

EDITORIALS

'You're A Part Of The Solution, Or You're A Part Of The Problem'

THE VIEWS OF THE WRITER'S ARE NOT ALWAYS THOSE OF THE PAPER'S

Benjamin L. Hooks
FCC
COMMISSIONER



One of the nagging questions plaguing Congress, some broadcasters, the Federal Communications Commission, the general public and specific minority groups, including blacks, is the whole matter of rating programs.

What is meant by program rating? Well, this is a device designed by audience measuring companies to tell broadcasters which programs are popularly watched or listened to, and which are not.

Now, obviously, every station and network, like every newspaper and magazine, wants to attract the largest possible audience. For this makes the medium held in higher esteem than its peers. Naturally, the more sought after, the more popular the medium, thus the more advertising at higher rates, will flow to it.

Programs that do not measure well in the sampling are usually axed. Just as magazines and newspapers which do not attract readers in enough numbers, eventually are forced out of business.

Those programs that do measure well bring in handsome commercial advertising dividends to the station or network. Many people deplore the fact that the type programming they hear or watch nationally is determined, too often, by the number of ears or eyeballs that are listening to or looking at, respectively, given shows.

While this may be true and valid, widespread popularity should not be the sole criterion to be used for every minute a TV station is on the air. I believe there ought to be some time set aside for the presentation of documentaries, meaningful programming for minorities and women, etc.

I do not, however, object to the networks or any business making money. But if I can believe the profit figures the networks released recently (and I can't see any reason to believe they are false), I would have to conclude that they are doing alright financially. That being so, I do not believe they have to rely on presenting financially profitable programming every hour of the 24-hour day. They should, as trustees of the public's airways, thus present some programs that are simply in the public interest, convenience and necessity to do so.

Furthermore, a lot of people deplore the relatively small number of folks used in the rating samplings. (It's a household joke in some

circles that nobody has ever seen anyone who knew anyone who had been sampled by Arbitron, PULSE, or Nielsen, the largest broadcasting sampling groups.)

Nielsen, of which the New York Times' Les Brown says: "is not only the scorekeeper of network television, but the score, itself..." is the dominant television audience sampling company. Generally speaking, it uses a "cross-sampling" of 1,200 persons scattered across the nation to make its determinations.

According to Michael Wheeler, a practicing lawyer, and an associate professor of law at the New England School of Law in Boston, Nielsen reluctantly admits that blacks and other minorities have been significantly under-represented in its samplings.

The complaint that Mr. Tony Brown, executive producer of Black Journal constantly makes has great merit. Brown protests that his show is aired on public TV which was mandated by congress to program to discrete (specific) audiences that commercial broadcasting finds either too unprofitable or insignificant.

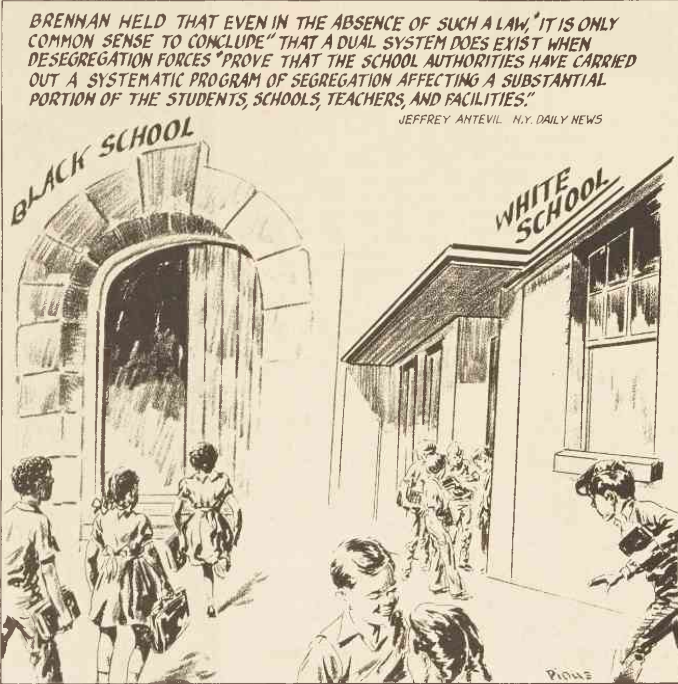
So he is correct when he says public broadcasting systems allot half-hours for target black shows — Black Journal, Black Perspective on the News, etc. — then seek to use general audience measuring means (the Nielsen ratings) to assess them.

They do not take general (white) audience shows — Upstairs, Downstairs, The Adams Chronicles, BBC's Masterpiece Theatre, etc. — and seek to determine their popularity by the number of blacks and minorities watching, Brown persuasively points out.

In other words, public TV is designed to serve special or discrete audiences. The "ratings game," as it is sometimes called, was not to be its watchword. If a black program is presented, its success or failure ought to be rated by its black audience, or lack of it. Similarly, if opera programming, or that concerned with chess playing, flycast fishing, french cooking, or figure skating (ice) is presented, these programs ought to be judged a success or failure by lovers of or those interested in such pastimes.

