RADIO AND TELEVISION COVERAGE
OF THE 1952 POLITICAL CAMPAIGN

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INTRODUCTION

It is the night of November 2, 1920. The place is a small room in the meter factory of the Westinghouse Electric Company in East Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. A small group of laughing, joking, men sit in this room, surrounded by storage batteries, condensers and a maze of complicated electrical equipment.

This is election night. Warren G. Harding is the Republican candidate, and James M. Cox is the choice of the Democrats. As the returns begin to pour in, a Republican landslide seems likely. In Pittsburgh as rapidly as the returns are telegraphed to the Washington Post, they are in turn telephone to our group of men in the meter factory. There Dr. Frank Conrad read the returns into a crude microphone to some thousand amateur wireless operator's and their friends who are gathered for the special event. It is radio's opening night and no more significant material could have been chosen for its debut.

Radio from that day on was to grow and thrive as a public service in its own right, and develop into a commercial and educative mass medium of communication of almost unlimited potential.

Radio's first broadcast dealt with the election of a President of the United States—the tabulating of votes and the announcement of the eventual winner. Since that first broadcast of a political event, radio—and later television—have developed the reporting of

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1. In all instances in this work "radio" refers to Standard or AM (amplitude modulation) broadcasting unless otherwise indicated.
political events to a high degree. No longer is radio content with the tabulating of election returns, but it has invaded the area of campaigning, and the reporting of campaigns. It is this area that I am investigating in this work.

A comprehensive study of the 1952 Presidential Campaign which saw the advent of television on a nation-wide scale move into this area, is my objective. The development of national political campaign coverage from 1920 to the present will be given, showing the trends leading to the present intimate relationship of campaigners with listeners and viewers.

In regards to the 1952 campaign, I will present what conclusive material is obtainable dealing with the effect of radio and television coverage upon the voting public. Television has opened up a whole new approach to political campaign coverage. By presenting both the past developments and the recent campaign, I hope to present a broad perspective of the area of national political campaign coverage by radio and television.
RADIO BEFORE 1930

The pioneer exploration of radio waves came largely from the work of trained scientists, with a small amount of stimulus from a pre-existing technology in the field. This is unusual, because most of the industries we are acquainted with in every-day life have evolved slowly through the centuries. In the great inventions of former ages, the need precedes and calls forth the invention, unless the invention is the result of accidental discovery. But during the nineteenth century scientific investigation was undertaken in a search for pure knowledge. From this atmosphere came radio and a vast industry of electronics.

James Clerk Maxwell, a professor of natural philosophy at London and Cambridge Universities, is considered as the greatest physicist of the nineteenth century. He was a leading light in the new complicated field of physics dealing with a theory of electro-magnetic influence on light. But the greatest contribution leading to the development of radio by Maxwell was that his Cavendish Laboratory at Cambridge provided opportunities for complete freedom of experimentation. Such scientific freedom had not been provided before.

Following Maxwell’s experimentation, Heinrich Hertz, proved the existence of ether waves, and it was on these scientific investigations that Marconi and other inventors built. Marconi, lacking the background in experimental physics which led to the discoveries of


Hertz, contributed mainly to the improvement of crude laboratory apparatus. Marconi's contributions are classified as applied research and engineering developments rather than fundamental research.\(^3\)

Marconi was from a wealthy family and was able to spend practically his whole time perfecting radio and electrical apparatus. By 1896, Marconi was sending and receiving Morse code messages over Hertzian waves at a distance of two miles. Thinking he could better commercialize on his inventions, Marconi moved to England where he established the British Marconi Corporation in 1897. In 1899 an American branch of the company was opened, and until 1919 when the Radio corporation of America was founded, the British and American Marconi Companies were the dominant concerns in wireless.\(^4\)

Immediately after founding his company, Marconi began experimenting with long-distance communications, and in 1901 the first trans-continental wireless message was received by Marconi in Newfoundland—it was the Morse letter "s". Marconi continued to invent and to make improvements on the wireless until 1902, when he turned most of his attention to the managing of his company.\(^5\)

In 1884, Thomas Edison worked out a system of wireless communication using Morse code between railroad stations and moving trains. Edison in one of his early discoveries learned that under certain

\(^3\) Ibid., p. 27.


conditions a wave could be sent between filaments in an opposite direction from the flow of electrical current. Ambrose Fleming, a scientist for the London Edison Electric Company, made improvements on Edison's system, and these became the keystone for De Forest's work which led to modern radio communication.6

Lee De Forest probably contributed the most prominent invention in the early development of radio—the three element vacuum tube. In 1907, De Forest was entertaining three people in his laboratory atop the Parker Building in New York City. He showed his guests his complicated looking wireless set and asked one of his guests, Eugenia Farrar, a young concert soprano, to sing into it. Miss Farrar complied and her voice was picked up by a naval wireless operator who was decoding Morse code. The wireless operator was completely flabbergasted, and his experience was reported in a New York newspaper skeptically as the hearing of "voices of angels."7

Unquestionably, that broadcast by De Forest was the first strictly modern broadcast of a human voice by radio. The editor of the New York Herald-Tribune asked De Forest what good was his gadget? De Forest could only scratch and shake his head—he was unable to think up an answer.8 Up until this point De Forest had looked upon his invention as merely an advanced form of telephony, but he was soon to grasp the potential of radio as a public broadcast medium.

6. Ibid., p. 91.
7. Frank Chase, Jr., Sound and Fury, p. 3.
8. Ibid., p. 5.
and in 1909 he said:

I look forward to the day when by the means of radio, opera may be brought into every home. Some day the news and even advertising, will be sent out to the public on the wireless telephone. 9

De Forest's prediction was not widely accepted, however, and by 1920 there were only a few individuals who shared his insight into radio's future. At the University of Wisconsin, an experimental station (later called WHA) was operated by the physics department to broadcast weather and market reports. 10...William E. Scripps, of the Detroit News, had started his experimental station (now WWJ)...in Pittsburgh, H. P. Davis a Westinghouse vice-president, and Dr. Frank Conrad, a research engineer, opened the first commercially licensed radio station. On November 20, 1920, American citizens had gone to the polls to elect a President. Warren G. Harding was the Republican candidate, and James M. Cox was the Democratic nominee. As the returns were telegraphed to the Pittsburgh Post, they were in turn telephoned to Dr. Conrad in a meter factory of the Westinghouse Corporation. There the returns were read over the air to approximately ten thousand listeners, and radio broadcasting made its formal debut. 11

Three large companies which entered the radio field were the American Telephone and Telegraph Company, General Electric, and Westinghouse. These firms later joined their extensive patent interests in radio into the Radio Corporation of America. A.T.& T. first


10. Loc. cit.

became seriously interested in radio in 1906. No basic new inventions were perfected by A.T.& T., but extensive improvements of earlier inventions put A.T.& T. in a strong position by 1920. Though the company did not dominate the radio industry, its position was strong enough to prevent any other company from doing so.  

It was an A.T.& T. owned station, WEAF, New York, which was the first station to turn Commercial. In 1922, WEAF was set up as a "toll" Station, available for hire to anyone wishing to reach the public by radio. The emphasis throughout this early period was on the use of commercial announcements to create good will. This policy was approved by the then Secretary of Commerce, Herbert Hoover, who in 1922 said:

It is inconceivable that we should allow so great a possibility for service, for news, for entertainment, for education, and for vital commercial purposes to be drowned in advertising chatter.

Such a policy lasted until 1924, but the line between direct and indirect commercial appeals soon began to wear thin under the pressure of studio managers who were anxious to reap financial reward for their investments.

In 1926, A.T.& T. sold out most of its radio rights to the Radio Corporation of America, which in turn formed the first national radio network...the National Broadcasting Company. By January of 1927, NBC was operating two networks, the Red and Blue. This gave NBC the dominant position in chain broadcasting until October of 1927.

when the Columbia Broadcasting System was founded with a federation of sixteen stations.15

By 1926 and 1927, radio had become heavily commercial, but opposition to this trend toward turning radio into a maze of commercial appeals was still being voiced. In 1929, the National Association of Broadcasters, set up a code in an attempt to maintain the dignity of radio. The code provided that after 6:00 p.m., commercials of only "good-will" type were to be used, and after 7:00 p.m., no commercial announcements of any kind were to be broadcast. But the barriers were down, and the rules against direct advertising became more and more lax, and soon disappeared altogether.16

15. Ibid., p. 27.

16. Ibid., p. 26. Also see Chase, Chapter 1.
III

CAMPAIGN COVERAGE 1924 TO 1944

The 1924 national political campaign was the first in which radio reported on-the-scene activity. The Republican Convention was held in Cleveland, where the G.O.P. chose Calvin Coolidge as their presidential candidate. The democrats met in New York City and nominated John W. Davis.¹

Radio as a reporting device came under sharp criticism in 1924 by politician and newspaper man alike. Few people thought of the radio as a straight informational medium, but looked at it with mistrust and cynicism as a "gimick" for getting votes. The Democratic presidential candidate himself sarcastically blasted radio, and another infant in the field of communications—the moving pictures—for entering the field of political reporting and promotion. Davis said:

Eventually we will pick our candidates for two qualifications: First, does he film well? Second, does he radio well?²

Political campaign coverage by radio was thought by many people to have come about purely by chance, and it was looked upon as a curiosity. In these early days, radio was still a novelty to millions of people, and in an effort to add variety to a rather meager selection of program types, station managers found the airing of political speeches and conventions to be a "natural" to meet the need.

¹ "Doubts About Campaigning By Radio," Literary Digest, 82:11, August 9, 1924.

² Loc. cit.
The growth of radio stations from 1920 to 1924 was rapid, and by election time in 1924 there were nearly 500 stations on the air. Networks had not yet been organized in 1924 except on a two station system, and this only on rare occasions. In 1923, the A.T.& T. owned station, WEAF, New York City, broadcast a program simultaneously with WNAC in Boston, so there were no "ready made" networks available for campaign coverage in 1924.4

American Telephone and Telegraph met the need of a nation-wide network hookup by transmitting the speeches of Coolidge, Davis and Robert M. LaFollette to selected cities by the use of telephone lines. From these cities, the speeches were broadcast by local stations. A system was worked out so that the campaign speeches were transmitted to various sections of the country according to their appeals. In other words, appeals to farmers were confined to the West and the South; appeals to workingmen confined to the industrial Midwest and East. This was done in the interest of economy, because politicians believed that a general campaign would be more expensive than it was worth.5

When President Coolidge announced that he would not go on the stump to campaign, but would campaign by radio from Washington, the radio men showed a strange reluctance toward the whole idea. All of the candidates had decided to do a great deal of their campaigning by radio, putting radio definitely on the spot. Radio men well knew

3. Loc. cit.


5. Literary Digest, op. cit., p. 11.
the limited facilities of A.T.& T. which would have to carry the
brunt of the nationwide speeches, and they feared that a poor showing
by radio in its first chance at political reporting, might greatly
hinder its future. 

Indeed, there was little optimism concerning the future of
radio in politics. There were however, some who had keen insight into
what lay ahead for radio. Senator Robert M. LaFollette said:

Throughout the campaign more people will catch the
voices of various candidates and their spokesmen than
have ever before been heard from the platform in Ameri-
can history. The consequence of this great stride toward
giving the people a first hand knowledge of political
debate can hardly be estimated.

Another source in an editorial made a statement seemingly flippant
at the time, but which was later to become astoundingly true:

Novelty will wear off; there may not be so many
radio listeners four years hence, and those who do
listen may be more impatient and less attentive. Or--
will the inventors go so far with radio-pictures that
the circle will be complete, so that conventions will
not be regarded but seen too, by a whole nations, over
the air.

The two major political parties in 1924 had faith in the value
of radio campaigning and news coverage. The Republican's appropri-
ated fifty thousand dollars and the Democrats appropriated forty
thousand dollars for radio time. The money was considered well
spent by the parties and following the campaign, each party went on

7. Literary Digest, op. cit., p. 11.
with plans for a bigger and better radio campaign in 1928. The technique of the radio convention was in its infancy though, and some of the results dismayed even the most hardened political cynic. Profanity and exasperated asides of party managers were heard all too often by the listening audience. For some the first coverage of a national political campaign began in curiosity and ended in disillusionment, but for the majority enthusiasm prevailed in anticipation of the 1928 campaign.  

