content to be a messiah who was to lead the American people out of the wilderness. Demagogue that he was, there is no question but that Coughlin had a strong influence on what Congress did and did not do, his listeners deluging that body relative to such issues as the World Court and the Patman bonus bill. (On the other hand, his showing in the Presidential election of 1936 was a weak one.) Ironically, the Catholic priest who was supposed to love mankind finally lost his hold on public opinion because of his hatred of the Jews, although technically he ran afoul of the National Association of Broadcasters' 1939 ruling vis-à-vis the purchase of air time for the discussion of controversial public issues. Coughlin's fall from favor was rapid thereafter, and he withdrew from radio in the summer of 1940.

While radio commentary and radio propaganda first blossomed on a full scale during the 1930's, the former declined with the arrival of television. Radio propaganda, though, continues unabated, as the financially well-heeled radical right daily saturates the airwaves with its messages. There have been right-wing radio station owners, such as G. A. "Dick" Richards, but right-wing

radio commentators have been far more common; the FCC cracked down on the former, but not on the latter. Perhaps the best-known of the radical right radio programs was "Life Line," financed by the oil billionaire H. L. Hunt. "Life Line" incurred the wrath of many liberal critics because it pretended to be fair, unlike its successor, "Facts Forum." One of the most significant aspects of radical right programs in general is the frequent fusion of politics and religion, the Reverend Carl McIntire and the evangelist Billy James Hargis being prime examples. An additional indication of how well-heeled the radical right is financially can be seen in its invasion of the highly expensive medium of television as well as radio. The effectiveness of radical right broadcasts is difficult to measure, but it is noteworthy that by 1964 they had incurred the active opposition of liberal Democratic and Republican groups. Senator Barry Goldwater may not have been elected President in that year, and conservatism may have been dealt a setback, but one could never tell this from the increasing proliferation of radical right broadcasts. The FCC remains tolerant, as in its ruling relative to the two Alabama stations and the anti-nuclear test ban treaty broadcasts.

In retrospect, the failure of the New Deal to propagandize as effectively abroad as at home seems curious, despite the isolationist temper of the American people at that time and the lack of precedent for a government shortwave station. Public opinion in this country at that time was more pro-British than pro-Axis, for which reason the radio broadcasts of the latter to the United States were probably doomed to fail regardless of their quality. Dr. Goebbels, the German propaganda minister, may have been a formidable figure, but most of the German radio propagandists were mediocre misfits. As for Italian radio broadcasts, Radio Rome's efforts differed from those of Radio Berlin in that they had only one prominent broadcaster, Ezra Pound, and also in that they abandoned their attempts to win American friendship at an earlier date. British radio propaganda had its faults, but many prominent British personalities took part in these broadcasts, while American stations frequently rebroadcast BBC news programs. Polls differed in their assessment of the number of Americans who listened to shortwave broadcasts, but it was clear that they tuned in on British programs far more frequently than on Axis ones.

Turning to the Voice of America, this organization did not get going until 1942, but by 1945 it had become the largest operation of its type in history. Since that date it has become something of a political football, suffering from the attacks of Senator Joseph McCarthy, Russian jamming of its broadcasts, and occasional internal bickering. Following 1953, the VOA became less of a propaganda vehicle, for better or for worse. Recent years have witnessed Henry Loomis' resignation as director because he was not allowed to include criticisms of America in his broadcasts, and a later director, John Chancellor, instituting a "new sound" featuring a brighter, faster broadcasting technique. Television propaganda has been a separate operation since 1958, but it still probably does not rival radio propaganda in its impact, although the televised Great Debates of 1960 were widely imitated abroad.

### *Fact and Opinion in Newscasts*

Despite the fact that programs of news and commentary currently dot the schedules of every radio and television station in the country, this phenomenon is a development which has evolved slowly over the years rather than being widespread from the beginning. As Mary Ann Cusack has pointed out, "In the late 20's . . . news was of small importance to the commercial purposes of broadcasters; advertisers were little interested in news because the audience was light." Newspapers, too, were fearful that the radio might usurp their role, and in 1933 the three major news services (AP, UP, INS) suspended the furnishing of information to radio stations; the result was that the latter had to gather their own news. The following year the Press Radio Plan went into effect. Under this, radio news commentators were limited to generalization and background of news situations, news programs were to be unsponsored, and stations were to carry only ten minutes of news a day. In addition, the news was supposed to be published in a newspaper before it was broadcast over a radio station.

News commentators in the current sense of the term did not make their appearance until the mid-1930's, by which time the New Deal was well under way. Some were pro-Roosevelt, some anti-Roosevelt. As we noted in the chapter on radio and politics, relative to the election of 1936, liberals were quite disturbed by

the commentaries of such conservatives as Boake Carter. Carter, who had been on the radio for a number of years, had at one time been friendly to the President. When he charged that the Roosevelt Administration was attempting to generate a pro-war atmosphere after the Japanese had sunk the American gunboat *Panay*, highly placed governmental officials decided to crack down on Carter. The Chairman of the Federal Communications Commission informed the Washington managers of the various broadcasting companies that news programs should be impartial; Carter's program clearly did not meet this standard. Only the fear of drawing attention to him kept the State Department from demanding regular time on the air to answer his charges. As a result Carter concluded that he had to pull his punches, and his radio rating subsequently dropped. When General Foods did not renew his contract, CBS "discovered" that there was no satisfactory time spot open for him. Another anti-New Deal radio commentator who bit the dust around this time was General Hugh Johnson, the former New Deal administrator. Johnson was replaced on NBC shortly before the 1938 election by Jay Franklin, a staunch Roosevelt admirer.

When the National Association of Broadcasters placed certain restrictions on the discussion of controversial public issues in 1939, it ruled that "News commentators as well as other newscasters shall be governed by these provisions." CBS took this advice to heart, in 1943 abolishing news commentators as such and substituting in their place supposedly objective analysts. In this connection Paul White, the head of the CBS news department, asserted: "The public interest cannot be served by giving selected news analysts a preferred and one-sided position in the realm of public controversy." A year previously, a half-dozen radio commentators led by H. V. Kaltenborn had banded together to form the Association of Radio News Analysts. Point six of their code of ethics was: "The Association opposes all censorship of broadcast material except in so far as duly required by government authorities in the interest of public safety during an emergency." This constituted a clear affirmation that the news commentator had the right and even the duty to express his views on controversial public issues.

In any event, restrictions or not, news commentators continued to flourish. According to a poll taken in 1945, the most popular were Gabriel Heatter, H. V. Kaltenborn, Lowell Thomas, Walter Winchell, Drew Pearson, and Fulton Lewis. During the same year, *Variety* made a comprehensive survey of the news commentary scene, rating 30 newsmen according to their political philosophy. *Variety* found that 5 were conservatives, 10 were middle-of-the-roads, 4 were liberals, and 6 were reactionaries, placing the remaining 5 in miscellaneous categories ranging from no political slant to Gabriel Heatter's "confused" status. In the opinion of *Variety*, the six best qualified analysts were H. V. Kaltenborn, Edward R. Murrow, Raymond Swing, Cecil Brown, Major George Fielding Eliot, and John W. Vandercook; none of these approached Walter Winchell's top 15.5 in the current Hooper ratings. (Winchell was judged by *Variety* to be a qualified reporter.) *Variety*'s survey also indicated that news programs were dropping in popularity, a phenomenon which it attributed to the ending of the war.

By this time the more liberally oriented commentators were experiencing the same problems that Boake Carter and other conservatives faced during the 1930's. As Quincy Howe observed in 1943, "Insofar as commentators do slant their news, those who slant it away from the New Deal have found favor with sponsors and the public alike. Those who take the New Deal line, so popular a few years ago, now find they get into trouble with their sponsors if not with their audience or with the stations or networks over which they speak." Of course, not every right-wing commentator prospered during the 1940's; Upton Close, for instance, was off the air more than on it. Yet in 1950 the *Nation* complained that "The liberal news commentators drop away—Shirer, Vandercook, St. John, Walsh, Stowe, and others." The inevitable result has been a growing tone of moderation among analysts. As Norbert Muhlen noted in 1947, a study of the writings of the leading newspaper columnists of the post-war period revealed that they were far more slanted and prejudiced (and original!) than the scripts of the outstanding radio commentators. Nevertheless, controversy occasionally did rear its head, as in the early 1950's when Fulton Lewis and other conservatives defended Senator Joseph McCarthy against a barrage of attack from the liberal camp.

Since the end of World War II, two distinct trends have emerged relative to the staffing of commentators by the major radio networks. The American Broadcasting System adopted the policy of presenting contradictory opinions ranging from one end of the political spectrum to the other, a policy which the Mutual Broadcasting System later copied. Thus during the mid-1950's one could hear such varied commentators over the two networks as Fulton Lewis, George Sokolsky, Martin Agronsky, Frank Edwards, John W. Vandercook, and Elmer Davis. On the other hand, the Columbia Broadcasting System espoused an ideal of objectivity, although during the mid-1950's, as William Pfaff points out, "The CBS News staff could certainly be called 'liberal' or 'internationalist.'" Among the leading CBS newscasters at this time were Edward R. Murrow, Charles Collingwood, Winston Burdett, Edward P. Morgan, Robert Trout, Eric Sevareid, and Lowell Thomas. The fourth network, the National Broadcasting System, was described by Marya Mannes as "a tapestry of neutral tones bordered conspicuously on the one edge by H. V. Kaltenborn and on the other by Clifton Utley, strangely lacking in punch." In the age of television, though, NBC has come to the fore with Huntley and Brinkley.

In 1957 the noted news analyst Quincy Howe published an article entitled "The Rise and Fall of the Radio Commentator," in which he complained that, since 1945, few sponsors have wanted news analysts on any terms—especially "if he is worth his salt and goes in for controversy." Whatever demand there was for commentators was met by the pre-war and wartime supply, of which there was an overabundance. In addition, as Howe pointed out, "a career in radio, with its declining audiences, profits, and influence, has lost much of its former allure." Of course there were a few developments which did advance the cause of radio news analysis, such as NBC's weekend radio program "Monitor" which abandoned the standard practice of programming all radio time into fifteen-minute units, thus allowing each feature to be given as much or as little time as that feature might be worth. Yet this innovation opened the doors to assorted experts who frequently take the place of commentators; more and more of the latter, in fact, have become specialists rather than all-purpose experts.

At this point we might well interject the question of where news ends and commentary begins. In 1957 David Smith completed an experimental study which examined the ability of listeners to discriminate between straight news and personal opinion in a radio news broadcast. The interviewees were all undergraduate students at Michigan State University; eighty subjects listened to the commentary of their favorite news broadcaster, while eighty others tuned in on the same commentary recorded by an anonymous news broadcaster. According to Smith, "These subjects averaged 50.5 per cent correct discriminations between straight news and personal opinion statements at a gross quantitative level of judgment," but "at a qualitative level of judgment they made more correct than incorrect judgments for straight news stories and more incorrect than correct judgments for stories containing statements of personal opinion expressed by the commentator." It is noteworthy that the lowest test scores occurred on those questions involving the recognition of the latter, higher scores being correlated with those questions involving the recognition of labelled opinion. Among those factors which proved to be of little or no consequence were the prestige of the commentator, one's attitude towards controversial issues, scholastic aptitude, and one's interest in current events.

Although most studies of various radio commentators that have appeared in print in the form of books and articles are generally either apologies or attacks, a few more objective analysts have attempted to make a balanced assessment. Perhaps the only comparative study that has been done, however, is the one which Frederick Dowling completed in 1955. Dowling studied five commentators—Edward R. Murrow, Elmer Davis, Fulton Lewis, Lowell Thomas, and Gabriel Heatter—from the standpoint of word choice, sentence characteristics, rhetorical devices, and delivery; he examined the first two of these objectively, the last two subjectively. It was discovered that the five commentators differed significantly in their use of words on various levels of ability and in their use of sentences of various lengths, and differed measurably in their use of sentences classified on the basis of complexity. All five commentators, moreover, made little use of interrogative, exclamatory, and imperative sentences, as well as of quotations,

questions, humor, epigrammatical statements, and ethical, emotional, and logical proof. Dowling concluded that "Each commentator's style can be partially identified by the presence or absence of four or five rhetorical devices which tend to vary with the commentator."

Turning next to studies of individual commentators, the late Fulton Lewis ranks among the most articulate spokesmen for the conservative tradition in the history of radio. In a rather hostile monograph dealing with Lewis' broadcasts during the winter of 1948-9, Sidney Reisberg made the discovery that Lewis did not deal with the most important news every day but stressed instead certain topics which especially interested him, such as internal security, Democratic administrations, and labor. Reisberg correctly aligned Lewis with the isolationist tradition, but his charge that Lewis rarely commented on foreign countries (except for China) does not hold true in the light of Lewis' subsequent broadcasts as the Cold War heated up. In any event, his claim that "Listening to Fulton Lewis seems more fruitfully described as a psychological addiction than a rational reaching out for information and understanding" merely mirrors the extreme liberal viewpoint that conservatives are incapable of thinking as logically as liberals, if indeed they think at all. A less biased tone was that of David Shepard analyzing 121 radio addresses delivered by Henry J. Taylor between 1945 and 1950. Shepard found that out of 486 references, 91 per cent were favorable to policies and people associated with a Republican or conservative position, while out of 1,995 references, 89 per cent were unfavorable to policies and people associated with a Democratic or liberal position. In terms of a positive program, Taylor frequently praised the good, the economical, and the American, while his prime scapegoat was the politician, especially the spenders, the socializers, and the bamboozlers. Taylor may have been as conservative as Lewis, one might add, but he never aroused as much hostility among the liberals as the latter did.

As for the other side of the political fence, one of the more controversial of the liberal radio commentators was Raymond Swing, whom many of his critics referred to as "the voice of the State Department." In a comprehensive study of Swing's radio broadcasts

between 1939 and 1945, Robert Smith came to the conclusion that Swing indeed favored the Roosevelt Administration, and omitted material that presented FDR in an unfavorable light; nevertheless, these broadcasts did not contain much information that did not appear at the same time in the *New York Times*, which seemingly indicates that Swing did not have access to inside data, his nickname aside. Smith listed puritanism, liberalism, and internationalism among the basic ingredients of Swing's political philosophy. World government was the topic of a special series of broadcasts which Swing presented in the autumn of 1945. As we noted previously, in 1945 *Variety* listed Swing among the six best qualified analysts then broadcasting; another commentator whose name appeared on this list was Cecil Brown. R. Franklin Smith, who examined Brown's radio scripts for the period 1940-1958, found that he was a liberal in domestic affairs and an internationalist in foreign affairs, devoting much more air time to the latter than to the former. As for specific issues, Brown took a hostile stance towards Nazi Germany, supported President Truman in his feud with General MacArthur, and strongly favored integration. Significantly, in asserting that "Psychologically, (Brown) primarily employed emotional appeals, 'loaded' stereotypes, suggestion and repetition," Smith mirrored Sidney Reisberg's criticism of Brown's political opposite, Fulton Lewis. This provides further evidence that the average person regards as rational and logical only those who think as he does.

In contrast to such news analysts from the age of radio as Lewis, Taylor, Swing, and Brown, the average television news commentator today is as a rule much less outspoken than his counterpart on radio two or three decades ago. This is partly because the addition of a visual image reduces the need for commentary, and partly because extreme ideas might alienate sponsors who purchase large and expensive blocks of television time. Perhaps the most notable exception to this dictum that the commentator should be neutral was Edward R. Murrow, whose clash with Senator Joseph McCarthy was one of the highlights of political television. (We have examined this episode at length in the chapter on television and politics.) Among those who have expressed the difference between radio and television most adroitly is the brilliant com-

mentator, Eric Sevareid, who has observed that "The most personal form of journalism ever known, in terms of the immediate communicator and the immediate listener, has become depersonalized in its processing steps, so many are the people and the separate functions that become involved." Another of the more ideologically committed television commentators is Howard K. Smith of ABC, who included a two-minute interview with Alger Hiss during a somewhat premature political obituary of Richard Nixon on one of his "News and Comment" programs. Smith is still on the air, but his sponsor at that time deserted him at the end of the year.

Another reason why there are fewer television commentators today is that there are fewer television networks than there once were radio networks. Mutual has no television affiliate, while as late as 1961 Hugh Fraser dismissed ABC from a discussion of television commentators "until it moved more actively into competition with the others in the field of news and public affairs coverage." One of ABC's chief problems was that it employed admittedly superior reporters such as John Scali and William Lawrence who unfortunately lack television charisma. Dwight Eisenhower's press secretary, James Hagerty, headed the ABC news department during the early 1960's. Since that date ABC has built up its staff of television news commentators, adding such prominent names as Howard K. Smith to its roster, but ABC still runs third behind CBS and NBC, its evening news program until recently being of only fifteen minutes' duration.

In May 1961, shortly after the NBC news team of Chet Huntley and David Brinkley had become the public favorite, *Television Quarterly* published a "Performer Popularity Study" of the profession which measured each commentator's familiarity and his "TVQ Score." The latter represented the percentage of persons familiar with a performer who considered him to be one of their "favorites." Significantly, Brinkley (89) and Huntley (88) led in the first category, followed by three CBS commentators, Douglas Edwards (85), Walter Cronkite (83), and Charles Collingwood (61). Bracketed at 50 were Robert Trout of CBS and two of the more ideologically oriented commentators, Eric Sevareid of CBS and Howard K. Smith, then of CBS. As for the "TVQ Score," the top four remained the same, except for Edwards and Cronkite, who

changed positions; Smith ranked fifth, Severeid seventh, and Trout ninth, with Frank McGee and Ray Scherer, both of NBC, standing sixth and eighth respectively. (McGee and Scherer had tied for ninth place, with 42 on the familiarity scale.) Of all the newscasters rated, Charles Collingwood had the most irregular scores, ranking fifth in familiarity but only fourteenth in "TVQ Score." The only ABC commentator to appear in the top seventeen in either category was Bill Shadell, a significant commentary on that network's news programming at that time.

An even more noteworthy indication of the general state of television news commentary in recent years was the failure of the Alfred I. Du Pont Awards Foundation to name a winner for its annual broadcast commentator award of 1964. This was the first such failure in the 23-year history of the award; among the previous winners had been David Schoenbrun, David Brinkley, Clifton Utley, Chet Huntley, Eric Severeid, and Pauline Frederick. According to the six-man committee, no commentator for that year was found "who is willing to give forthright expression to his political insights and convictions" and therefore worthy of the award; in this connection it noted the growth of "group news enterprise and the institutionalized editorial." It was obviously the opinion of this committee that the latter development is good neither for the American public nor the broadcasting industry.

The evening news program has become the focal point of television news commentary, in contrast to the radio years, when one might listen to a series of fifteen-minute programs starring different commentators, often on different networks. Today most people choose between either Walter Cronkite of CBS or David Brinkley and Chet Huntley of NBC, none of whom is overtly identified with a specific political philosophy. At times these programs have been direct competitors, filling the same half-hour slot. We have previously noted how, after World War II, NBC's radio news commentary lagged; by uniting Huntley and Brinkley, NBC television news forged ahead of CBS television news around 1960, despite the fact that, from the numerical point of view, CBS still maintained its lead in reporters. One significant aspect of NBC's lead is that its two commentators, Huntley and Brinkley, tend to be showmen, while Walter Cronkite of CBS tends to be more of a straight news

analyst. Those in search of the truth may find solace in the fact that television commentary is not dominated by right-wing ideologists like Fulton Lewis or left-wing ideologists like Raymond Swing, as radio once was, but the subtle innuendoes that all too frequently mar even the CBS newscasts makes one wonder whether the old system of overt ideological commitment that prevailed in the age of radio was not superior.

### *Broadcasting and Editorializing*

The question of whether radio stations should editorialize or not remained largely an academic issue down to the time of the Mayflower decision of 1941, as most of them during the 1920's and 1930's showed little enthusiasm for thus expressing their opinions. Entertainment was the major function of radio during its formative years. Instead of broadcast editorials, stations presented the opinions of various news commentators—men like Kaltenborn, Heatter, Winchell, and Thomas—whose regular programs reflected strong personal points of view on numerous controversial subjects. As radio was competing with newspapers for advertising revenue, many radio executives felt that it could attract this more readily by being impartial. Still another reason why radio stations were slow to editorialize was pointed out by William Hand in a 1935 article. Comparing radio to the newspapers, Hand observed that "Unlike the periodical, it has a quasi-public duty. It . . . owes the people the duty of permitting their thoughts to circulate on its air with no editorial bias and with no editorial commendation or condemnation, but with impartial and total hospitality." At that time, too, as Hand also noted, there were not enough radio stations in any given locality to represent all the various political and economic interests. The proliferation of stations in recent years, of course, makes this argument less valid today.

The landmark case relative to radio editorials was the Mayflower decision of 1941 which involved station WAAB in Boston. When that station applied for the renewal of its license, the Federal Communications Commission discovered that WAAB had broadcast editorials supporting candidates for political office or taking stands on various controversial public issues. Although the FCC

did renew WAAB's license, it also ruled that WAAB was to refrain from such actions in the future. In the words of the FCC, "A truly free radio cannot be used to advocate the causes of the licensee. It cannot be used to support the candidacies of his friends. It cannot be devoted to the support of principles he happens to regard most favorably. In brief, a broadcaster cannot be an advocate." This ruling, however, did not affect the right of news commentators to editorialize. Some radio station owners, in fact, continued to express their opinions over the airwaves; perhaps the most flagrant example was Colonel Robert R. McCormick who delivered a frankly labelled "weekly editorial" over his WGN outlet during the "Chicago Theater of the Air" broadcast every Saturday night. One of McCormick's favorite targets was Franklin D. Roosevelt.

Following World War II, the National Association of Broadcasters began a campaign to persuade the FCC to revoke its Mayflower ruling. In June 1947 Cornell University filed a petition for a declaratory ruling relative to its right to broadcast its opinions on various controversial issues over WHCU; the result of this agitation was that in September the FCC called for hearings to be held early the following year. Dr. Frank Stanton of CBS, who testified at these, announced that his network was revoking its abdication of the right to editorialize, a renunciation dating from the 1930's. With some cynicism the *Yale Law Journal* observed that "In retrospect, the turbulence surrounding the doctrine appears to have been a tempest in a teapot. Its demise, in practical terms, does not significantly alter either the ability of station owners to advance their views, or the extent to which the public is able to hear all sides of controversial issues." Even more disillusioned, the *Nation* noted, relative to the hearings, that "Their full importance can be appreciated only if we understand the ulterior motives and far-flung ambitions of the National Association of Broadcasters under its present leadership. Victory at these hearings will bring the NAB one step nearer its goal—radio's complete emancipation from federal regulation in the public interest. That is the reason why our very system of broadcasting may be in jeopardy."

On June 1, 1949, the FCC handed down its eagerly awaited ruling on broadcast editorials. The gist of this was that stations

would be allowed to editorialize provided that they maintain an overall fairness. This body, though, warned that "The opportunity of licensees to present such views as they may have on matters of controversy may not be utilized to achieve a partisan or one-sided presentation of issues." In a separate opinion, Commissioner Jones raised the point that the majority had failed to resolve the question of whether the commentators that a station carried were fair, but this question raises the further question of whether a station identifies with the opinions of its commentators.

Nevertheless, stations were slow to editorialize. According to a survey conducted by the Television Information Office, with one exception the 157 stations which were editorializing in 1963 had begun this practice no earlier than 1953; the number which initiated this practice during the years that followed were: 1953, 1; 1954, 1; 1955, 3; 1956, 5; 1957, 4; 1958, 20; 1959, 18; 1960, 22; 1961, 32; 1962, 42; and 1963, 8. Among the explanations which one might offer for the rapid growth of editorializing, beginning around 1958, were the example which the forceful editorials of those who had pioneered had set and the increasingly favorable attitude of the FCC. According to a survey conducted by *Broadcasting* in 1958, about a third of the responding stations were broadcasting editorials.

In 1959 the National Association of Broadcasters set up a standing committee on editorializing. During the same year the American Civil Liberties Union reversed its ten-year-old policy of opposing editorializing by radio and television stations; in this connection the ACLU observed that "To deny stations permission to editorialize is not furthering public discussion. It is, in effect, a blockade against much needed discussion." Returning to the FCC, in July 1960 that body issued a report which specifically listed editorializing as one of the "major elements usually necessary to meet the public interest, needs and desires of the community in which the station is located." That March the first television editorial was broadcast in New York City over WCBS-TV; this consisted of an attack on the city administration's proposal to legalize off-track betting on horse races. The CBS network, however, took the position that member stations could not editorialize on national issues with no peculiarly local implications, a restriction which provoked much criticism.

During the same year Mary Ann Cusack completed a study of editorialization in broadcasting "predicated upon the hypothesis that broadcasters have been granted the right to editorialize, but in the ten years following the Federal Communications Commission's decision in favor of their plea have failed to make adequate use of the privilege." Her monograph was based both on national surveys and on interviews with influential people in the field. Cusack found that few commentators had assumed the role of "pulpiters" and that networks had leaned over backward to remain above suspicion, with the result that only a limited amount of editorializing had taken place. One of her most important conclusions was that the broadcasting industry was more subservient to sponsors than the newspaper industry was to advertisers, and that newspaper publishers "appear not at all apprehensive about the whims of individual space buyers." As for Cusack's generalization that broadcasting stations often lack the necessary equipment with which to editorialize, this hypothesis is less valid today than it was. If, as she noted, sociologists feel that there is a lack of public demand for the broadcast editorial, it may well be because personalities rather than issues dominate political television today.

Between 1960 and 1962 the number of stations which broadcast editorials for or against candidates for public office increased from 62 to 148. The new President of the National Association of Broadcasters, LeRoy Collins, strongly endorsed editorializing at the NAB conventions of 1961 and 1962; at the NAB convention held at Washington in 1961, President John Kennedy asserted that "Broadcasting has new and untried possibilities for education." The new chairman of the FCC, Newton Minow, also took a stand in favor of more editorializing at the NAB Editorializing Conference of March 1962, while another FCC commissioner, Frederick W. Ford, expressed similar sentiments.

This enthusiasm, though, was not universally shared by members of Congress. The Yarborough Report released in April 1962 by the Senate Subcommittee on Freedom of Communications, for instance, recommended that Section 326 of the Communications Act should be amended so as to provide that nothing in it "shall prevent the Federal Communications Commission, acting upon a complaint in an 'editorial fairness' case, to direct a licensee to make time available and present the opposing position or a particular

person in order that the paramount right of the public to be informed on all sides of public issues be preserved." The probable impact of such a provision on broadcast editorializing, of course, is obvious. The following year a minority report of a communications subcommittee of the House Commerce Committee went so far as to charge that "Our friends in the broadcasting industry, having been given merely a glimpse of power in the political arena, are now hungrily pursuing its ultimate; the right to hound people out of office who do not please them, the right to openly groom a successor for an official in disfavor, the right to control completely what an official or candidate may say to his audience in his own behalf, the right to use the airwaves to argue for its own political point of view, its own candidates, and with impunity." Moreover, Representative John Bennett, the ranking Republican on the committee, challenged the right of the FCC to permit editorialization without specific permission from Congress or a ruling from the courts.

An FCC notice released on July 26, 1963 marked the next milestone in the evolution of FCC policy. This notice established the precedent of ruling immediately on fairness cases instead of waiting until the license of the station in question was up for renewal. In the Billings case, the FCC took the position that a Montana station, KBMY, had attacked the establishment of public utility districts in that state in a series of editorials without giving prior or immediate notice to a Mr. Ellis, who was among its victims. Likewise, in the Times Mirror Broadcasting Company case, the FCC reprimanded a California station for allowing two commentators during a regularly scheduled program to attack Governor Edmund Brown, then running for re-election against Richard Nixon, without sending a transcript of the program to him immediately and presenting an opportunity to his spokesmen to offer a rebuttal.

Regardless of this ruling, about twice as many stations reported that they editorialized on behalf of some candidate in 1964 than had done so in 1960. *Broadcasting* observed, relative to the former year, that it "will go down in broadcast annals as the year in which broadcasters took sides with on-the-air editorials favoring one Presidential candidate or the other." Yet not every television station has thrown itself into the election fray at the slightest provoca-

tion; one prominent exception is WTVJ of Miami, Florida, that state's first television station and a pioneer in broadcast editorials. In explaining WTVJ's reluctance to endorse political candidates, General Manager Lee Rutwitch pointed out in 1963 that the proven effectiveness of his station's editorials would give unfair advantage to any candidate for public office whom it endorsed.

Despite its overt encouragement of editorializing in recent years, the Federal Communications Commission has nevertheless investigated several cases of alleged abuse. Two stations that suffered in this connection were WRAL-TV in Raleigh, North Carolina, a conservatively oriented station, and WFTV-TV in Orlando, Florida, a liberally oriented one; each considered itself to be an aggressive editorializer, broadcasting editorials five days a week. In a decision handed down in July 1964 the FCC held that the Raleigh station, whose license it renewed unanimously, had failed to demonstrate which network programs it had carried to counterbalance points of view expressed in the station's editorials, and that a local public affairs program theoretically serving as an outlet for contrasting viewpoints was not serving that function. The Orlando station later had its license renewed, but it also received a letter from the FCC criticizing it for alleged unfairness in its editorial policy. Obviously displeased at being thus censured, President and General Manager Joseph Brechner of WFTV-TV urged the removal of "all editorial fairness restraints upon editorialists."

Elsewhere other broadcast editorials have recently attracted attention, but in ways that have reflected more favorably on the station. In February 1966 Governor William Scranton of Pennsylvania praised WCAU of Philadelphia for helping to push a bill through the state legislature limiting the amount of wood alcohol used in the manufacture of canned heat, while several months later WJXT-TV of Jacksonville, Florida, triggered off a six-month investigation of alleged corruption and waste of public funds which the other media had largely ignored. In December of that year the three King stations in the Pacific Northwest offered the first broadcast editorials opposing the official American policy towards South-eastern Asia.

On August 14, 1967, the Federal Communications Commission released its latest position paper relative to political editorializing.

According to this ruling, "Where a licensee, in an editorial, (i) endorses or (ii) opposes a legally qualified candidate or candidates the licensee shall, within 24 hours after the editorial, transmit to respectively (i) the other qualified candidate or candidates for the same office or (ii) the candidate opposed in the editorial (1) notification of the date and the time of the editorial; (2) a script or tape of the editorial; and (3) an offer of a reasonable opportunity for a candidate or a spokesman of the candidate to respond over the licensee's facilities." In the event that a broadcast editorial was presented within seventy-two hours prior to the day of the election, though, the FCC held that the subject of the editorial must be given sufficient *advance* warning. One must add that stands on issues rather than personalities do not come under the scope of this edict, for example, the endorsement or non-endorsement of a municipal bond issue by a station.

