

West Virginia University

MORGANTOWN, WEST VIRGINIA 26506

College of Arts and Sciences
Department of Speech

January 16, 1973

Dr. Malcom MacLean, Jr.
School of Journalism
University of Iowa
Iowa City, Iowa 52240

Dear Mal:

I am enclosing my ballot on the recommended constitutional revision for ICA. You will notice that I voted approved. I wish to make clear that this vote does not indicate my approval of the constitutional revision. Rather, I plan to move for reconsideration of this vote at the next Board meeting and realize that the only way I can do that is by being on the approval side at this point. Let me take a few moments to explain the reason for my negative reaction to this proposal.

I certainly have no objection to ICA receiving \$100,000.00 for the development and promotion of a high quality journal. Nor do I have any objection to George Gerbner serving as editor of the Journal of Communication. However, I have a strong objection to selling our journal to Annenberg for \$100,000.00 - and that is what I perceive this move may be.

As I read the proposed constitutional revision, I see only one very important change from the old constitution. That is the removal from Section 3 of the old constitution the provision for a three-year term of the editor of JC. I cannot understand any reason why this change should be made, unless Annenberg is stipulating a condition that their man must be permanently editor of JC in order for the funds to start flowing. Frankly, if that is the case, I would express appreciation to Annenberg for their interest but say "No thanks."

Possibly I am not reading your letter correctly, but I can see no reason for the extreme urgency for circulating the proposed constitutional revision to the membership. This is something that should be extensively discussed by the Board of Directors before it is submitted. We have a responsibility to the present members of our association not to take hasty or ill-conceived actions. As I have indicated above, I consider this action to be both hasty and ill-conceived.

Not worth \$100,000

Your letter certainly does not give me adequate information about how this \$100,000.00 would be used, or what restrictions would be placed on the use of the funds. I realize that at this early stage in the negotiations with Annenberg these things probably have not been worked out. But, in my opinion, these things must be worked out before I, as a Board member, can indicate approval on behalf of the division that I represent. It would seem to me that since there are only 3 months between now and when we will be meeting as a Board in Montreal, there is no reason for us to rush to the membership with a constitutional revision. Rather, I would suggest that you try to obtain as much information as possible from Annenberg and forward that information to members of the Board, with your suggestions and interpretations, so that we may be able to make a more intelligent decision in Montreal.

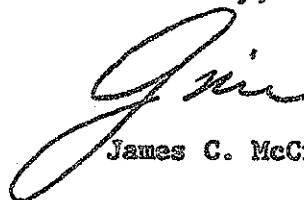
I would also like to take issue with a couple of less important points brought up in your letter. One is the strong implication that our current journal is not of high quality. That may or may not be the case; it seems to me to be a matter of opinion. In any case, the worth of the journal is primarily a function of the worth of the editorship and only marginally related to the availability of funds. Everyone on the Board, I believe, is aware that we have a problem with the current editor. That recognition establishes a need for a new editor, but it does not establish a need for more money. Secondly, you indicate that cooperation with Annenberg can improve the journal so that we can have more subscriptions and attract more members to ICA "of the kind we most want to attract." I am not sure what that "kind" is. I must confess a certain degree of ignorance concerning the Annenberg program. I have never visited their campus and the only people I have met from there are George and Klaus. The stereotype that I have of the Annenberg program, which is probably incorrect, is that they are not data oriented. Should that be a correct perception on my part, these are not the "kind" of members that I am most interested in recruiting to membership in our organization. The division which I represent is overwhelmingly populated by people who are data oriented. Movement of the association away from this direction through an alteration of editorial policies of JC would not only prevent us from recruiting new members with this orientation but would also cause many of us who are very active in ICA to remove ourselves from the organization. I hope that my stereotype of Annenberg is incorrect and this is not the orientation to which you refer. However, this is the perception held by a large number of ICA members with whom I am acquainted and would certainly cause considerable concern on the part of many people beside myself.

Finally, it is my understanding that the proposed constitutional revision in no way commits myself or other Board members (if approved) to any agreement with Annenberg or the appointment of any individual as editor of the journal. This revision would only permit us to consider these possibilities. For my part, as I have indicated before, I have no objection to accepting Annenberg funds nor do I have an objection to the appointment of George Gerbner as editor

of JC. I will strongly object, however, to the acceptance of any funds from Annenberg that would commit our organization to the appointment of any given individual to the editorship of our journal. ICA is not for sale. The Journal of Communication is not for sale. This principle must be upheld no matter who the source of funds may be - Michigan State, Iowa, Oregon, West Virginia or Annenberg. If any outside agency believes that what we are doing is worth supporting, we should happily accept funds from them in support of those activities. We must not, however, permit any outside agency to have any control over the operation of our association or our journal. If we do, it becomes their association and their journal.

I have taken the liberty of sending copies of this letter to the other members of the Board so that they may be aware of my reservations in advance of the Montreal convention.

Sincerely,



James C. McCroskey

JCM:mmk