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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Newton N. Minow, former chairman of the Federal Communications Commission, will discuss "The Great Society and Broadcasting" with graduate students at a colloquium, Thursday, December 2, at 3:00 P.M., in room 126 of The Annenberg School of Communications.

The colloquium is part of a regular series, sponsored by The Annenberg School, in which professionals, social scientists, and artists from various fields discuss their approaches to problems and issues in communications and the mass media. It is open to all University of Pennsylvania students, faculty members, and guests.

Minow, who served as chairman of the F.C.C. from 1961 to 1963, is now a senior partner in the Chicago Law firm of Leibman, Williams, Bennett, Baird and Minow. He also is a member of the Board of Directors of the Curtis Publishing Company, and a consultant to Encyclopedia Britannica.

As chairman of the commission, Minow created a stir in the broadcasting industry with his now-famous "wasteland" speech to the National Association of Broadcasters at their annual convention in Washington, May 9, 1961. He invited the broadcasters to sit in front of their television sets and watch their own stations from the time they went on the air in the morning until they went off the air late at night. "I can assure you," he said, "you will observe a vast wasteland."

Newton N. Minow - 2

Minow was graduated from Northwestern University in 1949. He received a bachelor of law degree from Northwestern in 1950, and was admitted to both the Wisconsin and Illinois bars the same year.

He practiced law with the firm of Mayer, Meyer, Austrian and Platt of Chicago, 1950-51, 1953-55; and was a partner in the firm of Adlai E. Stevenson, 1955-57, and Stevenson, Rifkind and Wirtz, 1957-61.

He served as law clerk to Chief Justice Fred M. Vinson in 1951-52, and as administrative assistant to Governor Adlai E. Stevenson in the 1952 and 1956 presidential campaigns, and as general counsel and secretary for the National Business and Professional Committee for Kennedy-Johnson in 1960.

Minow was voted one of the ten outstanding young men in Chicago in 1960 and one of America's ten outstanding young men in 1961. He received the George Foster Peabody Broadcasting Award in 1961.

He is the author of Equal Time; The Private Broadcaster and The Public Interest, published this year.

Minow is a member of the U. S. National Commission for UNESCO, and the Conference on Public Service. He is a director of the Chicago chapter of the American Jewish Committee and a member of the junior board of the Chicago chapter of the National Conference of Christians and Jews.

November 28, 1965

Questions for Newton Minow Panel:

During Mr. Minow's term on the FCC, the Commission and broadcasting were very much a part of the "New Frontier." Why have they not become an equally important part of Johnson's "Great Society?" Jack Gould wrote that "Ever since assuming office, President Johnson has had hardly a word to say about television broadcasting and has broken the tradition of sending Presidential messages to the annual conventions of the National Association of Broadcasters." Does this apparent neglect of broadcasting have anything to do with Johnson's own broadcasting interests?

If the "Great Society" campaign were to be taken seriously, and if television were to play an active part in it, what would this involve? What would be the broadcasting system appropriate to a great society? What are the broadcasting needs for the transition to such a society, and for such a society once achieved? What should be the role of television in relation to the poor, the civil rights movement, mass education, etc.? What changes must be made in the broadcasting landscape to suit it to the needs of the "Great Society?" In this regard, it would be interesting to know Mr. Minow's definition of "the PUBLIC INTEREST," with respect to the questions of popular tastes vs. popular needs, possibilities for educating and raising cultural levels, etc.

Does he feel, then, that television today is any more or less the great "vast wasteland" that he described five years ago? In what ways? Does he feel that his speeches have had any substantial and lasting effects? Is the introduction of color TV merely a means of hiding the television wasteland as billboards hide the junkyards along our highways?

Does he feel that American broadcasting, controlled by private corporate enterprise, and in particular as dominated by advertising, has succeeded in adequately serving the public interest? What changes, if any, would he suggest in the structure of broadcasting? In this regard, he supported the passage of the Space Communications act which essentially left the control of satellite communications in the hands of private enterprise: Why? In general, what should be the role of the United States in international communications (refer to Shiller's reservations)?

On leaving the FCC, Mr. Minow recommended publicly and in a letter to the President that the legislative and judicial functions of the Commission be separated. Does he still ~~think~~ believe this to be a viable proposal; and, if so, why does he think it has never been acted upon? What other changes would he recommend in the structure, activities, etc. of the FCC? (Why did he quit? What would have to be changed before he would return?)

Mr. Minow constantly advocated editorializing by broadcasters: does he feel that this responsibility is being more widely met today due to his urging? What is the present level of functioning of the fairness doctrine? Is it usually adhered to? Is it a viable administrative guide for the FCC?

For the future: In what areas can we expect improvement in television? What areas are susceptible to reform and pressure? What are the potential contributions of Pay-TV, CATV, ETV? What will be the FCC's role in relation to these new forms? (Will it be able to maintain control of wire broadcasting?)

POLICY COMMISSION