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March 1967

BROADCAST HOUSE PICKETED AFTER CANCELLATION OF PROGRAM

Broadcast House was picketed on March 15 because WTIC-TV did not carry a CBS special on Viet Nam that the Company considered one-sided and distorted.

The 15 demonstrators were members of the American Independence Movement, a group opposed to war in Viet Nam. Stephen Minot, the group's candidate for Congress in 1966, protested the station's action to the Federal Communications Commission--but on March 21, William R. chief of the FCC complaint and compliance division, told 'The New
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FIRST CONGRESSIONAL REPORT GETS FRONT PAGE HEADLINES

The first program in the new WTIC-TV and Radio series, "Congressional Report," made front page news when Sen. Thomas Dodd revealed on the program that he plans to run for re-election in 1970.

The program was filmed and recorded in Washington as the hearings on Senator Dodd's finances were being completed before the Senate Ethics Committee.

"I'll be running, you can be sure of that," said Dodd in response to a question from Tom Eaton. "If God gives me strength, I'll be there and I'll be running."

WORSHIPPERS HEAR SERMON ON CITY AT ECUMENICAL EASTER FESTIVAL

The second annual Ecumenical Easter Sunrise Festival attracted about 4,000 worshippers to Constitution Plaza on a sunny, but unseasonably cool, Easter Sunday morning.

The service, sponsored by Greater Hartford Catholic, Orthodox and Protestant churches, was broadcast by WTIC and televised in color for the first time on WTIC-TV.

The setting inspired the sermon by the Rev. Walter J. Burghardt, a Jesuit theologian from Woodstock College in Maryland, who looked about him and praised what he saw on the Plaza:

"All this," he said, is symbolic of the new life that throbs through the modern city. Granite and glass, orchard and pavement....these are lustily alive. From what was doomed to die, life has sprung forth.

The 6 a.m. service opened with a procession of 36 clergymen and a choir of more than 100 and ended with the ringing of the bells in all of Hartford's churches.

Those who braved the 35-degrees of early Easter morning were rewarded with warm feet, courtesy of Broadcast-Plaza, Inc. The Plaza deck was heated to about 50 degrees for six hours prior to the service at the request of President Morency.

SOLDIER IN VIET NAM HEARS WTIC NEWSCAST

A New London soldier stationed near Phu Lai, Viet Nam was startled the other day to hear "this is Brad Davis of WTIC, Hartford, Connecticut, with some local news" on his radio.

Sp4 William Shabauth wrote to Davis that he "came in loud and clear" on the Armed Forces Radio station. WTIC was selected to produce.

In a letter to Davis, the soldier wrote that he was "glad to hear about all of that snow you're getting.

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WTIC-PRODUCED SERIES
HEARD ON 300 STATIONS

A radio series produced by WTIC had its debut this month on more than 300 stations, located in every corner of the world.

"Coast Guard on Parade," a series of 26 quarter hour concerts by the Coast Guard Band, is being broadcast throughout the world on the Armed Forces Radio Network--and in southern New England on WTIC. It is being presented locally each Thursday evening at 8:05.

The new series is the second produced by WTIC in cooperation with the Coast Guard. During World War II, "The U.S. Coast Guard on Parade," the first Coast Guard - WTIC collaboration, was broadcast coast to coast on the NBC Radio Network. Robert S. Tyrol, now vice president and general manager of WTIC TV-AM-FM, was the announcer for the first series--until he left WTIC for the service with the Coast Guard.

Announcer Norm Peters was selected by the Coast Guard to serve as host of the new series. A Hartford native, Peters has been a WTIC announcer since 1962. Prior to joining WTIC, he was on the announcing staff of WMCA in New York and several New England stations, including WHTT, the former Hartford Times station.

"Coast Guard on Parade" was recorded by a WTIC production crew on location at the Coast Guard Academy in New London under the supervision of Production Manager William Marks and Producer Chuck Renaud. Bill Kolouch was the engineer. After being processed at Broadcast House, the tapes were shipped to the Armed Forces Radio Network headquarters in California, where they were transferred to discs and shipped to AFN stations throughout the world.

In addition to being broadcast on the Armed Forces Network stations, the programs will be heard in hundreds of veterans hospitals in the United States via closed circuit.

DAUGHTER FOR THE MAC DONALDS

Sarah Elizabeth MacDonald was born in Hartford Hospital on Feb. 24. The first child of Jane and Mac MacDonald, Sarah Elizabeth weighed seven pounds, 15 ounces and was 20 inches tall.

SOLDIER IN VIET NAM
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I've been here since last July and all it does is get hot, dusty and muddy, especially when the monsoon season is in full swing. Can't wait to see that snow again down in New London."