Public TV and radio were mandated by Congress to serve these kinds of specific audiences. Hopefully, the programs will also attract general audiences as time moves on. (NNPA).

ATTENTION MR. PRESIDENT



BRENNAN HELD THAT EVEN IN THE ABSENCE OF SUCH A LAW, IT IS ONLY COMMON SENSE TO CONCLUDE THAT A DUAL SYSTEM DOES EXIST WHEN DESEGREGATION FORCES PROVE THAT THE SCHOOL AUTHORITIES HAVE CARRIED OUT A SYSTEMATIC PROGRAM OF SEGREGATION AFFECTING A SUBSTANTIAL PORTION OF THE STUDENTS, SCHOOLS, TEACHERS, AND FACILITIES."

JEFFREY ANTEVIL, N.Y. DAILY NEWS

From THE CHARLOTTE POST

as i see it

A Thrill On Capitol Hill

Well, it strikes me quite amazing that Congress and the White House can't come to terms on the budget, since there is so much money in Washington to throw away on sex activities. I don't even see a need for a budget.

What really burns me up is the IRS. They stay on my back bugging me for every penny that they can squeeze out of me, yet look what my money is being spent on.

I can understand, now, why some people go through all the fuss to get elected to Congress.

Over the last decade we have witnessed a corrupt White House, Federal Bureau of Investigation, Central Intelligence Agency, and now Congress. We as taxpayers are being forced to pay for these corrupt activities with very little say about it.

But watch!!! Next year we will be made to pay extra dollars from our paychecks to support a broke Social Security System.

Our taxes will increase to help get the government out of deficit spending. Our pay checks will not increase to help curb inflation. Our Congress will vote to get a salary increase for themselves.

Those individuals elected to monitor our tax dollars are using it promiscuously.

I wonder what I'm entitled to with my portion of Elizabeth Ray's \$14000 salary. Oh, well.

But the fault with our corrupt government probably lies with us more so than anywhere else. Our poor attitude about politics has provided an abundance of garbage in Washington. We all know about the difficulty with garbage collection. You have to put the garbage out on the curb or nobody will pick it up. Therefore, all the garbage is still running the country.

Unfortunately, the public takes all of this lightly. I find

people saying "I don't see why the fuss they always did it" or "They are only human." Because they always did it doesn't make it right. If everybody felt that way we would still be in slavery.

People write in to daily papers complaining about scandals and corruption making front page. They are sick of reading about it, yet not sick of it happening. All I can say to those who have this asinine opinion is "You are sick."

Every Congressman, President, or any government official should be exposed to the public for any immoral or illegal doing. It should be publicized, overemphasized, and criticized on every front page in the country until it soaks into the public's head that we are being taken for a ride. Until we stop voting in any and every Joe that runs for office we will continue to get "Richard Roundtree" (Shaft) to death.

CHAKA

1786 - 1836



RANKED BY SOME HISTORIANS AS HISTORY'S GREATEST CONQUERER, THIS ZULU WARRIOR CONQUERED MILLIONS WITH HIS ARMY OF 100,000! CALLED "ELEPHANT" BECAUSE HIS FOOTSTEPS SHOOK THE EARTH, HIS GENIUS REVOLUTIONIZED MILITARY SCIENCE — HIS ENTIRE CAREER INCLUDED BUT ONE DEFEAT!

CONTINENTAL FEATURES



TO BE EQUAL

By Verron E. Jordan, Jr.

Executive Director of the National Urban League

Gun Control's Uphill Fight

After all the assassinations and attempted assassinations we're no closer to effective arms control than we were a dozen years ago. With all the furor about rising crime rates we still haven't moved toward a ban on handguns or even toward effective steps to control them.

Reasonable steps toward some kind of domestic disarmament have been bitterly opposed by many who believe that even some form of mild regulation would lead to depriving them of their hunting guns and other guns used for sports or for legitimate protection.

This is a gun-owning nation. More Americans own guns than own automobiles. There are more guns in American homes than there are dishwashers.

The most obvious form of gun regulation — and a very mild one at that — would be mandatory registration of handguns. According to a recent Harris Poll, more than three out of four people favor such a step, and even among owners of handguns, 61 percent favor such a measure.

There seems to be no reason why effective controls can't be established. The polls show the people want it, police officials are almost unanimous in backing it, and common sense says it is a basic step in controlling violent crime.

Despite this, Congress has failed to act. For a while there was some sentiment for legislation banning the so-called "Saturday night specials," or cheap handguns.

That would have been a small step in the right direction, although the probable result would have been that people, including criminals, would step up to the next price range. It would eliminate cheap competition to more expensive handguns but do little else.