Next of all, let us briefly examine five studies of broadcast editorializing, two limited to Louisiana, three national in scope. The first of these is a self-study which WDSU of New Orleans completed in 1961. According to Executive Vice-President A. Louis Reed, WDSU editorials tended to be relatively short—approximately two minutes in length—but each editorial was broadcast twice a day on television and five times a day on radio; not only were there no complaints about the duplication, but WDSU also calculated that its editorials "probably (reach) five to ten times the number of persons who read local newspaper editorials." In the case of controversial editorials, the station sought responsible spokesmen to broadcast rebuttals during the regular editorial periods, but WDSU, for various reasons, broadcast only about one rebuttal for every eight editorials. Among WDSU's outstanding editorials were three which attacked certain business dealings of the Chief Justice of the Louisiana Supreme Court. Besides winning the first award for editorials presented by the Radio-Television News Directors Association, they pressured the Chief Justice into severing certain business ties and appointing a commission to draw up a code of judicial ethics for the state.

The second of these studies, conducted in the Baton Rouge area, followed in the wake of a series of broadcast editorials delivered by

President Douglas Manship of WBRZ in the winter of 1960-1 criticizing certain actions of Governor Jimmy Davis and the state legislature. According to this study, 58 per cent of the 1,414 individuals polled asserted that they were aware that television editorializing was going on, while an overwhelming majority of the respondents who knew that these editorials were broadcast correctly matched them with the station over which they were delivered. Respondents with an opinion agreed by a two-to-one margin that station owners should have the right to editorialize. Interviewees also felt (66.8 per cent yes, 23.7 per cent no, 9.5 per cent undecided) that a station owner who editorialized is obligated to offer free time for a rebuttal, and by a smaller margin (51.3 per cent yes, 39.1 per cent no, 9.5 per cent undecided) that he also should seek out the opposing point of view.

Nevertheless, only 35 per cent of those interviewed watched television editorials regularly, while only 5 of the 13 issues which had been editorialized about were identified by more than 10 per cent of the respondents, the proposed one per cent increase in the sales tax evoking the highest degree of recall. It might be conjectured that in a city such as New York the percentages obtained on these questions might be higher, but the Baton Rouge data seemingly indicates that, despite the high per capita level of television viewing in this country, those programs which attempt to make listeners think do not command the attention or enthusiasm of many people. An equally negative finding was that only 55.2 per cent of those who were aware of editorializing felt that television editorials should be continued, while 33.1 per cent—a third—were of the opinion that they should be abandoned.

Broadening our focus to the national scene, in 1962 *Broadcasting* conducted a survey of 350 editorializing stations. Despite the fact that 53 per cent reported that they editorialized daily, only half of the 205 respondents had been editorializing for more than a year or two. Significantly, five out of six of the editorializing stations felt that they had improved their position as a competitor to local newspapers by editorializing, an obvious reason for their continuing the practice. Approximately half of the stations carried editorials from three to eight times a day, demonstrating that a

considerable number did go in for the practice enthusiastically. On the other hand, only one out of five of the editorializing stations had ever endorsed candidates for public office.

These figures might be compared with those obtained during a NAB survey conducted the previous year which evoked 1,723 responses. This study indicated that 61 per cent of the respondents were editorializing, while an additional 35 per cent planned to begin within a year; 27 per cent of those editorializing did so daily, 12 per cent weekly, and 65 per cent intermittently. Here, too, there were indications of limited political involvement, as only 11 per cent of the stations that replied reported that they took stands for or against a political candidate.

Still another survey was conducted by the Television Information Office in 1963. It involved responses from 169 television stations in 40 states, the District of Columbia, and the Virgin Islands. The only states not represented in this sampling were Alaska, Arkansas, Delaware, Idaho, Montana, New Hampshire, New Jersey, Rhode Island, Vermont, and Wyoming. A third of the respondents to the question: "How often do you prepare new editorials?" asserted that they did so daily, while a quarter did so weekly. Significantly, 87 per cent of total editorial time was confined to local subjects, 59 per cent of the stations restricting themselves to local editorials exclusively. As for the length of the editorials, 80 out of 144 stations which supplied information in this connection stated that two to three minutes was the average length. One may recall that WDSU broadcast only one rebuttal for every eight editorials; this figure may seem abnormally low, but it far exceeds the 5.7 per cent average response in the TIO survey to the question: "What percentage of your editorials provokes valid requests for air time from public officials or other bona fide spokesmen?" Obviously, this poor showing is not attributable solely to station negligence.

Significantly, in 1966 the NAB conducted another study which disclosed that there had been no appreciable increase in the extent of broadcast editorializing in the last several years. Of the 1,276 radio stations replying, 57 per cent reported that they editorialized, as did 56 per cent of the 247 television stations. A new finding of consequence was that those stations with the largest gross revenues

are the most likely to editorialize. The frequency of editorializing was as follows: daily—television stations 39 per cent and radio stations 25 per cent; weekly—22 and 14 per cent respectively; intermittently—39 and 60 per cent respectively. Over two-thirds of both the radio and television stations reported that their latest editorial had been on a local issue. Again the percentage which had ever endorsed a political candidate—10 per cent—was small.

One might well ask what guidelines a station is supposed to follow in preparing editorials. There is nothing in the NAB television code under editorializing as such, but in the separate "Editorializing on the Air," which first appeared in 1959, the NAB offers some pointers on this subject. Part I sets forth the following criteria:

Broadcast editorializing under the supervision of the licensee must be undertaken only after the most careful preparation and diligent effort to assure that the opinion expressed is well informed and well founded. Each editorial should deal with an issue of public interest, local, national or international. The subject of the editorial should be timely and controversy should not deter the decision to editorialize. The editorial must be based on facts assembled by competent personnel conversant with the subject. In keeping with the tradition of responsible broadcasting, fairness is a principal element of a station's editorial policy. To this end, reasonable opportunity must be provided for the expression of opposing views. Whenever individuals or organizations are the subject of an editorial, they should be supplied with a copy of the editorial as soon as practicable. Whenever an editorial position is taken on a political issue or candidate, timing is of the utmost importance in pursuing the standard of fairness. In the designation of a spokesman to reply to an editorial on a political candidate, the licensee should accord preference to the wishes of the opposing candidate. The editorial should be clearly identified as a statement of opinion of the licensee, regardless of who delivers it. The reputation for integrity, responsibility and fairness of the station must stand behind the editorial. The editorial should be clearly distinguished from the news and other program material by an appropriate identification. Editorials should be delivered from a script. A record of the editorial should be made a part of the station's files for a reasonable period, and available to interested parties. The use of on-the-air promotion to call attention to a particular editorial is a factor to be considered in connection with

the criterion of fairness. Consideration should be given to the distribution of copies of the station's editorial to appropriate leaders of the community to contribute to the understanding of matters affecting the community interest.

Finally, one must consider how effective broadcast editorials have been. This is difficult to determine since most stations do not care to publicize their futile campaigns, but there have been a number of cases where there has seemingly been a connection between broadcast editorials and local developments. Obviously it is impossible to evaluate the impact of editorializing on national and international affairs, largely because few editorials are presented in these areas. At the local level, WAVZ of New Haven, Connecticut, scored its first major editorial triumph when it took the lead in the campaign to revitalize that city over the opposition of the city's two newspapers. It may be significant that its head, Daniel W. Keps, has served as chairman of the NAB editorializing committee. By 1962 New Haven was spending over \$200 million annually for redevelopment. An instance of joint editorializing is furnished by the broadcasting stations of Orlando, Florida, who banded together in a successful attempt to promote a \$5.35 million bond issue for civic improvement which had twice before been defeated by the voters. Of a more limited scope were the successful drives by WMFG of Hibbing, Minnesota, to remove the garbage dump from the city limits and by WCAP of Lowell, Massachusetts, to tap the Merrimack River as a water source. KCBS of San Francisco, California, successfully advocated the imposition of a hotel tax, the funds from which were to be used to stimulate tourism; its editorials were cited during the Board of Supervisors debate as among the most eloquent arguments in favor of the tax. Summing up the case for editorializing, Robert Hyland, general manager of KMOX in St. Louis, Missouri, has observed: "As newspaper editorials were weakening in impact, radio editorials gained. They seem to have more force, more vitality, more influence than the cold printed word." One may disagree with the latter assessment, but there is no question that, relative to newspaper editorializing, broadcast editorials are becoming more and more important.

One station that did keep a box score of its editorializing was KABC of Los Angeles, a radio outlet which for the first nine

months of 1967 compiled a batting average of 16 wins, 9 losses, 2 partial victories, and 4 still pending. During this period KABC broadcast approximately 80 editorials covering 31 different topics, some repeated as many as a dozen times a day; the station also had as high a rebuttal rate as any other station in the country, mainly because KABC encouraged such rebuttals. Each editorial (as well as each rebuttal) was broadcast an average of 24 times, a dozen times on AM, and a dozen times on FM. Among the topics editorialized on were a state lottery, the metro water district, consumer protection, registration of lobbyists, Japanese-Americans, Mayor Sam Yorty, the firing of teachers, and the gun lobby. In the words of a station official, "We feel we are sort of the ombudsman for the people of Los Angeles."

Taking stands on controversial public issues, however, may prove highly disadvantageous either to an individual announcer or to a station. One of the prime examples of the negative rewards for expressing one's opinion was the beating into unconsciousness of Robert Goldman of WTTM in Trenton, New Jersey, while he was conducting a telephone interview program on the night of January 26, 1966. Goldman had previously expressed opposition to the war in Vietnam and had also attacked the John Birch Society and the Ku Klux Klan. The victim of more prolonged pressure was Ralph Blumberg, one-time owner of WBOX in Bogalusa, Louisiana, who was forced to sell his station when the Ku Klux Klan threatened his family and intimidated his sponsors. (The station's transmitter was shot at with a high-powered rifle.) According to Blumberg, who had bought WBOX in 1961, he "never editorialized for segregation and for integration. (He) only asked for understanding and for the cooperation of the city's power structure." Nevertheless, his membership in a group which decided to invite former Representative Brooks Hays of Arkansas, a racial moderate, to speak to the people incurred the wrath of the Ku Klux Klan, ultimately driving Blumberg from the state.

### *Father Charles Coughlin, The "Radio Priest"*

Despite the fact that the medium had been available for a decade, the use of the airwaves for the spreading of political propaganda did not become widespread until after the outbreak of the depres-

sion of 1929. However, those engaging in this practice quickly made up for lost time. Aside from politicians like Franklin Roosevelt and Huey Long, probably the most influential of all the radio propagandists was the famous "radio priest," Father Charles Coughlin. No other demagogue of his time linked his career so indissolubly with this medium; prior to his employment of the radio, Coughlin was a nonentity. Many who heard him address meetings in person and watched him in newsreels expressed the opinion that it was the radio which transformed Coughlin into a magnetic performer, rendering irresistible the "radio priest's" flair for the dramatic delivery of words and syllables. In addition, Coughlin's oversimplified diagnosis of what ailed the country made his message accessible to the least intelligent and educated. One of the most striking features of Coughlin's speeches was their overwhelming sense of urgency; in the words of Paul Hutchinson, "He manages always to speak as though his words of warning were being uttered just two jumps ahead of the crack of doom." If FDR soothed the people, Coughlin aroused them.

Nevertheless, there was an ideological metamorphosis on the part of Father Coughlin which is much more difficult to analyze than the reasons for his success as a radio orator. In its simplest form it involved a break with the New Deal. At one time the "radio priest" was quite favorably disposed to President Franklin Roosevelt; he once commented that FDR's ideas were "principles which centuries ago were sounded on Sinai's mountain top and of old were echoed on the hillsides where Christ preached his gospel of brotherhood." During his first ten years of broadcasting, Coughlin espoused the cause of the underdog and attacked big business and the banks in such addresses as the warmly received "Hoover Prosperity Means a New War." As late as 1934 Coughlin lambasted Alfred Smith and the American Liberty League for their critical attitude towards FDR. He was at that time one of the President's strongest supporters.

On February 3, 1935, though, the "radio priest" delivered a scathing radio address in which he charged that "The administration is still engaged in keeping America safe for the plutocrats." In his speech Coughlin criticized FDR for not making any significant change in the financial system, being "in love with the inter-

national bankers," and "wedded basically to the philosophy of the money changers." To remedy this situation Coughlin proposed the creation of a "liberal party where the duly elected representatives will be democratic enough to subscribe to the will of the people." The Union Party, as we pointed out in the chapter on radio and politics, did make its appearance in 1936, but fared poorly at the polls, capturing less than a million votes for its Presidential candidate.

As time went on Coughlin entered into an informal alliance with the legendary newspaper publisher William Randolph Hearst, who had played a key role in obtaining the Democratic presidential nomination for Roosevelt in 1932 but who later had become disillusioned with him. This tacit understanding between Hearst and Coughlin first manifested itself in mutual opposition to the World Court scheme. A subtle point of considerable significance is that Coughlin shifted his hostility from "the banker" to "the international banker" after his involvement with Hearst. The latter had long been an object of scorn in the Hearst press where William Randolph conducted a running feud with the Morgan and Kuhn-Loeb interests.

It appears that Coughlin's cure-all for the nation's economic ills was to terminate the issuing of credit by banks and to nationalize it instead. Like Roosevelt, the "radio priest" advocated a public works program to hasten recovery, although his ten billion dollars worth of projects far outstripped the proposals of the President; Coughlin suggested, among other things, reforestation, development of the St. Lawrence water power, reclamation of marginal lands, slum clearance, and road building. His National Union for Social Justice, however, did not restrict itself to these two reforms, but advocated a whole galaxy of innovations.

At one time Coughlin predicted "the total dissolution of modern capitalism," stating his preference for "American socialism as professed by the intelligent Norman Thomas or an honest Debs." Nevertheless, the "radio priest" at times engaged in a blanket condemnation of all "isms," much in the ideological style of the American Legion. Commentators have labelled Coughlin a radical, but it is difficult to determine whether as a right-wing or left-wing extremist because of his contradictory positions. As for Coughlin

himself, he once observed: "In politics I am neither Republican, Democrat, nor Socialist. I glory in the fact that I am a simple Catholic priest endeavoring to inject Christianity into the fabric of an economic system woven upon the loom of greed by the cunning fingers of those who manipulate the shuttles of human lives for their own selfish purposes."

As we have pointed out, the "radio priest" changed his mind in regard to FDR. He also changed his mind about others on more than one occasion, Henry Ford being a prime example. Thus the *New York Times* on July 26, 1930, proclaimed, "Priest says that Ford aids Communism," while on September 6, 1933, it declared, "Coughlin defends Ford as a patriot." Then there was the National Recovery Administration, a New Deal creation which Coughlin praised in 1934 and then attacked in 1935 in a rather abrupt about-face. It is no easy task to trace the ideological metamorphosis which led him to castigate an individual or institution one day and laud it the next.

In any event, consistent or not, Coughlin's growing hold on the American people is apparent from a comparison of the extent of his operations in 1926 with those in 1935. The "radio priest" apparently began his radio career over a single local station in Detroit in an attempt to relieve his church of a debt burden; his initial mail response was eight letters. Nine years later Coughlin was being heard over an independent network embracing thirty-one stations, the mail response now being a half million letters rather than eight. (This was the largest mail response at that time of any program not offering free prizes.) Many individuals who wrote to Coughlin, in fact, donated money to his cause; in 1934 his weekly radio bill amounted to \$19,000, or \$300,000 for the five winter months. Another costly expense was the employment of a clerical staff of 220 persons who opened, sorted, answered, and filed his mail. Thus the man who attacked big business became a big business himself; by 1935 eight million persons had enrolled in his National Union for Social Justice.

An obvious question in this connection is "How effective was Coughlin in shaping governmental policy?" The answer is that at times he was extremely effective. No less than 200,000 telegrams deluged the Senate following his address attacking the World Court,

while 100,000 messages followed in the wake of his speech advocating the passage of the Patman bonus bill. Relative to the latter, a newspaper syndicate aptly summed up the confused tone of some of these: "Many . . . apparently were sent by people who did not even know what they were talking about; some urged acceptance of the Patman 'report,' others demanded an 'introduction' of the Patman bill, and still others called for an early 'report' of the Patman bill." But there is strength in numbers, and there is little doubt that this avalanche swayed many a Senator's vote.

By the late 1930's Father Coughlin had been drawn into the problem of the United States' attitude toward Nazi Germany. Unfortunately, his analysis of this problem led him to anti-Semitism. According to the "radio priest," the Nazis were justified in identifying the Communists of Germany with the Jewish race, although his supporting evidence consisted solely of the groups of alleged Jews who had supposedly been prominent in the Soviet government in 1917. In December 1938, however, Coughlin claimed that a statement made by Henry Ford the previous week on the Jewish question was "totally inadequate," asserting that Ford was of the opinion that there was "little or no persecution in Germany." Almost immediately Harry Bennett, Ford's personnel manager, attacked Coughlin for reading into Ford's statement something that was not there, although Ford admittedly did have the reputation of being something of an anti-Semite.

By 1938 and 1939 Coughlin definitely had passed the peak of his influence. Nevertheless, a series of polls conducted by the American Institute of Public Opinion during these years throws considerable light on the "radio priest's" appeal to the American listening public. It found in April 1938 that, while only 9 per cent of those interviewed listened to Coughlin regularly, 24 per cent had heard him recently. (Before the 1936 campaign 30 per cent had reported that they listened to Coughlin regularly.) As late as April 1938, 83 per cent of those polled who listened to his radio programs affirmed their approval of the "radio priest's" actions, although this percentage had fallen off somewhat by December. In that month only 5 per cent of those interviewed reported that they listened to Coughlin regularly, another indication of his waning popularity. Another poll conducted in December indicated that he

had a regular listening audience of approximately 3,500,000 almost entirely concentrated in metropolitan areas.

One might date the beginning of the "radio priest's" descent into oblivion from the uttering of certain anti-Semitic remarks late in 1938. As a result of these, three stations demanded that Coughlin submit his scripts in advance so that they could censor them; when he refused to do so, the three stations broke their contract with Aircasters, Inc., a small Detroit advertising agency which handled the Coughlin programs. In retaliation, supporters of the "radio priest" picketed radio station WMCA every Sunday. A more severe blow to Coughlin was the July 11, 1939 ruling of the National Association of Broadcasters that radio time could not be bought for the discussion of controversial public issues. After he had commented on the arms embargo over the air, the NAB ruled on October 3 that he had violated its edict. Now this ruling did not prevent the "radio priest" from discussing an almost infinite number of other issues, but he began to lose stations in steady succession; ten had defected by November 1939, while others began refusing his money. Finally, in the summer of 1940, his advertising agency failed to persuade enough stations to sell time so that the "radio priest" could expound on the fall elections; as a result, Coughlin at last abandoned radio and concentrated his efforts on his publication, *Social Justice*. In the years that followed Coughlin gradually sank from sight but remained active in the priesthood until recently, his days of glory now a generation in the past.

### *The Radical Right Since World War II*

Probably the most significant development relative to radio since 1945, aside from its dethronement by television, has been the infiltration of this medium by the radical right. One of the first broadcasters of this ilk was G. A. "Dick" Richards, whose extremist views eventually led to his running afoul of the Federal Communications Commission. In 1926 Richards purchased the forerunner of what is now WJR in Detroit, later to become the originating station for the broadcasts of Father Charles Coughlin; in 1930 he acquired WGAR in Cleveland, and in 1938 completed his conglomerate of stations by buying KMPC in Los Angeles. On February 9, 1948,

Richards had one of the Los Angeles station's commentators fired, whereupon the victim, Clete Roberts, charged in *Billboard* that Richards was deliberately slanting the news. According to Roberts, Richards had told him that "all Jews are Communists, and most Communists are Jews," instructing him always to place in an unfavorable light the Roosevelts, Henry Wallace, Bernard Baruch, and David Lillienthal, among others. Richards allegedly wrote in a letter that was quoted by *Billboard*: "I believe in making a chump out of the Administration at every turn . . . Give 'em hell where it hurts." Shortly after this exposé the Federal Communications Commission received requests for a hearing on Richards' qualification, his critics hoping that the FCC would not renew his license.

While the FCC was hearing his case, Richards died. On November 28, 1951, the Commission handed down a ruling which approved the transfer of control of his stations to his widow, despite the fact that much testimony had been presented during the investigation to substantiate the charge that Richards had used them to propagandize on behalf of his personal political and economic beliefs. The FCC's ruling was based largely on the fact that the suit had been directed against Richards as an individual, although they did demand assurances from Mrs. Richards that the broadcasting policies of her late husband would not be continued. Thus the FCC in no sense of the term whitewashed the Richards' broadcasting policies.

During the course of the hearings, 280 witnesses testified before the FCC. Whoever wishes to examine the more lurid side of broadcasting might well peruse the 340-page "Proposed Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law of the General Counsel of the Federal Communications Commission," as this document constitutes a worthy companion to *The Prince* in the techniques of distortion and slanting. It was brought out during the hearings that the reason Clete Roberts was fired was because he had reported, after visiting General Douglas MacArthur's headquarters in Tokyo, that the General's hands trembled, while another staff member was forced to resign because he had referred with favor to the mother of President Harry Truman upon her recovery from a near-fatal illness. Aside from the New Deal and the Democratic Party, it appears that Richards' pet hates included Jews, Negroes, and organized labor.

A local target was the UCLA provost, Clarence Dykstra, whom Richards accused of encouraging immoral relations between white female students and Negro and Jewish male students. On the other hand, Richards and his commentators leaned over backward not to criticize Gerald L. K. Smith and the Ku Klux Klan. Richards' attorneys, however, pointed out that as a rule his newscasts did not contain untrue material, even though they abounded in over-emphasis, omission of fact, and distortion.

Far more subtle in his approach has been the legendary Texas oil billionaire Haroldson Lafayette Hunt. Hunt's propaganda has been channeled to the public through two series—"Facts Forum" and "Life Line." The former was set up in 1952, its charter authorizing it to organize "small discussion groups devoted to the study of the art of living, social advancement, the science of government, and agriculture." According to the applications that "Facts Forum" presented to the Internal Revenue Service for tax exempt status in 1951 and 1952, it was engaged in "discussion groups, lending libraries, and polls." For four or five years the commentator on the "Facts Forum" program was Dan Smoot, who eventually fell out with Hunt, partly over pay, partly over the program format. Since the termination of "Facts Forum" in 1957 Hunt has commented: "I don't believe "Facts Forum" did much good. It got a bad reputation by trying to present both sides. Its critics didn't want both sides. They didn't want Bricker and Kefauver on the same program." Smoot's procedure was to spend several minutes presenting what he called the "liberal-Socialist" side of an issue and then to devote an equal amount of time to the "conservative position." As Senator Mike Monroney once commented, it was "neither fact nor forum," while Representative Wayne Hays charged that it gave "both sides of one side."

In contrast, "Life Line," the new Hunt propaganda vehicle, makes no legitimate or spurious claims of impartiality. "Life Line," says Hunt, "is only trying to present one side—the constructive (conservative) viewpoint. That's in public affairs. It is also a part-time religious program. So it has a double-barreled appeal." Among the topics that have been most frequently discussed on "Life Line" are foreign aid, the United Nations, taxes, the State Department, the Supreme Court, urban renewal, immigration laws and labor

unions. Among those who have contributed scripts to "Life Line" have been Senator Harry Byrd, Sr. (on the debt limit), Senator John McClellan (on labor racketeering), and Clarence Manion (on conservatism). When radio stations WKUL of Cullman, Alabama, and WARF of Jasper, Alabama, carried a "Life Line" program that was highly critical of the nuclear test ban treaty, the chairman of the Citizens Committee for a Nuclear Test Ban Treaty demanded equal time; the secretary of the FCC ruled that "If it is (the station's) good faith judgment," that the public does not need to hear the pro-test treaty tape, "then your obligation pursuant to the 'fairness doctrine' has been met." It was estimated in 1964 that "Life Line," through its 331 outlets, reached an audience of five million persons in 45 states.

Viewing our subject in broader perspective, it was calculated in 1964 that "Life Line" and other extreme right-wing programs were heard six thousand times a week in more than five hundred communities. Maine was the only state not inundated by this deluge. Among the programs carried by the most stations were Carl McIntire's "Twentieth-Century Reformation Hour" (530), the "Manion Forum" (313), Billy James Hargis (200), Howard Kershner (148), and Dan Smoot (133). The "Life Line" and McIntire programs ran five days a week for fifteen minutes or half an hour, while the others were shorter. Among the viewpoints stressed on these and other programs were: (1) get the United States out of the United Nations, and the United Nations out of the United States; (2) abolish all foreign aid; (3) abolish unemployment compensation; (4) promote right-to-work laws; (5) impeach Chief Justice Earl Warren; (6) abolish social security; (7) sell the Tennessee Valley Authority; (8) fight integration; (9) oppose medicare. It has been estimated that during 1963 twenty million dollars were expended on programs of this nature. One might think that right-wing radio activity would lead to innumerable demands for equal time to answer the charges, but an examination of the experiences of station WITV with Dan Smoot reveals that Smoot offended individuals rather than organized groups, the former generally having less power than the latter.

Let us now examine those programs individually in more detail. Perhaps the most widely heard spokesman of the radical right is the

Reverend Carl McIntire of Collingwood, New Jersey. According to McIntire the civil rights movement is "serving the ends of radical powers that are working for a Socialist order in this free land." To McIntire, Communism is the "greatest enemy of freedom and liberty that the world has had to face today," and the National Council of Churches is "the strongest ally of Russia and the radical labor movement within the U. S." Liberty and democracy, moreover, are in his opinion mere fronts for the planned economy and socialism.

As for the "Manion Forum," this program was the brainchild of Clarence Manion, former dean of the Notre Dame law school and at one time a minor official in the Eisenhower Administration. The "Manion Forum" originated from South Bend, Indiana, the site of Notre Dame. A typical catalogue of Manion villains includes "the confiscatory, Marxian income tax, wanton foreign aid spending, socialistic public power, futile conferences with Kremlin gangsters, ridiculous budgets, federal aid to education, and unrestrained labor bossism." Because of his academic and governmental positions, Manion's views may carry slightly more weight in some circles than those of other extremists.

An offshoot of "Facts Forum" is the Dan Smoot Report, conducted by the onetime FBI agent and Hunt commentator out of Dallas. As Smoot surveys the political scene today, he finds that ". . . we place our freedom and our lives in the hands of political quacks and witch doctors in Washington whose power to destroy us is unchecked and unlimited." Unlike "Facts Forum," Smoot no longer makes any pretense that he is setting forth both sides of an issue. One of his pet peeves is the United States Supreme Court: "Earl Warren is a socialist who thinks the government has unlimited power to tax and spend for anything. . . . He has the same attitude towards the Constitution that the Communists and all other socialists have. . . . There are ample grounds for impeachment, not only of Warren, but of all nine Supreme Court Justices."

More religious in its overtones is the "Christian Crusade," a project of evangelist Billy James Hargis. Established in 1962 with an endowment of one million dollars, the "Christian Crusade" operates out of Tulsa, Oklahoma, in its attempt to line up fundamentalist religious and political support. An idea of the extent of

Hargis' dislikes may be gathered from the following objects of criticism in a single speech: Communism, liberalism, the National Council of Churches, federal aid to education, Jack Paar, federal medical care for the aged, Ed Sullivan, the Kennedy-Khrushchev meeting, Eleanor Roosevelt, disarmament, Steve Allen, and the Freedom Riders. Many analysts have stressed the tie between fundamentalist Protestantism and political conservatism; Hargis is an outstanding example of the fusion of the two.

Other programs might be cited, too. One widely heard is Howard Kershner's commentary on the news which originates in New York City and was at one time financed by Pew oil money. Another is "America's Future," the New Rochelle, New York, radio arm of the Committee for Constitutional Government. Its spokesman is R. K. Scott; once broadcast over ABC, "America's Future" is now presented over MBS. A frankly racist program is the "Citizens' Council Forum," a series engendered in part by the civil rights struggle. Of lesser importance are the radio edition of the "Independent American," broadcast from New Orleans, and the "Church League of America," of Wharton, Illinois. One could list more localized efforts on behalf of the right-wing philosophy almost ad infinitum.

Quite naturally the bulk of these programs are radio programs, but the radical right has also invaded television. According to a survey conducted in 1964, the "Manion Forum" was seen weekly on 30 television stations, Dan Smoot weekly on 40, Billy James Hargis daily on 7, and "Life Line" daily on 69. These statistics indicate the extensive financial backing which many right-wing extremists enjoy; obviously it would be impossible for them to televise to the extent that they do without it.

On September 22, 1964, the National Council for Civic Responsibility was set up "to bring to the American people, through the mass media, the truth about the John Birch Society and related radical reactionary groups, and about the misstatements on public issues and personalities that they are spreading on a rapidly increasing scale." The right-wing broadcasts specifically pointed out as objects of censure were Howard Kershner, the "Manion Forum," Dan Smoot, "America's Future," the radio edition of the "Independent American," Billy James Hargis, the "Church League

of America," "Life Line," and the "Twentieth-Century Reformation Hour." The National Council for Civic Responsibility selected the public relations firm of Ruder and Finn to aid in its campaign; Ruder and Finn produced a series of five-minute radio recordings and arranged that they be broadcast daily in eleven states where the radical right was extremely active.

During the 1964 campaign there was friction between extreme right-wing broadcasters and both the Republicans and the Democrats, despite the fact that the former party nominated a highly conservative candidate for President, Senator Barry Goldwater. One cause of Republican difficulty was Miss Vivien Kellems, who conducted a highly controversial political show over station WTIC-TV in Hartford, Connecticut. Miss Kellems had earlier won national attention by going to court when she refused to withhold federal income taxes from her employees' pay in 1948. During the 1964 campaign the Republican state campaign policy committee asked Miss Kellems to drop her weekly fifteen-minute program on the grounds that it was not representative of the Republican Party as a whole. Miss Kellems refused to leave the air, but she did clear the script for her September 28 show with the Republican state campaign director, and the committee subsequently withdrew its request that she leave the air. Early in 1965 the Democratic National Committee filed a number of complaints documented with broadcasts recorded during the 1964 campaign with the Federal Communications Commission. The Democratic body continued the monitoring of nine syndicated programs following the election. Individual stations were also approached in this connection. Those stations carrying "Dan Smoot Report" broadcast number 422, for example, were notified that this constituted "a vicious and distorted attack on President Johnson's educational proposals," and were asked if they were making an effort to present the other side of the picture. In the event that the stations had been unable to uncover material that could be used as an antidote to the Smoot broadcast, the Democratic National Committee offered to furnish it. Together with the attack by the National Council for Civic Responsibility, this effort marks the most serious challenge that extreme right-wing broadcasters have received in recent years, but the Federal Communications Commission and other regulatory agencies have been slow to crack down on the latter, as we noted

earlier relative to the Alabama stations and the anti-nuclear test ban treaty broadcasts.

Early in 1965 lack of financial support caused the National Council for Civic Responsibility to abandon its monitoring of right-wing broadcasts, but in November 1966 the Institute of American Democracy was founded for the purpose of opposing extremists. Theoretically the IAD is not concerned solely with broadcasting, and theoretically it is not concerned solely with the radical right, but in March 1967 it entered Fairness Doctrine complaints against two Florida stations (WSWN in Belle Glade and WEDR-FM in Miami) which had carried broadcasts by Richard Cotten and William Stewart McBirnie critical of the IAD. Both stations refused to play the tapes that the Institute of American Democracy had prepared for broadcast as rebuttals or to notify the organization and its officials in advance of the broadcast attacks.