There is one very basic event that occurred between the 1924 and 1928 political campaigns that did a great deal to change the whole coverage of the 1928 campaign—the formation of networks. The National Broadcasting Company had been in operation for nearly two years, and Columbia for over a year, by election time in 1928. Each party used fifty hours of time on coast-to-coast hook ups, and the theory of "selective areas" to receive broadcasts was done away with to a large extent. Through the use of networks, 107 stations broadcast (Republican) Herbert Hoover's nomination acceptance speech, and 115 stations carried (Democrat) Alfred E. Smith's acceptance speech—a record for the time. The average cost of network time per hour was seven thousand five hundred dollars. Since the Democrats appropriated six hundred thousand dollars and the Republicans four hundred thousand dollars for radio, it is apparent that a large portion of the appropriations went for network, coast-to-coast


11. Chester, op. cit., p. 28.
broadcasts. 12

There were two other factors that provided for better all around radio broadcasting by 1928. The first of these was the establishment of the Federal Radio Commission in the spring of 1927. The new Commission assigned frequencies to all stations, fixed hours and standards, the amount of power allocated. The Commission set up new technical requirements, forcing 200 to 250 weaker stations off of the air. These stations were almost immediately replaced, however. By these new requirements, the quality of radio was improved tremendously, especially by the elimination of overlapping signals. 13

Another factor of the technical improvement of radio was in the receivers themselves. Sets were introduced that required no batteries, and loudspeakers replaced the earphones. All of these factors lead to a much improved technical basis for the 1928 political campaign coverage. 14

By 1928, the critics of radio's entrance into the campaign of 1924 had begun to change their tune. It was generally accepted that radio played an important part in the 1924 campaign--how important a role no one could tell. By the 1928 campaign, as many people as had attacked and ridiculed radio's position in the 1924 campaign, now had come to its defense and were heaping praise upon it. Robert L. Duffus of the New York Times said:


13. Chester, op. cit., p. 29.

Radio is the greatest debunking influence that has come into American public life since the Declaration of Independence—a campaign speaker can no longer pretend to be misquoted in the newspapers, nor can he say one thing in the East and deny it in the West, for radio instantly exposes this sort of duplicity.  

And in an editorial from the Richmond Times Dispatch:

Not only are the citizens of this day thoroughly conversant with the issues at stake, but they are more interested in the outcome of the election by contact over the air with the men seeking their votes. Radio besides centering interest in the home and increasing the general culture and information of citizens, already has become a powerful factor in the advancement of representative government. The character of political campaigns in the United States was greatly changed by the telegraph and telephone; it was revolutionized by radio.

When it became time to broadcast the conventions in 1928, a new problem arose to face the broadcasters. Since 1924, most of the stations had become commercialized and found themselves in the sad position of having the time for broadcasting of the conventions already sold to advertisers. A great many stations did extensive time manipulation with advertisers in an effort to broadcast the conventions.

In the campaign of 1924 it was generally conceded that the Republicans held the advantage in radio campaigning and radio coverage. This was due to the fact that most of the stations were (and still were in 1928) owned by public utility corporations whose managers believed that their interests were bound up with the conservative

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16. Loc. cit.
wing of the Republican party. But the Federal Radio Act of 1927 did away with this advantage:

Sec. 18. If any licensee shall permit any person who is legally qualified candidate for any public office to use a broadcasting station, he shall afford equal opportunities to all other such candidates for that office in the use of such broadcasting station, and the licensing authority shall make rules and regulations to carry this provision into effect.

Since 1924, the potential audience of the campaign coverage had grown to twenty million and one can safely say that the men and women of the country went to the polls with a better understanding of the personalities of the candidates, and of the issues involved.

In the campaign of 1932, both major parties held their conventions in Chicago which had become the major radio center of the Midwest. There were over 16 million radios in the United States, being used by a listening audience of nearly 100 million persons.

The networks had learned much since their first political campaign eight years before, and they were cut to make the broadcasting of the '32 conventions "the greatest radio broadcasts the world has ever known." The National Broadcasting Company and CBS built elaborate sound booths in the convention hall, and mikes were strategically placed in an effort to catch remarks from the convention floor. Evidently, convention delegates had become radio conscious enough that the possibility of spontaneous profanity and slanderous remarks


20. Loc. cit.

was no longer a problem. The networks were prepared to present every sound of importance, whether a keynote speech, a band, or a motion to adjourn.22

The 1932 campaign brought out cries once again against radio political coverage and campaigning. But the cries this time were mild protests to the effect that radio had slain the political orator and was threatening to shorten political campaigns to a brief radio campaign. It was feared by some that radio would eventually take the personality of candidates out of the picture—"no man or woman, can be oratorically eloquent over the precise and matter-of-fact radio."23

The results of the 1932 election proved these words to be glaringly false, because Franklin D. Roosevelt became the greatest radio personality of any government office holder up to the present time, and one can only guess at the amount of influence the medium of radio had in Roosevelt's political success—but it was definitely a strong factor.

There were two apparent, but probably misleading political phenomenons, up to the time of the 1936 campaign:

1. The party which bought the most radio time in previous campaigns had lost.

2. Radio brought out the voters like no other single influence.

In regards to the first factor, in 1928 the Democratic party bought fifty-two and one-half hours of radio time, while the Republicans bought only forty-two and one-half hours of time and won the election. In 1936, both parties increased the amount of time bought;

22. Ibid., p. 882.

the Republicans buying ninety-seven and one-half hours of time and the Democrats bought seventy hours, and won the election once again.24

It would seem at first investigation that radio political campaigning had little effect on the voter, but the fact that the increase in the number of voters corresponds directly with the growth of political coverage, tends to disprove this logic.25

Looking at the second factor we find that in 1920, twenty-six thousand seven hundred five voters went to the polls. In 1924, Graham McNamee and Ted Husing announced the first radio coverage of the conventions, and twenty-nine millions voted. By 1928, radio politics was on a business basis with both major parties buying large amounts of time. That year, thirty-six million eight hundred thousand voted. National networks were well established by 1932, and network time increased from ninety-six hours to one hundred twenty-five. The vote that year was thirty-nine million eight hundred thousand. The Mutual Broadcasting Company entered the radio scene in 1936, and stations had become generally more powerful. Both parties bought one hundred seventy-three hours of time, and nearly forty-five million turned out to vote.26

By 1936 a reasonable amount of efficiency prevailed in the convention broadcasts. The networks carried the conventions on a sustaining basis, but they operated in fear that a delegation might blare forth with a tune that was restricted and subject the networks


25. See Appendix 1.

to copyright lawsuits. The National Broadcasting Company introduced a "midget broadcasting station." This was a forerunner to our present day "Walkie Talkies," and enabled portable coverage of delegates and happenings all over the convention hall.

The Standing Committee of the Press Galleries of Congress refused to allow radio reporters access to press facilities, so special convention committees allotted specific news coverage facilities to the broadcasters. Sixty-eight microphones were available to the networks, with a microphone for each delegation. In addition to this, all of the networks had extra microphones set up on the speaker's stand, and parabolic microphones placed to catch background noises. All of this, coupled with NBC's use of their "midget broadcasting station," gave the conventions the greatest amount of coverage up until that time.

An extremely impressive array of news men broadcast the 1936 convention. NBC was headed by Walter Lippmann, Edwin C. Hill, Lowell Thomas, Dorothy Thompson, and Graham McNamee. Mutual was staffed by Gabriel Heatter, Quinn Ryan, Arthur Sears Henning, and Arthur Evans; while CBS boasted of Bob Trout, H. V. Kalterborn, Maibelle Jennings, Paul Mallon, and Boake Carter. It is interesting to note that in these earlier days of convention broadcasting, a female commentator

27. Literary Digest, 121:54, June 6, 1936.
30. Loc. cit.
was usually employed by each of the networks as a means of audience appeal to the female listener.

Broadcast time for the 1936 conventions was set as much as possible to fall between two and five p.m. and after 10 p.m. so to avoid conflict with regularly scheduled commercial programs over the networks.31

Besides giving complete coverage to the Republican and Democratic Conventions in 1936, the networks gave partial coverage to the Socialist Convention held in Cleveland on May 23. It was at this convention that NBC tried out their microwave portable "broadcasting station" by interviewing Socialist candidate, Norman Thomas in a hotel room. Most of the network coverage of this convention was done in the form of such remotes and special broadcasts—little of the actual convention being carried.32

A new use of radio as a medium of political broadcasting arose in the 1936 campaign. Arthur H. Vandenberg, a candidate for the republican nomination, used recordings of a campaign speech of Franklin D. Roosevelt, and cut in on the recordings to make rebuttals to statements made by Roosevelt. Vandenburg's broadcast using this device was to be carried coast to coast by CBS, but at the last minute CBS thought better of the idea, cancelled the program, and only twenty-one stations carried the broadcast. The broadcast was not attempted again, however both parties used extensive use of recordings in an


32. Loc. cit.
effort to capture the "foreign-language" vote. Spot announcements
in six languages were presented by both parties.33

In 1940, radio was celebrating its twentieth anniversary with
"plans to make radio's coverage of the November 5th balloting the
most extensive and elaborate of any presidential election in radio
history."34 This extensive coverage of election returns capped off
the biggest convention coverage system yet seen. Each year since
radio first entered the political campaign reporting field, it has
increased its coverage, both in scope and in efficiency.

With sight as well as sound, radio covered the 1940 conventions
from the opening sound of the gavel to the finish. Networks carried
six pre-convention programs, presenting party leaders and campaign
managers. Broadcasts of the Republican convention started with the
organization meeting and preliminary actions during the day of June
24th. Broadcasts after that included all nominating speeches, roll
calls, and the nominees acceptance speech. Radio's representation
of arrangers, commentators and technicians was the largest ever
assembled at any national convention.35

CBS was represented by Paul White, Elmer Davis, Albert Warner,
Bob Trout and John Daly. Mutual's reporters were Quin Ryan, Dave
Driscoll, Wythe Williams, Fulton Lewis, Jr., and Gabriel Heather.
NBC aired the reports of H. V. Kaltenborn, Raymond Clapper, John B.

33. Literary Digest, 122:17, October 31, 1936.
34. Broadcasting, 19:22, November 1, 1940.
Kennedy, Baukhage, Lowell Thomas, and George Hicks. All in all the largest group of "name" and nationally famous radio news and press reporters were used to cover the conventions.36

The 1940 conventions gave television its really first play in political campaign coverage. Beginning on the opening day of the Republican convention (June 24th) and continuing to its close, NBC carried several hours of the convention activities via television—including the keynote address of Stassen, the nominating speeches, the parades for convention favorites and interviews with candidates and political experts. The television audience was estimated at nearly 40,000 persons.37 Television coverage of the Democratic convention was much the same as at the Republican convention. The same schedule of broadcasting was followed by NBC and Philco, but more close up shots were attempted, to give the viewers a closer look at the candidates. Viewing of the conventions was limited to New York, Philadelphia, and the near surrounding areas.38

The British Broadcasting Corporation carried several short wave pickups of convention commentaries by their own observers, and convention pickups were available to Canadian listeners through the regular network service.39

For the first time in the history of national political

36. Loc. cit.
conventions, a radio plank, endorsing the principles of free radio on a parity with the press was adopted unanimously June 19th, by the Republican National Convention. Backed by the National Association of Broadcasters' Legislative Committee, the plank denounced radio censorship and held that licenses should be revocable only after public hearing and for due cause. The plank read:

The principles of a free press and free speech, as established by the Constitution, should apply to the radio. Federal regulation of radio is necessary in view of the national limitations of wave lengths, but this gives no excuse for censorship. We oppose the use of licensing to establish arbitrary controls. Licenses should be revocable only when, after public hearings, due cause for cancellation is shown.40

A behind the scenes battle developed on the adoption of the "free radio" plank in the Democratic National Convention. Senator Wheeler was responsible for the plank, but the plank would have been much stronger had not Senator Wagner, chairman of the committee, opposed the plank. The original proposition was for five year licenses and a declaration against undue governmental interferences. The convention committee, however, stripped the resolution to the expression of "free radio" on a parity with the press. The Democrats ended up by adopting the same plank as the Republicans.41

On election night (November 5th), 1940 the radio industry brought to every American listener, and by shortwave to the rest of the world, a vote-by-vote report of the election returns. All four

41. Broadcasting, 19:70, August 1, 1940.
networks had large staffs of reporters and commentators working to keep the listener up to date and well informed. These staffs were for the most part, the same staffs that represented the networks at the conventions. NBC had a mobile unit in Times Square to interview voters and add atmosphere and excitement to the proceedings, and they also televised the election returns by a system of charts, and with Baukhage doing the commentary.\footnote{42}

Dealers of television sets looked back to the boom in sales of sound receivers caused by radio's first coverage of the national political conventions in 1924. They hoped that history would repeat itself, and that the telecasts from Philadelphia would revive consumer interest in television sets; this interest having been dampened by the Federal Communications Commission's action in stopping the Radio Corporation of America's merchandising drive.\footnote{43}

Enthusiasm over the job done by radio and television in covering the 1940 campaign was high, and acknowledgement as being a leading political instrument was accorded the radio industry. In commenting on this, Sherman H. Dyer said:

> The best vote-getting machine of the 1940 election ...is...the radio...and it will win votes for the candidates who can win attention. Radio presence has replaced baby-kissing for politicians.\footnote{44}

What people mistrusted in 1924 as a "gimick for getting votes" was

\footnote{42. \textit{Broadcasting}, \textit{op. cit.}, November 1, 1940.}
\footnote{43. \textit{Broadcasting}, 18:32, May 1, 1940.}
\footnote{44. Sherman H. Dyer, "Air Power," \textit{Colliers}, 106:18, September 14, 1940.}
in 1940 openly discussed and accepted as true. Straight, unbiased reporting and coverage by radio had won the confidence of the public. Both sides of all campaign issues were aired, and the public chose which ones to accept—not the radio industry.
IV

THE 1944 AND 1948 CAMPAIGNS

For the first time in history, radio augmented on a mass basis its regular news wire services and network programs with on-the-spot handling from both the 1944 Republican and Democratic National Conventions.