BROADCAST HOUSE PICKETED
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York Times" that "each station has the right to choose its own program material. We have always held that stations should exercise this right and not take everything a network pumps out."

The decision to pre-empt the special also resulted in many complaints and compliments by mail and telephone, and inspired several letters to the editor in Connecticut newspapers.

The only local editorial comment was made by "The Hartford Courant," which supported the station's decision:

"Every communication medium has not only the right but the positive responsibility to see that the news or information it puts out, is fair--not a subjective or slanted indictment or defense. It is not a matter of being for or against, in exercising this responsibility. True, it is often a difficult judgment to exercise. But the difficulty does not permit evasion of the responsibility. And WTIC is as entitled to its assessment as its critics are to theirs. Freedom of thought is a two-way street, as much as many persons acclaiming it in principle deny it in fact."

The Company's position was articulated in a letter sent to all those who commented on the decision to cancel the program by President Morency. It is printed in full on Pages 3 and 4.

Dear Viewer:

This is in reply to all who have written to us on the subject of the CBS documentary "Saigon." We do not resent those who attacked us, neither do we console ourselves because others agreed with our position. We are concerned and deeply regret the circumstances which forced us to take the stand which provoked this incident and produced a strain in our relationship with some of our viewers.

As of this date we have received 91 letters of complaint and 41 of commendation. The total of the 132 letters represents the gamut of American beliefs and philosophies.

Understandable to us is the reaction of the letter writer who feels he has the right to decide for himself whether or not he should view a scheduled network program. We ask for equal understanding and appreciation of our obligations as a broadcast licensee.

We have been accused of "censoring" a network newscast. A newscast consists of factual and objective reporting of news, a la Cronkite at 6:30 PM. "Saigon" was not a newscast. It was a film documentary, completely subjective in approach, dwelling entirely on the misery and ugliness of the war and how Americans helped make it that way.

When we first began to preview the film, we were not disturbed since we were convinced that one portion of the film would be devoted to footage, which though not perhaps complimentary, at least might be sympathetic to our presence in Viet Nam. Then the film ended. We were deeply perturbed. For the first time in all the years that we have carried CBS programming, this film was absolutely and completely one-sided.

By not devoting even one minute of footage towards a semblance of balance, the documentary evolved as nothing more than a visual accusation and distortion of the issues, the motives and the actions of American forces in Viet Nam. There simply was no attempt to achieve balance.

Jack Gould of the New York Times said of it, "The hour's tone was anything but sympathetic to the American presence and did not include a bare reference to the existence of even one soldier in Saigon who might have a modicum of compassion and sensitivity for the plight of the Vietnamese."

WTIC-TV has been deeply concerned about the war in Viet Nam since the time Americans became involved there. To gain first-hand knowledge of the war and its issues, we dispatched a WTIC news team to Viet Nam. As an important by-

Viewers

product of that trip, through the generosity of listeners and viewers and of the WTIC Staff, we have been able to build and equip a sixty-bed wing to the hospital at An Khe.

As all our viewers know WTIC-TV has presented hundreds of hours of news and documentary programming on Viet Nam, of both local and network origin, in order to provide as much information and insight as possible. In addition to daily reports of combat operations, such programming has included the complete Fulbright Committee hearings, news features on the Saigon black market, and the accidental killing of civilians by Americans.

The simple, the easy, the comfortable solution would have been to just carry the program. Some have suggested we should have done so and then followed "Saigon" with a local discussion program. There is no need to dwell, I'm sure, on the pallid ineffectiveness of such a program, in contrast with the realism and power of the camera on the scene, shooting only those subjects needed to support a preconceived effect.

Mr. William Ray, chief of the FCC complaint and compliance division, says in the March 21, edition of the New York Times, "Each station has the right to choose its own program material. We have always held that stations should exercise this right and not make everything a network pumps out."

The management of WTIC today is the same management which we trust has earned your respect and confidence over the past 37 years. It is because we are acutely aware of our duties and responsibilities as licensees, that we will not, we cannot, permit this station, your station, to become a compliant and passive pipeline for biased programming, no matter its source.

Sincerely yours,

Paul Morency

FOUR TAKE PART
IN COLLEGE SEMINAR

Four members of the staff took part in panel discussions at the New England Regional Convention of the Intercollegiate Broadcasting System at Wesleyan University March 11.

George Ehrlich was on a panel devoted to sports and news broadcasts; Harold Dorschug spoke on engineering, Dick Ahles, on public relations, and Arnold Dean, announcing and programming.

DOW TAKES POST
WITH BAR ASSN.

Dewey Dow of the News Staff has been named Administrative Director of the Connecticut Bar Association. He will assume his new duties April 10. He succeeds Alan E. Kurland of Bloomfield, who has taken a position with the American Bar Association in Chicago.