

MASS MEDIA:

Dear CEO of TV Programming; or Movie Producing; or News Reporting:

Democracy only works if the public is informed. TV has become our major teacher, the average US household having it turned "on" on the average for 40 hours per week, & only 1% of the public doing serious reading outside jobs or school. Yet, the major commercial networks have been coopted by advertizers working thru associations (AMA, GMA, NAM, etc.). Grants are used to control public TV also. So, the democratic responsibility rest on the shoulders of the few truly ethical leaders left in this "Brave New World"; leaders who value the health & "General Welfare" of American taxpayers, citizens, voters, workers, & audience, more than the vested interests (of the mis-allocators of concentrated capital as a vote for what is to be produced).

Alternative therapies, as a whole, are more effective, with much fewer "side effects", & approx. 80% less costly, than the dogmatic, high technology practices. Certainly, your advertising corporations, would prefer to pay only 20% of what they now do for employee health insurance. Why should corporate management subsidize the "closed shop" medical union, or pass on the expense as reduced real wages, unemployment, inflation (of consumer prices), & smaller stock dividends.

More remarkably: \$12 billion per year (1981) is spent on TV ads on the premise that TV affects behavior, but we insist that the violence (& medicine...) in the programs between the ads has no influence on actions, let alone thoughts.

Is it healthy for a democracy, that Star Wars (defense) was reported by Randall Operation Survival (Oct. 1977; Oceanside, CA), & by Free for All (Dec. 7, 1977; Madison, WI), 3 years before the mass media disclosed it to the pampered public (BBC World;...; Time, Sept. 15, 1980)?

We are ready to obey, to be drafted to kill or die (in true bravery) for our country, but not to think freely, to live & love for it, our best hope for world freedom.

Sincerely,

Dismayed at the
"Green(\$)Curtain"

"...The press has become the greatest power within the Western countries; more powerful than the legislative, the executive, & the judiciary." - Alexander Solzhenitsyn, (author, Cancer Ward), (in The Stanford Magazine, Summer 1982, p.21).

"The American press is not free. It's dominated by the same rich, elite aristocrats that control everything else.... How long will press reporters stand by & take it before they find the Martin Luther King who will lead them...?"

- Dick Gregory, "Up From Soul Food; ... from Night Club to Juice Bar", East West Journal, v.11, n.7, p.30, July 1981.

"I invite your attention to the latest piratical development commonly known as the "radio trust". It would seem that human cupidity could not reach so far, or human insolence become so gross as to attempt...to withhold from the public use the instrumentalities of communication through the air; & yet that is exactly what a group of great capitalists are attempting through the organization of a huge monopoly."

- US Senator James A. Reed, (first term: 1911-), this speech cut off air. (p.238).

"The American consumer has about one billion dollars invested in radio sets, ... ten times greater than the inflated capital of commercial broadcasting companies. Yet the consumer...has delegated — by default — to the broadcasting companies & the program sponsors a power that he should have retained: that of regulating the traffic through his own receiving set. ...an unending stream of...false statements on the supposed merits of a long list of advertised foods, dentifrices, medicines, cosmetics,"(p.3-4).

"Radio frequencies are recognized as public property by the Congress of the US." (p.248). - Peter Morell, Poisons, Potions, & Profits, c.1937, p.3, 4, 238, 248, (for last 3 paragraphs above).

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"Day & night the telescreens bruised your ears with statistics proving that people today had more food...lived longer, worked shorter hours, were bigger, healthier, stronger, happier, more intelligent, better educated, than the people of 50 years ago. Not a word of it could ever be proved or disproved. The past was erased, the erasure was forgotten, the lie became truth. A Party member is required to have...the right instincts. ...Attitudes demanded of him are never plainly stated.... ...He is a person naturally orthodox.... ...In Newspeak, the expression of unorthodox opinions, above a very low level, was well-nigh impossible."
- George Orwell, 1984, (1948 writing), c.1949. (1961, Signet), p.64, 174, 254.

"The industries that oppose (a bill for truth-in-packaging of food) represent 1/6th of the GNP.... Home economists (were) told to ... work against the bill or ... lose their jobs.... Editorial services in Washington ... send out editorials against truth-in-packaging; (editorials) used by hundreds of small newspapers across the nation; (to) papers that rely on canned editorials.... I was told advertisers had objected.... An educational television ...man... explained, '...the largest contributors to the foundations which feed money to (educational television) are the major industries.'"
- US Senator Philip A. Hart, (on the) virtual blackout on radio & television coverage for the entire 1963 truth-in-packaging hearings."

(We did)" "...discuss ... the facts of life covering advertising-media relationships We suggested to the publisher ...(that) their editorial department ... understand ... (that) their operations may affect the advertiser - their bread & butter. We invited them to consider publishing some favorable articles about the food industry.... (Television stations receive) about 65% of their advertising revenue from GMA (Grocery Manufacturers of America) members." - P. S. Willis, GMA head, in address to Television Bureau of Advertising, 1963. - (last 2 paragraphs above, in Beatrice T. Hunter, Consumer Beware!, p.25-6).

"...The (tv) networks refused an offer by a group of anti-war (US) Senators to buy time to explain their position. 'I could buy time to sell soap....,' complained Senator Harold Hughes, 'but not to speak as a US Senator on issues of war & peace.'" - Mark J. Green, Who Runs Congress?, Ralph Nader Congress Project, p.68, 104.