The four major networks (NBC, CBS, Mutual, and Blue) agreed to pool their facilities and broadcast official proceedings at the same time, following lines similar to those used in covering the D-Day invasion of Europe on June 6, 1944.1

Another first in the 1944 conventions was the complete shoving aside of commercial programs to make way for complete coverage. Cost was considered as no factor in the coverage. Two million dollars was set as the cost of radio and television broadcasts of both conventions. This figure was based on estimates of the four major networks and sixty odd stations which sent correspondents to the conventions, and includes revenue lost from cancelled commercial programs, rebates to talent and additional staff costs.2

In 1940, only four stations in addition to the major networks, covered the conventions. The total registered personnel in that year was forty, and most of these represented the networks. For the 1944 convention coverages, over three hundred persons were registered.

Seven networks (Blue, CBS, NBC, Mutual, West Virginia, Yankee, and

1. Broadcasting, 26:14, June 19, 1944.

2. Broadcasting, 26:11, July 24, 1944.
the BBC) gave coverage, along with 55 individual stations. Never before in its history had the broadcasting profession taken on such a broad spot coverage job. In virtually every instance, stations that sent news representatives gave special coverage with local flavor, not contained in the general news from the conventions.3

Still another "first" in communications history came as radio and television coordinated to provide sound and sight reports of the convention, with the expansion of NBC's television coverage. WNB, NBC television station in New York City, carried an hour long program on opening night of the Republican Convention, featuring a historical film of Chicago and scenes from the home towns of the leading Republican candidates. WRGB-TV, General Electric station at Schenectady, New York and WPTZ-TV, Philadelphia, was granted permission by NBC to telescast the film scenes. These two stations picked up the television signals direct from WNB, using relay links to form a three-city network.4

Television which had its first play in political coverage in 1940 made little advancement by 1944 due to the United States entrance into war in 1941. The production of television sales was curtailed and telecasting settled down to nearly a skeleton operation for the duration. By the time of the 1944 political conventions only nine television stations were on the air, but they brought coverage to four states along the Eastern Seaboard, and parts of the Mid-west and the far West by micro-wave transmission. An estimated fifty thousand

persons viewed the convention proceedings via television.\textsuperscript{5}

The National Broadcasting Company filmed Governor Earl Warren of California in an advance delivery of his Republican keynote speech, and timed presentation on WNBST-TV with the actual address. NBC had films of the opening procedures of the Republican Convention on the air ten to twelve hours before the delegates were called to order. Telecasting continued daily throughout both conventions.\textsuperscript{6}

Because of a limited space problem, only 120 seats were assigned to the radio news gallery at the conventions. But radio personnel not assigned to seats were given credentials entitling them to news privileges and practically a free range of the Chicago Stadium, scene of the conventions. Four radio news services were accredited to the radio gallery—Ask Washington Press Association (AP) radio wire, Transradio-Press, Washington News Bureau, and the Yankee News Bureau.\textsuperscript{7}

All the major networks top commentators and analysts were assigned to the conventions. For added color, Representative Joseph Martin did a five-minute summary of highlights after each session of the Republican Convention for NBC. Ben Gross, radio editor of the New York Daily News, commented for NBC also, limiting his reports strictly to non-political and color comments. CBS, not to be outdone, presented Dr. Wallace Sterling, CBS West Coast news analyst in a daily five-minute commentary.\textsuperscript{8}

\textsuperscript{5} Broadcasting 26:11, June 26, 1944.


\textsuperscript{7} Loc. cit.

\textsuperscript{8} Broadcasting, op. cit., June 19, 1944, p. 64.
Four years before, free radio planks were adopted by the major parties for the first time in political convention history. In 1944 radio planks became an important issue again, and it was said that "in the dual role of campaigning medium as well as an issue in the campaign, radio will figure as never before in the Presidential elections of this year (1944)."\(^9\)

Through the unanimous adoption by the Republican Party of a "free radio" plank in its platform, radio found itself catapulted into the national political scene. The Republican candidates pledged themselves to the "free radio" plank which put radio on a parity with the press. The Free Press and Radio plank adopted by the Convention came out flatly against censorship, and more significantly called for a "new radio law which (would) define in clear and unmistakable language the role of the Federal Communications Commission. The plank is as follows:

> In times like these, when whole peoples have found themselves shackled by governments which denied the truth, or worse, dealt in half-truths or withheld the facts from the public, it is imperative to the maintenance of a free America that the press and radio be free and that full and complete information be available to Americans. There must be no censorship except to the extent required by war necessity.

> We insistently condemn any tending to regard the press or radio as instruments of the Administration and the use of Government publicity agencies for partisan ends. We need a new radio law which will define in clear and unmistakable language, the role of the Federal Communications Commission.

> All channels of news must be kept open with equality of access to information at the source. If

agreement can be achieved with foreign nations to
establish the same principles, it will be a valuable
contribution to future peace.10

The Democrats avoided a "free radio" plank in their platform. Efforts
of the National Association of Broadcasters and a number of broad-
casters to have radio included in the Democratic platform was to no
avail. This was attributed to the view that a "free radio" plank
endorsing legislation would seem a repudiation of the Federal Com-
munication's Democratic majority to spell out the Commissions powers.
Such a repudiation might have been embarassing to President Franklin
D. Roosevelt's fourth term candidacy.11

There was no "radio" plank in the Democratic platform, but in
two instances the Democrats approached the issue in a round about
fashion. The Democratic "communications" plank read:

We believe in the world right of all men to
write, send and publish news at uniform communica-
tions rates and without interference by governmental
or private monopoly and that right should be pro-
tected by treaty.12

Mention in the platform that "mankind believes in the four
freedoms" was said to be recognition of a "free radio" by the Demo-
cratic leaders.13

In a war-time situation with transportation being to some extent
restricted, the importance of radio political coverage loomed more

10. Loc. cit.
12. Ibid., p. 67.
important than ever. By 1944, President Roosevelt had spoken on the air nearly 250 times, and was conceded a strong edge over his opponent, Thomas E. Dewey, as a "radical candidate." Articles appearing in periodicals in 1944 bore out the ever-increasing sentiment that radio was an unexpendable part of political campaigning. One article in particular stated:

The best radio candidate will win the election simply because he will persuade more voters more emotionally and more convincingly.

The farsighted men in both parties know that the radio will play a decisive part in the election, depending upon the basic common sense and sincerity of the candidate's offer to the voter; and the manner of presentment.14

On August 12, 1944, President Roosevelt upon his return from a tour of the Pacific spoke to service men from a Navy destroyer in Bremerton, Washington. The Republican and Socialist parties agreed that the speech was political in nature—and that under the Soldiers Vote Law they were entitled to equal amounts of radio time for their candidates.

The Socialists applied to the War Department for permission to short-wave a program to the servicement overseas, while the Republicans sought domestic time from the major networks. The Republicans were immediately turned down, but the Socialists were given indication that their request would be granted. Shortly afterward, Acting Secretary of War, John J. McCloy issued a statement saying that the War Department had reconsidered and were determined that President Roosevelt's speech had been non-political in content, and

therefore no time would be granted to the Socialist party on such a basis.

The original indication of approval of time for the Socialists was signed by Major General F. H. Osborn of the Army Services Forces, so even though McCloy vetoed the directive the controversy continued. The Republicans joined in on the issue, and through National Chairman, Herbert Brownell, Jr., renewed their requests for overseas time to the networks.

Finally the War Department reversed themselves again and granted equal overseas "soldier" broadcasts to political addresses by Republican, Democratic, Socialists, Socialist-Labor, and Prohibition parties.15.

Toward the end of the campaign the Democrats bought five-minute spots between big shows—one a night from October to the week before election when they doubled the time. Prominent speakers were used to fill these spots, with Harry S. Truman, the Vice Presidential candidate and the former Vice President Henry A. Wallace carrying most of the load. The Democrats also hired professional script writer, Norman Corwin to write an hour long program which they presented on election eve.16

The Republicans hired Ford Bond (soap opera, Manhattan Merry-Go-Round, Cities Service announcer) to serve as "Republican Reporter." Working from New York City, Bond cued in Thomas E. Dewey's broadcasts with thirty to thirty-five second descriptions of the speech setting,

and filled in any unused time with "news items" of Republican color.  

An audience estimated to have been the greatest ever reached by
the voice of radio over a sustained period of programming, listened
through the night of November 7, 1944 as American broadcasting sta-
tions covered the election. Networks and independent stations can-
celled commercial programs so as to be first with the reports of the
ballot counts.

C. E. Hooper Inc. placed the sets-in-use percentage at 50.3
for three and a half hours (seven to ten thirty p.m.), an average
figure computed from reports made by the survey's reporters over the
nation. This sets-in-use index compares with previous Hooper highs
of 37.5 per-cent on D-Day, June 6, 1944, and 46.9 per-cent on Pearl
Harbor Day, December 7, 1941.  

Hooper's surveys on comparative
listening audiences shows The National Broadcasting Company with the
highest number of listeners, Columbia Broadcasting Company second,
the Blue Network third, and Mutual fourth.

Networks devoted thirty-two hours to election coverage between
7:30 p.m. Tuesday (November 7) and four a.m. Wednesday (November 8).
It was estimated that networks lost nearly a half million dollars in
cancelled commercial program time. From early evening of election
day, until Governor Dewey's broadcast conceding the election to Pres-
ident Roosevelt, networks disregarded their regular Tuesday evening


17. Loc. cit.

18. "Highest rating ever earned by a program on American radio
was 79.0% of sets-in-use for the four-network broadcast of President
Roosevelt's War Message to Congress on December 8, 1940." Harrison
Boyd Summers, (Unpublished syllabus for Speech Course 552, Ohio
State University, 1952, R-22-b.)

schedules, retaining only their regularly sponsored newscasts.20

Columbia Broadcasting Company and the Mutual network did outstanding reporting jobs on election night. CBS did a human interest interview with the country's youngest voter," a girl from Georgia who was 18 years old on election day, and the "country's oldest voter," a gentleman 108 years of age. Edward R. Murrow also did an outstanding reporting job for CBS with his broadcast from London, reflecting British reception of the election results. Outstanding among the Mutual reports were a trio of overseas pickups, with Milton Bracker, New York Times correspondent in Rome; Arthur Mann, NBS representative in Paris, and Owen Cunningham, Mutual reporter at Pearl Harbor, reporting on G.I. reaction to the elections.21

The over-all campaign on radio was less in 1948 than it was in 1944—the big reason being money. The Democratic National Committee, a heavy spender in 1944, simply could not get the "money men" of the party to back Truman and Barkley. The Democratic radio budget for 1948 was nearly the same as it was in 1944—between 600 and 700 thousand dollars, but it bought fewer hours in 1948 due to an increase in radio time costs.

The Republicans however, thought that they were assured of a presidential victory in 1948, so they cut their radio budget from 700 thousand in 1944, to 500 thousand in 1948.22

20. Loc. cit.


22. Newsweek, 32:52, November 1, 1948.
The Progressive party entered into radio campaigning in 1948 on a high scale for a minor party, spending two hundred thousand dollars in support of Henry Wallace, their presidential candidate.23

Television, which had been touted as the perfect campaign medium was not used to a very large extent by the parties in campaigning; however television was employed extensively for coverage of the political conventions. The politicians considered television too expensive, too limited in audience and too unpredictable as to results as a campaign device and relied mostly on radio as in the past.24

For all practical purposes the television coverage of the 1948 political conventions was a first. A wartime situation in 1944 had held television to a limited operation, little improved over the 1940 coverage. Both parties made the most of television coverage during their conventions by scheduling "dull" committee reports and monotonous procedure for the daytime sessions--leaving the evening sessions for the "meat" and the maximum television audience.25

The television audience was estimated at 10 millions as compared with 50 thousand in 1944. Coverage of the conventions was pooled at a cost of 90 thousand dollars--the sum divided among 18 East Coast television broadcasters. The pooled broadcasts were relayed over American Telephone and Telegraph coaxial cable circuits serving Philadelphia at the time of the conventions. The cable

23. Loc. cit.


charges for both conventions cost 25 thousand dollars, alone.26

The pooled telecasts originated from Convention Hall in Philadelphi and were shared among the four television networks--DuMont, National Broadcasting Company, American Broadcasting Company, and Columbia Broadcasting Company. The pooling was shared on a rotating basis--each providing a crew to handle five television cameras and to man the production booth--a job, all told, which called for twenty-four men a day.27

The American Broadcasting Company gave full television coverage to both conventions, including remote, special events hook-ups. All of the ABC network commentators were available for both radio and television duty. The Columbia Broadcasting Company sent two full television crews to the conventions. One crew was used for the pooled coverage of on the floor activities, and the other crew was used for the networks exclusive pick ups. For all the events possible, CBS used dual coverage of radio and television.28

The National Broadcasting Company's pooled coverage of the conventions was similar to the other networks, and they also followed the policy of having their commentators and reporters available for both television and radio. NBC's exclusive television coverage (everything outside of the pooled coverage) was done in co-operation with Life magazine who sponsored these programs at a cost of one one hundred thousand dollars. Time-Life correspondents were used at


27. Loc. cit.

the conventions as television reporters in addition to maintaining their magazine duties. Prior to the conventions, NBC produced television films to preview the conventions and arouse interest. Richard Harkness did the "Story of The Week" broadcast from Philadelphia, also in an effort to arouse interest.