Since 1964 not only have right-wing programs previously on the air thrived but newcomers have joined the ranks. One new star in the firmament is the "John Birch Report"; even though it did not begin its career on the air until March 1966, by July of that year it was reaching 13 million listeners over 131 stations for fifteen minutes once a week. Among the pet targets of the John Birch Report are President Lyndon B. Johnson ("Caesar Bird"), foreign aid, and General Tito of Yugoslavia. The director of public relations for the John Birch Society, former California Congressman John Rousselot, has claimed that "These aren't hate programs"; this, of course, is debatable, but any impartial observer must admit that such programs as "Conservative Viewpoint" are even further to the right. One of the major sponsors of the Birch show (as well as that of Smoot) was the late West Coast manufacturer D. B. Lewis (Dr. Ross's Dog Food), who left one million dollars to the John Birch Society in his will, naming Rousselot as administrator. This is still further evidence that if the radical right ever goes off the air, it will never be because of a lack of funds.

### *American and Foreign Governmental Propaganda*

As World War II approached nearer and nearer, propaganda from various Western European countries began to make its presence felt here more and more. Despite this increasing bombardment,

though, our government did little to mount a counter-propaganda offensive of its own. Propaganda in the foreign relations field, of course, required a degree of governmental direction alien to both the libertarian elements of democratic ideology and the individualistic spirit of American radio; in addition, the isolationist temper of public opinion discouraged such activity. Nevertheless, as anti-American propaganda began to saturate Latin America, parallel bills creating a governmental shortwave station were introduced in the Senate in 1938. The reaction of Senator Bone, chairman of the committee in charge of the hearings on the bill, was that "I do not want to embarrass this nation in its international relationships; especially with my own isolationist views I do not think we ought to meddle too much with these international relationships. . . . God was good to this nation and put two great oceans between us and the people who might cause us trouble. . . ." Radio executives who testified before the Senate committee likewise tended to downgrade the foreign propaganda menace, obviously fearing that the establishment of a governmental station would establish a bad precedent.

Following 1938 several private stations began broadcasting shortwave programs to Latin America, but these as a rule were nonpolitical; aside from a general emphasis on good neighborliness, they usually avoided anti-totalitarian propagandizing. As for foreign countries other than Latin America, shortwave broadcasts to these nations developed even more slowly. Occasionally a foreign language translation of important political speeches (such as President Roosevelt's "quarantine" address) was broadcast, but such events were decidedly the exception to the rule.

In contrast, within a few months after the outbreak of World War II, German propagandists were transmitting no less than eleven hours of programming daily to the owners of shortwave sets here. Most of the nine news programs and approximately five commentaries were in English. Aside from these, the fare has been described as "a choice assortment of broadcasting viands, sparkling musical champagne and other tasty delicacies, such as operettas, variety entertainments, dance music and comic bits." An analysis of the first year or so of Nazi programming indicates that their broadcasters attempted as a rule to destroy pro-British feeling rather than arouse pro-German sentiment. While stoutly affirming

that Germany had the kindest feelings for us, their radio spokesmen charged that certain groups in this country did not reciprocate this cordial attitude, including the capitalists, the Jews, the newspapers, and the politicians. Among the devices that the Nazis used to get their message across were name-calling, confusion, and fright.

By the summer of 1940 the tone of German radio broadcasts to the United States had become increasingly critical, the Nazis having more or less abandoned their original attempt to win our sympathy. Around this time the focal point of their attack had become fixed on American aid to England. Time and time again the German commentators reassured their American audience that their government had no intention of attacking the United States, nor making any hostile move towards Latin America. At first the radio broadcasts that Germany beamed to England differed in content from those transmitted to this country, but the content of both became approximately the same as the Nazis began to regard us more and more as a British ally and less and less as a neutral. A survey covering the period from November 1939 to March 1941 reveals that the Germans stressed five themes in their radio campaign: "*division* of America from Britain and the Allies, *reassurance* regarding German intentions and conduct, and German-American relations, *futility* of the Allied war effort and American aid, *dissension* within America, and *intimidation* of the United States." It was calculated in 1942, though, that no more than 150,000 Americans heard a German broadcast on any given day, despite the existence at that time of five to seven million shortwave receivers in this country.

Significantly, most of the German broadcasters involved in this propaganda war against the United States were American misfits. The German propaganda minister, Dr. Joseph Paul Goebbels, was well aware of their discontent and seized every opportunity to capitalize on this for the benefit of the Third Reich. One of the star commentators was Edward Leopold Delaney, alias E. D. Ward, an Irish-American ex-actor and ex-writer. Among Delaney's favorite themes were the triumphs, actual or otherwise, of the German army. Then there was Fred W. Kaltenbach, "Lord Haw-Haw," who boasted of his German extraction, claiming that it was the German-Americans who enabled Lincoln to save the Union. Another Nazi

radio spokesman was the onetime Baltimore columnist Douglas Chandler, whose chief claim to fame was his impersonation of Paul Revere. Another broadcaster, "Mr. Guess Who," was a South Carolina lecturer and journalist, Robert H. Best, whose B. B. B. Program (Best Berlin Broadcast) featured Jew-baiting. Sometimes Kaltenbach, the son of an Iowa butcher, teamed up with Otto Koischwitz, an ex-New York City college teacher, to form the duo "Fritz and Fred, the Friendly Quarrelers." On the distaff side there was Gertrude Hahn, whose Brooklyn accent flavored her monologue as a switchboard operator on the mythical Pittsburgh *Tribune*.

In reviewing Italian radio propaganda just prior to and during World War II, one encounters a somewhat similar pattern of development but with some important modifications. During the summer of 1940, for instance, Radio Rome paid little attention to American aid to Great Britain. Around the time of the Presidential election, the Fascists quoted heavily from the speeches and writings of such prominent American isolationists as Senator Burton K. Wheeler and Colonel Charles Lindbergh but, following this, they became more hostile, charging that the collapse of England would pave the way for territorial aggrandizement on the part of the United States. By the end of 1940, Radio Rome apparently assumed that this nation was already at war, and President Franklin Roosevelt and Prime Minister Winston Churchill became the two archvillains. It is important to note that the Italians abandoned the myth that the United States was friendly to the Axis cause before the Germans did.

One might point out as many as a half-dozen themes that characterized Radio Rome's broadcasts to this country. These were: (1) to drive a wedge between the American people and the Roosevelt Administration; (2) to intensify domestic dissension by pitting group against group, race against race, and class against class; (3) to drive a wedge between the United States and Britain and between the United States and Latin America; (4) to persuade the American people that the issue of the war had already been settled; (5) to frighten the American people into submission to Axis policies; (6) to proffer Axis friendship and deny aggressive intent. Nevertheless, at times Radio Rome forgot all nice distinctions be-

tween the American people and the Administration in projecting a policy of hostility, and sometimes inferred the inevitability of a clash between the Axis and the United States.

Unlike the mediocre misfits that broadcast over Radio Berlin to the American people, Radio Rome boasted an authentic genius in Ezra Pound, the Idaho-born poet and American expatriate. Introducing his program with "Europe calling, Ezra Pound speaking," Pound relentlessly hammered away at three themes: Wall Street is reprehensible, the gold standard is reprehensible, the Jews, who are back of both, are reprehensible. Unfortunately, Pound's genius as a poet far exceeded his genius as an economist. Unlike some of the German propagandists who had lived in the United States during the 1930's, Pound paid his first visit to this country in eighteen years in 1939.

Authorities in Washington took a rather dim view of these broadcasts, as one would expect. In July 1943 a federal grand jury returned indictments for treason against eight employees of Radio Berlin and Radio Rome; these were Frederick Kaltenbach, Robert H. Best, Ezra Pound, Douglas Chandler, Edward L. Delaney, Constance Drexel, Jane Anderson, and Otto Koischwitz. According to the indictment, these Americans "knowingly, intentionally, feloniously, traitorously, and treasonably, adhere to the enemies of the United States . . . giving to the said enemies aid and comfort by repeated broadcasts of propaganda designed to persuade citizens of the United States to decline to support the United States in the conduct of the war." Most of these, however, disappeared from sight after the war was over and never came home to stand trial, although Ezra Pound did wind up in a mental institution here.

For purposes of contrast one might briefly summarize British radio propaganda as it affected this country. Prior to the Blitzkrieg this tended to be rather dull and uninspired, but following May 1940, the BBC began to rely on such prominent broadcasters as J. B. Priestley, Leslie Howard, and Somerset Maugham. Prior to the Battle of Flanders, the British tended to assume that an Allied victory was inevitable, but with their backs to the wall they switched their line to stress that the destinies of the United States and England were one and inseparable. In the final analysis British radio made more of an impression on listeners here than did Radio

Berlin, despite the fact that the latter had the advantages of greater experience, superior organization, and a more imaginative and energetic policy. This was mainly because public opinion in this country was already pro-British. In addition many American stations, together with MBS, rebroadcast BBC news programs. However, one might criticize British radio presentations, especially for their high intellectual level and narrow audience appeal.

In assessing the impact of European shortwave radio propaganda on this country just prior to and during World War II, one finds that various polls dealing with this subject do not agree. While the American Institute of Public Opinion found in January 1941 that only 10.8 per cent of its sample listened at least once during the past month to these broadcasts, the Gill nationwide survey conducted in 1940 had discovered that 17 per cent of its sample did so at least once a week. The statistics for more localized studies were: Schuler, Baton Rouge, 15.6 per cent; Douglas, Princeton, 13.3 per cent; Lazarsfeld, Erie County, Ohio, 10.4 per cent. All studies were in agreement that the shortwave listening audience preferred British programs, the AIPO finding that 93 per cent had heard at least one British program, 55 per cent at least one German one, while Gill discovered that 46.5 per cent of shortwave listeners tuned in on London regularly and only 14.4 per cent on Berlin. As one might expect, news programs were the most popular. Among the more interesting conclusions of the various polls were that the wealthy listened more frequently than did the poor, and that the educated tuned in more often than did the illiterate. Had the Nazis and the Fascists been aware of these trends, perhaps they might have mounted a somewhat more effective propaganda front.

Returning to American propaganda efforts, in February 1942 an official overseas shortwave service was finally organized. The first foreign language broadcasts of the "Voice of America," operated by the Co-ordinator of Information, were in German; within a few months the VOA had become a part of the newly formed Office of War Information and was broadcasting in a number of languages. Quite naturally, the first efforts of the VOA were hastily conceived. Sometimes the VOA committed serious blunders, as in 1943 when it referred to Italy's Humberto as a "moronic little king" at the same time that the Allied powers were negotiating

surrender terms with the Italian government. But the VOA continued to grow despite its mistakes. By 1945 it had become the largest radio operation ever undertaken up to that time, broadcasting in forty languages twenty-four hours a day to all parts of the globe.

Following the end of World War II, however, the Office of War Information was transferred to the State Department, and orders were given to reduce the VOA programming schedule to half what it had been at the peak of operations. For approximately two years (1947-9) the VOA operated with a greatly reduced staff, but the intensification of the Cold War brought about its revival. Early in 1950 the Truman Administration inaugurated its "Campaign of Truth" and a new Congressional appropriation made possible a major expansion of its shortwave transmitter facilities. Stations were established in the Philippines, Okinawa, and Munich with maximum transmitter power of one million watts each, a figure which so far exceeds that of the largest American commercial stations (50,000 watts) that there is no comparison. In addition, in 1952 a mobile transmitter was set up on a moth-balled Maritime Commission ship which was anchored off the island of Rhodes, where it sent out broadcasts to the Near East.

Despite this step-up in operations, the VOA soon encountered new problems both at home and abroad. In 1948 the Russians began jamming our Russian language programs, while the McCarthy era witnessed a cutback in VOA appropriations; the Senator from Wisconsin charged that certain VOA engineers were sabotaging the radio operation by constructing transmitters whose signals could not be heard abroad. In 1953 the VOA was moved from New York to Washington, having been transferred to the new United States Information Agency, and its studios were installed in the Health, Education, and Welfare Building. During the Eisenhower Administration, the VOA slowly recouped its strength and by 1960 it was again broadcasting in 36 languages, a figure which compares favorably with its peak performance during the days of the "Campaign of Truth."

The Eisenhower Administration also witnessed an ideological reorientation of the VOA. Prior to this time this organization had served primarily as a vehicle for anti-Communist propaganda, for

which reason foreign listeners often doubted its credibility. After 1953 the VOA became more concerned with factual news coverage, the anti-Communist campaign playing only a secondary role; today the average VOA programming schedule is made up of 50 per cent news and commentary and 50 per cent general features. There also has been a shift in the geographical pattern of VOA broadcasts. In the 1940's most of these were directed to audiences in Western Europe and Latin America, but in the following decade an increasing number were beamed to the newly independent nations of Asia and Africa and to the countries behind the Iron and Bamboo Curtains; programs to Europe have in recent years correspondingly decreased. Despite the fact that VOA broadcasters have come to employ a number of exotic languages, there has been a significant increase in English language programs, based upon the assumption that foreigners would rather listen to broadcasts in the language of the transmitting nation because they place more confidence in these.

When President John Kennedy appointed veteran CBS commentator Edward R. Murrow head of the United States Information Agency in 1961, it was only natural that there would be an increasing emphasis on the VOA. Murrow, though, was in the twilight of his life, and a fatal illness was soon to remove him from the scene just as an assassin's bullet was soon to remove the President. When a Kennedy address was broadcast over the VOA, Soviet authorities jammed only one paragraph; even this was not jammed when the speech was rebroadcast. Thus, after fifteen years of almost uninterrupted jamming of American propaganda at a yearly cost of several hundred million dollars, the Soviets suddenly stopped the practice, even going so far as to allow Russian language broadcasts on foreign affairs.

By 1965 the VOA had again become embroiled in controversy. When the White House began criticizing the VOA for including excerpts from columnists and editorials critical of the Johnson Administration's policies in Vietnam, VOA director Henry Loomis resigned his position to become Deputy U. S. Commissioner of Education; in his farewell address Loomis observed that "To acknowledge the existence of forces and views in disagreement with the policy makers, to take these specially into account in the format

of our output . . . is good, persuasive propaganda." In answering the charge that the VOA was presenting an almost unrelieved picture of US righteousness in foreign affairs, USIA chief Carl Rowan retorted that "I do not think that the Voice of America should be ruled by some vague intellectual notion of 'impartiality.'"

The most recent chapter in the history of the VOA was ushered in by the appointment of veteran NBC commentator John Chancellor as director. Under Chancellor there has been a balanced approach to broadcasting as well as a brighter, faster broadcasting technique. The day before the 1966 Congressional elections the director asserted that "Our broadcasts must not only be American, they must sound American and reflect the current image of the United States as an interesting, dynamic, up-tempo place." During the first hour of the first day's programming there was an interview with Secretary of State Dean Rusk that lasted only four minutes and 38 seconds. This "new sound" copied the highly successful "magazine formats" popular on both American radio and television, an amalgam of music, news, discussion, comedy, and anecdotes. Comparing the total hours shortwaved by the VOA each week with the number broadcast by its foreign counterparts, a survey taken during this year found that we rank behind the USSR and China and only slightly ahead of the UAR. In any event this most recent innovation on the part of the VOA reflects the trend in domestic political television away from long addresses and towards brief spots, a most interesting development in that foreign radio listeners are much less informed about this country than are American television viewers. Whether Chancellor's "new sound" will have a long life remains to be seen; as to its impact on world public opinion, it is also too early to determine this.

When Chancellor resigned as head of the VOA in the spring of 1967, veteran broadcaster John Daly took over the helm. Unfortunately for the VOA, a conflict between Daly and USIA Director Leonard H. Marks led the former to resign on June 5, 1968. Although Daly emphasized that his departure was not related to "any effort to control or affect the content of VOA broadcasts," he found certain of Marks' administrative practices to be distasteful, especially the transfer while Daly was out of the country of Leonard Reed of the World-Wide English Division to the press service of

the parent USIA. During Daly's absence the USIA also had circulated a questionnaire among VOA employees in an attempt to measure its effectiveness. According to the *Nation*, ". . . the ranking foreign service officers in USIA long hostile to the conviction held by most of the best VOA people that they were obligated to broadcast the truth . . . decided to end VOA's semi-autonomous state by transferring its most effective career executives and replacing them with foreign-service officers who know that their careers . . . depend on not rocking the boat." It is now up to the Nixon Administration to resolve this struggle for power between the parent agency and its offspring.

Over the past decade the United States Information Service has developed its television programming to the point where it currently rivals its radio counterpart as an important propaganda instrument. Prior to 1958, television programming was a minor function of the "Voice of America"; in September of that year it was separated from the VOA and given equal status under former NBC executive Romney Wheeler. At one time officials involved in planning television programs took the position that they should be produced the same way as the radio programs were produced, but they eventually discovered that the films lacked immediacy and intimacy. As a result they evolved a technique whereby a locally produced "live" program would include material provided by the American government. From the point of view of expenses it is obviously cheaper to produce parts of a program than complete shows; from the point of view of effectiveness, full-length films often have a "canned" quality that too readily leads the foreign viewer to categorize them as propaganda. It should be pointed out, nevertheless, that the American government has produced some excellent films, such as the *Report from America* series that had a successful run on British television in 1955 and 1956. One would like to make a detailed analysis of the similarities and differences between governmental radio propaganda and governmental television propaganda, but the material for such a study is not readily available.

It is highly difficult to measure the impact of American political broadcasts abroad except through a comprehensive poll in any given country, but it is possible to cite a few instances where Ameri-

can political broadcasting has influenced European political broadcasting. The most prominent of these has been the Great Debates, which were televised widely overseas. As early as November 1960 a debate was held in Japan among the incumbent Liberal Democratic Premier, Hayato Ikeda, and his opponents in which Ikeda stated that his party platform resembled the New Frontier. At a later date in Venezuela the two leading Presidential candidates debated for three hours, while in Canada the provincial elections of 1962 imitated the Kennedy-Nixon format. In England, on the other hand, several commercial stations made an unsuccessful attempt during the 1964 parliamentary elections to get the leading Labour and Tory candidates to debate. Viewing the question of political broadcasting globally, Wilson Dizard has observed that "No other country comes close to the way the US has restructured political practices around television requirements, from the organization of conventions to the split-second reporting of election results." Whether it will take the rest of the world years or decades to catch up with America remains to be seen.

#### NOTES ON SOURCES

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## 5/Censorship, Defamation, Equal Time, Fairness Doctrine

### *Introduction*

Despite the fact that Congressional regulation of broadcasting dates back to the Wireless Ship Act of 1910, the first comprehensive piece of federal legislation, the Radio Act, did not materialize until 1927. This measure was largely the consequence of a court decision depriving the Secretary of Commerce of his power over the broadcasting industry. It included the equal time provision and a prohibition on censorship, although it failed to protect stations against defamation suits. When Congress passed the Communications Act of 1934, it replaced the Federal Radio Commission set up in 1927 with a new Federal Communications Commission but let the equal time and censorship provisions stand. Over the years a number of changes have been proposed relative to the Communications Act, such as the Wagner-Hatfield amendment, but few have been adopted; a few sections such as the Davis amendment, though, have been eliminated. Among the controversial issues involving broadcasting that were before Congress during the 1930's were station distribution, radio monopolies, and censorship. Despite frequent complaints, Congress did not get around to investigating the FCC until 1943, and no significant legislation resulted from these hearings. The White-Wolverton bill of 1947, too, failed to pass the newly elected Republican Congress, as the McFarland bill of 1949 failed to pass a Democratic Congress. Finally, in 1952 Congress did adopt some amendments to the Communications Act of 1934, the most important of which outlawed the practice of charging premium rates for political broadcasts. Since then a number of bills

have been introduced, many of which dealt with equal time, but the only two of consequence to be enacted were the 1959 measure excluding news broadcasts and related programs from the scope of Section 315, and the 1960 measure excluding debates between Presidential and Vice-Presidential candidates from equal time restrictions. Editorializing became a major concern in 1962 leading to several committee and subcommittee reports; the broadcasting of computer predictions while polls are still open arose as an issue following the election of 1964. In neither case has any significant legislation been passed to date.

Throughout American history the censorship of left-wing philosophies and concepts has been far more common than that of right-wing ones. The Radio Act of 1927, of course, outlawed censorship by individual stations, networks, and the Federal Radio Commission; the American people have never been sympathetic to censorship, except in time of war or hysteria. Yet both the FRC and the FCC have been able to effect censorship by refusing to renew a station's license, while individual stations and networks have kept off the air individuals whose views were distasteful to them. Among those who suffered in this connection were Victor Berger, William Z. Ripley, Devere Allen, W. K. Henderson, Robert G. Duncan, and "Fighting Bob" Shuler, the first three being the victims of individual stations and networks, the last three of the Federal Radio Commission. Aside from political ideologies, prohibition perhaps furnished grounds for censorship more frequently than any other issue. Most of the more extreme cases of radio censorship predated the New Deal, radical ideas being more out of place during the Era of Normalcy. During the first two Roosevelt Administrations such prominent Roosevelt foes as Senator Huey Long and Father Charles Coughlin continued to express their views on the airwaves, although others, such as commentator Boake Carter, were forced off them. When a crackdown on the discussion of controversial public issues came in 1939, it came from the National Association of Broadcasters rather than from the New Deal. During World War II there was some censorship of broadcasting, but it was by no stretch of the imagination complete. The two groups that suffered the most from the ban on the discussion of controversial public issues were cooperatives and labor; thanks

largely to the protests of the former, the NAB took a stand on behalf of free speech in 1945, as did the FCC. Three years later, in 1948, the FCC dealt a severe blow to censorship by freeing stations from liability for defamation suits. Since that date radical right propaganda has increasingly saturated the airwaves, but the only real crackdown by the FCC in this area has been the conditional renewal of the license of the Richards chain in 1951. By enunciating its Fairness Doctrine in 1949, the FCC shifted the emphasis from "don't censor" to "be fair." Unlike radio time, television time is highly expensive and thus is not a likely medium for the dissemination of the type of idea likely to incur the wrath of the censor.

As Congress has never permitted individual stations or networks to censor broadcasts, so it never has protected them from defamation suits arising out of the later. Whether defamation over the radio or television constitutes a libel or a slander is a matter of dispute, but it has occasionally resulted in costly damage suits. When in 1932 the Nebraska Supreme Court handed down its Sorenson decision which held the station jointly liable with the defamer, it struck fear in the hearts of station owners throughout the country; it was not until 1948, in its Port Huron ruling, that the FCC took a stand on behalf of immunity. Congress, though, still failed to take action to protect stations from defamation suits, while the United States Supreme Court upheld the Port Huron ruling by only a 5 to 4 margin in a 1959 decision. Over the last two decades the states have been much more active in passing legislation designed to grant immunity, there being two major classes of statutes of this variety.

The most controversial section of the Communications Act of 1934 has been Section 315, the equal time provision. So many bills have been introduced into Congress altering or abolishing this section that it is a difficult task merely to count them; that body, however, has allowed Section 315 to stand virtually untouched, regardless of whether the Democrats or the Republicans have been in control. Section 315, as we will demonstrate at considerable length, refers only to candidates themselves, while the Fairness Doctrine of 1949 laid down by the FCC covers spokesmen for candidates. Among the questions that have been raised relative to

Section 315 have been whether write-in candidates qualify, whether Presidential addresses are political or non-political, whether equal time means an equal share of prime time, whether there may be restrictions on time sales, and whether it is possible not to sell any time at all for political purposes. During the era of television the aspect of Section 315 that has aroused the most controversy has been the allotment of equal time to minor party Presidential candidates. The three main solutions that have been suggested relative to this problem have been to grant third party nominees (1) the same amount of time as the major party nominees; (2) a proportional share of time; (3) no time whatsoever. Sometimes FCC rulings in this connection have been inconsistent; it granted a nonentity Presidential candidate, William Schneider, equal time in 1952 but not Senator Robert Taft, the major rival of General Dwight Eisenhower for the Republican Presidential nomination. Four years later, in 1956, the Suez crisis again brought this issue to the fore, the FCC again behaving in a highly controversial manner. When that body gave Lar "America First" Daly equal time on a news program with Chicago Mayor Richard J. Daley, an apathetic Congress took action, removing bona fide news programs from the coverage of Section 315. The equal time provision was suspended during the 1960 Presidential campaign, thus facilitating the Great Debates, but it was left in operation four years later mainly because President Lyndon Johnson did not care to debate his Republican opponent. Since 1964 the FCC has issued various supplementary rulings. During the 1968 Presidential campaign Section 315 remained in full force, as the Republicans were unwilling for the American Independent Party candidate, George Wallace, to have free time.

As we have noted above, the Fairness Doctrine of 1949 covers speeches by a political candidate's representatives rather than by the candidate himself. It should be added here that it also encompasses editorials delivered by broadcasting stations on behalf of a political candidate. One of the most controversial aspects of this has been the "seek out" doctrine, the ruling that a station must actively solicit opposing viewpoints. A number of cases have come before the FCC relative to this and other aspects of the Fairness Doctrine. In recent years there has been a running feud between

the National Association of Broadcasters and the FCC relative to the general question of what constitutes fairness. According to a study conducted by Joseph Ripley in the late 1950's, many stations at that time were not offering a well-balanced presentation of viewpoints on controversial issues, a discovery which obviously constituted grounds for concern to the FCC. Yet a recent Senate subcommittee survey revealed that the majority of stations favor the Fairness Doctrine.

As an additional preview, one might briefly summarize the historical evolution of the attitudes towards political broadcasting of both the FCC (formerly the FRC) and the NAB so as to demonstrate more effectively the role that each has played in this connection. Turning first to the former, many of the most controversial censorship cases were decided by the short-lived Federal Radio Commission rather than by the later Federal Communications Commission. When the FCC was set up in 1934, many New Deal critics charged that it was practicing thought control, but during the 1930's its most significant ventures into censorship were in the foreign relations field. In 1936, for instance, this body forbade the rebroadcasting of foreign programs without written permission. The FCC, however, did undertake an investigation of domestic radio monopolies in 1941, a document which had considerable impact in the anti-trust field. During the same year the FCC issued one of its most controversial and important rulings in the Mayflower case in which it forbade broadcast editorials. This ban was not lifted until 1949, the same year that this body set forth its Fairness Doctrine. The year previously, in 1948, the FCC handed down the Port Huron decision which freed stations from liability for defamation but at the same time prohibited them from censoring. Another preoccupation of the FCC during the 1940's was the problem of equal time, important rulings being made in the Stephens case (1944) and the Rainey case (1946). Returning to the Fairness Doctrine, a number of cases have come before the FCC since 1949 dealing with various aspects of this, such as the "seek out" doctrine, but these have only modified or clarified the original ruling rather than significantly altered it. As for radical right radio and television programs, the only instance where the FCC really cracked down on these since World War II was in its conditional relicensing of the

Richards stations in 1951. Equal time was an issue in the Presidential elections of 1952 and 1956, the FCC handing down several highly controversial rulings in this connection; as we have noted, Congress suspended its operation during the 1960 Presidential campaign, so that the occasion for a significant equal time ruling by the FCC did not arise. In 1963 the FCC modified its statement that broadcasters who air programs on controversial public issues should offer opportunities for reply to "all" groups in their community to read "other" after the NAB had protested the original edict.

While the NAB has protested other actions of the FCC, it has itself attempted over the years to impose certain regulations on the broadcasting industry. In 1937 the NAB promulgated a radio code, which is still in force after going through a dozen editions. Two years later it took one of its most widely criticized steps when it placed a ban on the purchase of air time for the presentation of programs dealing with controversial public issues, a ruling which contributed to the decline of Father Charles Coughlin as a radio orator. Cases involving such organizations as cooperatives and labor unions arose during the war years; by 1945 the NAB had come around to the position that this edict should be reversed. Fifteen years after the appearance of the first edition of the radio code, in 1952, the first edition of the television code made its appearance. Section VI of this deals with controversial public issues. In 1959 the NAB set up a standing committee on editorializing and issued a guide entitled *Editorializing on the Air*; since that date such NAB officials as President Le Roy Collins have taken firm stands in favor of editorializing, and in 1963 the NAB pressured the FCC into altering its wording of a Fairness Doctrine ruling. Currently the two bodies are most in conflict relative to the latter, most in agreement relative to the desirability of editorializing.

### *Regulating Broadcasting Through Congressional Legislation*

There are few more controversial aspects of governmental activity in this country than its relationship to the broadcasting industry. To

permit too much freedom is to run the risk of being charged with encouraging irresponsible license; to permit too little freedom is to run the risk of being charged with violating free speech. Laws encompassing various aspects of this relationship date back to 1910, when Congress passed the Wireless Ship Act, and 1912, when it wrote onto the statute books the Radio Act. The latter measure made the Secretary of Commerce responsible for the licensing of radio station and operators. During the 1920's there was an explosive mushrooming in the number of stations, a tenfold increase taking place in 1922 from 60 to 600. As a result, Secretary of Commerce Herbert Hoover made an attempt to persuade the industry to regulate itself; he described the National Radio Conferences held annually between 1922 and 1925 as "experiments in industrial self-government." Statewise, one of the more unusual developments was the rule laid down by a Massachusetts station in 1924 which provided that "A man may talk about what he stands for, what his party stands for, etc., but he may not revile or attack his political opponent or any other party." When a court decision deprived Hoover of most of his powers over the radio industry in 1926, its leaders joined in an appeal to Congress to pass regulatory legislation.

The Federal Radio Act which that body passed in 1927 represented the first comprehensive attempt to regulate the industry. One of the most important provisions of the law was the establishment of a five-man Federal Radio Commission; the heart of the measure was Section 18 which dealt with such controversial matters as equal time and censorship. In its final form this read: "If any licensee shall permit any person who is a legally qualified candidate for any public office to use a broadcasting station, he shall afford equal opportunities to all other such candidates for that office in the use of such broadcasting station: *Provided*, that such licensee shall have no power of censorship over the material broadcast under the provisions of the section. No obligation is hereby imposed upon any licensee to allow the use of its station by any such candidate." Equally important were the provisions that were omitted from this law in its final form. Senator Clarence Dill had offered an amendment which relieved radio stations from criminal or civil liability as a result of uncensored utterances, but this died in committee. As

we shall see in the section on defamation, this action had far-reaching consequences.

Not unexpectedly, this measure aroused almost immediate controversy. When the industry asked the Federal Radio Commission for a precise definition of its provisions, that body passed the buck to the United States Supreme Court; many stations were disturbed because they were liable for libel but not allowed to censor. The position of the FRC itself was rather shaky, as it was set up on a year-to-year basis subject to the whims of Congress. During 1933 the whole question of the relationship of the federal government to the radio industry was before Congress, and the by-product of this prolonged debate was the Communications Act of 1934. On February 26 President Franklin Roosevelt recommended to that body that it establish a Federal Communications Commission in place of the Federal Radio Commission, an agency which was to have jurisdiction over the nation's telephone and telegraph system as well as over the radio. In executing his request Congress increased its membership to seven from the original five who had served on the Federal Radio Commission. The President, moreover, was given the authority to determine which frequencies were to be reserved for army, navy, and governmental use, the radio receiving those that were left over; even more important, if in his opinion there existed a "war or threat of war or state of public peril or disaster or other national emergency, or in order to preserve the neutrality of the United States," he was handed the power "for such time as he may see fit" to close down private broadcasting or transfer it to some governmental agency without obtaining the permission of Congress. As Stanley High pointed out in 1939, FDR did not put into effect either of these provisions. As for Section 18 of the Radio Act of 1927, it was incorporated into the new measure in virtually unaltered form as Section 315.