"...control of press, radio, & television is made possible (1) by the voluminous advertising by (special) interests, (2) by a 'working agreement' whereby nothing pertaining to health ... is made public until it has been cleared through a representative of the local health dept. whose policy is dictated by the AMA."
- inserted by US Congressman Usher L. Burdick, Congressional Record, Appendix, v.103, n.40, p.A-1853, March 7, 1957.

"...The AMA Public Relations Dept.'s activities...for 1957....(:)conventions... conferences & symposia.... Weekly releases.... Liaison was maintained with the National Assoc. of Science Writers.... assisted in the preparation of copy for newspapers & magazines, & some of the publications actually submitted the manuscripts to the AMA for review.... (&) close contact with the television industry, (on:) March of Medicine, Medical Horizons, Dr. Christian, Dr. Hudson's Secret Journal, Frontier Doctor, (& 9 other shows listed). There was Medical Education Week, with...repeated screening of AMA slides & film clips on 133 tv stations."(p.223).
- Richard Carter, The Doctor Business, p.223, 241.

"A recent EPA action(:)... That agency (EPA) is not only not publishing booklets, but they are destroying 86 of the 104 publications they have on hand. Most are objectionable to the chemical industry because they emphasize the dangers of pesticides & chemicals...." - Caveat Emptor, v.12, n.2, p.19,20, Feb. 1982.

(A) "striking & disturbing" (pattern in magazines that accept cigarette advertising:) "I was unable to find a single article in seven years of publication, that would have given readers any clear notion of the nature & extent of the medical & social havoc being wreaked by the cigarette-smoking habit." - R.C. Smith, Columbia Journalism Review, 1978, (in "Conspiracy of Silence", ACSH, (American Council on Science & Health), News & Views, v.1, n.2, p.1, Feb. 1980).

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"Freedom of the press is reserved for those who own one." - A. J. Liebling.

"(Whenever) a bill...proposed...investigating the deadly ("drug") industry, telegrams from the Proprietary (drug) Assoc. (of America) immediately blackmailed the...press into defeating the general welfare of the public." - George Seldes.

"...Business spends annually...\$500 million to \$1 billion (1977 \$'s) to promote its editorial & institutional point of view."

"A p.r. firm for the Tobacco Inst....paid...reporters \$1,000 a week...."

- Mark Green, "How Business Is Misusing the Media", The New York Times, Dec. 18, 1977, (for last 4 paragraphs above).

"Every family break-up means a doubling of the purchases of TV sets & washing machines. ...A corporate investment in the destruction of the family. ...Our mad agony of loneliness which makes the telephone co.'s (ads) so cruel. American education(:)....Cooperative work is considered cheating."

- Hugh Drummond, MD, "A Telltale Heart". (p.29-30)

- Mother Jones, Found'n for National Progress, A Sourcebook On Health & Survival, p.29-30, 37-41, (for last 4 paragraphs above).

"...The connection between TV & real-life violence.... NCTV has found 15 reviews of the scientific literature since 1976 & every one concludes that a causal connection exists. (ie, TV influences behaviour, as advertisers well know, -Ed.) NCTV has now found 700 scientific studies & reports from the US & 15 other nations.... The overwhelming consensus of this research is that a significant & important connection exists. ...All age levels, social classes, ethnic backgrounds, & IQ levels are negatively affected in a variety of ways."

(Other)"Clean Up TV' (groups) make no mention of trying to decrease violence, only sex."

"The average family now has the TV on for 48 hours...each week." - NCTV (National Coalition on Television Violence), NCTV News, v.2,n.4,p.1,2, July 1981.

"What is disturbing — & I have never had an adequate answer to this — is whether a corporation, simply by making a contribution, has a subliminal impact on the kinds of programs public broadcasting (TV) will undertake." - US Congressman Henry Waxman, (in TV Guide, June 20, 1981, p.8).

"...Based on (1400) energy-crisis stories seen on.... ...CBS, NBC, & ABC(,) correspondents relied on govt. sources more than 57% of the time. Outside sources — independent experts... — were consulted less than 3% of the time. (On) possible solutions to the crisis, the govt. was consulted a whopping 77% of the time." - "A New Study of Network Coverage Reveals Disturbing Omissions", TV Guide, Mar.6, 1982, p.6

"...Americans...automatically equate dissension with disloyalty. They view any criticism of our existing social, economic, & political forms, as sedition & subversion. ("The growing reluctance of Americans to criticize, & their increasing tendency to condemn those who, in ever dwindling numbers, will still voice dissent") "is disturbing, deplorable, & truly dangerous."

"Today's dissenters mainly focus their attention & expend their energies on the most inconsequential of trivia. Allegedly serious intellectuals quibble endlessly over such ridiculous trivialities.... In the meantime, the public is lulled into a perilous somnolence, spoon-fed pap, & palpable untruths, many of which are turned out by special-interest & pressure groups & well-organized propaganda machines."

"Some of our newspapers & magazines are more concerned with the welfare of their advertisers than they are with the dissemination of news & the discussion of matters of lasting importance. Radio, television, motion pictures, popular books — all contribute...to...the stifling of dissent on all but the most banal levels. ...a renunciation of the most basic & precious of democratic principles." - J. Paul Getty, ("the richest man in the world"-Fortune, Oct. 1957), How to be Rich, p.120-123.