Station WPIX, New York City, was the only independent television station to handle coverage. A crew of twenty-five handled remotes and WPIX's own shows, while also participating in the posed coverage.

Television covered the conventions from the beginning to the end, but its job was not finished with the transmission of live broadcasts. Placed as strategically as the live cameras were news-reel cameras, and what they recorded was sent to television stations outside the range of the coaxial cables that connected Philadelphia with Boston and Richmond, Virginia. Therefore, within a day or two television audiences as far west as Los Angeles were able to see the convention proceedings.

Effecting this setup was a great engineering feat, accomplished at a considerable expense and an untold amount of time. To some observers the convention coverages were hailed as a "virtual revolution in electronics reporting," while others were more critical.

29. Loc. cit.
30. Ibid., p. 71.
picking out the mismatched pictures, and the too often lack of sound to dampen their enthusiasm. But, there was a general agreement that television had passed the test and was here to stay.

One astute and prophetic observer summed up television's role in the 1948 campaign thusly:

—To the right candidate, television can mean many votes that newspaper write-ups and even radio speeches would not win him. But to another man it might be dangerous. For the medium is not always kind to its subjects. Television catches false emotions and enlarges them. It overplays small gestures into annoying habits. Suddenly a candidate's smooth-shaven face, the hair on his head, and a broad grin have become as important as well written speech. Though this year's televiwers are not numerous enough to elect a President, the 1952 campaign may tell a different story.33

Television encroached into the field of another communications medium in the 1948 campaign in an experimental fashion. The New York Star published three pictures of the Democratic Convention, photographed in Manhattan from a television screen by a camera using no flash attachment. Life, Acme, the New York Post, and the New York Daily News also experimented with pictures taken from television sets, but the results all were too distorted and unclear to be used as news pictures in periodicals or newspapers. Looking ahead to improvements in television, there was some speculation in 1948 that television might eventually be a threat to the news services.34

By and large, radio reported the 1948 political campaign better than television. Radio had the pacing, the organization and the

34. Time, 52:52, July 26, 1948.
assurance that television in its first big test lacked. Nearly 15 hundred radio stations carried the conventions, as radio turned in its biggest, fanciest and most expensive convention coverage up to that point. Practically the entire news staffs of the four big networks (NBC, CBS, ABC, and Mutual) were present, plus the correspondents of 35 independent stations. All the main events were thoroughly covered as in the past by radio, but much emphasis was placed on feature material and color in an attempt to give word pictures to compete with the actual scenes produced by television.35

To assure complete coverage radio strategically placed 250 microphones about Convention Hall, and had microphones and remote units in the "smoke-filled rooms" and the headquarters of the parties. The radio audiences for the first day of the two conventions was estimated at 62 millions. This audience was increased considerably by shortwave relays of the coverage that were sent all over the world. There was no way of measuring this overseas audience, however. The total expenses of the radio coverage of the conventions was set at two million dollars, which included cancellations, talent fees and losses, line charges, salaries, housing and meals.36

These figures alone do not show the revolutionary character of the reporting. For not only did the public follow the proceedings via the air waves, but so did the candidates and the other media

36. Loc. cit.
covering the conventions. General agreement was found among editors to the effect that television receivers were valuable adjuncts to newsroom equipment—giving important checks against reportorial accuracy.

Radio also made it possible for Western Union to handle one of the largest volumes of press rate messages in its history. Radio beams carried the brunt of the 300 thousand-an-hour word rate from Convention Hall. 37

The Republicans completely reversed their plank tactics concerning radio in the 1948 campaign. In 1944, they had firmly endorsed a "free radio" plank, while the Democrats ignored such a plank. But in 1948, the shoe was on the other foot, and the Republicans ignored a "free radio" plank, while the Democrats strongly endorsed a "freedom of information" plank.

The fact that the Republicans made no radio and television provision in their platform, plus a recognition of the impact that radio and television were making "in the life and politics of the country," prompted the Democrats to adopt the following "freedom of information" plank:

We urge the vigorous promotion of world-wide freedom in the gathering and dissemination of news by press, radio, television and newsreel with complete confidence that an informed people will determine wisely the cause of domestic and foreign policy.

We believe the primary step toward the achievement of world-wide freedom is access by all people to the facts and the truth. To that end, we will encourage the greatest possible vigor on the part

37. Loc. cit.
of the United Nations Commission on Human Rights and
the United Nations Economic and Social Council to
establish the foundation on which freedom can exist. 38

In summing up the convention coverages in 1948, there is little
distinction to be drawn between the two conventions except in the
degree of technical perfection. Both the Republican and Democratic
conventions had virtually the same facilities and the same amount
of coverage, but the technical end of the Democratic Convention was
superior due to the knowledge gained at the Republican Convention.
This applies almost exclusively to television. There was consider-
able conjecture that as future radio and television coverage devel-
oped, provisions would have to be made in the designs of convention
halls to make hidden facilities possible. This, in an effort to re-
tain the character of the conventions without the obvious radio and
television equipment—yet still making it possible to give full
coverage for the media. 39

The job radio and television did has left such
an impact on political leaders that there cannot fail
to be much consideration given to what adjustments
political conventions must further make in light of
the fact they now are gigantic stages for radio and
television (broadcasts).—Talk that the media may
have great influence in the future planning, pro-
gramming and conduct of conventions was everywhere
in Philadelphia—and the talk was not accompanied
by criticism of radio or television. They had done
a good job, but they had changed the face of an old
institution considerably. Undoubtedly it would be a
matter given considerable thought by both parties,
each anxious to make the convention not only a ve-
hicle for choosing nominees, but also initial steps
in putting those nominees into office. 40

At unprecedented expense and effort, the major radio and television networks and independent stations carried a nation-wide coverage of the great political upset of 1948. A special C. E. Hooper audience survey of the four major networks in thirty-six cities showed that between eight and eleven p.m. (election night) the set-in-use percentage was 54.7. A special television survey by Hooper showed that 74 per cent of the television sets in the New York City area were in use between nine and eleven p.m. of election night.41

The National Broadcasting Company's radio and television networks were the only networks to give uninterrupted coverage of the election. From eight p.m. Tuesday, November 2, until noon the following Wednesday, NBC carried full coverage. Operating in conjunction with Life magazine, NBC operated eleven television cameras in New York City, and relayed their coverage to a seven station network on the East coast. For its uninterrupted telecast, NBC erected a giant RCA-Victor 15 by 20 foot television screen in New York's Rockefeller Plaza which brought the proceedings to some five thousand people gathered around it. More than 150 television personnel were used in NBC's New York operation alone. Cameras operated from the studio, at the Republican and Democratic headquarters, and pickups were sent to the network from Washington where headquarters and studio coverage was maintained also. NBC's Midwest television network covered the election night proceedings, and was sponsored by the Radio Corporation of America at a reported price of 50 thousand

dollars.\textsuperscript{42}

Due to the length of the coverage, all networks were forced to cancel time. Chevrolet purchased NBC's radio coverage time for 100 thousand dollars, while the cost of cancellations ran to approximately 85 thousand dollars. Television time cancelled by NBC amounted to five thousand dollars.\textsuperscript{43}

The American Broadcasting Company gave coast-to-coast coverage from seven p.m. election night until nine p.m. Wednesday. ABC used a staff of 500 across the country—300 of these in New York City. Twelve television cameras were used in the New York operation. The Kaiser-Frazer Corporation sponsored both ABC radio and television at a cost of 125 thousand dollars. Time cancelled by ABC amounted to 30 thousand dollars.\textsuperscript{44}

Nash Motors sponsored another radio and television package coverage over the Columbia Broadcasting Company. No report of the cost of the coverage was given. CBS presented eleven and a half hours of continuous coverage—from six p.m. election night until 5:30 a.m. the following morning. Columbia's network coverage was also carried by the State Department's "Voice of America" and by the Armed Forces Radio Service—carrying the election news to countries the world over.\textsuperscript{45}

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{42} \textit{Ibid.}, p. 61.
\item \textsuperscript{43} \textit{Loc. cit.}
\item \textsuperscript{44} \textit{Loc. cit.}
\item \textsuperscript{45} \textit{Broadcasting, op. cit.}, November 8, 1948, p. 63.
\end{itemize}
For its largest audience (an estimated eleven millions) television tried to make up for a lack of action by presenting simple gimmicks like graphs and score boards, but the election night just didn't have much to offer for people to look at. As with the convention coverages, radio's experience and organization paid off to produce the better job.  

All in all, it (was) a good dress rehearsal for 1952's election night—when, if everything goes according to plan, television should be a coast-to-coast affair.


PRE-CONVENTION COVERAGE -- 1952

National radio and television coverage and sponsorship of both the 1952 political conventions was negotiated under an arrangement which called for the networks to sell sponsorship on the condition that advertisers be acceptable to both the Democratic and Republican National Committees. Regional and local stations also were asked to submit their sponsor lists to the committees, which prescribed general requirements on advertising messages.

A code was worked out by representatives of both national committees and the national radio and television networks. The agreement was approved for the Republican Committee by Chairman Guy Gabrielson, Representative Clarence Brown, chairman of the Republican Radio-Press subcommittee, and McIntyre Faries, chairman of the Television-Motion Picture subcommittee. Approval for the Democratic Committee was given by Chairman Frank McKinney, on the basis of arrangements worked out by Charles Van Devander, publicity head, and Kenneth Fry, Democratic radio and television director.¹

Text of the code:

The two major political parties have no objections to sponsorship of the networks' television and radio coverage of the 1952 political conventions, under the following conditions:

A. The type of sponsor shall be approved by the political parties.

¹ Broadcasting-Telecasting, 42:31, March 10, 1952.
B. Commercial messages may be made only during recesses or during periods of long pauses during the actual convention proceedings.
C. Commercial messages must meet the highest standards of dignity, good taste and length.
D. No commercial announcements may be made from the floor of the convention.
E. There shall be a disclaimer made at the beginning and end of each broadcast period. This disclaimer shall make perfectly clear two points: (1) that the client is sponsoring the network's coverage of the event; (2) that sponsorship is by ______ company of the ______ network's does not imply in any manner an endorsement of the product by the political party. All commercial announcements shall be written, programmed and delivered in such a way as to be clearly and completely separated from convention proceedings, political parties, issues and personalities.2

The announcement that radio and television coverage of the 1952 political campaign would be sponsored—for the first time in history—was the beginning of the industry's most significant contribution to the field of political campaign coverage. Each national Presidential campaign since 1924, had seen radio, and then radio and television, increasing the voter's scope of the political issues involved. This progress by the radio and television industry culminated in the 1952 campaign, with its extensive, thorough reporting job. Often the listening, and especially the viewing audience was better informed than the politicians.

Sponsorship of the national nominating conventions was criticized loud and often. This sponsorship was labeled as "a violation of the principle of open discussion," and "a brutal declaration that the man with the most money behind him can have most frequent access

2. Loc. cit.
to the public.\(^3\)

Most of this criticism was, I believe, sincerely put forth, but it is also significant that the majority of the critics represented the press, which brings into focus the element of competition between the two media. These critics were taken to task in an editorial appearing in Broadcasting-Telecasting:

It is not difficult to understand why some newspapers have already begun to object, on a high ethical and intellectual plane—to the networks' sale of political convention coverage to sponsors.

In a way we don't blame the press for being worried about these financial arrangements which will provide rather large funds to pay for elaborate coverage. If we were competing with radio and television in covering the forthcoming political events, we'd be awfully worried too.

They (the press) are objecting because they say that commercial radio and television broadcasts will somehow degrade the serious business of selecting Presidential candidates and lead to biased reporting.

We fail to see how these objections can be entertained seriously. To begin with, the networks are veterans at handling political coverage, and the record will show that over many years they have carried it off with as much impartiality as was humanly possible.