Of all the amendments that were left out of this legislation in its final version, none aroused more furor than the Wagner-Hatfield one. This amendment would have required that 25 per cent of station programming be allotted to religious, cultural, cooperative, labor, and similar non-profit organizations. In the words of the National Association of Broadcasters, this amendment would "destroy the whole structure of American broadcasting"; it is obvious,

especially in the case of cooperatives and labor unions, that such a provision would enable certain liberal or radical ideas to be heard which might otherwise have been silenced. Thanks in part to the opposition of Senator Dill, Chairman of the Interstate Commerce Committee, the Senate rejected the Wagner-Hatfield amendment by a 42 to 23 vote, asking instead that the FCC study the proposal that fixed percentages of station facilities be allocated by Congress to various types of non-profit organizations and report back to Congress the following year with its recommendations.

At its annual convention the following year, the National Association of Broadcasters vigorously affirmed that it opposed all governmental regulatory legislation, "the effect of which would result in the abridgement of freedom of speech." Admittedly the FCC lacked the power of determining per se what programs a station was to carry, but that body did have the authority to renew or not to renew a station's license. In the words of one commentator, "Radio stations must play ball with the politicians, for their very right to existence rests in the hands of the politically appointed Federal Communications Commission." Frank R. McNinch, the chairman of the FCC, did assert over the major networks in 1938 that "Neither the President nor any member of his family nor any of the secretaries to the President nor anyone who ever pretended to speak for the President or the White House, has ever made the slightest suggestion to me about granting any license or denying any license." Nevertheless, the potential threat to free speech because of political pressure was always there.

One of the most controversial provisions of the Federal Communications Act was the Davis amendment. This provided that the nation was to be divided into five zones and that an equal number of stations were to be licensed in each; the South and the West joined together to push the adoption of this amendment over the opposition of the East. Ironically, by 1936 the West was calling for its elimination. As Senator Burton Wheeler of Montana observed, "We found . . . that the operation of the so-called Davis amendment had discriminated against the West, because of the fact that the zones in the West are so large and zones in the East are small. As a consequence, the policy of Congress to distribute radio facilities so that every section of the country will be ade-

quately supplied, has been very difficult of effectuating." The repeal measure passed both houses of Congress and was signed into law in June.

An equally delicate question was that of radio monopoly. Carl Friedrich was to write in 1943 that "From the point of view of time consumed in hearings and debates, Congress has been more concerned with the problems of monopoly than with any other aspect of the radio industry." When Representative Monaghan introduced a bill in 1935 calling for governmental control of the radio industry, he cited the trend towards monopoly as the chief abuse characterizing the latter. By 1937 there were pending simultaneously before Congress no less than four resolutions calling for an investigation of monopolistic practices. The following year the FCC took the bull by the horns after Congress had refused to take action, setting up a three-man commission of its own to determine what regulations should be applied to chain broadcasting; the report of this commission did not appear until 1940 but contained a number of far-reaching recommendations.

Another controversial issue that increasingly occupied the attention of Congress during this period was whether the federal government should censor radio programs or not. The fight over censorship reached its peak in 1940 when Representative Ditter of Pennsylvania introduced a bill which forbade the FCC from considering programming offenses in passing on license renewals. It was the position of Ditter that program standards should be established in advance; "ex post facto censorship" at hearings on license renewals should be eliminated. The Ditter bill was also designed to restrict the powers which the President had the authority to exercise under Section 606 of the Federal Communications Act, the chief executive having the authority under this measure to take over the entire radio industry in time of war or national emergency. The Ditter bill did not pass Congress, and within a year as the war clouds darkened there was a trend in the direction of more, not less, governmental censorship.

Over the years an anti-FCC movement had emerged in Congress, but this did not culminate in a full-fledged investigation of that body until 1943, after the war had been in progress over a year. Representative Cox, a onetime friend of the FCC, turned

against that body when it charged that he had received pay for representing a radio station before it. In retaliation Cox asserted that FCC Chairman Fly was "the most dangerous man in the Government. He maintains an active and ambitious Gestapo and is putting shackles on freedom of thought, press and speech without restraint"; as for the FCC as a whole, in Cox's words the "whole outfit is a nest of reds." When the House voted overwhelmingly to investigate the FCC, Cox became the chairman of this select five-man committee. While the trend in the past had been to criticize the FCC on the grounds that it had not gone far enough in its attempt to stifle monopoly, the Cox committee charged that it had gone too far in this direction. It also took the position that the FCC had interfered too much in the programming and business affairs of radio stations as well as practicing political favoritism and blackmail. Chairman Fly resigned his position before the committee made its report, but so did Chairman Cox; by this time the size of the committee staff had dwindled from nineteen to five. Because of the ill will then poisoning the atmosphere, Congress decided not to pass any remedial legislation at this time.

It was not until the Eightieth Republican Congress convened in 1947 that the White-Wolverton bill was introduced into the Senate. Senator White, it may be recalled, had played an important role in the enactment of the original radio legislation twenty years previously. Not only did FCC chairman Denny testify against parts of the bill, charging that it would reduce him to a ceremonial figurehead, but representatives of the National Association of Broadcasters also objected to those provisions that mirrored the chain broadcast rulings of the FCC and allowed that body to review the past performances of a station at license time. Nevertheless the bill might have passed had it not been for the illness of Senator White and the early adjournment of Congress during election year. The following year (1949) Senator Ernest McFarland introduced a bill which closely resembled the Communications Act amendments of 1952, but which was to undergo three years of buffeting at the hands of various members of Congress before reaching its final form.

Perhaps the most significant modification of the Communications Act that was adopted in 1952 was the amendment outlawing

the practice of charging premium rates for political broadcasts. Certain stations had been doing this to discourage the latter, while others thus safeguarded themselves against losses incurred when a political broadcast preempted regular commercial time. These amendments also included separation of function provisions that had the object of freeing the commission from staff influence in the making of adjudicatory decisions, but which has contributed to a lack of continuity in the latter; under this provision the commission takes no part whatsoever in the writing of its decisions aside from issuing directives to its review staff. In addition, these amendments have created a situation where the commission claims that it has no power over the transfer and sale of television licenses except that of pro forma approval, which has resulted in an ever-increasing degree of concentration of ownership in the hands of a few.

In recent years many more reforms have been proposed than have been adopted. During 1956 alone, for example, three bills were introduced into Congress dealing with the equal time provisions of Section 315, but none became law. Of a more esoteric nature was the bill proposed by Senator Richard Neuberger which would have made it obligatory for a governmental official or political candidate to state on the air whether he or she was (1) wearing makeup and (2) speaking extemporaneously or using prepared material. As one might expect, this bill did not get too far.

Two proposals which affected the broadcasting industry were written onto the statute books in 1959 and 1960. The first of these was the direct result of a suit brought by Lar "America First" Daly in the Chicago mayoralty race and provided for the exclusion of news broadcasts and related programs from the scope of Section 315. The second, which was enacted during the summer of 1960, exempted Presidential and Vice-Presidential candidates from the equal time restriction and thus opened the door to the Great Debates. The latter measure, though, was limited to the 1960 campaign rather than being of indefinite duration.

During 1962 bills amending or repealing Section 315 were brought before the Senate by Jacob Javits, Warren Magnuson, and John Pastore, but this controversial provision escaped unscathed, despite attacks on it by CBS, NBC, MBS, and a number of gov-

errors. The same year, editorializing came under attack in the Yarborough Report which sought to correct inequities resulting from a lack of editorial fairness. The minority report of the House Commerce Committee, which appeared in 1963, was even more vitriolic in its criticisms of the political involvements of the broadcasting industry. But neither of these led to any significant legislation. In 1964 the question of suspending Section 315 for the Presidential campaign (as it had been in 1960) again came to the fore; on this occasion the incumbent chief executive did not care to debate his Republican opponent so that a heavily Democratic Congress failed to pass legislation effecting this end. Since that date perhaps the most important proposals for reform that have come before that body have been the bills placing various restrictions and prohibitions on the broadcasting of computer predictions while polls are still open. The possibility of suspending Section 315 for the Presidential campaign was again raised in 1968, but in a reversal of their 1964 role the Republicans killed the measure in the Senate on the grounds that it would give third party candidate George Wallace free exposure on television.

### *Censorship and Broadcasting*

As we have noted above, the federal government discouraged the censorship of broadcast material through the passage of the Radio Act of 1927. Nevertheless Vita Lauter and Joseph Friend protested in the *Forum* four years later that "By use of this sieve (censorship), every possible un-American and harmful ingredient (Bolshevism, Communism, Socialism, sex, free thought, (nudism), atheism, liberalism, radicalism, pessimism, etc.) has been kept out of the ambrosia fed to listeners." This is a typical expression of the sentiment that radio censorship has been widespread in this country. Actually, left-wing radicalism has perhaps suffered more at the hands of censors than its right-wing counterpart; most of the cases that we will cite from the first decade of radio support this generalization, while right-wing propaganda has practically saturated the airwaves over the last fifteen years.

Turning to public opinion, various polls that have been taken over the years indicate that as a rule the American people have

been hostile to the censor. In 1938, for example, the American Institute of Public Opinion found that 57 per cent of those interviewed thought that governmental censorship of the radio would be harmful; only 43 per cent were of the opinion that it would be desirable. Similarly, in 1939 the FOR found that 51 per cent of those polled were opposed to the setting up of a governmental bureau to supervise what was produced over the radio. It has been only in time of war or hysteria that the American people have been more receptive to censorship.

An examination of the background of the Radio Act of 1927 throws some additional light on this question. When this bill was originally introduced in the House of Representatives, it contained no provision expressly forbidding censorship. Representative Fiorello La Guardia of New York then raised the point that nothing in the proposed legislation guaranteed free speech, following which Representative Wallace White replied, "It does not touch that matter specifically. Personally, I felt that we could go no further than the Federal Constitution goes in that respect. The pending bills give the Secretary no power of interfering with freedom of speech in any degree." In the Senate, however, the Committee on Interstate Commerce added a new section which provided that "Nothing in this act shall be understood or construed to give the commission the power of censorship over the radio communications or signals transmitted by any radio stations . . . and no regulation or condition shall be promulgated or fixed by the Commission which shall interfere with the right of free speech by means of radio communications." In slightly modified form this became Section 29 of the Radio Act of 1927 and Section 326 of the Communications Act of 1934.

Nevertheless, both the Federal Radio Commission and the Federal Communications Commission have refused to renew a license on the grounds that utterances previously disseminated over a station did not meet the test of "public interest, convenience or necessity." As we will see in the pages that follow, the FRC and the FCC have on occasion cracked down on domestic broadcasters, but its restrictions, relative to their foreign counterparts, have perhaps been more severe. In 1936—a full three years before the outbreak of World War II—the Federal Communications Commission

forbade the rebroadcasting of foreign programs without its written permission; the one exception to this rule was programs transmitted entirely by telephone facilities. It was, of course, beyond the powers of the FCC to shut down those European shortwave stations that were transmitting their propaganda to this country. Three years later, in 1939, the Federal Communications Commission issued a new edict declaring that shortwave licenses for American operators would henceforth be issued only on the understanding that the stations would render "an international broadcast service which will reflect the culture of this country, and . . . promote international good will, understanding and cooperation." This time both the National Association of Broadcasters and the American Civil Liberties Union protested, and the FCC withdrew the offensive ruling after public hearings.

Next we shall examine various censorship cases of the decade of the 1920's and the early 1930's with the object of determining (1) what types of ideas were censored and (2) who did the censoring. First of all we might cite the case of Victor Berger, the onetime Socialist Congressman and Mayor of Milwaukee. In April 1927 Berger made a speech in celebration of the thirteenth anniversary of the *Jewish Daily Forward* which was scheduled to be carried on WJZ, the key station of the Blue Network of the NBC system. At the height of his address Berger charged that capitalists in this nation controlled the President, the radio, and the schools; at this point broadcasting station officials carried off his microphone. The excuse given for this action was that the program had run over its allotted time. As for the Federal Radio Commission, it refused to take action on the grounds that it lacked the authority to do so. Another prominent Socialist who incurred the wrath of the radio censors was Norman Thomas, whose speech over WABC was cancelled because of his stand against military training.

It would seem, moreover, that criticism of capitalism in itself was enough to evoke censorship in some cases, aside from any outright espousal of socialism. Thus in 1931 the National Broadcasting Company refused to carry certain remarks of the eminent Harvard economist Professor William Z. Ripley because of his indictment of public utility financing. While the public may have been protected against hearing over the air what Ripley said to the National

Association of Savings Banks, it was not shielded from the headline "\$148,000,000 loss in Insull Utilities" which appeared in the newspapers at approximately the same time. Ripley's "crime" was to demand governmental supervision of the issuing of public utility securities, a proposal which was to bear fruit within a few short years when the New Deal came to power.

Station WGY in Schenectady, New York, likewise refrained from broadcasting an address by Devere Allen in March 1933 which was highly critical of public utilities, banking interests, and the "Buy American" movement. This speech before the League for Industrial Democracy was entitled "A New Philosophy for a New Age" and set forth three possible alternatives that might be followed: drift, reaction, or socialization. Among the various offensive passages was the following: "If there are those who still hold hopefully to the ordinary, time-tried methods of capitalist business and finance, let me remind them that we have had a significant depression in this country, since the Civil War, on the average of once every seven years." In explaining its blackout of Allen's remarks, NBC commented that its rules did not permit the broadcasting of speeches which might undermine "public confidence and faith."

Even more unfortunate were the fates of W. K. Henderson and Robert G. Duncan. Henderson, who was from Shreveport, Louisiana, attacked among other targets the chain stores in his "Hello World" programs. When he applied for a renewal of his license during the depression, he failed to obtain this from the FRC, the latter claiming in its ruling that his derisive and abusive language was having a bad effect on the moral and aesthetic development of American youth. Even more catastrophic was the destiny of Robert G. Duncan, the "Oregon Wildcat." While a candidate for public office—and thus beyond the pale of censorship—Duncan spoke out over station WVEP in Portland against chain stores (as Henderson had) and lumber monopolies. Prominent citizens whom Duncan attacked might have sued him, but instead they protested to the Federal Radio Commission with the result that the station that carried his remarks lost its license in 1930. In all fairness one must note that some of Duncan's remarks were quite inflammatory. One man, for instance, was described by the "Oregon Wildcat" in

one of his radio addresses as "a doggoned thieving, lying, plundering, doggoned corrupt crook, that goes out there and rams a milk contract through the schools, and has the little children of this town a-drinking putrid milk," while another was labelled by him as "the lowest, dirtiest, vilest grave robber on the Pacific Coast." Thanks to remarks such as these Duncan was charged with using "abusive, indecent, and profane language" over the radio but was convicted only on the last count. Otherwise, he personally might have escaped with impunity.

More universally abusive was "Fighting Bob" Shuler of Los Angeles, California, the pastor of the Trinity Methodist Church, South, whose speeches over his church-owned station KGEF were sprinkled with vitriolic references to bootleggers, gamblers, politicians, the local board of health, Jews, Catholics, newspapers, the governor, bankers, brokers, usurers, the local bar association, the sheriff, and certain judges. Shuler, too, was fined and sentenced to jail on the grounds of trying to influence and intimidate judges in pending proceedings. In this case also the offending station lost its license, the FRC ruling that this action reflected "the public interest, convenience, and necessity" since Shuler's broadcasts had been "sensational rather than instructive." Shuler did appeal this ruling, but the Circuit Court of Appeals of the District of Columbia rejected his plea for free speech, while the United States Supreme Court later declined to review the decision of the lower court.

Remarks in the foreign policy field also have furnished grounds for censorship, although less frequently than in its domestic counterpart. Thus station WGL refused to broadcast the pacifist play *Spread Eagle* after the American Legion had voiced a protest against its performance. The president of WGL observed in this connection: ". . . as this company consists mainly of veterans of the World War it will under no circumstances broadcast anything that has not the full endorsement of veteran and patriotic organizations." Praising Russia, too, almost invariably drove the censors into action. Glenn Hoover of Mills College discovered this when he submitted a speech for radio broadcast that the station turned down. Among the points made by Hoover were (1) the Russians were willing to plan and experiment while the United States drifted and clung to tradition; (2) the Russian political system was

superior; (3) one must perform socially useful work in Russia in order to obtain a food card; (4) Communism is preferable to capitalism; (5) the Russian Church ought not to be revived because of its Czarist leanings. Other cases involving censorship in the foreign relations field include the barring of Eamon de Valera by station KOA because of his anti-British views and the cancelling of a debate weighing American intervention in Nicaragua over the Oregon State College System.

Perhaps the most frequent charges of censorship during the Age of Normalcy arose over the prohibition issue, many stations being afraid to permit attacks on the Eighteenth Amendment. Among those who charged that they had been barred from the air because of their views upon this subject were Senator James Wadsworth, Mrs. Charles Sabin, William G. MacAdoo, Hudson Maxim, and Heywood Broun. Station WHEC in Rochester refused to broadcast anti-prohibition speeches on the grounds that carrying such addresses might jeopardize the station's license; other offenders included a NBC station in Los Angeles and station WBZ-WBZA. Even after the repeal of prohibition the Federal Radio Commission released a statement to the press asserting that "millions of listeners throughout the United States do not use intoxicating liquors and many children of both users and non-users are part of the listening public." As a result, "the Commission will designate for hearing the renewal applications of all stations unmindful of the foregoing."

It should be firmly emphasized that none of the above cases occurred later than 1933. As for the relationship of the New Deal to radio censorship, the Roosevelt Administration adopted the tactic of selling itself to the American people through constant propagandizing rather than by suppressing the ideas of those who were at odds with it. There were, however, various exceptions to this rule. In 1933 a NBC representative warned the Massachusetts American Legion that its radio speakers must not "disturb the public confidence in the President," while in 1935 station WHN in New York City censored Representative Hamilton Fish's attack on Roosevelt, Postmaster General Farley, and New Deal policies in general. During 1933, too, the American Alliance of Patriotic Societies was turned down by CBS when it requested time to broadcast a speech opposing the Roosevelt Administration's new

policy of extending recognition to the Soviet Union. The following year F. J. Schlink, President of Consumers Research, was banned from speaking over key CBS station WCAU in Philadelphia on the grounds that his proposed address contained criticisms of the NRA. Despite New Deal support, though, organized labor ran afoul of the censor on more than one occasion. Thus WLW in Cincinnati issued an edict in 1935 to the effect that "No reference to strikes is to be made on any news broadcast from this station"; after the American Civil Liberties Union had complained to the FCC, the general manager of WLW asserted that the matter was a closed incident. The year previously, in 1934, every broadcasting station in San Francisco rejected the request of the Newspaper Guild to explain its side of the controversy between it and the *Oakland Tribune*, one station having backed out after the *Tribune* had threatened to sue it for libel if it carried the broadcast.

An important figure in FCC deliberations during this period was its secretary, Herbert L. Pettey, who not only served as a contact man or liaison officer with the other governmental departments, bureaus, and agencies, but also made arrangements for all official broadcasts. It is highly significant that Pettey had served as director of radio publicity for the Democratic National Committee during the Presidential campaign of 1932, becoming secretary of the Federal Radio Commission shortly after FDR became President. What Pettey's precise influence on the FRC and FCC was is difficult to determine but, according to Elisha Hanson, "In August 1933, one of the members of the Federal Radio Commission issued a formal statement in which he informed broadcasters that any remarks made over their stations derogatory to or in criticism of the Administration's program and policies would subject the offending station to a possible revocation of license." One may only surmise that some of the FCC position papers around this time had their origin in Pettey.

One of the best proofs that the New Deal did not engage in widespread radio censorship is that it never muzzled Senator Huey Long of Louisiana, who was a formidable rival of Franklin Roosevelt down to his death in 1935, or Father Charles Coughlin, the magnetic "radio priest" from Detroit, whom the National Association of Broadcasters finally cracked down on in 1939. (Doubtless

FDR would have loved to have seen both barred from the airwaves.) On the other hand, the twelve station Don Lee network in California censored a Townsend Radio Club program in 1938 after the precursor of social security had complained about the President; during the same year the six leading radio stations in New York City refused to broadcast an address on Americanism by Martin Dies, Chairman of the House Un-American Activities Committee, on the grounds that time was not available and the subject was controversial. FDR had not been very sympathetic towards Dies' inquiry into subversive activities.

Among those most convinced that the Roosevelt Administration was engaging in censorship was the conservative radio commentator Boake Carter, who was himself forced off the air. In a 1939 article Carter charged that the major radio chains exercised complete and absolute censorship over radio programs, and that this censorship was attributable to the fact that they were in business for profit and feared Administration pressure. Carter also wrote that Hugh Johnson, David Lawrence, and himself would not be on the radio again until this pressure let up, claiming that the chief governmental censors were "Steve Early, Tommy Corcoran, Harold L. Ickes, Harry L. Hopkins, and that group." How much of this constituted objective analysis and how much was sour grapes is a moot question. As of 1937—after ten years of governmental regulation of radio—only five stations had lost their licenses, and, as we have pointed out, some of these episodes occurred during the Age of Normalcy.

In 1938 the National Association of Broadcasters appointed a committee which was instructed to prepare a code which would regulate the industry and protect the listening public. After holding numerous meetings, this group drew up a document which was printed and distributed in advance of the Atlantic City convention. When that gathering convened in July 1939, the delegates adopted the draft code, with some modifications. The key section of this code provided that "Time will not be sold for discussion of controversial public questions, nor will such discussion be permitted on sponsored advertising programs"; the object of this provision was to insure "the free and open discussion of questions of public interest." The code, however, did exempt political campaign broadcasts

from the ban on paid controversial programs. It went into effect on October 1, 1939, and almost immediately Father Coughlin ran afoul of it as a result of his comments on the arms embargo. Although the "radio priest" was to abandon the radio within a year, one must remember that the NAB censored him only relative to this one topic and thus technically did not run him off the air.

During the same year (1939) the NAB issued a *Code Manual* which supposedly clarified questions raised by the code. On June 28, 1940, it also issued a bulletin stating that "It was the feeling of the Board that stations and networks will find that the best interests of the industry will be served by a broadcasting policy which would ban the following: dramatizations of political issues, either in the form of announcements or programs; studio political 'rallies'; audience participation programs such as the 'man in the street' type; anonymous, simulated and unidentified voices at any time." In the opinion of the NAB, "Political broadcasts should be limited to speakers, interviews and announcements, and to broadcasts of bona fide political meetings or rallies held outside the studio." The reaction to this new code was somewhat mixed. While the director of the American Civil Liberties Union, Roger Baldwin, took a favorable position at the time of its adoption, the ACLU general counsel, Arthur Garfield Hays, made a strong attack on it two years later. Labor was divided, with the AFL in favor and the CIO opposed. One of the most noteworthy protests came from Elliot Roosevelt, son of the President, who withdrew his Texas stations from the NAB, attacking the "imposition of a ruling barring expressions of personal opinions on public controversial issues on commercially sponsored programs." In the words of Roosevelt, the code was "censorship in its worst form."

Shifting our attention back to the federal government, it must be pointed out that Congress made no attempt to impose strict censorship on the broadcasting of news during World War II. There was an Office of Censorship and an Office of War Information which published a "Code of Wartime Practices for American Broadcasters" at regular intervals, but this was placed on a purely voluntary basis. Generally speaking, the cooperation between the broadcasting industry and the federal government during World War II set an example for other free nations to follow in time of

crisis. Nevertheless, the Cox investigatory committee of 1943-4 was highly critical of the activities of the Federal Communications Commission in the field of censorship during the war years, charging that the latter had "unlawfully and capriciously" censored programs carried on foreign language broadcast stations and had encouraged the firing of American citizens allegedly sympathetic to the fascist cause.

Network censorship also took place. Early in 1943, for example, the Blue Network censored passages scheduled for delivery on a regular Sunday broadcast of Drew Pearson, asserting that Senators Wheeler and Nye were opposing the impending trial of thirty-three alleged seditious conspirators, reporting that Wendell Willkie was writing a book attacking the State Department for "selling democracy short in North Africa," and accusing Beardsly Ruml of being an "innocent instrument" of war profiteers. The Blue Network also censored passages scheduled for delivery by Walter Winchell the same day defending American seamen accused of refusing to unload cargoes at Guadalcanal, criticizing Representative Martin Dies, and ridiculing Charles Michelson, the Democratic press chief. Although there was a general ban on the discussion of controversial issues on commercially sponsored programs, the Blue Network on this occasion added a new regulation forbidding a broadcaster to make derogatory or insulting remarks about any person holding public office. Although the army may have placed pressure on the Blue Network to censor Pearson and Winchell, it is evident that their remarks also displeased many pro-war isolationists in Congress. Representative Claire Hoffman of Michigan thus attacked Winchell on the House floor a few days before his scheduled address, complaining that Winchell, who was a naval officer, had not been reprimanded for his public statements; Hoffman was especially unhappy with Winchell's reference to pro-war isolationists' constituents as "those damn fools who re-elected them." After Secretary of the Navy Frank Knox had defended the columnist, both Pearson and Winchell returned to the air free from blue-pencilling.

As for the NAB code, two groups that ran afoul of this during World War II were cooperatives and labor. In 1942 the Cooperative League of the United States had a program rejected by both NBC and CBS stations on the grounds that it was controversial; this pro-

gram advocated an atypical system of marketing and openly solicited membership in the organization. Criticism of this ruling was so heavy that the NAB was forced to backtrack and rule in December that the League could present its programs, exempting the cooperatives from the ban on advertising. It was labor, though, which punched the first significant hole in the "controversial issues" wall. When the United Auto Workers sought to buy time over several stations for the presentation of transcriptions "advocating an orderly postwar reconversion and stabilization program," the NAB ruled on July 23, 1943, that "Broadcasts of this nature should not be classed as political under the Code, nor should they be presented on paid time." By the summer of 1945 more than three hundred stations were providing time for labor discussion, both sustaining and commercial; in August of that year a new NAB code appeared which abandoned the attempt to curb "controversy" on the air. It is significant that the terminal dates of this restriction on free speech coincide with the outbreak and close of World War II, a period during which stringent restrictions on what one broadcast were only natural.

The Federal Communications Commission, too, took a stand against censorship in June 1945. Here the issue at stake was the renewal of the license of station WHKC of Columbus, Ohio. This station had censored remarks that were scheduled to be delivered on a United Automobile Workers' Program with the result that the union had petitioned the FCC not to renew the station's license. The FCC dismissed this petition after WHKC had agreed to give the union the opportunity to be heard, but in its order it also denounced the policy of refusing air time for labor discussions on the grounds that they were controversial. The commission, moreover, asserted that it was in the public interest for licensees to provide time for the examination of controversial issues of public importance; in fact, it was an "affirmative duty" rather than merely a nice gesture.

In 1948 the FCC ruled in the Port Huron decision that the prohibition against the censorship of broadcasts was complete, citing Section 315 of the Communications Act of 1934 in this connection. We will touch upon this case again in the section on defamation, as this decision involved both of these controversial issues. Neverthe-

less the FCC has on occasion retreated from its extremist free speech position, as in the Richards case which we analyzed in the section dealing with radical right propaganda since World War II. Although the licenses of Richards' stations were renewed in 1951, the FCC emphatically affirmed that licensees are not to use their stations for the purpose of spreading propaganda. This ruling, of course, must be regarded as a mild form of censorship.

In 1949 the Federal Communications Commission set forth its Fairness Doctrine which is the subject of an entire section of this chapter. Doubtless some television and radio stations today do attempt to keep certain ideas off the air; a deep South broadcasting outlet, for example, might attempt to block a program favorable to the NAACP. To take such an action today, however, would lead critics to charge that the station was unfair in its presentation of a controversial public issue rather than that it was practicing censorship. In other words, the emphasis during the past two decades has shifted from the negative admonition "don't censor" to the positive one "be fair." It also should be pointed out that because of its expense, television time is a less practical vehicle for the dissemination of propaganda than is radio time. There appears to be a direct correlation between the intensity of propaganda and the demand for censorship. If there has been a movement in recent years to drive certain ideologically slanted programs off the air, it has been the one to crack down on the spokesmen of the radical right who have assumed such an important position in the broadcasting field (especially radio) since World War II. We have already examined some of these dating from the mid-1960's in the section dealing with their propaganda efforts.

During the Communist-conscious 1950's, nevertheless, left-wing spokesmen were barred from the airwaves on more than one occasion. Unquestionably a number of figures in the entertainment world suffered blacklisting because of their political views, but since they appeared in the role of entertainers rather than as politicians we must bypass them in favor of those who appeared primarily in the latter role. One of the most prominent examples of political censorship occurred in 1952, when the Grand Union grocery store chain forced James Wechsler of the *New York Post* off its weekly news discussion program on Du Mont entitled "Starring the

Editors" on the grounds that Wechsler had joined the Young Communist League while a student at Columbia University. Wechsler later renounced Communism in favor of liberalism, but Grand Union feared that his youthful indiscretion might reflect unfavorably on its sales and reputation. Fortunately for the grocery store chain its program was due to expire in the very near future, so that its dropping of Wechsler aroused only a moderate amount of controversy; the *New York Post* itself did not even editorialize on the incident, restricting itself to straight news coverage instead.

Five years later, in 1957, the Columbia Broadcasting System—a network long respected for objective reporting—refused to allow news analyst Eric Sevareid to present a five-minute script that challenged the wisdom of the State Department's refusal to allow American newsmen to visit Red China. Ironically, CBS has been the only network to broadcast direct reports from the Baltimore *Afro-American's* William Worthly, one of three newsmen who entered Red China in defiance of our government's policy of barring American correspondents from that nation; the same day an even blunter criticism of State Department policy by Edward R. Murrow cleared a CBS censor. Sevareid, moreover, had expressed much harsher opinions previously with impunity, such as his remark in June 1953 that "The country is not in danger of government by fascists or Communists; it is in danger of government by stuffed shirts." In the past such commentators as H. V. Kaltenborn and Cecil Brown had left CBS following similar incidents, but Sevareid as of this writing remains a fixture at the network, frequently offering his capsule views on the nightly half-hour newscast.

Despite the fact that governmental censorship of radio and television broadcasts had long been illegal, in 1958 former officials of the Office of Censorship first set up during World War II formulated a stand-by *voluntary* censorship code to be employed by television, radio, and other media in the event of a national emergency. Similar to the code in force during that conflict, the new version was updated to cover nuclear and missile warfare. Among those who approved the 1958 code were the Secretary of Defense and the head of the Office of Defense Mobilization. It is suggested in the text that "The code is but a guide and cannot cover all possible contingencies"; consequently, "Ask yourself always, 'Is this infor-

mation I would like to have if I were the enemy?' and then act accordingly." During the last decade, though, no national emergency has arisen severe enough to require the employment of this code.

