

Behind the Bylines

The Trilateral Press

Dec. 14 — Back in the 1850s, any newspaper worthy of the name proclaimed its political beliefs proudly in boasting headlines and provocative editorials. Today's press and media are in fact no less political — only less honest. The news that finally appears in print or on your radio, or on your TV screen, in living color, first goes through a systematic process of purification and "objectification" for mass public consumption...and is then purged of the scent of the corporate media smoke-filled backrooms where the process originates and ends. The name of the game is not "no politics," but dirty politics. The real political statement behind the contrived "non-political" message of the news can indeed be read loud and clear in an accounting of who's who in the corporate boardrooms of the nation's apolitical press and media.

Take "Group W" Westinghouse Broadcasting, the home of Rockefeller's right-wing media cowboys. As at the top of any of the Big Three Networks, a clear pattern of direct political associations and affiliations belies the myth of the disinterested fifth estate. Here are a few of the more outstanding faceless gnomes coloring Group W's non-point of view:

* *Karl R. Bendetson* — Director of the World War Two evacuation of Japanese-Americans from the west coast into government concentration camps; Special Assistant to the Secretary of Defense and Undersecretary of the Army, 1948-52; currently Director of the sabre-rattling Hoover Institute for War, Revolution and Peace.

* *Roger Milliken* — Close associate and financial supporter of William F. Buckley and major advertiser of the Deering Milliken textile company in Buckley's National Review magazine.

* *Hobart Taylor, Jr.* — Director, Standard Oil of Ohio; Associate counsel to President Johnson from 1964-5; Currently a member of the warmongering Committee on the Present Danger.

* *Francis P. Cotter* — FBI special agent, 1946-52; Member and then staff director of the Jt. Congressional Committee on Atomic Energy, 1952-56; State Department agent and then consultant in the early sixties; currently vice-president of Westinghouse Electric Corp.

* *Patrick J. Lynch* — Standard Oil of New Jersey economist, 1967-8; currently vice-president of Westinghouse business planning division.

* *Donald W. McGannon* — Trustee, National Urban League; Board of Directors, Radio Free Europe; Chairman, Westinghouse Broadcasting.

At the other end of the dial are the Fabian "softliners" of CBS and NBC networks, with whom Group W has traditionally locked horns. A few of the leading apolitical lights at these outfits are:

* CBS's corporate director *William A.W. Burden*. The New York Council on Foreign Relations, Atlantic Council, Atlantic Institute, and Brown Brothers Harriman are a few of his credentials.

* *Frank Stanton*, CBS director, also a member of the N.Y. Council on Foreign Relations, and a trustee of the Rockefeller Foundation, the Carnegie Institute, the Rand Corp., and New York Rand Institute.

* CBS director and past president *Arthur Taylor*, also of the New York Council on Foreign Relations, the Trilateral Commission and the U.N. Association.

NBC top brass includes corporate director *Thornton F. Bradshaw*, who hails from the Aspen Institute for Humanistic Studies, the New York Council on Foreign Relations and the Foreign Policy Association, and who chairs the United Nations Association "softline" counter-organization to the Committee on the Present Danger. Other NBC outstanding corporate boardmen of like mind are *John R. Petty*, *Stephen Du Brul, Jr.*, and *Donald Burdette Smiley*.

The power struggle for this political propaganda baronies in the last century has become a classic study in public deception and mass manipulation, carried out under the cynical rubric of the fight for a "free press." Whereas "free" is supposed to convey non-partisan and non-political in this context, it is merely flimsy cover for an ongoing battle among Wall Street factions over how best to conduct psychological warfare operations against the population.

Since 1970, Group W has been bringing this fight before the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) in a sly suit for more local affiliate control of network TV. Group W is no defender of the "little man" in its petition. Like ABC, CBS and NBC, it also owns and operates the FCC-mandated limit of five of its own TV stations. But Big Three network TV programming also supplies hundreds of independently owned and operated TV stations around the country with *two-thirds* of their total program offerings and with exclusive national and international network news programming. Group W's suit for more "local autonomy" for local affiliates boils down to a clear-cut case against this network programming, targeting especially the prime time network news hour of 7-8 P.M. The Group W case created the convenient idea of a so-called "family hour" in this time slot, to be set aside for local "rape report" news and reruns of "Lassie."

Attorney General Levi's Justice Department has taken special notice of this suit and filed its own petition on behalf of the Group W suit, urging the FCC to expand Group W's exemplary action into a full-fledged anti-trust action against all three networks. Levi's Justice Department went so far as to offer its services for undertaking full federal investigations and hearings before the FCC as well.

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