As to the chance of bias in selecting candidates for appearance on the air, there isn't any, or at least so little that it is not worth considering. Federal law compels broadcasters to give equal treatment to all.\(^4\)

An editorial appearing in the *New York Times*, entitles, "Television As A Political Force" defended the extensive radio and television coverage proposed by the industry, and felt that sponsorship would prove no hinderance. The article said in part:

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It is one thing for a candidate to mount the platform and read a speech, which he himself may or may not have written. It is another thing for him to face a roomful of newspaper men and submit to informed critical questioning. In no respect has television made a greater contribution of public service, perhaps, than in putting a press conference on the air. The public is able at first hand to measure the fortrightness, the courage, or the evasiveness of a candidate. It watches while the subject speaks on topics he might prefer to avoid. It catches all the hesitations and nuances.5

Looking ahead to the conventions the networks estimated a radio and television audience of some 60 million persons. Anticipating such an audience and industry did everything humanly possible to assure the most complete coverage—with cost being no factor. The American Telephone and Telegraph Company laid over five thousand miles of radio-relay and television coaxial cable to accommodate ten new cities and ninety-nine per-cent of the nation's seventeen and a half million television receivers. Several cities not equipped with television stations were set up to receive coverage by means of closed circuit hookups. Every television station in the United States with the exception of KOB-TV Albuquerque, New Mexico, were connected with A.T.& T's live television network—making live network coverage available to 107 stations in 65 cities.6

Circuits also were set up to assure interconnection by long lines of more than 12 hundred radio stations. Many independent outlets were accredited for direct pickups on a pro-rated fee, which

was a new, more economical plan benefiting the smaller independents. 7

The new cities joining the A.T. & T.-Bell television relay network, were Miami, Florida; Oklahoma City and Tulsa, Oklahoma; Dallas, Ft. Worth, San Antonio and Huston, Texas; New Orleans, Louisiana; Phoenix, Arizona; and Seattle Washington. Residents in Portland, Oregon; Denver, Colorado; and Fresno, California were able to watch the television proceedings by special closed hookups in theaters and hotels at no expense. 6

To assure more complete and equitable coverage, the four television networks—The National Broadcasting Company, Columbia Broadcasting Company, American Broadcasting Company, and the Du Mont Network set up a pooled coverage system to cover convention floor activities. Sig Mickelson of the CBS television network served as chairman of the pool committee. The cost of the pool was approximated at 150 thousand dollars, which was shared proportionately by the pool participants, or roughly 35 thousand dollars per network. Seven independent television stations who cut in on the pool paid proportionately, plus the charge of A.T. & T. to feed their station from Chicago. Participating television stations paid 250 dollars for their share of the audio costs. 9

William McAndrew, NBC, was named chairman of the radio network pool. The pool installed and operated the central audio system of


the convention, providing microphones to serve the platform and each of the individual delegations. Television used the same audio. McAndrew estimated that the conventions would be heard in 27 million radio homes.\footnote{10}{\textit{loc. cit.}}

Radio and television networks agreed to pay their own convention installation costs for the first time. The agreement was the result of the political parties' argument that, since the networks were permitted to seek sponsorship for their broadcast coverage—then the cost of installing booths and equipment could be deducted from charges of their advertisers. The networks were in no position to argue the point since they had used the plan of deducting installation costs from sponsors in their original argument for sponsored coverage.\footnote{11}{\textit{Broadcasting-Telecasting}, 42:97, March 3, 1952.}

Pre-convention estimates placed the number of radio and television representatives at two thousand, which was nearly a 15 percent increase over the 1948 conventions. According to statistics released by the Executive Committee of the Radio and Television Galleries, these two thousand representatives covered more than three hundred network and individual outlets at the conventions.\footnote{12}{\textit{Broadcasting-Telecasting}, \textit{op. cit.}, June 30, 1952.}

The executive Committee of the Radio and Television Galleries was designated to supervise radio and television news galleries at the national conventions. D. Harold McGrath and Robert Menough,
superintendents of the Senate and House of Representative galleries, respectively, were in charge of the two facilities. Working space requirements for physical coverage of the conventions were blue-printed by industry representatives on behalf of the radio and television networks and independent stations.13

The planning of radio space allocations was under the direction of Thomas Velotta, vice president of ABC, and the television space allocations were directed by Sig Mikelson. These two worked in close conjunction with the Democratic and Republican National Committees, and set aside the second floor north wing of the Chicago International Amphitheatre for radio and television occupancy. The apportionment of the space—some 50 thousand square feet—among the individual stations and networks was an industry matter, with the national committees taking no part. Radio and television space was also set aside in an adjoining exhibition hall.14

Other working space was provided for the newspapers and press associations, theater newsreels, members of the Senate and House radio and television correspondents, and press and periodical galleries. William McAndrew also directed plans for television newsreels.

The Philco Corporation sponsored NBC radio and television coverage of both nominating conventions, certain pre-convention activities and results of the November election at an estimated cost of three

15. Loc. cit.
million eight hundred thousand dollars. Two special NBC television studios and one radio studio were constructed in the International Amphitheatre, and one booth each for radio and television was set up in the Conrad Hilton Hotel—headquarters for both the Republican and Democratic parties. NBC was also given the task of handling all of the audio transmission for the television networks' pool.16

Overall convention supervision for NBC was under the direction of William F. Brooks, vice president in charge of public relations for the network; Davidson Taylor, general production executive for NBC television; and A. (Abe) Schecter, pioneer radio journalist. Henry C. Cassidy, NBC's director of news and special events, was named to direct the network's radio coverage. William McAndrew, supervisor of the networks' pool, doubled as NBC's television director.17

The complete staff of NBC news reporters and commentators were assembled to provide coverage for the network.18

NBC provided thirty-six hours of special pre-convention programming as a public service. The programs were intended as a climax to the network's reports on primary elections and as a prelude to the conventions. The programs included profile reports of leading candidates, explanations of convention mechanics and reviews of the conventions held in Philadelphia in 1948. Convention programming by NBC


17. Loc. cit.

18. Ibid., p. 36.
also included the origination of the network news program, "Today" in Chicago all through July, and also "Republican Review" with George Hicks. "We The People" presented a 13-weeks series devoted to the nomination race for the Presidency. NBC television carried this series which was a mixture of live interviews, films, animated cartoons and commentary.

Previous scheduling prevented a conflict for NBC on the second day of the Republican convention, July 8. The Gillette Company had signed with NBC for baseball coverage of the annual All Star game, as a part of a sports package, before Philco negotiated political commitments. NBC could only hope that the Republicans would schedule routine business for that afternoon, and carry out their previous commitment with the Gillette Company.

The Westinghouse Electric Corporation signed to sponsor convention and election coverage, plus a special 13-weeks "get-out-the-vote" campaign on CBS radio and television. This coverage was carried on a more restrictive basis than the NBC-Philco affiliation. One hundred major markets were given access to the coverage, with the radio station selections representing the network's first instance of their "Selective Facilities Plan." Under this plan, CBS radio allows advertisers to use any reasonable minimum number of affiliates they wish, provided the programs also are made available in all


other markets and subject to sale there to non-competitive advertisers through CBS radio.\textsuperscript{22} This required Westinghouse to make the broadcasts available to all other CBS affiliates, for sale through CBS radio to non-competing advertisers. Cost of the Westinghouse sponsorship was set at nearly three million dollars.\textsuperscript{23}

Special CBS studios were erected for both radio and television in the International Amphitheatre and at the Conrad Hilton Hotel. A staff of more than 100 were assigned by CBS television for its convention coverage, including its complete staff of newscasters—many of whom doubled on radio.\textsuperscript{24} The entire CBS radio network staff of editors and writers were assigned to convention duties, as was David Schoenbrun who had covered Eisenhower's Paris headquarters.\textsuperscript{25}

Executive producer of CBS television for the political conventions was Sig Mickelson, assisted by Fritz Littlejohn, director of news, and Betty Koenig, television program assistant. CBS radio coverage was headed by Wells Church, editor-in-chief of CBS news, assisted by Theodore F. Koop, Washington editor, Henry Wefing, New York editor; Dallas Townsend, special events director; and Lew Shollenberger, Washington special events director.\textsuperscript{26}

\textsuperscript{22} Broadcasting-Telecasting, 41:24, December 10, 1951.


\textsuperscript{24} Ibid., p. 52.

\textsuperscript{25} Broadcasting-Telecasting, 42:40, April 21, 1952.

\textsuperscript{26} Broadcasting-Telecasting, op. cit., June 30, 1952.
Outlining its technical plans CBS television reported the utilization of more than four tons of equipment valued at an excess of 300 thousand dollars. Instead of the usual four or five cameras assigned to a major television program, CBS television used 17, often operating simultaneously. Five directors were assigned to supervise this coverage. Four of these five directors supervised groups of cameras selecting the best scene to be transmitted to the master control room where final selection of the one scene to be transmitted to the audience was made by Don Hewitt, veteran CBS television newsman. Franklin Schaffner was assigned to cover the eight cameras used in the network pool, and news directors Ted Marvel and Vince Walters covered six other cameras located in special studios in the Amphitheatre and the Conrad Hilton Hotel. Byron Paul directed the remaining three cameras in spot and emergency situations, while the entire CBS television technical operations were headed by R. K. Thompson.27

CBS radio scheduled a series of 230 broadcasts for both conventions, with 66 special programs. Many of the network's regularly scheduled weekly programs were originated from Chicago--two notables being "Capitol Cloakroom," and "Peoples Platform." The CBS television network presented previews of convention preparations and coverage from July 6 to July 21 with six CBS television shows moving from New York to Chicago. Additionally the network presented a new program, "Candidate Closeups," as part of its election year coverage.28

CBS radio and television networks collaborated with *Time* magazine to produce a special guide to the 1952 political conventions. The 24-page booklet was written and published by the editorial staff of *Time*, and was offered to the public free of charge by CBS as a public service. The booklet was written to be non-partisan in content and contained history and highlights of previous conventions, plus procedures and regulations for the 1952 conventions. 29

As another public service the CBS television network offered instruction in fundamental television "stage" procedure to all Presidential and Senatorial candidates. The "school" was conducted at WTOP-TV Washington, D.C., by William Wood, CBS television Washington reporter, and Producers Charles von Fremd, and Alma Walker. 30

The television and radio executive roster for ABC coverage of the 1952 political conventions was headed by Thomas Vellotta who served as overall supervisor and vice president in charge of special events and news for CBS radio. Paul White directed ABC television coverage. 31

Sponsorship for ABC radio and television coverage was provided by the Admiral Corporation at an estimated cost of two million dollars. ABC also contracted with *Newsweek* magazine for exclusive services of *Newsweek* editorial and news personnel for convention coverage.


Newsweek editors presented their own reports, making individual as well as panel appearances on both ABC radio and television during both conventions. Ernest K. Lindley, chief of Newsweek's Washington Bureau; Kenneth Crawford, editor of national affairs; Chet Shaw, executive editor; and Vera Clay and Sam Staffer of the Washington Bureau represented the periodical.32

To meet the needs of convention coverage ABC transported over one million dollars worth of equipment to Chicago, and called in a force of 55 radio and television engineers from their affiliates in New York, Los Angeles, San Francisco and Detroit to operate it. The complete ABC news staff drew assignment to the national conventions under the direction of John Daly.33 ABC radio aired twelve special events broadcasts prior to the Republican Convention, and ABC television broadcast nine special events between July 4th and 6th, previewing the opening of the Republican Convention on July 7. For both conventions, ABC scheduled 430 radio broadcasts and 304 television broadcasts.34

The Mutual Broadcasting Company financed their political campaign and convention coverage by co-op sponsorship throughout their affiliates. MBS convention coverage was under the supervision of Arthur Feldman, director of special events, and Milton Burgh, director of news. MBS carried coverage only on radio, with emphasis upon

special programming emanating from the convention floor. Executive Director for the conventions was William H. Fine, and as in the case of the other networks the complete MBS news staff was assigned to coverage.  

Five MBS newsmen (Cecil Brown, H. R. Baukhage, Frank Singiser, Holland Engle and Francis Coughlan) led special coverage during the convention, on a 15 minute broadcast under the sponsorship of S. C. Johnson & Sons, Inc. This broadcast was heard each evening just prior to the evening sessions of the conventions. The network also scheduled four successive Sunday broadcasts preview and review convention activities throughout the month of July. MBS used a staff of 150, with practically all of the network's news programs originating from Chicago.  

Mutual also was faced with the All Star Baseball conflict along with NBC. Being under contract with the Gillette Company, MBS broadcast the baseball game, interrupting at inning intervals to give summary convention coverage and important bulletins.  

Westinghouse Electric Corporation added a four station DuMont television network hookup to its previously arranged CBS television network facilities. The DuMont network scheduled coverage of both national conventions and election night coverage on November 4.

37. Loc. cit.
DuMont also joined CBS in broadcasting the Westinghouse "get out the vote" series which started August II. Announcements made jointly by DuMont and Westinghouse said that the arrangement "was made in an effort to secure maximum impact for Westinghouse coverage of all major political events up to and including the election." The four station network was made up of stations WABD-TV New York, WTTG-TV Washington, WGN-TV Chicago, and WDTV-TV Pittsburgh. DuMont convention coverage was under the supervision of Les Arries, Jr.\footnote{38}

DuMont presented several special events programs prior to, and during the conventions—most notable of these was "Author Meets The Critic," which presented Presidential candidates Harold E. Stassen, Senator Estes Kefauver, and Senator Robert A. Taft, on successive weeks in February.