Returning to the radical right, it is significant that the various attempts to crack down on its radio and television programs have come since 1964 from a political party (the Democratic) and an independent group (the National Council for Civic Responsibility) rather than from a station or network or the NAB or the FCC. Admittedly the latter body did place pressure on the Richards network in 1951, but in this case the chain in question was broadcasting radical right propaganda which directly reflected the views of its owner rather than incidentally including radical right broadcasts in its programming. Thanks to the Port Huron decision of 1948 with its ban on the censorship of broadcasts, it was inevitable that any widespread attempt to censor political broadcasts would come from outside the broadcasting industry or the federal government and, thanks to the Port Huron decision of 1948, it was also inevitable that any such effort would fail. (Both generalizations hold true of the campaign against radical right broadcasts that has emerged since 1964.) This is not to say that an isolated political broadcast will never be censored, but it is quite unlikely that this censorship will be part of a larger pattern.

### *Defamation and Broadcasting*

Inextricably bound up with the problem of censorship is that of libel and slander. Over the years there has been considerable sentiment in favor of a federal defamation statute. Radio Editor James E. Chinn of the *Washington Star*, for example, wrote in 1936 that "Libel laws should be made to apply even more strictly to the spoken word on the air than to the written word. The writer's influence by comparison is small." Herbert J. Kerbel, writing in the *American Bar Association Journal* in 1963, likewise observed that "There are two fundamental features of defamation-by-broadcast which make federal control a necessity: (1) the interstate character of the tort and (2) the incredibly vast potential for harm which is inherent in dissemination over the airwaves."

On the other hand, there exist a number of arguments why Congress should not enact a defamation law. A number of these are summarized by Jack H. Friedenthal and Richard J. Medalie in their article on Section 315 of the Communications Act which appeared in the *Harvard Law Review* in 1959. In the first place it is questionable whether that body has the constitutional authority to grant immunity from state liability vis-à-vis defamation to broadcasters. Secondly, thanks to the availability of insurance programs there no longer is as much need for federal legislation. Thirdly, measures have been passed in most states which provide adequate safeguards for licensees. Fourthly, quite a few of the results of immunity are not desirable. A final objection is that an immunity statute may even promote defamation, since stations that are protected are less likely to discourage the use of defamatory material.

A question that we must examine in this connection is whether the broadcasting of defamatory statements over the air constitutes libel or slander. One theory is that what is said on the radio is a slander because it is only said, while what is said on television is a libel since a picture is an integral component of the speech. On the other hand, another interpretation holds that defamatory remarks over both radio and television constitute slander while those in newspapers, magazines, etc. constitute libel. Still another approach is to regard what is said on both radio and television as libel. This was the gist of the ruling in *Hartmann v. Winchell*, a 1947 decision of the New York Court of Appeals, which affirmed that the veteran radio commentator had libelled the leader of the "Peace Now" movement. As for other nations, the British Royal Committee on Defamation held in 1948 that a defamatory statement over the radio may be far more damaging than a written statement in the newspapers. Courts and legal scholars in this country have found no easy solution to this dilemma other than to follow the lead of those states which have abolished the distinction between libel and slander.

Various attempts were made by members of Congress during the debate on the Radio Act of 1927 to amend it so as to cover this area. Representative Blanton of Texas declared that the bill should contain a provision which regulated or controlled the broadcasting of defamatory material, but Representative White of Maine, who

spoke for the majority, argued that the common law and state legislation provided sufficient protection; Representative Blanton forced a vote on his amendment but lost overwhelmingly, 287 to 57. Senator Dill of Washington offered a similar resolution in the Senate only to have his amendment struck down in conference committee, it having passed the Senate without debate. The Dill amendment provided that "No person within the jurisdiction of the United States shall knowingly utter . . . any libelous or slanderous communication by radio, and the violation of this section shall be punishable by a fine not exceeding \$1,000 or one year in jail or both." When Representative Blanton raised the question in the House as to why this Section 7 had been struck down by the joint committee, he was told that it had been removed because its legality was dubious. Thus the Radio Act of 1927 became law without a defamation provision. Eight years later, in 1935, three bills were introduced in Congress which would have protected licensees from libel suits as a result of broadcasts dealing with public questions, but these were not enacted.

In 1932 C. A. Sorenson brought suit against station KFAB in Lincoln, Nebraska, on the grounds that Richard F. Wood, speaking on behalf of a candidate for political office, had made certain false and libelous statements about him on the air. The Nebraska Supreme Court upheld Sorenson, holding the station jointly liable with the defamer; as the decision pointed out, ". . . due care and honest mistakes do not relieve a broadcasting station from immunity for libel." Since stations were not free to censor the speeches of political candidates, this ruling obviously left them in a highly vulnerable position, especially since Congress over the years refused to give them protection. The Sorenson decision was appealed to the United States Supreme Court only to have our highest tribunal refuse to review the judgment of the state court. Eleven years later, in 1943, the Nebraska legislature passed a statute which provided immunity to broadcasting stations from any suit arising from remarks made over them on behalf of or against any candidate for public office.

In the years that followed other cases arose which demonstrated the essential defenselessness of radio stations thanks to the Sorenson ruling. In Idaho in 1946, for example, station KIDO in Boise asked

the Idaho Central Democratic Committee to have Senator Glenn Taylor delete certain references to the *Boise Statesman* from an address that possibly constituted libel. When the Democratic organization refused to do so, threatening to complain to the FCC, KIDO broadcast the speech uncut only to have the Boise newspaper sue for \$100,000 damages. Four other stations that were booked to rebroadcast the address, forced to choose between possible FCC censure or an almost certain libel suit, followed the lead of KIDO and were likewise sued. These Idaho cases never reached the courts but it required three years and cost \$10,000 to settle them.

Finally, in 1948 radio won some measure of protection from libel suits in the Port Huron decision of the Federal Communications Commission, a case which involved the cancellation of all broadcasts by candidates prior to an election on the grounds that the licensee did not approve of the material to be broadcast by the candidate who was scheduled to speak first. In essence this ruling construed Section 315 of the Communications Act of 1934 as an absolute prohibition against censorship and an inferential grant of immunity from actions for defamation. On the other hand, in *Felix v. Westinghouse Radio Stations, Inc.*, a case involving the broadcast of allegedly defamatory remarks by the *representative* of a political candidate, a federal circuit court in Pennsylvania ruled that the station owner did have the right to censor his speech and thus was also responsible for any defamatory remarks that he might utter.

Despite the protection of the Port Huron ruling, in 1951 station WDSU in New Orleans refused to carry the speech of a mayoralty candidate which it considered libelous. The FCC retaliated by giving WDSU a temporary license, only restoring its original one after serving firm notice that the repetition of this incident would result in the closing down of the station. During the following year, when certain amendments to the Communications Act of 1934 were passed by Congress, an amendment (the Horan) was introduced which contained a clause providing for immunity from libel for broadcasting stations but it was not enacted.

The most recent development of consequence in this connection is the WDAY case, which the United States Supreme Court de-

cided in 1959. This centered around a libel suit that the Farmers Educational and Cooperative Union brought against the station as a result of a speech which a legally qualified candidate in the 1956 Senatorial race in North Dakota, A. C. Townley, broadcast over it. In this speech Townley accused his two opponents and the cooperative of conspiring to establish "a Communist Farmer's Union right here in North Dakota." It was the contention of the cooperative that the prohibition against censorship set forth in the Port Huron case by the FCC left the broadcaster free to delete libelous material from candidates' speeches; the United States Supreme Court upheld the station but only by a five-to-four margin. The minority, led by Justice Felix Frankfurter, not only upheld the cooperative but also challenged the FCC ruling in the Port Huron case. Had one vote been cast differently, the course of political broadcasting in America might have taken a different turn over the last decade.

Despite Congressional inaction, a large number of states have adopted statutes freeing stations from defamation suits resulting from political broadcasts. Prior to 1948 only four states had taken this step; a few others had been able to effect this end via judicial rulings. One reason that many states took action was that individual members of Congress encouraged them to do so. By the time of the WDAY decision, forty states had passed legislation of this nature, the New England states of Vermont, Rhode Island, and New Hampshire being among the exceptions. Those statutes may roughly be divided into two classes. The first, of which that of Georgia is representative, completely absolves the station owners from liability: "In no event . . . shall any owner, licensee or operator or the agents of any such owner, licensee or operator of such a station or network of stations be held liable for any damages for any defamatory statement uttered over the facilities of such station or network by or on behalf of any candidate for public office." This is the more popular type of measure, and is similar to a model statute prepared by the National Association of Broadcasters. In contrast, the second type, of which that of Texas is representative, absolves the station owners from liability only under certain conditions: "The owners, licensees . . . shall not be liable for any damages for any defamatory statement . . . unless it shall be

alleged and proved by the complaining party, that such owner . . . has failed to exercise due care to prevent the publication or utterances of such statement in such broadcast." A variant act is that of New York, which conditions its grant of immunity upon the station's announcing before and after each political broadcast that the views expressed in the program are not necessarily those of the station and that the remarks are not subject to censorship.

### *The Equal Time Controversy*

As we noted in the section on Congressional regulation, Section 18 of the Radio Act of 1927 provided that "If any licensee shall permit any person who is a legally qualified candidate for any public office to use a broadcasting station, he shall afford equal opportunities to all other such candidates for that office in the use of such broadcasting station. . . ." This was later incorporated into the Communications Act of 1934 in virtually unaltered form as Section 315. In theory this seems a desirable provision, but a candidate might choose to allow a spokesman to further his cause without taking to the airwaves himself; this would in no way oblige the stations over which they broadcast to provide equal time for the opposition since Section 315 only applies when the candidate speaks personally. As a result, Mitchell Dawson concluded that equal time was "nothing more than a specious sop thrown to minority parties." In July 1938 the Federal Communications Commission made an attempt to clarify this equal opportunities provision by ruling that "No licensee shall make any discrimination in charges, practices, regulations, facilities, or services for or in connection with the service rendered pursuant to these rules, or make or give any preference to any candidate for public office or subject any such candidate to any prejudice or disadvantage; nor shall any licensee make any contract or other agreement which shall have the effect of permitting any legally qualified candidate for any public office to broadcast to the exclusion of other legally qualified candidates for the same public office."

Of course, one might well ask the question, who qualifies as a candidate? In 1941 the Legal Department of the FCC issued an unpublished opinion in which it stated that "the words 'legally

qualified candidate' are not to be construed as limited to persons whose names appear on the general election ballot," thus providing for write-in candidates. This ruling was apparently precipitated by the treatment accorded Communist Party candidates during the 1940 campaign. Nevertheless, in order to qualify as a bona fide candidate it was still necessary to either furnish proof of nomination by an established political party or the backing of a substantial number of eligible voters. Two months after this ruling the FCC handed down another decision in which it made it clear that Section 315 applied to primary as well as general elections.

One might cite several cases from the decade of the 1940's to demonstrate the variety of problems raised by the equal opportunities provision. During the 1944 campaign, for example, the army ruled that President Franklin Roosevelt's Bremerton speech was a political address and granted the Socialist Party request for equal radio time to address the soldiers overseas. Six hours later the War Department reversed its decision; not only did the Socialist Presidential candidate, Norman Thomas, complain but his Republican counterpart, Governor Thomas Dewey, also raised his voice in protest. Several days later the army again reversed its decision, granting each political party an equal amount of radio time each week for broadcasts overseas.

At the state level the 1944 Senatorial primary in Louisiana and the 1946 gubernatorial primary in Texas gave rise to landmark decisions relative to equal opportunity. As for the former, Senator John Overton complained that station WDSU in New Orleans, which was owned by one of his primary opponents, H. A. Stephens, had allotted practically none of the time which it had made available to Senatorial candidates to him, practically all going to Stephens. In its decision the FCC ruled that it was not sufficient for a station to give the same amount of time to all candidates; they all must have an equal share of prime time. Yet although the FCC reminded Stephens that "The facility . . . is not an instrumentality to be used for his personal political advancement," it dismissed the case without taking further action on the grounds that the station's policies were probably the result of ignorance rather than deliberate disregard for the law.

On the other hand, two years later in Texas the Texas Quality

Network adopted a policy "of restricting discussions by primary candidates to a total of thirty minutes between the date when the candidates were certified and two weeks before the primary election," thereafter selling a limited amount of time. Homer Rainey, whose candidacy was opposed by the newspapers that owned three of the four stations involved, charged that he had to pay for his time, which was limited in accordance with the above policy, while a United States Senator spoke at length on behalf of Rainey's opponent without charge. Here the FCC ruled that the restrictions upon time sales did not bear "a reasonable relation to the needs of public interest in the particular campaign," charging that the individual station licensees had surrendered their policy-making responsibility. Each subsequently promised not to do so again.

An obvious route of escape from the quicksand of Section 315 would be for a station not to carry any political broadcasts whatsoever. Such an approach has not found favor with the FCC; in the *Matter of United Broadcasting Co.*, that body held that "The operation of any station under the extreme principles that no time shall be sold for the discussion of controversial public issues . . . is inconsistent with the concept of public interest. . . ." Consequently, a station is in danger of losing its license if it boycotts all political broadcasts. The White bill of 1947 did stipulate that none of its provisions "shall be understood as imposing, or as permitting or authorizing the Commission to impose, any obligation upon the license of any broadcast station to permit the original use" of the station for such broadcasts, but this measure never became law.

During the first widely televised Presidential campaign, that of 1952, the Progressive Party protested vehemently when the major networks broadcast the acceptance speeches of the Republican nominees Eisenhower and Nixon and the Democratic nominees Stevenson and Sparkman but failed to carry those of its nominees Vincent Hallinan and Charlotte Bass. In expressing their disapproval the Progressives mailed letters to 439 radio stations and 94 television stations. Technically the Progressive convention had occurred before the two major party conventions; Mrs. Hallinan had read the Presidential nominee's speech since he was at that time in jail serving a contempt of court sentence. A number of radio and television stations had broadcast the Progressive proceedings,

but when a number of the petitioned stations refused the third party's request the Progressives requested the FCC to take action against them. Nothing ever came of this, however.

In this 1952 campaign, too, the perennial Socialist candidate Norman Thomas made the logical suggestion that a certain amount of free time be divided equally between the major party candidates and that a lesser amount be apportioned equally among the minor party nominees. In addition, Thomas proposed that only those minor parties would qualify for free time that had won a place on the ballots of at least half the states. This would eliminate from participation such candidates as Lar "America First" Daly and the Vegetarian Party nominee. One major problem that must be overcome in rating these minor parties on the basis of past performance is that a new minor party, such as the Wallace Progressives and the Thurmond Dixiecrats of 1948, technically would not qualify during its initial campaign, although it might poll far more votes than other established minor parties.

But it was not just the minor parties that raised the equal time issue during the campaign of 1952. Senator Robert Taft became disturbed when all three major radio-television networks covered the homecoming of General Dwight Eisenhower from Europe and the announcement of his candidacy at Abilene, Kansas; after these networks denied his request for equal time, he protested to the FCC. More successful was a nonentity named William Schneider who had entered his name in the New Hampshire Presidential preference primary and polled a few hundred votes. When Schneider appealed to the FCC for equal time, that body granted his request; such rulings left the major networks quaking in their boots. During 1952 the FCC also ruled that each party primary is an entirely separate contest, and in 1953 ruled that a candidate in one party's primary need not be given an opportunity equal to that received by candidates in another.

Three years later, in 1956, Senate hearings were held on several bills designed to amend the equal time provision of Section 315. The first of these excluded news, news interview, news documentary, panel discussion, debate, or similar types of programs. Despite the support of CBS, this measure incurred the wrath of NBC because it discriminated against third party candidates. Quite differ-

ent in its orientation was another bill which stipulated that to qualify for equal time a party would have had to have polled at least 4 per cent of the vote in the previous Presidential election, or to obtain signatures totalling at least one per cent of this. NBC did favor this measure, but CBS was only lukewarm in its enthusiasm. Testimony relative to the equal time controversy was heard from a number of persons, but no bill was passed at this time.

Despite Congressional inaction, the Suez crisis that took place during October as the Presidential campaign neared its close caused the equal time issue to flare into full flame. On October 31 President Dwight Eisenhower made a fifteen-minute radio and television report on the Middle Eastern situation. Although "Ike" affirmed that he was reporting to the people as President and that the issues which he was going to discuss had no partisan taint, Democratic nominee Adlai Stevenson sent wires to the major networks demanding equal time. The networks passed the buck to the FCC, which stalled despite the plea for an immediate ruling from Commissioner Hyde; four days before the election the FCC held that equal time must be extended not only to Stevenson but also to Presidential nominees of the Socialist, Socialist Labor, and Socialist Workers parties as well as the National Committee for Andrews and Weidel. Now the Republican Party itself asked for equal time to answer the Democratic nominee's speech. The day before the election the FCC reversed its decision and ruled that the networks were not obliged to offer equal time to the other Presidential candidates since Congress had not intended that a Presidential address at the height of an international crisis come under Section 315. Stevenson did address the nation on November 1, but President Eisenhower refused the offer by CBS and NBC of equal time to answer him. Needless to say, this entire episode left everyone more confused at its termination than they had been at its beginning.

We next might examine the relationship between the donation of free time and Section 315. During the 1956 campaign individual stations voluntarily donated 760 hours of free time for political broadcasts, while the networks themselves gave 66 hours. Had it not been for the possibility that time would have to be given to third party spokesmen the totals probably would have been somewhat higher. The total allotment of free time stationwise for the

Democratic nominees for President, Vice-President, Senator, and Representative exceeded that of their Republican counterparts, in contrast to the allotment of free time networkwise. No free time at all was given in Alabama, Arkansas, Delaware, Mississippi, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, New Hampshire, New Jersey, North Dakota, Oregon, Rhode Island, Utah, and Wyoming. Those states donating the most free time were New York, North Carolina, West Virginia, and California, a somewhat unexpected grouping. Unfortunately, no one has attempted to correlate this factor with the election results that year.

Two episodes during the 1958 elections furnished additional proof that Section 315 was in definite need of revision if not of abandonment. In this year the FCC reversed its earlier stand by holding that splinter party candidate Lar "America First" Daly was justified in his demand for equal time following the appearance of Chicago Mayor Richard J. Daley, then seeking another term, on a news program. As a result, Congress was forced to modify Section 315 in 1959 so as to exclude news programs and related programs from its coverage. The American Civil Liberties Union supported the exemption of bona fide news programs from Section 315 but warned against broader revision; the ACLU stated that it wanted to achieve "more access to broadcasting opportunities by candidates of the smaller parties, and more broadcasting discussion by the candidates of the two major parties." The equal time issue also arose in 1958 relative to the televised debate between the two major party candidates for the New York governorship, Nelson Rockefeller and Averill Harriman; we previously examined this contest in some detail in the chapter on television and politics. Two third-party candidates, Eric Hess of the Socialist Labor Party and John T. McManus of the Independent Socialist Party, were included by WCBS-TV in order to prevent a possible protest to the FCC.

In this connection one might well raise the question as to who determines what constitutes equal opportunity. As Jack Friedenthal and Richard Medalie pointed out in 1959, the majority of stations use their own judgment but a significant minority either discuss the situation with the candidate before making up their minds or rely mainly on the judgment of the candidate. This seemingly indicates

that many stations are quite edgy in regard to this matter, as they obviously are fearful that they are going to be reprimanded by the FCC, which itself has been quite inconsistent in formulating guidelines for them to follow.

At least two members of Congress made a marked effort during the 1960 session to circumvent Section 315. Representative Henry Reuss introduced a bill which required broadcasting stations to devote a minimum of 20 per cent of their schedule "to public service programming including one hour in prime evening time." Furthermore, Reuss proposed the creation of a seven-member Advisory Board on Education and Culture, one of whose functions would be to define public service programs. Not surprisingly, Reuss' measure did not get very far. Slightly more restrained was Representative Stewart Udall's bill, under which it would be compulsory for the television networks to donate an hour a week of prime time in the evening to each of the major party candidates during the eight weeks before the election; third party nominees might share in this gift if they could demonstrate more than token voting strength. The broadcasting industry looked askance at Udall's proposal and it eventually died on the Senate floor.

Effective August 24, Congress did suspend Section 315 for the forthcoming Presidential campaign, thus opening the gates for the Great Debates. It must be emphasized, though, that this action was not taken until after the conventions were over, a fact which makes it impossible to generalize on the effect of this suspension on the campaign as a whole, including the primary period. Despite this action by Congress, Lar "America First" Daly demanded and received equal time on Jack Paar's nightly television show after Paar had invited John Kennedy and Richard Nixon to appear on his program. During the 1960 campaign the Presidential and Vice-Presidential candidates of both major parties received an average of six and a half hours of free time from 429 television stations, including the time consumed by the Great Debates. (For purposes of comparison, one might point out that Nixon and Kennedy purchased an average of ten hours on these same stations.) While the allotment of free time to the Democrats by three television and four radio networks increased by 131 per cent over 1956, the Republicans showing a 71 per cent increase over this period, that to minor

parties decreased 85 per cent, an expected consequence of the suspension.

During the early 1960's criticisms of Section 315 continued to mount. Vice-President Howard Bell of the National Association of Broadcasters, for instance, observed in 1962 that the NAB "opposes vigorously the necessity for Section 315." In a similar vein, NBC board chairman Robert Sarnoff referred to Section 315 around the same time as "the equal-time joke," while CBS president Frank Stanton urged that Congress "suspend the equal-time requirement for *all* elections, Congressional, state and local, through 1963." Senator Jacob Javits did introduce a bill to bypass Section 315 for the 1962 Congressional campaign, but this failed of passage, as did a bill offered by Senator John Pastore repealing Section 315, and as did bills fathered by Pastore and Senator Warren Magnuson extending this suspension to Presidential and Vice-Presidential candidates.

When hearings were held the following year before the Senate Communications Subcommittee, no less than thirty governors stated that they favored the suspension of Section 315 for gubernatorial races, as well as Presidential, Vice-Presidential, and Congressional ones. One significant holdout was Nelson Rockefeller who was of the opinion that the suspension should be limited to the Presidential and Vice-Presidential races. During the same year (1963) Philip Loucks published a paper in the *Federal Communications Bar Journal* in which he recommended that Section 315 be wiped off the statute books, pointing out that "Time and time again stations have been unable to present discussions of leading political issues of the day by candidates because one hour granted to one or two candidates may proliferate into a total of ten or twenty hours which would have to be granted to obscure candidates who could make little, if any, contribution to exposition of the political issues in question."

On June 19 the House of Representatives suspended the equal time provision of Section 315 for the 1964 election by a vote of 263 to 126. The Senate, however, did not take action during this year, and when the bill came up in the Senate the following year it failed of passage. The obvious reason for this was that President Lyndon Johnson did not care to debate his Republican opponent,

Senator Barry Goldwater. During the campaign itself, in late September, the FCC ruled that LBJ's news conferences were not exempt from the equal time restriction, a decision which the Republicans quite naturally cheered. But when the GOP demanded equal time for Goldwater to answer President Johnson's October address to the nation on the change in Soviet leadership and the Chinese nuclear explosion, the FCC rejected the request, as did the three national networks. (NBC, however, did give the chairman of the Republican National Committee, Dean Burch, fifteen minutes on October 19.) The Republicans took their case to court but lost in the Washington Court of Appeals on a tie vote.

Since the election of 1964 the cloud of confusion surrounding Section 315 has as yet to dispel despite the fact that the FCC has continued to hand down rulings in this connection. In a September 1966 letter to Harry M. Plotkin, that body held that a candidate's opponents are entitled to equal opportunities if the candidate is shown either in a silent film or in a photograph or sitting in the studio while a non-candidate reads a political script. The following month, in October, the FCC ruled in a letter to Kirkland, Ellis, Hodson, Chaffetz, and Masters that a station which intends to set aside a block of time on a sustaining basis for use by candidates for various offices may require these candidates to waive their subsequent rights to equal opportunities if they are unable, fail or do not wish to appear on the program or programs in question. It was also held by that body in a letter to Triangle Publications in May 1967 that a station may not refuse to sell a run of schedule spots to political candidates on the grounds that equal opportunities could not be guaranteed to opponents. In the Capital Broadcasting Company case during the same year, the FCC forbade a station to cancel or censor the broadcast of a legally qualified candidate in the event that his opponent charged that his presentation distorted the campaign issues. A more recent ruling which that body laid down near the beginning of the 1968 Presidential campaign (on January 24, 1968, in a letter to Senator Eugene McCarthy) was that to be a legally qualified candidate a person must as a prerequisite publicly announce his candidacy. Otherwise Section 315 would be rendered unworkable.

Fortunately there have been few incidents of consequence relative

to Section 315 during the last several years. Several of these did arise during the course of the 1965 mayoralty election in New York, the first during the Democratic primary when two candidates for the nomination protested to the FCC that a scheduled television debate over station WPIX-TV between two other candidates had violated their right of equal time. Actually the two protesters had been offered separate time later for a debate of their own but they demanded to be included in the original debate; the FCC upheld the station, affirming that there was nothing in its rules requiring a station to present all the candidates for office at the same time. A similar situation arose during the general election campaign when several stations arranged a three-way debate among the leading contenders, Republican John Lindsay, Democrat Abraham Beame, and Conservative William Buckley. The fact that several minor party candidates were also in the field caused some hesitation on the part of New York City stations, as there was the possibility that they might run afoul of Section 315 in the process. But the FCC failed to issue a reprimand to any of these stations, as it likewise failed to do in the case of the various complaints that it received relative to alleged violations of equal time from elsewhere in the country.

As for the mid-term elections of the following year, the only decision that the FCC handed down of consequence was a ruling in which the commission upheld a rather bizarre position-paper drawn up by its staff that a Republican candidate for the state legislature was entitled to receive *thirty-eight seconds* of prime time on two Great Falls, Montana, television stations, about half of it free. The stations had earlier presented film clips featuring Democratic Senator Lee Metcalf that also included shots of one of the protester's opponents in the legislative campaign. This relative paucity of significant equal time incidents recently has been paralleled by a corresponding paucity of Congressional legislation on this topic. Among the proposed bills dealing with Section 315 were ones by Senator Hugh Scott (1965) excluding candidates of parties that received less than 10 per cent of the vote in the previous election, and by Senator Joseph Clark (1967) making free time for candidates a condition for the granting of a license to a station. One of the strongest advocates of outright repeal has been Senator

Vance Hartke whose efforts to date have yet to bear fruit, despite the fact that many members of Congress feel the same way that he does. What sort of catastrophic occurrence it will take to erase the equal time provision from the statute books remains to be seen.

During the early days of the 1968 Presidential campaign the equal time issue again flared up when the three major networks turned down the request by Senator Eugene McCarthy for time to answer certain remarks that President Lyndon Johnson had made the previous December 19 on the one-hour, three network presentation of "A Conversation with the President." The networks rejected McCarthy's demands on the grounds that, while he may have been an announced Presidential candidate the President was not, so that Section 315 did not apply. LBJ, moreover, had made no personal attack on the Minnesota Senator. After the FCC had rebuffed McCarthy's plea in an unanimous decision, a three-judge panel of the appeals court in Washington also upheld the networks. The latter body, however, did leave the door slightly ajar as far as the future is concerned by its observation that ". . . program content and perhaps other criteria may provide a guide to reality where a public figure allowed television or radio time has not announced for public office."

More successful in his appeal was the Republican candidate for tax collector in Panama City, Florida, George Logue, Jr., who was offered free time on WJHG-TV because the Democratic candidate Donnell Brookins was one of its commentators. When Logue showed up at the studio on June 3 with a group of high school students who were to provide entertainment on his program, though, the station withdrew its offer. When Logue complained to the FCC, the commission staff wrote a memo upholding him, as did the commission itself later. No less than 22 hours of air time was involved in this particular ruling. The office at stake, of course, was relatively unimportant, but the principle that a candidate entitled to equal time under Section 315 cannot be barred from using that time in the company of others was quite consequential.

Interviews with candidates provided the basis for two significant FCC equal time rulings during this election year. The first of these involved station WOR-TV of New York City, which selected Representative Charles W. Sandman, Jr. (R) of the second Con-

gressional district of New Jersey to appear on its Sunday interview program "New Jersey Report" as an opponent of a New Jersey bond issue. His Democratic challenger, David Dichter, demanded equal time; the station rejected Dichter's request on the grounds that the program was a bona fide news program (and thus outside the scope of Section 315) and that the Congressional district which Sandman represented was outside the station's coverage area. While the FCC upheld WOR-TV, it failed to do so in the case of WGR-TV of Buffalo, New York, which had broadcast a special half-hour interview with the Democratic Presidential candidate, Hubert Humphrey, during his visit to that city on September 17. When the Socialist Labor Party Presidential candidate, Henning Blomen, unsuccessfully sought equal time from the station, the FCC ruled that a news interview is not exempt from the scope of Section 315 unless it is regularly scheduled, a most important distinction.

As had been the case four years previously, Congress again balked at suspending the equal time provision for the Presidential campaign. Unlike 1964, though, when the Democrats provided the roadblock, on this occasion it was the Republicans who did not care to furnish third party candidate George Wallace with free television exposure. Although the suspension bill had originally passed the Senate with ease and had been held up by the House, it was the Senate which finally administered the deathblow to the measure. Thus there was no confrontation between the Presidential candidates of the two major parties. One might suggest that it is most regrettable that a decision on suspensory legislation is not always made before the national conventions of the Republican and Democratic parties, as to delay it until the latter have taken place is to convert the debating concept into a political football instead of the educational device that it was intended to be.

### *The Fairness Doctrine Controversy*

It is a not infrequent occurrence to find the equal time doctrine linked with the Fairness Doctrine. This often results in confusion, as Section 315 of the Communications Act of 1934 is Congressional law, while the Fairness Doctrine of 1949 is Federal Com-

munications Commission policy. The equal time doctrine, moreover, involves political candidates, while the Fairness Doctrine covers speeches by a political candidate's representatives and editorials delivered by broadcasting stations on behalf of a political candidate.

One of the best summaries of the Fairness Doctrine in print appeared in the June 25, 1962, issue of *Sponsor*. We here quote three of the most pertinent paragraphs:

When a political candidate's representative uses a station's facilities, the station must provide 'reasonable opportunity' to the candidate's opponents (but not to opposing candidates). The station must get in touch with the other side(s) and invite a reply. However, the station does not have to afford an approximation of time, as in 315. The licensee also may pick a spokesman for the other side (but he must be 'fair'). Here in contrast to the freedom of censorship responsibility granted solely under 315, the licensee must censor all libelous and obscene remarks made by the spokesman, for the station is liable.

When a station delivers an editorial on behalf of a political candidate, the station must again provide 'reasonable opportunity' for reply. The same obligations apply as those which govern the appearance of a spokesman—in addition to which editorials must be 'timely.' That is, they must be delivered so that opponents will have a chance at rebuttal.

Again, as in 315, a breach of the Fairness Doctrine could block license renewal.