Meanwhile the murder rate climbs, partly due to the easy accessibility of lethal weapons. Since this is a Bicentennial year, we might recall that three times as many people were murdered by firearms last year as were killed in battle during the entire Revolutionary War.

The use of guns in committing violent crimes is rising too, and many police departments are concerned about the growing use of guns by teenagers. A gun in the hands of an immature person is doubly dangerous for the sense of power it gives him and the psychological compensation it offers, can only lead to trouble.

Opponents of any kind of gun control are fond of the slogan "guns don't kill, people do."

That may have a nice ring to it, but it's not true — guns do kill people — and just like any other potentially lethal instrument controls over their use are needed. Automobiles are potentially dangerous so we license drivers and make sure they know how to use their cars; the same compelling public interest ought to apply to firearms. There's no "auto lobby" protesting licensing requirements for car ownership so why should the gun lobby fight the much more reasonable attempts to regulate weapons?

It's a mistake to launch an all-out challenge to simple ownership of any gun. Most firearms are legitimately owned and used and a lot of the opposition to reasonable controls comes from people who regard regulation as unwarranted intrusions on their rights.

But with the overwhelming majority of people, including gun-owners, favorable to some form of regulation it should be clear that political cowardice is no longer an excuse for inaction.

State and local regulation isn't working because of interstate gun-running. Only national regulation, including licensing, can help to control the runaway problem of firearms abuse.

Anyone who says he's against crime and spouts the usual law and order line without also being for strict controls on handguns or their outright banning, is either being hypocritical or fooling himself.

Bayard Rustin Says

MORAL EXHORTATION IS NOT ENOUGH

It has always been tempting to believe that social change could come through moral exhortation. And in times when it seems difficult or impossible to gain change through concerted political action blacks have been particularly susceptible to this habit.

Jesse Jackson has called for a program of self-improvement and a new morality among blacks, beginning with the schools, in the New York Times Magazine, and has since attempted to start such a program in ten high schools in Chicago.

Jackson has certainly hit on a real issue. All right-thinking blacks share Jackson's concern about the chaotic conditions in some black communities and in our schools. I, for one, am all for efforts to improve the schools and the community. Certainly we need to insist that there is no room for crime, drug pushers, and chronic disrupters in our schools. Too many of our young people have been victimized by the attitude nurtured by white liberals that imposing discipline on black students is racist. Certainly black parents must push the schools to educate and encourage their children to learn.

Several years ago we were hung up with some similar notions about crime. For a long time the legitimate concerns of blacks about crime could not break through the liberal notion that to be concerned about crime was to be racist. We have gotten over that notion. All across the country blacks are organizing to fight crime in their communities. The

same thing is now happening with education.

If Jackson stopped with an analysis of the need for discipline, order, and learning in the schools there would be no problem. But he goes far beyond this. He makes the schools into the primary agent of social change and moral persuasion the primary engine of social change.

This is, I believe, an erroneous evaluation of the problems of blacks and a profoundly mistaken prescription for achieving social change. You simply cannot, as Jackson suggests, "rebuild our communities with moral authority." It will take money, resources, and skills to do the job.

It is no accident that Jackson's message has been picked up and endorsed by such ultra-right columnists as Phyllis Schlafly. For Jackson's insistence that blacks must help solve their own problems leaves the impression that it is blacks along who are responsible for creating those problems. I find it no more palatable when a black leader suggests, however sincerely, that blacks can pull themselves up by their bootstraps than when it was suggested hypocritically by racist and conservative whites.

It is not simply that Jackson is unintentionally living ammunition to white conservatives. The idea that the problems of deteriorating inner cities, of unemployment and underemployment, and of poverty can be solved by self-improvement crusades is just as likely to be picked up by white liberals and moderates who are already in a defeatist mood about the possibility of real change. It will aid and abet those who are ready to

concede that the federal government has only a limited responsibility to aid the cities and to solve social problems.

No one, including Jesse, doubts that black students want to excel. The question is how do we provide the economic and social environment which will allow black youth to excel. There are enormous reservoirs of ability and energy in the black community, but self-improvement crusades are not capable of releasing those energies. The call to excellence may stimulate black youth to new exertions but in the absence of fundamental social changes they will soon run into a brick wall and will emerge even more disillusioned and discouraged than before.

The fundamental reasons that so many of our inner city schools are out of control is not a lack of moral authority and sound ethical conduct. When unemployment and underemployment in many inner city areas is 20 or 30 percent or more and unemployment among black teenagers 40 or 50 percent, is it any wonder that so many young people have become disillusioned and discouraged? Schools simply do not produce social conditions as such as social conditions are reflected in the schools.

You cannot achieve social reform by exhortation. A good sermon often makes a poor political program. Jesse Jackson is a young man of great ability and greater potential. His energies would be better employed if he would get back to the hard business that Dr. King was engaged in before his death: the mobilization of political power and skills to create a coalition that will implement economic and social changes to bring equality.

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