Originally, DuMont and Life magazine had planned to collaborate on convention coverage, and provide it for local sale by stations. But, prior commitments to other networks were found to have been made in many one-station markets, and a number of stations objected to Life's participation because the magazine had openly endorsed Dwight D. Eisenhower for President. Life's support of Eisenhower also delayed the approval of the two national committees for the dual supported coverage. Life participated in the convention coverage only in a reportorial capacity.\footnote{39}

\footnote{38. \textit{Broadcasting-Telecasting}, 42:64, February 18, 1952.}

\footnote{39. \textit{Broadcasting-Telecasting}, 42:64, February 11, 1952.}
Individual radio stations using direct lines joined a pool system at a cost of 250 dollars each, with an additional cost of 200 dollars for installation of lines. William McAndrew and George McElrath of NBC New York, coordinated details for radio pool. Stations using the pooled pickups channeled the broadcasts straight to their stations.

Small stations benefited from an arrangement made by the National Association of Radio News Directors (now the Radio and Television News Directors Association) with trade groups and the Chicago Broadcasters Association. Through the cooperation of these forces a headquarters newsroom at the convention hall was made available to accredited radio and television newsmen. Television receivers, telephones and tape recorders were at the disposal of these newsmen. At previous conventions, only the largest stations and networks could afford direct coverage because of excessive costs. At the 1952 conventions the cost of procuring a single radio booth was originally set at 700 dollars, and even when the cost was reduced due to vigorous complaints, the cost was still beyond the limits of most news budgets. The arrangement committee for these facilities for smaller independent stations was headed by Spencer Allen, president of the Chicago News Broadcasters Association.40

At the Republican National Convention 311 radio and television organizations were accredited, using 724 radio and television newsmen,

466 technicians, and 681 producers and directors to handle pickups. The Democratic National Convention had 305 accredited organizations, 721 newscasters, 468 technicians, and 603 producers and directors. The networks used more than 900 accredited newscasters, technicians and staff personnel for both conventions. A breakdown shows ABC radio using 141, CBS radio 105, NBC radio 201 and MBS 138. ABC television used 100, CBS television 149, NBC television 57, and NBC-Newsreel 26. 41

Overlooking the convention floor from the rear of the International Amphitheatre were six booths—one each assigned to ABC, CBS, NBC, MBS, and the television pool. High power stations received special service during the conventions through the Clear Channel Broadcasting Service, which maintained four large studios in the Amphitheatre. Accommodations were also accredited the British Broadcasting Company and the Canadian Broadcasting Company. 42

The 1952 political campaign brought forth legal problems concerning radio and television coverage of political issues as no previous campaign had done. It seemed as if 1952 was the year of tests for radio and television as a reporting media.

One of these issues—the issue of radio and television's right to editorialize and take definite stands on political issues and candidates—was vigorously defended by Judge Justin Miller, chairman of the National Association of Radio and Television Broadcasters. In

41. Loc. cit.

42. Loc. cit.
response to a query from Arthur L. Greene, manager of KLTI, Longview Texas, Judge Miller said:

I hope you will go ahead and editorialize your own position frankly and forcibly, letting your audience know that it is your right and privilege to do so, under the constitution of the land. Then I hope you will invite as many responsible citizens—as you can conveniently program—to speak on all phases of the problem, for, against, or in-between; telling your in so doing, that you are inviting those people to speak—not in derogation of your own right to editorialize—but in order that the people may hear all sides of the question and decide intelligently how to vote; being fully confident that truth will prevail if all sides are presented.

This in my opinion, is the true editorial tradition, and the one best calculated to maintain the respect and confidence of your community, as well as to establish the prestige of broadcasting.43

Another issue which came under much criticism and testing was the 315 section of the Federal Communications Act. Senators Robert A. Taft and Estes Kefauver protested to the Federal Communications Commission that the radio and television networks refused to grant them time equivalent to that given Dwight D. Eisenhower for his "homecoming" speech at Abilene, Kansas. Both Taft and Kefauver claimed that radio and television coverage of Eisenhower's Abilene speech and its subsequent news conference was of a political nature, and that they should have similar facilities afforded them in accordance with the mandate of Section 315 of the Communications Act. Section 315 provides that if licensees permit the use of their facilities to one candidate, they must provide equal time to all others.44


44. Newsweek, 39:64, June 9, 1952.
Section 315 reads:

If any licensee shall permit any person who is a legally qualified candidate for any public office to use a broadcasting station, he shall afford equal opportunities to all other such candidates for that office in the use of such broadcasting station, and the Commission shall make rules and regulations to carry this provision into effect: Provided, that such licensee shall have no power of censorship over the material broadcast under the provisions of this section. No obligation is hereby imposed upon any licensee to allow the use of its station by any such candidate.\(^{45}\)

The vigorous demands of Taft and Kefauver for equal time were granted by the networks, but in the case of Kefauver, he dropped the matter as soon as the time was granted to him.

Another significant instance involving the testing of Section 315 concerned a demand for equal network convention coverage by the Progressive Party. The Progressives wanted more detailed coverage of their conventions by the four major television networks and also challenged the networks' right to sell time for commercial sponsorship. C. B. Baldwin, Progressive Party Secretary and Campaign Manager claimed that the national networks had scheduled 96 hours of coverage for each of the Republican and Democratic Conventions, and only 15 minutes for the Progressive Convention. Baldwin filed a complaint with the FCC on the above grounds, and also filed a complaint with Attorney General James McGrannery on the grounds that sponsoring of convention coverage violates the Federal Corrupt Practices Act.\(^{46}\)

Baldwin said, "the conduct of these corporations (sponsors).

\(^{45}\) _Radio Laws of the United States_, p. 74.

\(^{46}\) _Broadcasting-Telecasting_, _op. cit._, June 16, 1952, p. 106.
constitutes a violation of the Hatch Act." Corrupt practices, he said forbids this type of contributions or expenditures "in connection with a political convention held to select candidates." Baldwin claimed that the Hatch Act forbade purchase of goods or advertising if proceeds of the purchase "directly or indirectly inured to the benefits of any candidate or any political committee or other political organization." 47

Baldwin went on to say:

It is perfectly evident that the sponsorship of these programs by these corporations, thus making such extensive coverage of the convention possible will inure to the benefit of both the candidates and the political organizations involved.

It is our understanding that there is an implicit condition in the contract between the nets and these advertisers that coverage on this program be given only to the views and candidates of those on the Republican or Democratic ticket, and that no coverage be afforded to the Progressive Party and its candidates. 48

Baldwin claimed that such conditions would violate the political broadcast section of the Communications Act.

The FCC rejected the complaint of the Progressive Party, contending that the question of physical convention coverage is one matter with no application to Section 315 of the Communications Act. The FCC rejection stated that "it is of course clear that the extent of the coverage afforded national political conventions must be determined on the basis of fairness and general interest in the presentation of public events." 49

47. Loc. cit.


The Justice Department did not act on the Progressive Party claim that convention sponsorship was a violation of the Federal Corrupt Practices Act, but referred the case to the FCC, which took no action.\textsuperscript{50} Judge Justin Miller of the NARTB, explained and pointed out the incongruities and deficiencies of Section 315 of the Communications Act. If a station gives time or sells time to a political candidate it must also give or sell equal time to any other qualified candidate. In so doing, the station must not censor the script of any candidate who broadcasts, thus involving possible risk of libel. The FCC has ruled that the word censor in Section 315 forbids the broadcaster to delete any part of, or in any way change, the script of the candidate, even though it may be libelous prima facia. Thus, if the broadcaster should refuse to allow a candidate to broadcast libelous material or persuade him to rewrite it, such action would involve the danger of having the FCC deny license renewal. On the other hand, if the broadcaster allows the candidate to broadcast a libel he may suffer a judgment for damages under the law of the state.\textsuperscript{51}

Another risk that was more prominently evident in the 1952 political campaign than in previous campaigns coverage, was how to handle Communist demands for time. The United States Supreme Court has ruled that a Communist is a criminal if and when he advocates the overthrow of the government by violence. Therefore, under Section 315, if Republicans and Democrats are given time by broadcasters, Communists must

\textsuperscript{50} \textit{Loc. cit.}

\textsuperscript{51} \textit{Broadcasting-Telecasting, op. cit.}, June 9, 1952, p. 84.
also be given time if they demand it. If then, a member of the Com-
munist Party qualifies as a candidate and preaches the overthrow of
the government over a broadcasting station—assuming that the broad-
caster knowingly permits him to do so and fails to strike out the crim-
inal preachments—then the broadcaster might be charged as an associate
or accessory to the crime.52

Judge Miller stated that, "the incongruity of Section 315, and
the FCC's interpretation of it, are becoming more and more apparent."
He went on to say:

If radio can set a pattern of editorial courage and
understanding which will show willingness to assume vol-
untarily, the normal responsibility of an editor in his
community, if other broadcasters throughout the country
will do the same; perhaps after a time we can put broad-
casting upon such a footing as to make possible the same
bold insistence upon the constitutional principles as
that of the editors today. Until that time the odds are
against us—in Congress, in the courts and before the
FCC.53

Representative Mike Mansfield reviewed a complaint in 1952,
blasting certain broadcasters for charging higher rates for political
advertising than for commercial advertising. Mansfield had originally
made the complaint in December 1950, when he was chairman of the House
Special Campaign Expenditures Committee. Mansfield voiced the com-
plaint as he introduced a bill designed to amend the Federal Corrupt
Practices Act.54

52. Loc. cit.

53. Loc. cit.

Prior to this, a bill that fused the NARTB and FCC thinking on political broadcasts was introduced by Representative Walt Horan of Washington. The bill (HR 7062) was to denote legally qualified candidates as those "in a primary, general or other election," and specify than an authorization to speak in behalf of a candidate must be in writing and direct that the broadcaster would have no power to censor the material broadcast. It also would not hold the broadcaster liable in any civil or criminal action in any local, state or federal court. However, the candidate himself would be subject to all libel laws now on the statute books.55

The radio and television industry hoped that the Horan Bill or a similar bill would be incorporated into law before the conventions and the post convention campaigning began, but this never came about as the Horan Bill was shelved, and only a revised part of the Mansfield proposal became law in the McFarland Act. The McFarland Bill ($658) became law just before the opening of the Republican Convention, and the only significant section pertinent to political coverage and campaigning, was the provision prohibiting broadcasters from charging political candidates more than "the charges made for comparable use of such station for other purposes."56

An editorial summed up the industry's position concerning Section 315 of the Communications Act: "As for Section 315 relief, it looks


like a forlorn hope until the campaign is over. It's a simple case of the political controversy being too controversial for the politicians in an election year.\textsuperscript{57}

\textsuperscript{57} Broadcasting-Telecasting, \textit{op. cit.}, June 16, 1952, p. 56.
VI

CONVENTION COVERAGE -- 1952

As the Republican National Convention got under way in Chicago on July 7, it was quite evident that television wanted recognition as a news gathering medium on a level with the press. Just before the convention got under way, radio and television newsmen were barred when members of the Republican National Committee voted 60 to 40 against introduction of cameras and microphones into pre-convention hearings.

Newsreel and still cameras were included in the closed door policy, but newspaper reporters were allowed to sit in on the hotly-debated dispute between Eisenhower and Taft forces over votes for delegates in seven southern states and Puerto Rico.1

Television technicians, radio technicians, reporters, commentators and producers, primarily from NBC and CBS, were on hand early Tuesday, July 1 as the first Republican Committee meeting came to order in the Conrad Hilton Hotel. Both networks carried coverage from the Hotel, but program content was limited to commentary and the coming and going of delegates.

The ban, which came shortly after the opening morning session, was split along strictly factional political lines, in the opinion of broadcast representatives who were present. They reported that Taft backers, generally speaking, were against introduction of cameras and microphones into the meeting, and that Eisenhower delegates were in

favor of the move.²

Three NBC and two CBS live television cameras were stationed in the North Ballroom of the Hilton, and also in the adjacent third floor corridor for coverage of the delegates as they moved about, and also for coverage of the committee hearing inside. After taking one look at the mass of newsmen, technicians and equipment, Charles Hackett, convention sergeant-at-arms, announced that the meeting would be moved to a "cooler," more private place—the Boulevard Room on the second floor. As the sessions in the Boulevard Room began, the committee banned all microphones and cameras.³

Sinclair Weeks of Massachusetts proposed that Chairman Guy Gabrielson name a subcommittee to study the possibility of pooling radio and television facilities for coverage of the meetings. A subcommittee to study the possibility of pooling radio and television facilities for coverage of the meetings. A subcommittee of five was named after a long delay, and recommended such a pool. The Eisenhower and Taft factions took sides, with Representative Clarence J. Brown leading the forces in favor of the ban. Brown declared that the old rules (let in the press reporters only) should stand. He claimed that a press association could demand permission to install a teletype transmitter if television were permitted, and he foresaw the possibility that a Chicago newspaper might move in a printing press—an argument that Brown surely put forth with tongue in cheek. Brown went on to note that the House of Representatives permits only pen and pencil

² Loc. cit.
³ Loc. cit.
coverage. 4

After vigorous protest against the ban by Senator Henry Cabot Lodge, who also served as Eisenhower's campaign manager, the recommendation of the subcommittee to facilitate a radio and television pool was voted down, and the ban was on.

The ban affected five network television men, 40 still picture cameramen and six newsreel cameramen. Joseph H. McConnell urged Chairman Gabrielson to reconsider, and branded the admission of one medium and the exclusion of another as "unfair". McConnell further charged:

The argument that television coverage interferes with the proper conduct of your meeting cannot be sustained. Television unlike newsreels, does not require any additional lighting. Also with any kind of advance notice we can install television cameras so that they will not interfere with either the movement or deliberation of the committee.