Examining the points of contrast between Section 315 and the Fairness Doctrine at greater length, one might turn to an analysis of the exact wording of each. The Fairness Doctrine of 1949 states that "licensees have an *affirmative duty* generally to encourage and implement the broadcast of all sides of controversial public issues over their facilities," while Section 315 as it now reads notes "the obligation . . . to afford *reasonable opportunity* for the presentation of conflicting views." (Italics added for emphasis.) The wording of the Fairness Doctrine is thus somewhat stronger than that of Section 315, although over the years the latter probably has been a more disruptive factor in political broadcasting.

Once the Fairness Doctrine had been laid down, it was only natural that a series of cases would arise testing it. Let us now

examine a representative sampling of these from the decade of the 1950's. Theoretically, programming responsibility rests with the licensee, but in the WWJ case (1950) the FCC directed this New York City station to allow a labor union the "right to reply to present their opinion" after the station had proposed a joint discussion program with management to discuss the issues involved in a strike affecting the Communists. In the WLIB case during the same year, the FCC invoked the seek-out doctrine when this New York station broadcast editorial programs supporting a national Fair Employment Practices Commission, charging that it had failed to take "affirmative steps to seek out and present points of view which differed from the point of view of the station." Despite its ruling in the WWJ case, in 1956 the FCC upheld KNBC in San Francisco when that station offered the California Committee Opposed to Oil Monopoly a forum-type program devoted exclusively to the espousal of its position. In addition, the FCC seemingly acted inconsistently in the Herbert Muschel case (1959). Here the operator of WLIB applied for a construction permit for an FM station in New York City which he hoped to gear to the Negro audience; he won this over two competitors because the proposed programming would fill a "real and worthy need." The FCC charged, nevertheless, that programs presented over WLIB in recent years had reflected pro-NAACP viewpoints largely to the exclusion of opposing ones.

Several other cases dating from the late 1950's might also be cited in this connection. In 1958 station WTTG ran afoul of the FCC when it prepared daily kinescopes of the Senate Committee hearings on the Kohler strike in Wisconsin under a contract with the National Association of Manufacturers and attempted to peddle these to over one hundred stations throughout the country. When this effort failed WTTG offered the kinescope free, failing to point out that the NAM was involved in the operation; the FCC ruled that these actions violated not only the Fairness Doctrine but also Section 315. The following year, in 1959, the Lamar case involving station WLBT-TV of Jackson, Mississippi, came before the FCC after the NAACP had protested its programming. In 1955 WLBT-TV had Thurgood Marshall, general counsel of the NAACP, cut off the air on the pretext of cable trouble, and in

1957 it had presented a panel discussion of the Little Rock crisis which included only segregationists. In a rather vague ruling which held that the panel show did not constitute a "balanced presentation," the FCC stated that if partisan views were expressed, the station was obliged to present the opposing point of view, but laid down no criteria to determine when an issue is controversial. More international in scope was the Dominican Republic Information Center Case of 1959 which featured a protest by that agency following the presentation of the CBS radio documentary, "The Galindez-Murphy Case" on May 20. In this instance CBS was acquitted by the FCC on the grounds that it had attempted (without success) to obtain an interview or statement from the Dominican Republic relative to its position on this case.

A more recent decision (1963) involved two Alabama radio stations WKUL in Cullman and WARF in Jasper, both of which were daily broadcasting the extreme right-wing program "Life Line." After "Life Line" had attacked the then-proposed nuclear test ban treaty, the chairman of the Citizens Committee for a Nuclear Test Ban Treaty approached them and requested that they broadcast a tape prepared by the committee which presented the other side. When asked by the two stations for a ruling, the FCC replied that "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 (and does not plan to present) contrasting viewpoints in other programming, and has been unable to obtain paid political sponsorship for the appropriate presentation of the contrasting 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." This, of course, is a rather strong stand. Yet in its closing remarks the FCC also observed that ". . . you feel that you have presented contrasting views as to the test ban treaty in your other programming. Our files contain no complaints to the contrary. Thus, if it is your good faith judgment that the public has had the opportunity fairly to hear contrasting views on this issue on your station, then it would appear that your obligation pursuant to the 'fairness doctrine' has been met." Accordingly the two Alabama stations that carried the "Life Line"

programs escaped censure. We have previously referred to conflicting FCC rulings relative to the Fairness Doctrine; here we have an example of a hard line and a soft line both within the same ruling.

If only because of FCC decisions such as this one, it is not surprising that attacks on the Fairness Doctrine have become more and more common during the 1960's. One of the most articulate critics of this has been Charles Tower of the Corinthian Broadcasting Corporation who, in finding it even more distasteful than Section 315, cited five serious objections to it: (1) it is contrary to the letter and certainly to the spirit of the First Amendment; (2) there is no demonstrable proof that such regulation is necessary; (3) administration of the Fairness Doctrine is time consuming, awkward, and aggravating for all parties concerned; (4) it has the effect of discouraging the expression of opinion; (5) regulation in this sensitive area sets a dangerous precedent. Each of these points, of course, might be examined at length.

In 1963 the FCC declared that a station which presented programs on controversial issues of public importance "must offer spokesmen for all responsible groups within the community similar opportunities for the expression of the viewpoints of their respective groups." When NAB President LeRoy Collins protested, the FCC changed the wording of its ruling so as to substitute "other" for "all," describing the viewpoints as "contradictory." The original edict, it might be added, singled out for special emphasis "the views of the Negro and other community groups as to the issues of racial segregation, integration, or discrimination," a provision which reflects current concern with the civil rights issue. In September Collins observed that the NAB position was that there should be a general rule as to what constitutes fairness without restrictive corollaries as guidelines. Elaborating on this point, the NAB president commented: "When efforts are made to define precisely what is fair in a given situation, trouble is inevitable," since "It is the broadcaster's integrity and his judgment from which real fairness must come." During the following year several debates were held between FCC Commissioner Kenneth Cox and Washington communications attorney W. Theodore Pierson in which the former took the position that the Fairness Doctrine was both constitutional

and sound policy while the latter affirmed that it was neither. Returning to the NAB, the eleventh and latest edition of its television code, published in August 1966, asserts relative to the Fairness Doctrine that "The television broadcaster should seek out and develop with accountable individuals, groups, and organizations, programs relating to controversial public issues of import to his fellow citizens; and to give fair representation to opposing sides of issues which materially affect the life or welfare of a substantial segment of the public."

The latest rulings of the Federal Communications Commission relative to the Fairness Doctrine have been in the personal attack area. On August 14, 1967, the FCC laid down an edict that "When, during the presentation of views on a controversial issue of public importance, an attack is made upon the honesty, character, integrity or like personal qualities of an identified person or group, the licensee shall, within a reasonable time and in no event later than one week after the attack, transmit to the person or group attacked (1) notification of the date, time and identification of the broadcast; (2) a script or tape (or an accurate summary if a script or tape is not available) of the attack; and (3) an offer of a reasonable opportunity to respond over the licensee's facilities." Exempted from coverage, though, were attacks on foreign groups or foreign public figures, personal attacks made by legally qualified candidates and their authorized spokesmen, on other candidates and their spokesmen, and bona fide newscasts and on-the-spot coverage of bona fide news events. The latter was amended on March 27, 1968, so as to exempt bona fide news interviews, as well as commentary or analysis in any of these three types of news programs. While this ruling seemingly frees the station of responsibility for political broadcasts in the overwhelming majority of cases, one must remember that it is still liable in the political editorializing area.

Two stations have run afoul of the Fairness Doctrine in recent years, WRAL-TV of Raleigh, North Carolina, and KTLA-TV of Los Angeles, California. The Raleigh station, whose editorial had incurred the wrath of the FCC in 1964, escaped censure on this occasion by a 3 to 2 vote. Here former Representative James Cooley charged that the station had engaged in a conspiracy to secure his defeat during the previous Congressional election held

in November 1966; the focal point of his complaint was a film edited by his Republican opponent, James Gardner, which included excerpts from newfilm of a debate between the two candidates. Cooley had unsuccessfully attempted to have the broadcast of the film cancelled, but such a step obviously would constitute censorship, a practice in which a station is not supposed to engage. On the other hand, in another 1966 decision the Los Angeles station received a warning from the FCC that it had overdone the Fairness Doctrine in reaching a "Memorandum of Understanding" with the Democratic State Central Committee which had led the latter to drop a complaint against the station. One of the main provisions of this agreement was that whenever the station or a station commentator took an editorial position contrary to one taken by the Democratic Party, it was to afford the State Central Committee "a right of reply"; in addition the station was to permit the committee to screen film clips and video tapes. This "Memorandum of Understanding," in the words of the FCC, accorded "one organization or group favored treatment beyond that accorded to other responsible organizations within his community." In other words, to be too fair is not to be fair.

More fortunate was station WDSU-AM-TV of New Orleans, one of the leaders in broadcast editorializing in the South. WDSU escaped censure in September 1968 when the FCC rejected a complaint by the president of the board of the New Orleans levee district, Milton Dupuy, after WDSU's editorials attacking Dupuy had led to a grand jury indictment of him. In its ruling the FCC declared in effect that stations offering time for reply under the Fairness Doctrine need not keep that offer open indefinitely. WDSU had broadcast editorials on February 2, 12, 20, 21, March 29, and April 2 accusing the levee board of paying bond attorneys excessive fees over the previous two years; on each occasion the station had notified Dupuy that the editorial had been delivered and offered him time for reply. According to the FCC, Dupuy did not request time until six weeks after the last editorial, by which time a grand jury had begun an investigation of him. Despite its assertion that the offer of time for rebuttal had expired, WDSU did offer to broadcast a one minute and 45 seconds response by Dupuy three times over WDSU-TV and five times over WDSU. Whether this

matter would have ever reached the FCC had there been no grand jury indictment is debatable.

Since most of the cases discussed here involve single stations, it is difficult to generalize about the entire industry on the basis of them. In 1961 Joseph Ripley completed a study of the practices and policies of stations all over the country vis-à-vis the broadcasting of viewpoints on controversial issues. Two sets of questionnaires were sent out—one early in 1957 and the other late in 1959; usable replies were received from 730 radio and television stations out of the first set, 852 out of the second. The major conclusion that Ripley reached after analyzing these questionnaires was that “a great many broadcasting stations failed to meet their obligation to devote an adequate amount of time to broadcasts featuring points of view about public issues” despite the fact that “generally the respondents felt the station had a duty to treat both sides of an issue fairly.” Ripley’s study, however, did not touch upon the treatment of controversial issues by candidates for political office when they were presented on newscasts or commentary programs.

The most recent study of this nature is summarized in a 602 page staff report prepared for the Senate Subcommittee on Communications and released in 1968. This document is entitled the Fairness Doctrine and is based on questionnaires that were returned to the subcommittee by 5,643 AM, FM, and TV stations. In expressing their opinion of the Fairness Doctrine, 2,767 respondents approved it as it stands, 1,183 supported it but offered modifications or clarifications, 1,160 opposed it, and 533 expressed no opinion. Such a strong endorsement is perhaps surprising, as 27 per cent of the respondents declared that they never broadcast any programs involving controversial public issues while just under 70 per cent affirmed that they sometimes carry these. In observing that “Obviously, a dramatically large number of stations are assuming no responsibility for dealing with important public issues,” the report of the Senate Subcommittee on Communications reinforces the conclusion reached at the start of the decade by Joseph Ripley. As Robert Lewis Shayon notes, there are a large number of broadcasters who prefer regulation in form if not in substance; if they are guilty of advocating a double standard, their hypocrisy is not without its counterparts in modern American society.

## NOTES ON SOURCES

The most comprehensive study of the activities of Congress in the area of broadcasting legislation is to be found in a 1958 publication of the Interstate and Foreign Commerce Committee of the U.S. House of Representatives, *Regulation of Broadcasting*. One may also find data on this subject in condensed form in the valuable but somewhat mistitled pamphlet of Edward Freedman, "Equal Time"—*Then and Now*. It is a sad commentary on scholarship in the area of broadcasting and politics that so little has been written from an overall point of view on Congressional legislation.

Public attitudes towards censorship of broadcasting during the radio era is treated in Hadley Cantril, *Public Opinion 1935-1946*, radio censorship and federal legislation to 1935 in Louis G. Caldwell, "Freedom of Speech and Radio Broadcasting." There are numerous studies of radio censorship cases during the Era of Normalcy (1920-32); these include Vita Lauter and Joseph H. Friend, "Radio and the Censors"; Mitchell Dawson, "Censorship in the Air"; Devere Allen, "Confidence and Censorship"; "Freedom of the Air and of the Press"; "Radical Truth Goes Off the Air"; Glenn E. Hoover, "Radio Censorship." For the New Deal Era (1933-1945) see especially H. B. Summers, *Radio Censorship*, as well as Llewellyn White, "The American Radio: Towards Self-Regulation," in Bernard Berelson and Morris Janowitz, eds., *Reader in Public Opinion and Communication*. Instances of broadcast censorship since the Port Huron Doctrine (1948) have been relatively rare, but one may find unsuccessful attempts in the material on radical right radio programs, and successful ones in "Wrangle over Wechsler" and "Mirage."

Writings on defamation have been less extensive. One finds convenient summaries of the arguments against Congressional legislation in Jack H. Friedenthal and Richard J. Medalie, "The Impact of Federal Regulation on Political Broadcasting: Section 315 of the Communications Act," and of what constitutes libel and slander in Albert E. Harum, "Remolding of Common Law Defamation." Various cases in this area are discussed in Edwin H. James, "Broadcasters' Ordeal by Politics." For the Port Huron decision, see Jerry B. Martin, "Immunity of Broadcast Stations from Liability for Defamatory Statements by Candidates for Public Office." The most recent case of consequence in the area of defamation led to the WDAY ruling of 1959; Albert Harum analyzes this in his "Federal Occupation of Political Defamation." Studies of policies and practices at the state level include "Defamation by Radio and Television—Recent Addition to the Civil Practice Act" and Dennis W. Sheehan, "Broadcaster's Immunity from Liability for Political Defamation."

The controversy over equal time (Section 315 of the Federal Communications Act of 1934) dates back to the radio era but has become more acute since the growth of television, television time being more expensive than radio time. Treatments of cases from the radio era are found in "After Due Consideration" and Murray Edelman, *The Licensing of Radio Services in the United States, 1927 to 1947*; those from the television era in Edwin H. James, "Broadcasters' Ordeal by Politics"; Jack H. Friedenthal and Richard J. Medalie, "The Impact of Federal Regulation on Political Broadcasting: Section 315 of the Communications Act"; Charles A. H. Thomson, "Mass

Media Activities and Influence," in Paul T. David, ed., *The Presidential Election and Transition, 1960-1961*; Robert E. Sanders, *The Great Debates*, and Bernard Rubin, *Political Television*. For federal legislation, see in addition to Rubin and Sanders, Jerome A. Barron, "The Federal Communications Commission's Fairness Doctrine: An Evaluation" and "When Must I Give Equal Time?" Very recent FCC rulings are examined at length in the National Association of Broadcasters, *Political Broadcast Catechism and the Fairness Doctrine*, very recent equal time cases in various issues of *Broadcasting* magazine.

As the Fairness Doctrine is only two decades old, commentaries on it are quite naturally more limited. One may find a convenient summary in "When Must I Give Equal Time?" and a comparison with Section 315 in Frederick W. Ford, "The Fairness Doctrine." Various cases relating to the doctrine are discussed in Jerome A. Barron, "The Federal Communications Commission's Fairness Doctrine: An Evaluation"; it is criticized in Charles H. Tower's pamphlet, *The Fairness Doctrine*. As above, check the National Association of Broadcasters' *Political Broadcast Catechism and the Fairness Doctrine* for very recent FCC rulings, various issues of *Broadcasting* magazine for very recent Fairness Doctrine cases.



## **6/The 1968 Election: A Tentative Appraisal**

In 1968, for the first time since 1952, the question whether the incumbent President would run again hung over the political horizon like a dark cloud. It was not until March 31 that Lyndon Johnson made the announcement that "I shall not seek, and I will not accept, the nomination of my party for another term as your President," at the end of a nationally televised speech dealing with the war in Vietnam. (It was in this speech that LBJ announced the unilateral halting of the bombing of part of North Vietnam.) In many ways 1968 was a year of surprise entrances and exits and primary showings in the Presidential race; among these were Michigan Governor George Romney's withdrawal on February 28, New York Governor Nelson Rockefeller's pullout on March 21 and re-entry on April 30, Minnesota Senator Eugene McCarthy's capture of 42 per cent of the Democratic vote in the New Hampshire primary on March 12, and New York Senator Robert Kennedy's entry on March 16 and assassination in Los Angeles on June 5 just after winning that state's Presidential preference primary. Each of these events received wide coverage, live and in color, on the television screen.

Prior to the entry of Vice-President Hubert Humphrey into the Presidential sweepstakes on April 27, the two avowed candidates for the Democratic nomination were Eugene McCarthy, who had entered the race the previous November 30, and Robert Kennedy. Although these two Senators were largely in agreement on the critical issue of the day (both opposed the policies of the Johnson Administration in Vietnam), they differed widely in their television

and public speaking styles. McCarthy's cool and conversational delivery, which often proved disappointing before political rallies, seemed ideal for television, while Kennedy's more emotional approach may have wowed live audiences but proved less than effective on television. Thus Kennedy's managers (at least initially) did not plan any elaborate television campaign; instead they scheduled numerous personal appearances all over the country. As for Hubert Humphrey, he gambled successfully on lining up the support of a large number of electoral votes and Southern state Democratic organizations, largely bypassing the primaries, and televised national appeals for support as well. A decision not to rely on television was indeed wise in the case of HHH, as his approach to politics was, if anything, more emotional than that of either McCarthy or the late Robert Kennedy; it is most difficult to crusade on television and simultaneously present a "cool" image. When the Vice-President did finally take to the airwaves in August in a series of 15 five-minute television spots costing nearly one-million dollars, he had a firm hold on his party's Presidential nomination as the Democratic convention neared.

While George Romney was withdrawing from the Presidential race, Nelson Rockefeller vacillating, and supporters of Ronald Reagan campaigning for their unannounced candidate, Richard Nixon was using television to further his White House ambitions. (He had formally declared himself a candidate on February 1.) Especially effective was his use of commercials in the New Hampshire and Wisconsin primaries; the New York advertising firm of Feeley and Wheeler produced a series of short television spots debunking the theory that Nixon couldn't win and stressing his familiarity with the international scene. Another Feeley and Wheeler effort was a half-hour film of Nixon on the campaign trail which attempted to show his human side. Nixon, who of all the leading Presidential candidates was the most aware of his shortcomings as a television performer and the most objective in his attempts to overcome them, had by the time of the 1968 campaign remade his television image from that of a "hot" performer into that of a "cool" one. As Marshall McLuhan has pointed out, Nixon completely reversed his television role in his second Presidential race from that of his previous one. Hubert Humphrey occupied the

same position in 1968 vis-à-vis Nixon that Nixon had occupied relative to John Kennedy in 1960.

Apart from his national appearances, Nixon also participated in a series of programs at the state level, "The Nixon Answer," which featured citizen panels that varied from state to state. Among the states which were selected as targets for these special programs were the large electoral vote states of Ohio, Illinois, California, and Michigan, the first three of which Nixon carried in November. The California program was an hour in length, the others a half-hour each. An added feature of the California program was a five-minute conversation between Nixon and Negro basketball star Wilt Chamberlain. Frank Shakespeare of CBS, who conceived "The Nixon Answer," shortly thereafter took a leave of absence to serve as a television advisor to Nixon during the campaign.

An additional perspective concerning the leading Presidential candidates and their use of television may be gained through an analysis of their publicly expressed views on these two media during the last few years. Surprisingly, an investigation of this subject reveals fewer statements than one might expect; Eugene McCarthy up to the time of the 1968 campaign had issued no broadcast-related news releases since 1959. In contrast, Hubert Humphrey stated that he was an avid radio and television fan when he had the time to listen and watch. In assessing the importance of the electronic media, Humphrey once observed "I happen to believe that the printed word is vital and important, but I also believe that the spoken word is the message that is most readily received. . . ." Significantly, Robert Kennedy was quoted in 1966 to the effect that he rarely watched television because he had found it boring the few times that he had watched it, and that his children were of the same opinion. One of Kennedy's pet crusades was the isolation of young audiences from cigarette commercials, especially on sports telecasts.

As for the Republicans, off-and-on candidate Nelson Rockefeller's exposure to television on a workday basis in recent years has been mostly at the state level; New York broadcasters generally regard the Governor as a friend of broadcasting whose relations with the electronic media have been productive. Then there is Richard Nixon who probably lost the 1960 Presidential election to

John Kennedy as a result of their televised debates, yet whose experience with the newspapers was so bad during his unsuccessful 1962 gubernatorial race in California that he observed at the famous news conference following his defeat ". . . thank God for television and radio for keeping the newspapers a little more honest." In the case of Ronald Reagan, the role of television in his professional career prior to his entering politics was so great that it hardly needs additional elaboration here.

By 1968, expenditures for political television had reached an unprecedented level. Ironically, it was Robert Kennedy, one of the wealthiest candidates for high political office in American history, who focused public attention on soaring campaign costs in a victory interview which he granted following the Indiana primary. When questioned by Walter Cronkite of CBS about the impact on his Presidential campaign of the charge that he had "bought" this primary, Kennedy retorted that he could not measure this impact. He then launched an attack on the broadcasting industry which he claimed was lining its pockets at the expense of political candidates, suggesting that the networks give candidates for public office free time. During the Indiana primary one single station WFBM-TV of Indianapolis ran commercials costing \$44,000 on behalf of the three Presidential slates; even if one is unsympathetic to the Senator's lament that television expenses were a financial drain on the Kennedy family, he must admit that such costs may well have prevented less affluent candidates from mounting effective campaigns. Significantly, NBC announced late in July that the prices charged for political advertising would be halved from August 1 to Election Day, CBS subsequently noting that it sold political minutes at the lowest card rate.

On June 1 Robert Kennedy did obtain free time on television in the form of a debate over ABC with Eugene McCarthy several days before the California primary. In terms of the number of home viewers this event was no smashing success; according to the national Arbitron ratings there were approximately 25 million, only one-third of the total for the first Kennedy-Nixon debate. Nor was it an artistic triumph; John McLaughlin perhaps spoke for the majority when he commented that, despite its informational value, "it was a bland and inconclusive offering." ABC managed to evade

Section 315 by labelling the debate a "special edition" of the regular Sunday program "Issues and Answers." The major obstacle to a stimulating McCarthy-Kennedy encounter was that the two candidates were largely in agreement on the major issues, especially Vietnam; two-thirds of the way through the program, moderator Frank Reynolds observed: "Well, there don't seem to be very many differences between (you) on anything, really." If there was any difference at all, it was in their respective attitudes to Secretary of State Dean Rusk and FBI chief J. Edgar Hoover, McCarthy giving the impression that he would retire both. (It must be remembered that John Kennedy had hired the former and continued the latter in office.) Another problem was the format, which inhibited direct dialogue. After three ABC newsmen had posed questions for a while, McCarthy complained that "This is not really shaping up as a debate. We're just going to sit around a table and be nice to each other."

In 1968, unlike 1964, there were no widespread complaints about computerized predictions of victory in the California or any other primary. According to a survey published in *Television*, the three major networks were divided equally in making the earliest calls in six Democratic Presidential preference primaries held in New Hampshire, Wisconsin, Indiana, Nebraska, Oregon, and California. In three of the first four of these, NBC's coverage of the primary attracted a larger television audience than either ABC's or CBS's, although it fell behind the latter two in the case of the Indiana primary. Yet as primary specials generally were not on the air at the same time on the different networks, it is perhaps unfair to make direct comparisons.

Turning to the conventions, the most significant innovation in network coverage was the decision by ABC (announced in February) that it would forego gavel-to-gavel coverage, instead telecasting ninety minutes of highlights nightly. This marked the first time since 1952 that any of the "big three" did not present a convention from beginning to end. In part this move was dictated by financial rather than journalistic considerations, as there was a major cutback in the ABC news budget following the collapse of its proposed merger with the International Telephone and Telegraph Corporation. Full convention coverage would have cost

ABC three million dollars and at the time of the announcement it had not as yet found a sponsor. As it turned out, ABC perhaps did provide the most exciting political commentary of any network, as the monumental encounters between William Buckley and Gore Vidal, which alternated between sophisticated political analysis and vicious personal attacks on each other, have had few, if any, parallels in the history of television. Despite its truncated coverage, ABC did telecast the conventions in color, as did CBS and NBC, the first time that this had ever been done.

The Republican convention which met at Miami Beach in August, was by the standards of most conventions a relatively dull affair, thanks to the fact that Richard Nixon had more or less wrapped up his party's Presidential nomination by the time of the gathering. In the words of *Time*, it was "Medium over Tedium." While NBC stuck more or less to a hard-news approach, CBS made more of an effort to uncover possible erosion in the Nixon strength via its "CBS News Delegate Count," but this search proved rather unrewarding, despite occasional reports of increased Rockefeller or Reagan strength. During the dull stretches of the convention, network cameras strayed from the rostrum approximately 70 per cent of the time. One of the few highlights of the television coverage was the presentation of the hastily conceived floor fight against the nomination of Spiro Agnew as Richard Nixon's running mate; Nixon's acceptance speech of his party's Presidential nomination proved to be one of his better efforts. To a British observer writing in the *Economist*, the convention was a "disturbing democratic experience," a victim of "editorial and political overkill"; "... what they succeeded in killing was not so much their rivals' audience ratings, but the political convention itself."

At least in terms of the audience that it attracted, ABC's abbreviated coverage of the Republican convention proved to be a success. On every night except the night of the Nixon nomination ABC substantially led the other networks between 7:30 and 9:30 p. m., when it showed reruns of television shows, and for the whole convention period its final percentage rating of 11.1 on the National Arbitron scale edged CBS (11) for second place behind NBC (12.8). ABC, moreover, spent only \$2 million on its curtailed coverage compared to \$4 million for NBC and \$5 million for

CBS. Whether these statistics will lead the other two networks to abandon gavel-to-gavel coverage of future conventions remains to be seen.

Thanks to his adroit maneuvering, the Democratic Presidential nomination was practically in Hubert Humphrey's pocket by the time his party's convention met at Chicago in September, as the Republican one had been for Richard Nixon at Miami Beach the previous month. Here, however, there was an explosive debate on the Vietnam question which stands as one of the highlights, if not the highlight, of the convention proper, itself one of the stormiest in modern American political history. Lyndon Johnson wisely stayed away, although his sixtieth birthday did fall at this time; Chicago's Mayor Richard J. Daley, who was largely responsible for the convention coming to that city, emerged as the "heavy" of the drama. Some of Daley's maneuverings on the floor of the convention were distasteful to the reform elements, but it was his vigorous crackdown on the protesters outside the convention halls that earned him a place in their hall of infamy. Unfortunately for Daley, the Chicago Mayor has one of the worst television images (he looks like the quintessential political boss) in all of American politics, and this factor may well have prejudiced many viewers against him who otherwise might have felt that his police tactics were partially justified.

During the course of the Democratic convention the floor reporters for the various networks involved themselves in the action to the point where they themselves experienced some of the intrigue and violence that was enveloping the convention both inside and outside the halls in which it was meeting. Sander Vanocur of NBC was constantly followed by several unidentified men, despite the complaints of David Brinkley. Mike Wallace of CBS was hustled off the floor by security police while investigating the attempted eviction of a delegate from the New York delegation; Dan Rather of the same network was punched to the floor by an unidentified security guard while covering the ejection of a regular Georgia delegate. The usually calm Walter Cronkite lost his composure, charging that ". . . we've got a bunch of thugs down there." Rumors about personalities and issues flew left and right, CBS commentator Eric Sevareid eventually admitting that the projected Edward

Kennedy candidacy was "partly the creation of TV." An interview of Mayor Daley by Cronkite, after the latter's flare-up, proved a surprisingly tame affair, the former informing "Walter" that he was not complaining about him but about "other" reporters.

Despite the punishment that its reporters took, CBS lost out again to NBC in the audience ratings for the entire convention period. As at the Republican convention, ABC led during the period from 7:30 to 9:30 p. m., when it showed reruns, but slipped percentage-wise to third place (10.3) in the National Arbitron ratings behind NBC (17.1) and CBS (14.5) when it began its reduced coverage. While the latter may have proved effective in the case of the rather unlively Republican convention, it must be judged inadequate for the tumultuous Democratic gathering. Those who did watch the ABC commentary witnessed the climax of the William Buckley-Gore Vidal feud, Vidal accusing Buckley of having Nazi sympathies and Buckley charging that Vidal was lacking in masculinity.

Mayor Daley, whose image obviously had been tarnished by the televising of the brutality which accompanied the convention, struck back with a television special later in September that gave his side of the story. Although the three major networks rejected this apologia, 160 individual television stations did present it, while more than 1,000 radio stations, too, carried the radio version. Charging that network coverage of police actions had been distorted, the Daley special attempted to present the untold portions of the convention disorders, especially the planned demonstrator provocations. While the telecast attracted 38.8 per cent of the audience in the eight-county Chicago area when it was shown, it pulled only 14 per cent of the total in New York City. Daley was not alone in his attacks on the network convention coverage; Kenneth Crawford wrote in *Newsweek* that it "was oversimplified and overdramatized to the point of gross distortion, if not of falsification." Adding that television "succeeded in putting on a crackling good show, complete with plot, suspense and archetypical heroes on one side against villains on the other," Crawford concluded that it may have succeeded as entertainment but failed as a source of accurate information.

As the fall progressed, each major network in turn defended its

broadcast coverage of the Democratic convention. According to Frank Stanton of CBS, his network's version of the violence was both cautious and balanced; he pointed out that only about 30 minutes of the total 38 hours plus of convention telecast that CBS carried was devoted to the demonstrations. Elmer Lower of ABC expressed similar sentiments, partially blaming the Daley Administration for his network's failure to present as well-rounded a picture of events in Chicago as originally hoped, while Howard Monderer of NBC questioned the Federal Communication Commission's policy of requesting the networks to comment on charges of biased coverage, asserting that this policy raised serious free speech issues. Significantly, in March 1969 the FCC did publicly declare that the national television networks had presented a balanced report of the Democratic convention, but it declined to assess the overall "truth" of their coverage, continuing to investigate allegations that camera crews had deliberately staged four supposed news events.

Shifting our attention back to the campaign, Richard Nixon entered the post-convention period confident of victory, as all the public opinion polls had him leading Hubert Humphrey by varying margins. One Nixon telecast, which originated out of Chicago in September, continued "The Nixon Answer" format; with former football coach Charles B. (Bud) Wilkinson acting as moderator, eight panelists representing "a true cross section of America" asked the Republican nominee questions before an audience consisting of such celebrities as Senators Charles Percy and Edward Brooke. Beginning in mid-October, Nixon appeared in a series of ten night-time radio broadcasts dealing with such subjects as welfare, youth, education, arms, peace and other topics of contemporary political interest.