The issue the Credentials Committee is now considering is one in which the American Public is deeply interested. In the interest of fair play to the public and to the broadcasting industry we urge your committee to permit radio and television coverage of the Credentials Committee hearings and any other convention activities to which the press is admitted. 5

The ban lasted during the week prior to the Republican Convention, but radio was not entirely shut out. CBS discovered a permanently installed line in the Boulevard Room, which was used to broadcast dance band pickups over WBBM, Chicago's CBS station. The station engineer had only to switch on the microphone to pick up full conversation of the committee members. By tape-recording portions of the session, CBS was able to put on the air an exclusive 30 minute broadcast of the


vehemently contested debate over the seating of Texas delegates. Bill Downs narrated the broadcast which went on the air nationally just twenty minutes after it was recorded. 6

Criticism of the ban was so intense and heaped so much political disfavor upon the Taft forces, that by the time the actual proceedings of the Republican Convention got under way, the ban had been lifted by the National Committee in an effort "to correct a major error."

An editorial in Broadcasting-Telecasting hailed the lifting of the radio and television ban as a great victory:

Whatever the outcome of the political conventions and the elections, the radio and television ticket emerges the winner. Barred from the pre-convention proceedings of the Credentials Committee on contested delegations, the microphones and cameras were welcomed after the convention got underway "to correct a major error." But the carpet wasn't rolled out until stern protests from broadcast executives had descended upon the Taft leadership following the arbitrary lockout.

The results of this turnaround, it was generally conceded, will be lasting. Every proceeding to which the public is permitted also will be thrown open to radio and television. It is bound to have a salutary effect, too, upon decisions of Senate and House, which at the session just closed, threw roadblocks in the path of the broadcast media. 7

The Republican National Convention was badly mismanaged--nothing went off on schedule, and the handling of credentials for radio and television personnel ended up in utter confusion--but "American radio and television acquired new prestige and made journalistic history by assuming the major role in the family of news media." 8

7. Ibid., p. 56.
8. Ibid., p. 23.
Edward Ingle, Republican radio and television director made the most of a bad situation which found his allotment of credentials cut by about 150 by the Republican National Committee. This credentials mix-up caused many top network and stations executives to be unaccredited, but newsmen were practically all seated and given access to coverage facilities. The tentative broadcast schedule was nearly completely of no use—the major speeches of the convention went out around 10 p.m. Central Day-light Time which meant that they were heard in the Eastern Time zone (where 70 per-cent of the population resides) after 11 p.m.\(^9\)

The networks competed strongly, and were hard pressed to accommodate all those who wanted equitable treatment. Candidates and their supporters were eager to get all the time they could, so that the disputes and quarrels over coverage, heretofore heaped upon the press, hit radio and television too.

Scores of newsmen from stations were on hand at the convention, sending local and state reports to their stations by direct line or by long distance telephone, and through a very extensive use of tape recorders. It was estimated that 99 per-cent of the total population of the United States could hear the convention coverage through 12 hundred radio outlets. Forty per-cent of the total population was enabled to view the convention activities, as a total of 60 million people was estimated to have had access to television receivers.\(^10\)

One hundred and eight television stations carried live coverage

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10. *Newsweek, op. cit.*
of both conventions, and station KANS Wichita, Kansas, set up a closed circuit to bring coverage into the city's Civic Auditorium. With no television station yet licensed in the state, the closed circuit provided the only means for Kansans to view the proceedings. Besides complete national coverage of the conventions, radio transmitted evening sessions to the West Indies, and Central and South America by international shortwave over station WRUL under the sponsorship of Philco International Corporation. 11

The cooperative television pool was successful except for one instance. A misunderstanding between ABC, CBS and NBC caused a 45 minute lapse of coverage on the second day (July 8) of the Republican convention. NBC covered the morning session of the Credentials Committee's controversial delegate seating debate, and was under the impression that the other two networks would cover the afternoon session. So, immediately after the morning session recessed, NBC pulled all of its television equipment from the meeting room in preparation for switching its network to the coverage of the All Star Baseball game in Philadelphia. CBS and ABC didn't know of the switch until the Credentials Committee reconvened for the afternoon session, and it took 45 minutes for them to set up equipment and get on the air. 12

NBC-TV reported that its coverage for the Republican Convention had totaled 75 hours—65 of which were sponsored by the Philco Corporation. NBC radio gave 50 hours of coverage. CBS television's coverage

12. Ibid., p. 36.
amounted to 68 hours, with the network devoting 47 and one-half hours to radio coverage. ABC had equal coverage for both radio and television, including regular programs which dealt with convention matters; each media reported 70 hours. Mutual had no exact count of hours of coverage, but they reported it at slightly more than 50 hours. 13

Though radio and television won a major victory in gaining reporting privileges on a par with the press in the Republican Convention, the broadcast media did not get all that they wanted. The industry had advocated a free-radio-television plank in the Republican platform and had hoped that the Republican Resolutions Committee would comply with their request. But the Committee made no specific mention of radio or television in its platform, and barely approach it in a generalized paragraph dealing with censorship. The statement read: "We pledge not to infringe by censorship or gag order the right of a free people to know what their government is doing." 14

The Democrats learned much from the Republican Convention and announced early that all public hearings set by the Preliminary Drafting Committee studying the 1952 Democratic platform would be open to full media coverage—including radio and television. Representative John W. McCormack, House Majority Leader and chairman of the platform drafting group said: "Our platform hearings will be small-d democracy in action and we want the voters to have every opportunity to be informed


...through the media of newspapers, radio, newsreels, and television.15

The biggest technical alteration from the Republican Convention was in the placing of cameras, in an effort to benefit the television audience. One camera was placed on the convention floor, about 60 feet directly in front of the speakers platform, permitting head-on closeups which were not available at the Republican Convention. Democrats believes that the placement of the camera in front of the speaker would have a better psychological effect on the audience—giving them a feeling of being a part of the proceedings. Another unique innovation was that every network was provided with a complete shooting script in advance of every session. This was a gesture in the right direction, but as in the Republican Convention, little or nothing came of as scheduled. The Democratic National Committee also sent out letters of instruction to delegates, informing them as to "do's-and-don'ts" of convention behavior. Through all of this added effort, the Democrats were able to produce a more technically smooth convention coverage than the Republicans.16

Action and controversy was lacking in the first three days of the Democratic Convention, presenting a problem for the television networks. During the Republican Convention the networks carried the pooled pickups form the floor even when there was nothing of importance to broadcast. But the novelty of convention telecasting had worn off during the Republican sessions, and the networks filled this void with extensive

use of remotes and gimmicks. CBS, NBC, and ABC all came up with varied screen effects--technicians blocked out sections of the screen and put in the commentator, or superimposed circles and arrows around politically important people on the convention floor. The networks generally cut down on commentary and relied more on important camera shots and films. All of the networks and a few of the independent stations used film designed for local audiences.

The on-the-spot, complete coverage of radio and television put press reporters in a position of relying upon color and background material, rather than straight facts. Dick Thornburg, managing editor of the Scripps-Howard Newspaper Alliance told reporters to "provide more interpretative material, and...forward looking stories telling the reader what to expect that evening on television, and telling what happened in the back rooms and caucuses that the television audience did not see." The networks anticipated the strategy, and covered almost all of the on or off-the-record caucuses with broadcasts.

ABC scored the major scoop of the Democratic Convention. Martin Agronsky managed to get exclusive television shots of the Louisiana caucus, as the members discussed, behind closed doors, the proposed loyalty amendment. Agronsky found some obscure opening into the caucus room and had a camera set up to view the proceedings. Though there was no audio available from the members, Agronsky kept up a running commentary on possible positions the delegates were taking. 18


CBS television gave 71 hours of coverage to the Democratic Convention, and CBS radio coverage totalled 55 hours. NBC television gave 77 hours of coverage, and 58 hours was given by NBC radio. ABC television's coverage amounted to 75 hours, while ABC radio gave equal coverage of 75 hours. Mutual claimed a network of more than four hundred stations received its 70 hours of coverage.¹⁹

A resolution was drafted by the North Carolina Association of Broadcasters, urging the Democratic party to "reaffirm their convictions that radio and television shall be accorded all of the privileges traditionally granted the press." And, as in the case of the Republican Convention, the radio and television industry advocated a free radio plank. But the Democrats ignored the issue entirely, making not even a general mention of it in their platform.²⁰

All of the networks gave some coverage to the Progressive Party Convention, July fourth to sixth. CBS radio recorded the acceptance speech of Mrs. Vivian Hallinan, who represented her husband and the Progressive candidate for President, Vincent Hallinan. Hallinan was unable to speak because he was serving a jail sentence for contempt of court. CBS broadcast the speech in its entirety after the Progressive Convention. NBC television worked a film of the Progressives into a pre-Republican Convention broadcast, and Mutual gave the party convention 15 minutes of time on July 4th. ABC radio and television each gave 15 minutes of time to the Progressive Convention on July 5.²¹

Television ratings for the conventions, published by Pulse showed that the Republican Convention drew a larger audience than the Democratic Convention. The Pulse statistics were based on a door-to-door interview survey of 12 thousand five hundred television homes during the two conventions. The Pulse figures are based on sets-in-use figures of television homes. Dr. Sidney Roslow, director of Pulse, reported that the Republican Convention had average ratings of 43.0 at night, and 16.5 in the afternoon. The Democrats averaged 32.0 in the evening, 12.2 in the afternoon.22

22. See Appendix II.
Radio and television went to new record lengths in its coverage of the 1952 election balloting, which was carried nationally and to some foreign countries. Unlike the 1948 election coverage which ran until late morning of the day after the balloting, the 1952 election coverage came to a climax far ahead of the expectations of all of the networks. CBS was the only network that had not concluded its coverage by three a.m. Wednesday, November 5. CBS put on 13 and one-half hours of coverage, starting at 6:15 p.m. Tuesday and continuing until eight a.m. Wednesday.¹

The 1952 election balloting coverage was the first coast-to-coast reporting of a national election by television. The networks used a wide variety of mechanical and electronic gimmicks as visual aids, and also used electronic "brains" to forecast final results.

CBS television employed the use of the Univac "brain," a device reportedly capable of making predictions by comparing returns with those at comparable periods in previous years. At about 10 p.m. on election night, Univac forecast that Eisenhower would win 43 states and Stevenson would win but five. Statisticians, employed by CBS to operate Univac, were familiar with public opinion research that predicted a close race, so they tempered data that was fed into the machine with "corrective factors," to conform more closely with the pre-

¹ Broadcasting-Telecasting, 43:27, November 10, 1952.
election polls. The result was that Univac soon began to predict a division of 24 states for Eisenhower, and 24 states for Stevenson.

At 10:30 p.m., CBS newsman Edward R. Murrow forecast that Eisenhower had been elected. By this time Univac was predicting eight to seven odds in favor of Stevenson. The statisticians promptly reverted to feeding the machine unadjusted data, and Univac soon began forecasting 100 to one odds in favor of Eisenhower.²

CBS radio and television coverage of the election was part of its three million dollar sponsorship deal with Westinghouse Electric, which also included national convention coverage and a get-out-the-vote campaign. Election coverage for CBS radio was under the direction of News and Special events Director Wells Church, and CBS television was directed by Sig Mickelson.

Robert Trout, who spent 102 and one-half hours before the microphone at the national conventions, provided the running story for CBS radio, backed up by analysis and comment by Edward R. Murrow, Lowell Thomas, Eric Sevareid, Charles Collingwood, and Allan Jackson. Twenty some other newsmen reported from New York, Washington and across the country, providing local coverage.³

CBS television used a staff numbering more than 200. Walter Cronkite provided running commentary assisted by most of the CBS radio staff, plus Douglas Edwards, Don Hollenbeck, Griffing Bancroft, Bill Costello, Bill Downs, Mike Wallace and Bill Leonard. Bill Shadel and

². Loc. cit.
³. Ibid., 112.
Ron Cochran reported from Washington, and Ed Morgan covered Stevenson's Springfield, Illinois headquarters. Fritz Littlejohn, CBS's television news managing editor, assisted Mickelson in supervising the television coverage. Senior Director Don Hewitt, Paul Levitan, special events producer, were in charge of remote television pickups. 4

William R. McAndrew, NBC special events manager, supervised NBC television coverage of the election. The network's election coverage was part of their sponsorship pact with Philco, which included national convention coverage also. NBC utilized some 300 commentators, reporters, general staff members and technicians for their coverage. Twenty-five of these commentators were heard or seen from NBC's headquarters in New York, Eisenhower's headquarters in New York, Boston, Chicago, Detroit, Washington, Cleveland and Los Angeles, or Stevenson's headquarters in Springfield, Illinois.