Faced with an uphill battle and inadequate campaign funds, the Humphrey forces placed a great deal of emphasis on television spots. Among these some were sarcastic ("Agnew for Vice-President?"), anti-Wallace in orientation ("Alabama: Highest Murder Rate"), or somewhat questionable in their claims ("Nixon: Opposes Medicare"). Typical of the Humphrey approach was this statement from one commercial: "But for every jail that Mr. Nixon would build, Mr. Humphrey would also build a house." The mastermind of the Humphrey campaign was Joseph Napolitan, the

former public relations partner of Lawrence O'Brien, the new head of the Democratic National Committee. In mid-campaign Napolitan dropped the Doyle Dane Bernbach advertising agency which had handled the Democratic account in the Johnson-Humphrey landslide of 1964 in favor of Lennen and Newell and its spun-off subagency, Campaign Planners. Napolitan, who relies heavily on public opinion polls, discovered that the majority of the American people felt that the Negro has had too many handouts, and advised Humphrey to switch from emphasizing a Marshall Plan for the cities to the law-and-order theme. When the "hip" Doyle Dane agency did not produce commercials to his taste, Napolitan abandoned them for the more "square" Lennen and Newell. According to one theory, what finally caused the decision against Doyle Dane was a proposed commercial that showed Humphrey turning into a dart board: "Hubert Humphrey has always been a target for criticism."

As for third party candidate George Wallace, he announced on his first nationwide half-hour on television on NBC that "The people of the United States are going to take back government into their own hands." Unfortunately, Wallace's stands on various public issues aroused such heated emotional responses, both pro and con, that it is difficult to be objective about him as a television performer; while one critic may observe that "On the TV screen, he comes over as a cross between Flem Snopes and Huey Long," many of his supporters regard him as the most charismatic political personality they have ever encountered. In addition, most analyses of Wallace in print stress the merits of his message rather than his manipulation of the media. Having seen Wallace in person and on television, I am of the opinion that the former Alabama Governor is aware that appearances on video call for a different technique than ones at public rallies and that he varies his performances accordingly.

If the Great Debates were the highlight of the televised 1960 Presidential campaign, the failure to debate was the focal point of the latest Presidential race. Summing up the situation briefly, Richard Nixon was willing to debate Hubert Humphrey but not George Wallace, and George Wallace was most eager to debate both major party candidates. Being ahead in the three-way contest

according to every public opinion poll and still smarting from his debating loss to John Kennedy eight years earlier, Nixon quite naturally was hesitant to debate again. Unfortunately for Hubert Humphrey, his public statements vis-à-vis the desirability of candidates for public office debating were, if anything, inconsistent. In 1964 he had been Lyndon Johnson's Vice-Presidential running mate when LBJ refused to debate his Republican opponent, Barry Goldwater, while as late as April 1968 Humphrey had declined to participate in a three-way confrontation with Eugene McCarthy and Robert Kennedy. Admittedly, Humphrey had agreed to debate the former in July but had called off the encounter on the eve of the Democratic convention. Yet upon receiving his party's Presidential nomination, underdog Humphrey challenged Richard Nixon to a debate; in this connection the former observed "As a Senator, I always debated; as a candidate in the primaries against John Kennedy, we debated. I have debated any candidate that I could ever find, and that is my position."

Tied up with the projected debates between the Presidential candidates, of course, was the suggested enactment of Congressional legislation suspending Section 315 for the 1968 campaign. Both Richard Nixon and Hubert Humphrey were quoted in print to the effect that they favored suspension; on the other hand, George Wallace opposed suspension unless he, too, was given equal time. The Senate did pass an equal time suspension bill on May 29 but, after the House finally enacted the measure in October, the compromise measure died in the Senate after twenty-seven hours of delaying tactics and debate. Similar to the 1960 law in a number of respects, the Senate resolution would have protected broadcasters from the equal time demands of minor party candidates for the Presidency or Vice-Presidency, thus striking a blow at George Wallace, although network presidents had told the Senate Communications Subcommittee that "reasonable coverage would not be denied the American Independent Party." The House, however, eventually voted to include Wallace, which may have been the major reason why Senate Minority Leader Everett Dirksen successfully adopted a non-quorum strategy when the bill reached the Senate floor the second time. Despite the failure of this resolution to pass, CBS did attempt to bring Richard Nixon and Hubert Hum-

phrey together on its "Face the Nation" program on October 27, George Wallace having waived an offer from CBS of free time on the program a week later, but Nixon aide Herbert Klein rejected the offer on the grounds that it would give Wallace free (if separate) exposure. Klein also asserted that Wallace couldn't waive Section 315 which Congress after all had failed to suspend.

On election eve, in a massive orgy of spending for network time, both Humphrey and Nixon held forth on separate four-hour long telethons originating on the West Coast. Humphrey was also seen in filmed half-hour long programs over CBS and NBC, the latter of which competed with the Humphrey marathon on ABC. (The Nixon telecast was on NBC.) George Wallace appeared on three separate half-hour programs on each of the major networks. Both Nixon and Humphrey answered questions telephoned in by listeners, but the latter shared his questions with his Vice-Presidential nominee Edmund Muskie, while the former did not make use of his running mate, Spiro Agnew. According to Sindlinger and Company, on election eve approximately two-thirds of the national audience watched political television; of this two-thirds, 79.3 per cent saw Nixon, 79.3 per cent Humphrey, and 54.5 per cent Wallace. The combined cost of the Humphrey-Nixon-Wallace telecasts on this Monday evening alone was well over one million dollars, but considering the massive audience reached it may well have been worth it.

It is impossible to determine at this time what impact these final programs had on the next day's voting. The political fortunes of Hubert Humphrey had been given a final boost by Lyndon Johnson several days before (on October 31) when the President halted the bombing of North Vietnam; prior to this action Humphrey had enjoyed a steady and unexpected rise in the public opinion polls over the previous two months, largely at the expense of George Wallace. (Richard Nixon's strength apparently remained almost constant during the entire course of the campaign if one is to believe the polls.) In an election almost as close as that of 1960, Nixon emerged the victor on Wednesday morning when the 26 electoral votes of Illinois fell into his column. ABC awarded Nixon the Presidency at 8:15 a. m. Eastern Standard Time, NBC at 10:33 a. m., and CBS at 11:45 a. m.; the closeness of the race and the

presence of a third candidate acted as a deterrent against early computer predictions. According to the final returns, Nixon polled 31.8 million popular votes and 302 electoral ones, Humphrey 31.3 million and 191, and Wallace 9.9 million and 45. One Nixon elector eventually switched his vote to Wallace, causing a minor furor that did not lead to corrective measures when Congress met.

With the proliferation of campaign committees it is becoming increasingly difficult to compile accurate totals for media expenses, but in January 1969 the FCC reported that the Republicans had outspent the Democrats for television time, 5 million dollars to 3, during the 1968 Presidential campaign. Other groups (referring mainly to the American Independent Party of George Wallace) spent \$681,491 on television. This total of 8.9 million dollars was roughly twice that for 1964, an unparalleled increase. Of the 96 hours consumed by Presidential and Vice-Presidential campaigns on television, 32 were paid for by the candidates, 49 were on commercially sponsored shows such as the weekly news interviews, and 15 were donated free by the networks. Broken down on an individual network basis, expenditures were: NBC, 4.2 million dollars; CBS, 2.9; ABC, 1.7. Significantly, the Republicans bought three times as many spot announcements as did the Democrats, although the amount of program time each purchased was approximately the same. The Democratic Party probably would have spent more for spots under ordinary circumstances, but it was so short on campaign funds that it had to borrow over one million dollars between October 28 and Election Day.

Although it is far too early to have the proper perspective with which to evaluate the role of political television in the 1968 Presidential campaign as a whole, one might well comment on various theories set forth by Harvey Wheeler in his article "The End of the Two Party System," which appeared in the *Saturday Review* just prior to the election. According to Wheeler, "Television, which has already had profound effects on American politics, is not only making the two-party system irrelevant, it is also producing a new political coalition and new systems of campaign communications." After attributing the rise of the Republican Party a century ago to the modern mass circulation newspaper and that of Franklin Roosevelt a generation ago to the radio, Wheeler

listed the contributions that Dwight Eisenhower made to the development of political television in the Presidential campaign of 1952; stressing a theory that is not original with him, he then went on to observe that today with the emergence of the politics of personality as a full-fledged phenomenon we have a "new" politics in which many of the older political practices have become obsolete.

One must admit with Wheeler that both Richard Nixon and Hubert Humphrey were hold-overs from the "old" politics, but Nixon's conscious attempt to remake his television image before and during 1968 and his successful use of this medium during the transition period (the announcement of his cabinet) and the early days of his Presidency (his first press conference) apparently demonstrates that an old dog sometimes does learn new tricks. Less fortunate in this respect was Lyndon Johnson who was a victim of an inadequate television image as well as the unresolved Vietnamese conflict. According to former White House news secretary Bill Moyers, the President was "never able to effectively use TV to communicate to mass audiences," since he had grown up in politics before the medium had developed and had never mastered it; LBJ himself observed at the National Association of Broadcasters convention in Chicago on April 1 that "I understand far better than some of my severe and perhaps intolerant critics would admit my own shortcomings as a communicator." Nevertheless, as Wheeler pointed out, Robert Kennedy's victory over the solidly entrenched Branigan machine in the Indiana primary with the aid of television marked a significant milestone in the replacing of the "old" politics with the "new." What the dominant elements will be in the new political coalition that Richard Nixon or Edward Kennedy or some other political figure, known or unknown, will forge to govern America in the years to come remains to be seen, but the forging of such a coalition will require that the party in power and its leader so use television that the disparate elements involved will remain together under their banner.

#### NOTES ON SOURCES

As of this writing (Spring 1969) scholarly studies of the election of 1968 are not yet available, so that the author was forced by necessity to rely largely on journalistic accounts and his own personal impressions. A list of

the materials employed in the writing of this chapter is appended to the bibliography proper as "The 1968 Election: A Preliminary Bibliography"; references to additional articles not used here may be found in such reference works as the *Readers' Guide to Periodical Literature*, the *Social Sciences and Humanities Index*, and the *Business Periodicals Index*. Descriptions and evaluations of most of the articles employed is not necessary in view of their general nature, although at least one isolated piece, Harvey Wheeler's "The End of the Two Party System," should be singled out for special emphasis.

Three books on television and politics did appear during 1968, but none of them treats the Presidential election of that year, being instead retrospective works. Of the three, Kurt and Gladys Lang, *Politics and Television*, is the most scholarly; Gene Wyckoff, *The Image Candidates*, and Robert MacNeil, *The People Machine*, are somewhat popular treatments written by individuals with television experience either as political advisors or newscasters. Both the Langs and Wyckoff use the case-study approach, Lang and Lang going back as far as 1951 and Wyckoff to 1960. MacNeil's topical approach is chronologically somewhat chaotic, but his scope is more comprehensive than that of the other two volumes. All three volumes cover well those areas they have staked out for examination, but none really presents the entire picture.



## 7/Radio and Television in Perspective

### *Radio: Evaluating the Evaluations*

During the formative years of radio various theories and counter-theories were offered as to its political impact by a number of critics. Among the earliest of these was the hypothesis that radio would lead to the abandonment of political barnstorming and old style oratory. An extremely optimistic view was that of George Baker, the head of the Republican national publicity bureau, who observed in 1924 that "The man who talks politics over the radio has got to talk sense in order to get a hearing. If he doesn't his audience walks out on him. . . . The radio will entirely change political methods, I believe; it will knock the nonsense out of politics." In a similar vein the *Saturday Evening Post* thought that radio would lead to "the debunking of present-day oratory and the setting of higher standards of public speaking," pointing out that "The familiar phrases and resources of the spellbinder sound very flat and stale over the air." Five years later Samuel Blythe wrote that radio "had the exceeding merit of cutting down the hokum and keeping the talkers, to some extent, to fairly factual statements." Such claims, of course, are true in so far as radio broadcasting does require a different technique than platform speaking, but to assume that political addresses today are, generally speaking, of a higher quality thanks to the emergence of the radio as a means of communication is to deceive oneself.

A related hypothesis was that the radio broadcaster could not arouse the emotions of his radio audience as an old style orator could that of an assembled crowd. This in theory was to lead to

more rationality in politics. As the *New Republic* summed it up back in 1924, "The radio listener is free of the two most powerful compulsions of the crowd, emotional contagion and mass disapproval." Eunice Fuller Barnard also observed in this connection that listeners to a political speaker over the radio "do not, they cannot react upon him or each other. He cannot sense their feeling. He cannot adapt himself to them. There is no mutuality, no emotional give and take between speaker and audience." Even more optimistic was the *Forum*, which made the claim five years later that the radio listener "is free from the contagion of the crowd and only the logic of the issue which the orator presents can move him." Here again there is considerable truth in the basic assumption that mass hysteria, like the old style oratory largely passed into the realm of limbo with the introduction of the radio. Yet the latter did enable the highly emotional Father Charles Coughlin to become a national figure; other speakers, too, have been able to play on a radio audience's emotions subtly without screaming and ranting. Thus to assume that radio is a cold, unemotional medium is to deny facts that point in a diametrically opposite direction.

Another controversial issue that was raised in the early days of radio was whether political personalities would or would not project over the airwaves. Those most convinced that radio was working a political revolution frequently took a negative position; the *New Republic* proclaimed in 1924 that "This course of political eavesdropping will be unrelieved by any magnetic radiations of personality. The famous teeth of Teddy, his melodramatic fist, the portentous solemnity of Dr. Wilson, the boozing joviality of Warren (Harding), all will be lost on the headphones." Yet Eunice Fuller Barnard had written in the same magazine several months earlier that radio exposes the speaker's "own voice, with his own revealing emphasis, with his own chuckle, or candor, or uncton, with the immediate warm reaction of his personality, down to the very creaking of his shirt studs." Today most media analysts would probably agree with the latter assessment; the radio image Franklin Roosevelt projected differed from that of Herbert Hoover, and that which Herbert Hoover projected differed from that of Al Smith. However, one might raise the question whether the radio images of

those political figures coincided with the real person, just as one might raise the same question today relative to television images.

Flawed as some of the above-mentioned theories may have been, others were even more out of step with the truth. William Shepherd, for example, wrote in 1924 that "Politics itself is always local," concluding that "Even this early the campaign managers have discovered that nation-wide broadcasting, except for important fixed events, is not of great value." It may have been true that during the 1920's there was less interest in national and international developments than during the previous decade, but this phenomenon was only temporary; within a decade the coming of the New Deal and the approach of World War II had shifted interest away from state and local developments. In contrast, Katherine Ludington wrote in 1928 that radio would help break down sectionalism in this country. The political speaker "must find arguments suited to a farmer or to a city dweller, to a Southerner equally with a New Englander or a Westerner, for if the hookup is wide enough, all will be there." There is much truth in this hypothesis, but Ludington failed to point out that most speeches addressed to a highly diverse audience tend to be platitudinous and thus frequently do not constitute meaningful discussions of complex issues.

A more thorny question raised by some of these commentators was whether radio had made politics in the United States more democratic, whatever that ambiguous adjective may mean. In this connection Eunice Fuller Barnard optimistically asserted in 1924 that the invention of radio "does reproduce to some degree, for the first time in the United States, the condition of the Athenian democracy where every voter, for himself, could hear and judge the candidates." Miss Barnard, though, apparently forgot that the newspaper was also available to everyone literate; assuming that the overwhelming majority of Americans are literate, it is unlikely that the radio led to many people becoming acquainted with the leading political issues of the day who otherwise would have been ignorant of them. An even more far-reaching claim was that of Katherine Ludington who believed in 1928 that "If the future of our democracy depends upon the character of our electorate, the crowning glory of radio, transcending all its other miracles, will be to make

ours the first permanent democracy in the world." Democracy in America may endure for many years to come, but it is highly debatable whether this will be mainly attributable to the influence of the radio; actually radio may have contributed just as much to demagoguery as to democracy, as it is generally easier to inflame the mass mind through the spoken word than through the written word. One need only to compare the impact of Father Charles Coughlin's radio addresses with that of his publication *Social Justice* for proof.

Another area in which unrealized claims were made relative to radio was that it would shorten political campaigns. The argument in support of this position held that barnstorming—which is highly time-consuming—was no longer necessary, thanks to technological progress. Among those holding to this position was the *Omaha World-Herald*, which declared in 1928 that "A month with the radio is equal to six months of the old-fashioned campaigning. After a few addresses by the candidates on nation-wide hookups, and a few others by eminent leaders on both sides, the country will understand what the issues are, be educated as to the merits of the opposing sides, and be ready to vote." Although this prophecy was based on logical reasoning, time has not borne it out; an ill Franklin Roosevelt, preoccupied with the war, did rely heavily on the radio in 1944 while seeking a fourth term as President, but four years later Harry Truman barnstormed across the nation, "giving 'em Hell." As for the preceding conventions, the *Christian Century* hopefully suggested in 1932 that the invention of the radio had eliminated the need for "the camp-followers, the ward-workers, the noise-makers, the banner-carriers, and the bands" at the quadrennial meetings of the major parties, observing that "There is no longer any reason why nominations should be made in the presence of vast and turbulent mobs whose interruptions and whose very presence makes it impossible for the conventions to be deliberative bodies." Needless to say, there was relatively little streamlining of conventions in the era of radio, although some progress has been made in this direction during the age of television.

A more valid suggestion that was made by various commentators was that radio is a more politically neutral medium than are the newspapers. Thanks to the instantaneousness of transmission, "The

listener can form his own opinion from the candidate's utterance, before the press or the parties can instruct him," as Eunice Fuller Barnard pointed out in 1924. But when a candidate employs the radio, there is no commentator on hand to correct an erroneous statement or an unbalanced presentation, as is the case with the newspapers, so that while much is gained, much is also lost. On the other hand, as Mark Sullivan complained, "It is the reporter who ignores some speeches, makes mere allusions to some, and transmits extracts from others." Thus one must choose between the distortions of an uncorrected speaker and those of a correcting newspaperman. One must not forget, though, that radio time is more expensive, relatively speaking, than newspaper space; as Hugh Williamson has pointed out, the "era of substantial equality of election opportunity between rich and poor receded yet further into the background as the role of money loomed ever larger." This is especially true of primary campaigns, where a candidate who lacks the official backing of the party machine may not be able to purchase enough radio time so as to be able to carry on an effective campaign. It might be added relative to television, too, that while this medium may be even more politically neutral than radio it is also more expensive.

As early as 1928 Samuel Blythe correctly foresaw that radio would expand rather than revolutionize politics in America, although his declaration that "It hasn't changed politics an iota" is perhaps a little extreme. The *New York Times* similarly thought around the time of the 1940 Presidential nominating convention that "All the revolutionary effects predicted in the twenties, as a result of broadcasting, have not come to pass," since "Politicians still cling to traditions." In contrast, those who boldly asserted, as the *Nation* did in 1924, that "Radio will never again play so important a part in a campaign" were underrating the political impact of the medium. Radio, of course, eventually came to be taken for granted. As the *New York Times* noted in 1936, "The wonder of radio has long since departed. It is now reckoned among the commonplaces of life. People turn it on automatically, but discount or ignore a great deal that is poured into their ears." For something to become commonplace, however, is not per se to destroy its influence and, as we have emphasized in the chapter on radio and

politics, radio has continued to make its weight felt relative to American politics down to the present.

In summary, the major claims that its proponents made for political radio during its formative years were that it would end political barnstorming and the old style political oratory; halt emotional appeals and mass rabble-rousing; project political personalities; nationalize politics; make politics more democratic; streamline conventions and shorten campaigns; be a more politically neutral medium than the newspapers, and revolutionize politics. Radio obviously did not live up to all of these claims, as we have seen, but equally significant is the fact that every one of them has been made by proponents of television relative to that medium. If, moreover, one examines closely the approximately two dozen claims that its proponents have made for political television, which we shall discuss in the following section, he will discover that the overwhelming majority are simply variations on the ones made by proponents of radio for their medium decades ago. As the French would say, the more things change, the more they are the same. In the final section, though, we will attempt to demonstrate that there are some differences between political radio and political television despite the numerous similarities that exist.

### *Television: Evaluating the Evaluations*

Shifting our attention to television, the fact that this medium has inspired a number of extended analyses leads one to examine a half dozen of the more significant of these rather than to take up various hypotheses relative to political broadcasting one by one as we did in the case of radio. One of the first extended analyses of the political impact of television was Charles Thomson's *Television and Presidential Politics*, which first appeared in 1956 prior to the Presidential campaign. Thomson foresaw that television would increase the number of candidates and speed the creation of political personalities, although he admitted that Estes Kefauver's television performances did not win him the Democratic Presidential nomination over Adlai Stevenson in 1952. In attempting to answer the question "Does television inexorably and inevitably unmask the charlatan?" Thomson straddled the fence by taking the position that it may do so. Thomson, moreover, was of the opinion that

television projects personalities better than issues, and it would seem that there has been an emphasis on the former during recent elections at the expense of the latter. There also is considerable validity to his warning that, thanks to the cost of television, "the politics of the future will be the playground of the rich."

As for conventions, some of Thomson's prophecies do not stand up well under careful scrutiny. His hypothesis relative to these was that "Television will not determine but will exercise peculiar leverage on the timing, location, management, and procedure of conventions." The latter, however, have yet to conform to his forecast that sessions will more and more tend to coincide with television prime time; the length of the proceedings inevitably requires afternoon and even post-midnight gatherings. Likewise, despite the assertion of Thomson that the conventions of the major parties were likely to be held in some centrally located city in the years to come, conventions have been scheduled for San Francisco, Los Angeles, and Miami Beach in recent years. Another controversial prediction of Thomson was that television equipment will take up more and more space in the convention hall at the expense of the other media, the newspapers and the radio still being very much in evidence there.

More perceptive is Thomson's questioning of a possible trend towards shorter campaigns because of television, despite a growing tendency to concentrate on fewer issues. In this connection Thomson made the observation that "Television in itself does not reduce the number of symbolic settings in and occasions on which a candidate must appear if he is to appeal to all politically significant elements of the electorate, at least until television or a combination of political media reduces the importance of regionalism in American politics to negligible levels." This theory helps explain why Richard Nixon thought it necessary to appear in every state during the 1960 Presidential campaign, the opinion of certain advisors to the contrary. According to Thomson, the chief value of television is to make a relatively unknown candidate better known.

In weighing the impact of television on politics, there is probably no more elusive factor than the element of personality. In 1956 Kurt and Gladys Lang attempted to explain this factor in terms of a three-way reaction by the viewer to the appearance of a public figure on television: "It can be seen as a television *performance*; as

a political appearance in a *political role*; as an introduction to a human being, stirring in the viewer a *personal image* of the actor." The first of these factors involves the extent to which the political candidate or the governmental official has successfully mastered the demands of the medium, while the second centers around whether the man shows a good grasp of his subject matter and seems qualified for the position he holds or is seeking. The third, though, is more difficult to pin down. It basically involves the extent of positive personal identification which the viewer feels towards the speaker; a political candidate or governmental official may be an excellent television performer and play his political role perfectly yet leave his audience "cold."

Unlike many commentators, the Langs have observed relative to television that "intimacy is not inherent in the medium, no matter how conducive the setting and screen may be to intimacy," adding that "it is necessary to distinguish between close-up and intimacy." As a result the "social distance" between the performer and viewer may seem enormous or minute, depending on the occasion. Among the occasions where the performer is less likely to close the gap are: (1) when he delivers a spectacular performance; (2) where he is shown in a relatively unfamiliar situation; (3) when he is already known for his political role. When the performer responds personally in a series of actions, the viewer may react to him as a person, but only if the viewer does not fall victim to strong political preconceptions and if the performer does not allow possible political overtones to overshadow his personality.

The occasions on which the element of personality is most likely to lead the performer to intimately relate to the viewer, according to Lang and Lang, are when there is a political consensus rather than political controversy; when there is a general atmosphere of distrust because of an alleged lack of political ethics, driving the viewer to look for character in the performer, and when the media build up the performer as a television "personality." If personality becomes the main concern of viewers in evaluating political candidates or governmental officials on television, then the end result may be what Walter Lippman referred to in the pre-television age as "the intensification of feeling and a degradation of significance." Television may not by nature be always intimate, but as the Langs

pointed out, "there is a widespread belief in the intimacy of television and this, in itself, makes a difference." Despite widespread public distrust of successful "politicians," one can only wonder whether they are more of a menace to American democracy than television "personalities" who make the viewer forget that they are also politicians. Unfortunately, social scientists have yet to measure the television personality of a political candidate or governmental official in quantitative terms.

An expected booster of political television was Sig Mikelson, President of CBS news, who wrote in 1960 that "Television has brought about the most radical revolution in the history of politics." Of all the analysts discussed here, Mikelson makes the most exorbitant claims for political television. In observing that "Political campaigning has become more intimate and personal than even in the early years of our history," Mikelson touched on a question which the Langs probably have answered at greater length than anyone else, and in a more negative fashion than Mikelson. On the other hand, Mikelson rather surprisingly admitted that television has only changed the course of recent elections to a limited degree; Dwight Eisenhower would have won over Adlai Stevenson in 1952 and 1956 and Lyndon Johnson would have won over Barry Goldwater in 1964 with or without television, but the same thing does not hold true of John Kennedy and Richard Nixon in 1960.

If television has had an impact, stated Mikelson, it has been on the citizens, not the voters, having brought about "an infinite broadening of public participation in our democratic processes." Many would take issue with his claim that "it has given all Americans a clearer understanding of trends and issues," and that "it has resulted in balloting based more on reason than on emotion," although there is more justification for his assertion that television "has increased the degree of independent thinking and has decreased the influence of the party." Mikelson is also correct in his statement that voter turnouts during the first two television campaigns (1952 and 1956) were the largest in history, but he exaggerates the increase over those of the radio years from the standpoint of percentage of eligible voters voting.

Other generalizations of Mikelson are more difficult to evaluate. Admittedly television is capable of creating national figures over-

night; whether this has brought about a wider choice of candidates is debatable in light of spiralling campaign costs. As for his theory that television has had a negative impact on machine politics, one recalls that most of the country's great political machines—the Hague, the Crump, and the Pendergast—had fallen from power by the outset of the television age. Then there is Mikelson's claim that television has made political candidates more intellectually honest, a claim that was also advanced for political radio with questionable justification. Thus in challenging the hypothesis that many candidates will attempt to get by on charm while slurring over the issues so as to avoid offending anyone, Mikelson noted that "The television camera is merciless and uncanny in the way it can pierce through sham and insincerity," adding that "The political pitchmen of the past cannot survive the probing camera." Of all the claims that have been made for political television this perhaps is the most disputable, yet it is highly difficult to offer concrete proof that it is erroneous.

Among the most penetrating analysts of the current political scene is Emmet John Hughes, a onetime member of President Dwight Eisenhower's White House staff and a contributor to *Newsweek*. Writing in 1960, just prior to the Great Debates, Hughes set forth a series of generalizations relative to the impact of television on American political life. In the first place, Hughes concluded that television makes political life more fluid and volatile; as he pointed out, Richard Nixon's political fate was hanging in the balance when he rescued his image with his famous Checkers speech. Secondly, television brings into full glare much of the backroom maneuverings of political bosses. It may be a legend that Warren Harding was nominated for the Presidency in a smoke-filled room shortly after 2 a. m. in the morning, but today a battery of television cameras would probably be set up outside the door, mercilessly exposing entrances, exits, and reactions.

Perhaps more controversial were Hughes' next two conclusions. He affirmed that television tends to dramatically nationalize political life, a claim that also had been made for radio. Personalities and issues such as William Jennings Bryan and Populism, of course, had aroused intense national feeling before the days of radio, while today in the era of television local controversies may lead to

acrimony and bloodletting. Admittedly, however, the public takes constant exposure to national political figures via television for granted, in comparison with their fathers and forefathers who might have been raised to a fever pitch of excitement by the local appearance of a Congressman or Senator. Hughes also thought that television may shift the political advantage to national office-holders since they have easy access to television. The objection that one must raise here is that there is no medium—be it newspapers, magazines, radio, or television—where the national office-holder does not enjoy an advantage.

Examining some of the other aspects of political television, Hughes also foresaw that this medium imposes new demands and offers new opportunities to the individual politician and that it accelerates the tendency of national politics to resemble big business. Few will find fault with either of these generalizations. Hughes perceptively pointed out that many of the political evils attributed to television—the exaltation of personality, the appeals to emotion, the trend towards manipulation—have plagued American life since time immemorial. Conversely, the claim that television is the greatest thing that ever happened to American democracy is a decided exaggeration. As for the negative aspects of political television, Hughes' greatest fear was that "the sight seen on the television screen boasts some special authenticity," a belief which "might eventually mark and measure the gravest impact of television on America's political life, and it may be doubted whether any such result would be for the good." Here we have the hypothesis that the image projected over the television screen may become more important than the reality; in the advertising-conscious America of today this is indeed a real danger.

Certainly one of the most important aspects of television vis-à-vis politics is not only the extent to which it aids or impairs the cause of any given candidate but also the degree to which it swells the vote in any given election. In this connection Angus Campbell, the director of the Survey Research Center of the University of Michigan, has concluded that "In its first decade, television seems neither to have elevated the general level of political interest nor to have broadened the total range of political information." While there was a tremendous increase in television coverage between 1952

and 1960, voter interest dropped off slightly in 1956. As Campbell noted, at the time of the introduction of television the newspapers and radio were providing the nation with so saturated a coverage that there did not remain much virgin territory for television to exploit; one might expect that the quarter or third of the population which is generally uninvolved or uninformed might have been "activated" by the coming of television but nothing seems capable of awakening this group out of its apathy.

For the purpose of placing television in its proper perspective Campbell also analyzed some data regarding radio. It will be recalled that following an increase in the total vote cast during a Presidential election, commentators of that day often gave radio credit for this phenomenon; Campbell maintained that this judgment was indeed correct. Radio, however, did not achieve full coverage of the electorate until 1932, despite the fact that it had been employed as early as 1920. Between 1932 and 1940 the turnout increased by 8 per cent, while the off-year Congressional vote jumped from 33.7 per cent in 1930 to 44.1 per cent in 1938. In 1936 Franklin Roosevelt won re-election to the Presidency over heavy newspaper opposition thanks in part to his golden radio voice, apparently capturing the votes of an overwhelming majority of previous non-participants in a Presidential election, while in 1940 he triumphed over Wendell Willkie in an election in which the problem of what attitude the United States should take towards the European crisis was the critical issue.

Through the 1948 election the highest percentage of voter turnout in a Presidential contest was in 1940 when 59 per cent of the electorate voted. The highest voter turnout in a Presidential election during the era of television was for the 1960 contest when 64 per cent voted. As the percentage figure for 1924 was a mere 43 per cent, there was a 16 per cent increase between that date and 1940, compared with a 5 per cent increase between 1940 and 1960. Likewise, through the 1948 election the highest voter turnout in an off-year Congressional election was in 1938 when 44 per cent of the electorate voted. The highest voter turnout in an off-year Congressional election during the era of television was for the 1958 contest when 43 per cent voted. In other words, from the standpoint of off-year Congressional elections the highest percentage of

eligible voter turnout established during the era of radio has not been equalled, let alone surpassed. Even though one might use different figures, such as total numerical turnout, and come up with different conclusions, it is difficult to twist the above-mentioned percentages to prove that television has been responsible for the political awakening of the American people.

One of the most recent assessments of the political impact of television was by Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., historian, governmental advisor, and critic. According to Schlesinger this impact has been the greatest in the area of national conventions. Observing that dark horse candidates like James K. Polk are a thing of the past, Schlesinger declared that "the feedback is too quick and intense to encourage any convention to risk ditching the favorite of the national audience in favor of a crony of the party professionals." One, of course, might well inquire in what category Schlesinger would place Adlai Stevenson—for whom he wrote speeches—who triumphed over Estes Kefauver at the Democratic convention in 1952 after Kefauver had won all the primaries. Schlesinger's contention that television has shortened conventions is less open to contention.

Of greater significance is Schlesinger's downgrading of personal comment and broadcast editorials as factors shaping American political life. In regard to the former, Schlesinger thought that "No television commentator has spoken with the pungency or authority of Elmer Davis on radio, and men like (Howard K.) Smith and (Eric) Sevareid often look more restrained on the screen than they used to sound over the loudspeakers." We have already discussed this point at some length in the section on commentary; as for broadcast editorials, opinion is more mixed, but quite a few analysts feel that they have not lived up to expectations. On the other hand, he spoke highly of the analytical documentary, perhaps having in mind Edward R. Murrow's attack on the late Senator Joseph McCarthy.

Another significant trend, noted by Schlesinger, which has emerged in recent years is toward shorter speeches during the campaign. Paid political programs, he felt, have been "the area of television's most conspicuous failure"; "the effect of television has been to cheapen political discourse, steadily reducing its length, its

substance and its rationality." Admittedly length per se is no guarantee of profundity and incisiveness, but brevity is even less so. Whether the donation of more free time to candidates might reverse this trend, as Schlesinger suggested, would depend on the length of the time-segments made available by the networks; those could take the form of the much criticized spots as well as half-hour programs.

Summing up his ideas, Schlesinger took one of the most pessimistic stands relative to this general subject of the prominent analysts of political television. Stating that "The effects of television . . . have been mostly marginal," Schlesinger asserted that "If voters had to depend on television alone for the information on which they base political judgments, the results would undoubtedly be poor for American democracy." Ironically, the man whom Arthur Schlesinger advised when he was President, John Kennedy, probably won office because of his impressive showing in the first televised Great Debate. This negative evaluation of political television by Schlesinger is doubtless in line with the widespread distaste among intellectuals for the most "mass" of all mass media, television.

### *Radio and Television: A Survey of Polls*

Having examined what the experts think of the political impact of radio and television, let us now take a look at what the American people feel. This is determinable only by national polls, and countrywide polling on a large scale did not begin until the 1930's; a number of polls that were taken, moreover, are not readily available today. Some of those for the years 1935-1946 have been collected and published in a single volume, though, and it is thus possible to cite those here, along with a few others. We have already mentioned in the chapter on radio and politics the survey conducted during the 1936 campaign as to whether there should be more, the same number of, less, or no political addresses on the radio; the percentages obtained for these questions were respectively 15.8, 38, 27.9, and 18.3. Two years later, in 1938, 63 per cent of those interviewed observed that they thought that broadcasting stations handled political issues fairly, while only 11 per cent replied in the

negative. The following year (1939) the question of whether radio news broadcasters were fair in their treatment of political news brought the following responses: yes, 60 per cent; no, 21 per cent; no opinion, 19 per cent. Just before the war broke out in Europe, Elmo Roper, who was making a comparative study of the various media, discovered that 50 per cent of those interviewed were of the opinion that "Radio gives you news freer from prejudice," compared to 17 per cent for the newspapers.

The most famous study of media influence during the age of radio was the previously analyzed Erie County, Ohio, survey of 1940, but this was local rather than national in scope. Following the outbreak of the war, in 1942, a poll was taken whether interviewees ever listened to any radio political discussion or educational program in which several different people took part. The results were: often, 22 per cent; occasionally, 40 per cent; no, 37 per cent; no answer, 1 per cent. We have already mentioned in the chapter on radio and politics the survey conducted during the 1944 campaign as to what medium was the most accurate source of political information; 56 per cent of those polled picked the radio, 27 per cent the newspapers, and 6 per cent the magazines. Two years later, in 1946, the National Opinion Research Center discovered that 62 per cent of those polled would give up newspapers if forced to make a choice between newspapers and radio while only 11 per cent would give up the latter. Another poll taken in 1946 revealed that 51 per cent of the respondents favored and 44 per cent opposed Congress building a broadcasting station in Washington over which it would air its sessions; half of those interviewed stated that they were opposed to being taxed for the purpose of constructing and operating such a station. Nevertheless, 56 per cent thought that many people would listen to Congressional broadcasts compared to 35 per cent who did not think so. Over twenty years later the broadcasting of Congressional sessions remains a dream despite the fact that as many Americans favor the practice as oppose it.

By 1952 television had emerged as a significant rival of radio, this being the one campaign in American political history in which the two media were approximately of equal importance. For this reason we might re-examine the findings of Angus Campbell, Gerald Gurin, and Warren Miller, whose national survey was

examined at length in the chapter on television and politics. According to Campbell, Gurin, and Miller, more people followed the campaign via television than had television sets while fewer followed it via radio and the newspapers than had radio sets or subscribed to the newspapers. Furthermore, television was cited most often as the source of most political information, leading radio and the newspapers in that order. This indicates that during its early years television exercised a disproportionate influence politically, having established itself as the prime political medium before it had gone into universal use throughout America.

Let us turn next to a national survey which spanned three election campaigns, that of a University of Michigan research team whose members were the authors of *The American Voter*. This group found that the percentage of interviewees who followed the campaign by television increased from 53 in 1952, to 74 in 1956, to 87 in 1960, while those who did so by radio declined from 69 in 1952, to 45 in 1956, to 42 in 1960. Those who followed the campaign through the newspapers and magazines were fewer, but their number was approximately the same in both 1952 and 1960, there being a drop-off in 1956; why this drop-off occurred is not certain, but one conjectures that since the 1956 campaign was largely a rerun of that of 1952 it did not stimulate extensive reading. As early as 1952 television was the leading source of political information for those interviewed, outdistancing radio by 4 per cent (31 to 27); this lead widened to 38 per cent (49 to 11) in 1956 and to 55 per cent (60 to 5) in 1960. On the other hand, newspapers held relatively constant as the leading source of political information during the three campaigns (22, 24, and 23 per cent respectively), as did magazines (5, 5, and 4 per cent respectively). Thus by 1960 newspapers had replaced radio as the second leading source of political information, radio by that time barely leading magazines.

In 1959, 1961, 1963, and 1964, Elmo Roper and Associates conducted a series of studies for the Television Information Office that constitute the most comprehensive evaluation of television in relation to the other mass media conducted during this period. After extensive investigation Roper concluded that: television has maintained the slight lead it first achieved in 1962 as the public's

primary source of news; television has widened its lead over the other media as the most believable source of news; television is mentioned as the least believable news source much less often than competing media; television's possible harmful effects are of much less concern to the public than other current issues; television's performance at the local level is rated ahead of local newspapers and local government and slightly behind local schools; television's lead as the most desired medium has reached the point where it exceeds in desirability the three other major media combined. A Roper report based on surveys conducted during June and November 1964 which we previously examined in a chapter on television and politics indicated that at the city, town, and county levels newspapers still led television as the chief source of information but that during the 1964 campaign television had forged ahead of the other medium at the state level.

In 1967 the Roper people conducted a new wave of interviews which revealed a number of important new trends in the public attitude towards television. In the first place, television had replaced the schools as that local institution which those who polled felt was performing its tasks most effectively. Despite the fact that there has been a decline in public approval of television entertainment fare, public support for news and public affairs programs has seemingly grown. Television also widened the narrow lead which it had wrested from radio in 1964 as the leading source of information vis-à-vis candidates for state offices, but it still played a secondary role to newspapers at the local level. Sentiment in favor of television editorials increased during these three years from approximately 5 to 3 in favor to 6 to 2 in favor, a phenomenon closely allied with the actual growth of editorializing. As for the specific endorsement of political candidates by broadcasting stations, this question was asked for the first time in 1967. Seventeen per cent replied that they "should recommend candidates just like newspapers do, provided they make plain it is an editorial"; 37 per cent replied that they "should recommend candidates, but should be required to offer equal time to spokesmen for the opposing candidates"; 37 per cent replied that they "should not recommend political candidates"; 9 per cent didn't know or gave no answer. As was the case with editorializing in general, exposure to the practice of

candidate endorsement tended to make those persons interviewed more favorable to the practice. What direction these new trends in public attitudes will take in the years to come remains to be seen.

### *Radio and Television: Comparisons and Contrasts*

In attempting to assess whether the political impact of radio and television has been essentially similar or basically different, one must first be aware that far more analytical studies exist of the latter than of the former. Sophisticated polling techniques which measure this impact quantitatively were not evolved until the mid and late 1930's; the first comprehensive analysis of the political effect of radio vis-à-vis the other mass media did not appear until 1940 when the Erie County study was released. In contrast, material scattered throughout the pertinent pages of this manuscript demonstrates that there has been a mushrooming of such studies during the era of television. Perhaps a few of these offer contradictory conclusions but in general they constitute a major step forward in assessing the national political impact of television relative to the other mass media. There has been less research, however, into the role of political television at the state and local levels; although there were almost no studies of the political impact of radio there, the record in regard to television has not been much better. Among the first sophisticated investigations of the relationship of television to politics in state and local elections were the ones conducted in Ohio in 1952, in Illinois in 1954, in Oregon in 1956, and in New York in 1958; on the other hand, such an important phenomenon as the "little debates" remains largely unexplored by scholars despite a number of journalistic treatments.

As political scientists and other scholars have examined political television more deeply than they did political radio, so have the journalists whose output is perhaps an even better indication of what the American people are currently interested in. The most accurate index of the political impact of radio on the various Presidential campaigns in journalistic terms is the number of listings that one finds relative to this subject in the *Reader's Guide*. By 1924 quite a few articles were appearing in print dealing with the new medium, but by 1928 the number had decreased; four years later,

in 1932, relatively little was published, thanks to the overriding issue of the depression. Yet following the inauguration of Franklin Roosevelt as President in 1932 there was an immense revival of interest in the political use of radio, and more articles were penned dealing with this phenomenon during the 1936 campaign than during any other. Such demagogues as Father Charles Coughlin and Senator Huey Long, of course, were also blistering the air-waves during this period. Following 1936, though, writings in this area again became scarcer partly because people were becoming more and more concerned about the impending world war. Thus the pertinent articles that appeared in print during the 1940 and 1944 campaigns were relatively few and far between. By 1948 the war had ended, but President Harry Truman decided to rely heavily on whistle-stopping rather than limit himself mainly to broadcasting, so that the main emphasis that radio received in 1948 was in connection with the broadcasting of the Dewey-Stassen debate during the Oregon primary. Since 1952 writings on politics and radio have been the exception rather than the rule.

During the last five Presidential campaigns—each of which was given wide television coverage—countless articles and a number of books appeared in print assessing political television. Obviously the 1960 campaign with its Great Debates stimulated more than its share of these, but even the 1964 campaign, in which President Lyndon Johnson coasted to victory, witnessed such episodes as the Scranton non-candidacy address, the Democratic nuclear spots, the withdrawn Republican film "Choice," and the televised computer predictions. The first Presidential campaign televised on a large scale, that of 1952, naturally aroused wide attention because of its sheer novelty, although it featured such incidents as the Nixon Checkers speech which would be highlights of any campaign. Of these five campaigns, perhaps that of 1956 was the least interesting from the standpoint of political television, yet even so one must wade through a mass of published material relative to it. As for the recent 1968 campaign, coverage of the riotous Democratic convention must stand as its highlight together with the assassination of Senator Robert Kennedy in Los Angeles following the California primary. It would seem therefore that, regardless of whether television is playing a really critical role in an election or

not, people are constantly being kept aware of its presence, and this was not as true of radio in the day when it was king.

One of the best ways of measuring the political impact of radio and television is to examine two or more elections where one party's Presidential candidate remained constant while the other party's Presidential candidate changed. In the case of radio, an examination of FDR's four radio campaigns reveals that his Republican opponents—Hoover, Landon, Willkie, and Dewey—fared at the polls approximately as well as they spoke over the radio; Landon, the weakest radio performer, did the worst at the ballot box while Dewey, the strongest, did the best. (Each campaign, of course, had its particular issues, and these were equally or even more important than one's broadcasting capacity.) On the other hand, Thomas Dewey fared no better against Harry Truman in 1948 than he had against FDR in 1944, although Franklin Roosevelt was a superior radio performer to HST. Herbert Hoover, too, who was no great radio performer, managed to triumph decisively over Alfred Smith and his East Side accent in 1928 despite his loss to that master broadcaster Franklin Roosevelt four years later. Thus the results of the two Dewey and the two Hoover campaigns do not reinforce the clear-cut correlation of speaking ability and voter appeal established by the four Roosevelt campaigns. As for television prior to 1968, it is impossible to cite two or more elections where one party's Presidential candidate remained constant while the other party's Presidential candidate changed. Dwight Eisenhower and Adlai Stevenson did confront each other in two successive campaigns; significantly, telegenic "Ike" defeated Adlai the orator more decisively the second time around, although Stevenson was far more widely known in 1956 than he had been in 1952. Turning to the 1968 campaign, Richard Nixon barely edged Hubert Humphrey who was no match for the late President John Kennedy (Nixon's 1960 successful opponent) as a television performer in a contest in which he did not debate his Democratic rival. Issues, of course, probably were more important in 1968 than they had been in 1960, while most of George Wallace's ten million votes probably would have gone to Nixon had this anti-administration candidate withdrawn from the field. (American involvement in Vietnam in 1960 had been minimal; civil rights had yet to become the main domestic concern of the American people.)

If it is difficult to measure the political impact of radio and television through the comparative study of Presidential campaigns, it is also no easy task to correlate voting turnout with the number of radio and television sets in operation. Admittedly there was a steady increase in voting turnout from 1920 to 1940, but this was doubtless more attributable to a corresponding increase in the number of eligible voters than to the progressive growth numerically of radio sets. In fact there was less increase in voting turnout between 1920 (the last pre-radio Presidential election year) and 1924 (the first Presidential campaign with radio) than between 1924 and 1928; the latter increase, in fact, was greater than between 1932 and 1936, the latter year being the one in which FDR triumphed over solid newspaper opposition with the aid of his golden radio voice. On the other hand, the campaign of 1952, the first one in which television was widely used, witnessed a sharp increase in voting turnout over 1948, while that of 1960, with its televised Great Debates, saw a significant increase in voting turnout over 1956. Thus one might conclude that the political impact of television at times has been greater than that of radio if attracting voters to the polls is any criterion.

Nevertheless, neither in the case of radio nor in that of television has the mere quantitative purchase of time for political use guaranteed victory. Calvin Coolidge did retain the Presidency in 1924, thanks in part to his extensive radio exposure, but outspending the Republicans for radio time did not win the Democrats the Presidency in 1928, nor did it win the Republicans the Presidency in 1932, 1936, or 1940. It is not well known, but one reason that Thomas Dewey may have lost the election of 1948 was that the Republicans did not spend as much on radio time as did the Democrats. As for the age of television, the GOP did outspend the Democrats in 1952 and 1956, making excellent use of the telegenic Eisenhower who won both elections handily, but they also outspent the Democrats in 1960 when John Kennedy defeated Richard Nixon for the Presidency. (The Great Debates, which probably elected Kennedy, were made possible by the donation of free time.) As for 1964, the Republicans spent a great deal of money on television in a futile effort to get Barry Goldwater elected President but none of their lengthy programs was as effective as the shorter Democratic spots. Hubert Humphrey's slow start in

the 1968 Presidential race was due largely to the divisive character of his party's convention, but inadequate campaign funds also deterred widespread television exposure of HHH.

Next, examining the various phases of a Presidential election campaign from the standpoint of the impact of the mass media, television coverage of the Presidential preference primaries has been more complete than was radio coverage of these during the era when the latter medium was predominant. Today a serious Presidential candidate is much more likely to become a household name prior to the nominating conventions than he was in the age of radio; a true "dark horse" candidate, like Wendell Willkie, is much less likely to win his party's Presidential nomination. As for the conventions themselves, television probably has done more to streamline them than did radio, television time being too expensive to waste. Admittedly a long, indecisive, televised convention (such as the Democratic one of 1924 from the era of radio) will doubtless alienate a number of voters, but conversely a regular length, clear-cut but bloody televised convention, such as the Republican one of 1964 and the Democratic one of 1968, may hurt a party's image just as much. In 1968 ABC established the precedent of presenting 90 minutes of convention highlights nightly instead of covering such gatherings from gavel to gavel.

With regard to the campaign proper, television has not shortened it despite frequent claims that a lengthy one is not necessary in an era of instant communication. There has been a trend in the direction of shorter speeches since the introduction of television, while that *reductio ad absurdum* of political discourse "the spot" has become more important than in the age of radio, although it was employed during that period, too. In both cases the result has probably been detrimental rather than beneficial. With regard to the election night itself, computer predictions allow the viewer to learn the outcome more quickly, but they may just as easily be broadcast over the radio as telecast; on the other hand, with a visual image it is much easier to present complex vote totals than it is without one.

Once one has been elected President, of course, he will continue to employ the mass media in attempting to get his ideas across to the American people. As some chief executives used radio more

effectively than others, so have some been more successful in their employment of television. Significantly, the outstanding radio Presidents (Calvin Coolidge and Franklin Roosevelt) were innovators in the use of that medium, as the leading television Presidents (Dwight Eisenhower and John Kennedy) were also innovators televisionwise. Unfortunately, one President who was mediocre as a radio performer (Herbert Hoover) needed desperately to communicate with the public about his remedies for the depression of 1929 but failed to do so; similarly, the recent incumbent (Lyndon Johnson) was unable to employ television effectively in presenting his Vietnam program to his countrymen. In both cases neither won an additional term as chief executive.

More mixed must be our judgment on the President whose terms spanned the transition between the radio and television eras, Harry Truman. Taking office as an admittedly deficient radio performer, HST showed marked improvement in his use of that medium, employing it regularly; nevertheless, during his 1948 election campaign he chose to whistle-stop by train across the country. Following in the footsteps of Franklin Roosevelt as a radio performer was obviously a difficult task. With the advent of the new medium, (television) however, Truman was quick to adopt it for his use, having no predecessors with whom he might be compared unfavorably. Not being a candidate in 1952, it is impossible to measure his television performance in that year with his radio performance in 1948. (One questions whether he would have whistle-stopped again.) Some commentators rate HST fairly high as a television performer, but he did not prove the equal of his successor as chief executive, Dwight Eisenhower, nor of the following President, John Kennedy.

In attempting to explain why the power of the executive branch has increased during this century while that of Congress has held constant or even slipped backward, too few commentators have stressed the fact that over the past half-century many of our Presidents have made effective use of radio and television while Congress militantly prohibits the broadcasting or telecasting of any of its sessions. When committee hearings have been broadcast or telecast, such as the Kefauver hearings or the Army-McCarthy hearings, a national reputation may be made or destroyed. (As we

noted in the pertinent chapter on television and politics, the televised hearings in which he participated did not wipe out or significantly reduce popular support for Senator McCarthy, although many political commentators at the time made this claim.) One wonders why those zealots who constantly uphold Congressional authority against Presidential encroachments have not been among the most militant supporters of the broadcasting and telecasting of Congressional sessions and committee hearings. Whatever exposure Representatives and Senators have received on radio and television has been as individuals, and for this reason the present book must necessarily emphasize the Presidential tradition rather than the Congressional one relative to these two media.

Because of a lack of data it is impossible to compare the political use of radio at the state level with that of television. As for the former, W. Lee O'Daniel did employ the radio most effectively in becoming Governor of Texas during the late 1930's, while radio coverage of state government in Wisconsin during that decade was more comprehensive than in any other state; despite its decline as a political instrument after 1948, radio played an important role in the 1964 Florida Democratic gubernatorial primary and the 1965 mayoralty election in New York City. Thus at times its impact has been unquestionably great. Turning to television, Governor Thomas Dewey of New York was the first prominent state official to use television effectively, his 1950 talkathon arousing widespread favorable comment. Since that time televised "little debates," or the failure to debate, have apparently been decisive in a number of state elections, as the examples we presented in the chapters on television and politics attest. In a recent year (1966) heavy outlays for television time were instrumental in winning Milton Shapp the Democratic gubernatorial nomination in Pennsylvania and in obtaining Nelson Rockefeller a third term as chief executive of New York; in 1966, too, a seasoned television performer and actor (Ronald Reagan) won the California governorship by nearly a million votes. No state political figure, it would seem, obtains national political prominence today without having a charismatic television image; Adlai Stevenson (in 1952) was the last Governor nominated by a major party for President, and he was relatively unknown at the time. Skillful or inadequate radio performances on

the part of political candidates several decades ago, of course, may have been equally decisive, but a relative absence of pertinent writings leads one to believe that an awareness that this factor could be the critical one was not as widespread then as it is today relative to television.

One of the most difficult but vital questions relative to political television is whether it is more politically neutral than radio. Public opinion polls to the contrary, one must challenge this assumption. Reiterating our observations on radio news commentary, it may have been more blatantly ideological at times than television news commentary, but the latter often exhibits subtle and not-so-subtle prejudices and preferences which make the frequent claim of its advocates that it is more objective hypocritical. Today television networks not only cover political events but they also attempt to manufacture political events. One needs only to recall certain episodes at the Democratic convention of 1968 to perceive that when political action is lacking it is only necessary to investigate various rumors to get the kettle boiling; there were instances in Chicago where the rioters refrained from breaking loose until the television cameramen arrived on the scene. Such episodes were much rarer during the years when radio was the dominant medium. Yet as Daniel J. Boorstin points out in his recent book *The Image: A Guide to Pseudo-Events in America*, news is being manufactured artificially in the present age by all media on a larger and larger scale. Television, it would seem, only makes the process easier.

While radio may have killed the old style political oratory, television has seen the emergence of a new species of political address in which the image that is presented is as important as the text that is delivered. In California, an actor, Ronald Reagan, was elected Governor in 1966; as one would expect, his image is charismatic. As television is more image-centered than radio, commentary and propaganda have fared less well on the former than on the latter. The most issue-oriented Presidential candidate of recent years, Senator Barry Goldwater, suffered a landslide defeat at the polls in the 1964 election. With television, political advertising has become more prominent than political discussion, the Great Debates aside, as the increasing reliance on spots demonstrates. The anti-Goldwater nuclear commercials of 1964 come to mind.

Personalities who project well on radio do not always project as well on television; polls showed that Richard Nixon defeated John Kennedy in the first Great Debate in the eyes of the radio audience, although JFK's victory in the eyes of the television audience is what apparently decided the election in his favor. (The reverse generalization also holds good.) Moreover, it is probably easier to create a political personality overnight with television than it was with radio, Estes Kefauver being the first prominent example. Again citing Richard Nixon, the Checkers speech of 1952 made him while the first Great Debate of 1960 unmade him; during the 1968 Presidential primaries the relatively obscure Senator Eugene McCarthy attained rapid national prominence politically via television. In contrast, such a gifted radio orator as Franklin Roosevelt (as well as Father Charles Coughlin, Huey Long, and W. Lee O'Daniel) built up his reputation only after a number of addresses despite the superior quality from the beginning of FDR's "fireside chats." This is partly due to the direct contact factor, television being probably a more intimate medium than radio.

As its emotional temperature is generally several degrees lower than political oratory, news commentary would seem just as suited for television as radio, especially since it would be impossible to reinforce an unemotionally delivered text with highly emotional visual images. Even though television time is more expensive than radio time, there always will be news broadcasts; nevertheless, overt ideology even of the more non-emotional kind that one finds in slanted news commentary is rarer today than it was in the era of radio. On the other hand, editorials—which generally represent the opinions of a station or network rather than those of an individual—are becoming more and more common in the age of television. At least from the standpoint of news this would seemingly indicate a growing depersonalization of ideology. In the case of straight political propaganda it is difficult to imagine Father Charles Coughlin on television, although some of the leading spokesmen of the radical right have invaded video. The latter wisely reserve the bulk of their efforts for radio, where the emotional tone of their broadcasts is more in harmony with the medium. Significantly, the radio broadcasts of the governmentally sponsored "Voice of Amer-

ica" overseas have remained more important than the television broadcasts; films presented on the latter generally lack immediacy and intimacy so that it is necessary to produce most of the telecasts live. This is not as true of the recordings used on radio broadcasts.

By adding a visual image, television has opened new possibilities vis-à-vis political censorship and defamation, but the major precedents in these areas were established during the era of radio when there was only a verbal message. Section 315 (the equal time provision) and the Fairness Doctrine also date from the pre-television age, a period when broadcast time was much cheaper than it is today. In the case of editorializing, the age of television has witnessed the emergence of an attitude of encouragement on the part of regulatory agencies towards this practice, but here again key decisions that once banned and then allowed editorializing date from the era of radio. Generally speaking, therefore, the age of television has been characterized by modification rather than innovation in the area of regulation, a rather curious situation in that the political impact of television differs somewhat from that of radio.

In summary, both radio and television have changed rather than revolutionized politics. Both media, too, reached universal use during politically conservative periods in American history so that the ideological ferment which characterizes reform eras did not overshadow their early growth and development. As for the question of whether television has had a more beneficial political effect than radio, one must challenge the assumption that television has done more to further the democratic process in the United States than radio. In certain respects television has even had a retrogressive rather than a progressive impact on American politics despite the fact that it has probably led to a greater independency in voting and a decline in partisan politics. One need only cite the exorbitant cost of video time, its subordination of issues to personalities, the growing superficiality and brevity of political discourse, its failure to offer more of an outlet for minority and extremist views, the spurious claims it makes of political neutrality, to demonstrate that the new idol does indeed have feet of clay. The American people,

nevertheless, have displayed an ever-increasing confidence in television, as the University of Michigan and the Roper polls that we examined in the previous section reveal.

Having set forth our conclusions as to the political impact of radio and television, we turn now to that Toynbee of the media, Marshall McLuhan, to see how these findings square with those set forth in his book *Understanding Media*. Generally speaking there appears to be more agreement than disagreement, although a few of the prophet's ideas appear slightly farfetched. By labelling radio as a hot medium and television as a cool medium, McLuhan has expressed in different words what has been said here, that radio is more issue-centered and television more image-centered. One controversial hypothesis that McLuhan sets forth that has not been previously discussed in this volume is that "The power of radio to retribalize mankind, its almost instant reversal of individualism into collectivism, Fascist or Marxist, has gone unnoticed"; "That Hitler came into political existence at all is directly owing to radio and public-address systems." As England and America have had, according to McLuhan, a long exposure to literacy and industrialism, they have become immune to the more dynamic effects of the "tribal drum" radio. In this connection McLuhan seems to forget the enormous if transitory success of Father Charles Coughlin here, although the "radio priest" never won high office as Hitler did.

With regard to television, McLuhan believes that it has been "as revolutionary a medium in America in the 1950's as radio in Europe in the 1930's," observing that "Ten years of TV have Europeanized even the United States." Such a claim, of course, is difficult to substantiate, despite McLuhan's qualification that "It would be misleading to say that TV will retribalize England and America." As television is a cool medium, McLuhan concludes that hot figures and hot issues like the anti-Communist crusade of Senator Joseph McCarthy do not project as well on it as in the press, while the "blurry, shaggy texture" of John Kennedy triumphed over the "sharp, intense image" of Richard Nixon during the Great Debates. Those findings are in line with the data presented in this volume which demonstrates that ideologues and orators fared better in the days of radio. In the words of McLuhan,

television "is a medium that rejects the sharp personality and favors the presentation of processes rather than products"; unless one who uses television politically recognizes this fact and adapts to it, his efforts are likely to end in frustration. For those who care to explore the dissimilarities between radio and television in general, the writings of McLuhan offer a gold mine of information and comment, but hopefully the less fanciful presentation unfolded here has provided a comprehensive analysis of the more limited topic that it has attempted to investigate.

#### NOTES ON SOURCES

The writings on the political impact of radio on politics are legion. Those quoted here date largely from the decade of the 1920's; later writings may be just as perceptive, but the earlier ones give initial impressions and sometimes make forecasts. Ten of these, in approximate chronological order, are William G. Shepherd, "Blotting Out the Blah"; "Spellbinder and the Radio"; "Electioneering on the Air"; Eunice F. Bernard, "Radio Politics"; Mark Sullivan, "Will Radio Make the People the Government"; "Politics by Radio"; Katherine Ludington, "Democracy Goes on the Air"; "Radio Debunking the Campaign"; Samuel G. Blythe, "Political Publicity"; J. G. Harbord, "Radio and Democracy." Later commentaries include "Radio and the New Oratory" (1932); editorials in the *New York Times* on October 21, 1936, and July 21, 1940; Hugh P. Williamson, "Technology, a Threat to Democracy" (1957).

The writings on the political impact of television on politics are also legion; many are more comprehensive, however, than those analyzing that of radio. As in the case of radio, many accounts written after the first decade of the widespread use of television politically merely echo earlier theories, adding little new. Six representative statements are: Charles A. H. Thomson, *Television and Presidential Politics: The Experience in 1952 and the Problems Ahead* (1956); Kurt and Gladys Lang, "Television and the Intimate View of Politics" (1956-7); Sig Mickelson, "The Use of Television," in James M. Cannon, ed., *Politics U.S.A.: A Practical Guide to the Winning of Public Office* (1960); Emmet John Hughes, \$52,000,000 TV Sets—How Many Votes? (1960); Angus Campbell, "Has Television Reshaped Politics" (1962); Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., "How Drastically Has Television Changed Our Politics?" (1966).

The best survey of polls examining the political impact of radio is Hadley Cantril, *Public Opinion 1935-1946*. Unfortunately, polling activity was relatively limited for the period 1920-1935, the formative years of radio. Polling activity during the formative years of television is examined in Richard S. Salant, *The 1960 Campaign and Television*. For the most recent period, the Roper organization has set forth its findings derived from a number of polls in Elmo Roper and Associates, *The Public View of Television and Other*

*Media* and Burns W. Roper, *Emerging Profiles of Television and Other Mass Media*. Finally, one must note the most significant comparative study of media ever published, Marshall McLuhan's *Understanding Media*. Although this is by no means limited to politics, its inclusion in this bibliography or any other bibliography in this area is mandatory, as the ideas contained in this volume are of seminal importance.

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# RADIO, TELEVISION AND AMERICAN POLITICS

by EDWARD W. CHESTER

Not surprisingly, the development of radio and television broadcasting has done more than bring politics to the public. It has changed politics. The instantaneous communication these media provide has again and again exerted influence on political decisions and, to some degree, determined their effects. This continuing and burgeoning involvement has many more facets than the high peaks and low points that achieve national prominence. Local electioneering, especially on radio, is taken for granted. In addition, radio and television are outlets for overt propaganda, domestic and exported, privately as well as publicly sponsored.

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