Bill Henry was NBC's television moderator for the coverage, with John Cameron Swayze reporting on the Presidential returns, and Ned Brooks and Richard Harkness reporting the congressional and gubernatorial returns. Pickups were made from cities across the country on the hourly basis, and local results were given every half-hour. 5

Joseph Meyers directed NBC radio coverage, assisted by George Hicks, Bill Chaplin, H. V. Kaltenborn, Kenneth Banghart, Ray Henle, Merrill Mueller, Bob Murphy, Bill Fitzgerald, and Bill Sprague.

4. Loc. cit.

5. Loc. cit.
Kaltenborn did commentary on both radio and television, along with public opinion analyst, Elmo Roper. The NBC electronic "brain" was called a "Monorobot," and was under the surveillance of Morgan Beatty who reported its predictions and calculations.⁶

On Wednesday following the Tuesday election, NBC television's early-morning program "Today," broadcast a special roundup of election developments, plus films highlighting the preceding night, and analyses by NBC commentators abroad and in the United States.⁷

News and Special Events Vice President Thomas Velotta directed ABC's radio and television coverage of the election. As in the case of the NBC and CBS, ABC's election coverage was sponsored by its national convention sponsor, the Admiral Corporation. ABC originated from separate program simultaneously from its central headquarters in New York. One broadcast was transmitted over the ABC television network, one over the radio network, and one each over stations WJZ (radio) and WJZ-TV in New York.⁸

Reporting and Commentary of the elections was headed by John Daly and Elmer Davis, assisted by Martin Agronsky, Walter Winchell, Taylor Grant, Gunnar Back, Paul Harvey, public opinion research specialist George Gallup, and Erwin Canham of the Christian Science Monitor. ABC also carried numerous remote broadcasts from New York and throughout the country, plus special interviews with Governor John Lodge of Connecticut, Senator Duff of Pennsylvania, and Governor Thomas E. Dewey

⁶ Ibid., p. 55.
⁷ Loc. cit.
⁸ Ibid., p. 113.
of New York. 9

Mutual covered the elections under the sponsorship of the Chevrolet Division of General Motors. The coverage was under the direction of News Director Milton Burgh and Special Events Director Arthur Feldman. Moderating the coverage were commentators Ed Pettitt and Fred Van Deventer. The network had the rest of its news staff assigned to various strategic points over the country. Everett Hollis, Cecil Brown, Cedric Foster, William Hillman and Frank Singiser reported from New York; Holland Engle and Robert F. Hurleigh from Chicago; Les Higbie from Stevenson's headquarters in Springfield, Illinois; H. R. Baukhage, Fulton Lewis, Jr., and Joseph McCaffrey from Washington; and Bill Cunningham from Boston. Wallace Fanning broadcast special remotes from President Truman's train which was en route back to Washington from Missouri. 10

MBS emphasised local election coverage as it made a total of 187 pickups from 27 key cities throughout the nation. All in all, Mutual provided seven hours of election coverage. 11

DuMont did not cover the elections—limiting its political coverage to campaigning and the national conventions.

A special House Committee to investigate campaign expenditures stated: "It may never be known what methods of campaigning had the greatest effect in the 1952 elections; but if the money outlays are

10. Loc. cit.
taken as the index, broadcasting can make best claim to the honor.\textsuperscript{12} The networks and their affiliates found themselves engaged in the costliest commercial venture they had ever engaged in. NBC estimated that it paid out nearly four million dollars for its campaign coverage. Even with the Philco Corporation footing two million, 700 thousand dollars of the cost, NBC had to make up the difference of one million 300 thousand dollars.\textsuperscript{13}

Although there were no specific figures given out, it was estimated that ABC lost nearly one million dollars on its campaign coverage. The CBS-Westinghouse Electric sponsorship was the only one which provided the sponsor to make additional payments for coverage beyond a specified maximum number of hours. This cut down CBS's red figures considerably, but network spokesmen still estimated their loss at more than a half-million dollars.\textsuperscript{14}

Mutual, which had no single sponsors but sold coverage on a co-op basis, found the exceptionally long national conventions expensive from the standpoint of both operating costs and pre-emptions. Some of the networks were, however able to cut down losses to some extent by giving 30-day cancellation notice on regularly sponsored programs. But especially in the cases of the national conventions, it was impossible to predict 30 days in advance how long any particular convention session would last.\textsuperscript{15}

\textsuperscript{12} Report on the Special Committee To Investigate Campaign Expenditures, 1952 House of Representatives, Pursuant to H. Res. 558, p.46.

\textsuperscript{13} Broadcasting-Telecasting, 43:23, July 14, 1952.

\textsuperscript{14} Ibid., p. 26.

\textsuperscript{15} Loc. Cit.
A special House committee to investigate campaign expenditures was formulated and made up of the following Representatives: Hale Boggs (Democrat, Louisiana), Chairman; John J. Rooney (Democrat, New York); Frank M. Karsten (Democrat, Missouri); Kenneth B. Keating (Republican, New York) and William M. McCulloch (Republican, Ohio). The Committee called witnesses from both the Republican and Democratic National Committees, and several network executives.

Stephen A. Mitchell, chairman of the Democratic National Committee, testified that the expenditures of that committee for radio and television amounted to some four hundred thousand dollars, out of total expenditures which were close to the three million dollar limit allowed by law. Mitchell placed the radio and television expenditures of the Stevenson-Sparkman Forum Committee, and independent national political committee, at between seven and eight hundred thousand dollars.16

Harman Dunlap Smith, chairman of the Volunteers for Stevenson Committee, testified before the House Committee that his organization spent 42! thousand dollars for network radio and television time, plus an additional 77 thousand dollars for spot announcements. Volunteers for Stevenson spent 49 thousand dollars for newspaper advertising, and Smith said that its total campaign expenditures was 740 thousand dollars. The most expensive single program of the Democratic presidential campaign was the hour-long broadcast of the Madison Square Garden Rally; Volunteers for Stevenson paid 120 thousand dollars for that one

program carried by the major networks.17

Chairman Arthur E. Summerfield, of the Republican National Committee was unable to estimate the expenditures of his committee for radio and television time. W. Walter Williams, chairman of the Citizens for Eisenhower-Nixon, estimated that his independent national political committee spent 634 thousand dollars for radio and television time. This committee financed the most expensive single broadcast of the Republican campaign—the election-eve broadcast which cost 267 thousand dollars.18

Additional independent committees, National, State and local, supporting one or the other of the Presidential candidates added considerable to the total spent for campaign broadcasting. More sums were spent in the various Congressional campaigns, but witnesses before the House Committee could not even attempt to give the amount.

Republican and Democratic witnesses were unanimous in their belief that the spectacular growth of television in the four years preceding the 1952 campaign was the major single cause of the vastly increased costs of the 1952 campaign. These witnesses were also unanimous in their recommendation of removing or revising upward the three million dollar limitation on campaign expenditures of a national political committee.19

Ralph W. Hardy, director of governmental relations of the National Association of Radio and Television Broadcasters stated:

17. Ibid., p. 47.
...it would be physically possible for as many as 2,000 or 2,300 television stations to operate in this country. When it is considered that there were only 116 television stations licensed and operating during the 1952 campaign, that few of the tremendously costly political telecasts or simulcasts (radio and television broadcast of the same program) of that campaign were carried by more than about half of these stations, and that the cost increases with the number of stations utilized, it can be predicted with some confidence that television costs in the 1956 presidential campaign might easily be double or treble those of 1952.\textsuperscript{20}

The total campaign expenditures as reported to Congress by the Republican and Democratic parties was 32 million 155 thousand 251 dollars. A breakdown of how much of this was spent on radio and television time was not available.\textsuperscript{21}

Following the hearings, the House Committee made eight recommendations to the House of Representatives, two of which are significant for this study:

\textit{Recommendation 4.} That the existing limitations of $3,000,000 for national political committees be substantially raised, and a lower limit be for political committees active in only one State, in accordance with Recommendation 3.

\textit{(Recommendation 3.} That the financial reporting requirements of existing law, now applicable only to activities and expenditures in two or more States, be extended to include activities and expenditures in a single State, if for the purpose of influencing or attempting to influence the election of candidates for Federal office.\textit{)}

\textsuperscript{20} \textit{Loc. cit.}

\textsuperscript{21} \textit{Hearings Before The Special Committee To Investigate Campaign Expenditures, 1952 House of Representatives, H. Res. 588, p. 49.}
Recommendation 5. That the existing limitations on candidates for the Senate and House of Representatives of $25,000 and $5,000, respectively, be raised substantially, and that the law be clarified to indicate what expenditures are to be included in determining compliance.\textsuperscript{22}

\textsuperscript{22} Report of the Special Committee To Investigate Campaign Expenditures, 1952 House of Representatives, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 57.
VIII

EFFECTS OF TELEVISION -- 1952

How much did television influence the election? No one really knows, because no specific studies were made to measure the impact of television on the voters. Practically everyone is in agreement that television was highly influential in bringing out the highest number of voters for a Presidential election in the history of the United States.¹ But whether television or television and radio swung the election in favor of one candidate must be left to speculation.

We can on the basis of one study show something of how television compared with the other media of information in bringing the campaign to the public, and what groups in the population were most exposed to, or effected by the television campaign. The Survey Research Center of the University of Michigan, through the sponsorship of the Carnegie Corporation, made an intensive analysis of the factors affecting the decision of citizens to vote. A sample of the United States population was asked questions (in November, 1952) about the media through which they had "paid attention" to the campaign. They were asked to state which media they considered had been the most important to them. The sample used one thousand 174 citizens of voting age, and was selected in such a way that there is only one chance in 20 that its representation of the country at large is in error by more than four percentage points.²


The first noteworthy fact of this study is that the public went out of its way to watch the 1952 campaign on television. Nearly 40 per-cent of the homes in the United States then had television receivers, but some 53 per-cent of the population saw some part of the campaign coverage. On the other hand, the campaign coverage in newspapers, magazines and radio did not reach all of their respective audiences. More than 60 per-cent of the population took daily newspapers and more than 60 per-cent regularly read magazines, but in each case the number following the campaign in these media was smaller than the total audience.³

The relatively poor showing of radio in the Northeast may indicate that television is supplanting radio in that area. In the South radio leads all other media, because of a predominantly rural region with less access to newspapers and very little access to television.

When people of the sample were asked which medium had given them the most information about the campaign, the impact of television became even more apparent.⁴ Though available to a minority of the population, television led the other media in the number of persons who rated it most informative. Of those who actually watched the campaign on television 59 per-cent considered television their most important information source. In contrast, among those who followed the campaign in newspapers, which takes in 79 per-cent of the population, only 28

³. See Appendix III.

⁴. See Appendix IV.

⁵. Loc. cit.
per-cent rated newspapers as the medium from which they gained most of their information. 6

Here again there was decided difference geographically. The Northeast relied most heavily on television, the South on Radio, and the Midwest and the Far West were nearly identical in their patterns, with television in the lead. 7

Television as a campaign medium made its main inroads into radio. On the whole the press seems to have held its ground, for its importance was held as high in the Northeast, where television receivers are most common, as in the other regions. 8 But as television expands its coverage and develops techniques for appealing to the various kinds of audiences, it will undoubtedly offer more and more competition for the attention of the voters. 9

As to how television affected the voting itself, there is no way of telling. Those who rated television as their most important source of information, voted for Eisenhower in about the same proportion as those who relied mainly on radio and the press. 10

Magazine readers were considerably more Republican. Stevenson did somewhat better among those who were devoted to television than among those who preferred radio or newspapers. 11 However, these

6. Ibid., p. 47.
7. Scientific American, op. cit., p. 46.
8. Loc. cit.
9. Ibid., p. 47.
10. See Appendix V.
differences may not be very significant since geographical and economical factors enter into the situation.

From this study you cannot tell whether television had a distinctive influence on voters, but there were many sources who were convinced that television had a profound effect on political campaigning—especially the national conventions. In reference to the broadcast media's influence on the national conventions one editorial said:

Television did wield a powerful influence. But any notion that it controlled anything is nonsense. A television camera can't think. Nor can a microphone. Television is the faultless reporter. In that role, it has outmoded the pencil and pad reporter. It romps hand-in-hand with the radio reporter, because the microphone provides full text in the speaker's own voice and his own image too.

If television has in fact revolutionized the nominating conventions, it has done so only because of its ability to report events as they are. It has not changed those events.

What the "actuality" radio and television broadcast did, without question, was to de-emphasize the traditional "smoke-filled room" aspect of bossism. But it didn't eliminate bossism. Most of it has gone back stage. Delegates heard quickly from their constituents. They heard before the coverage reached the home town newspapers. They got the news direct, by the neutral reporting of microphone and camera.

Television may change many of the methods of future conventions. It may force upon politicians better manners. But the nominating convention, as an American institution, will continue inviolate. 12

Newspaper comment was widespread also as to the possible effects of television would have on future political conventions. Some newspapers agreed that television created such widespread popular reaction that the conventions were obliged to react to the popular will of the

people in choosing candidates who, at the beginning at least, had not been the choice of the party professionals. Others predicted that public disapproval of old convention practices, caused by television, might lead eventually to the adoption of Presidential primary elections throughout the United States.  

An editorial in the *New York Times* stated:

...the most lasting thought that comes to my mind is whether television has not eliminated the need for such a protracted campaign. No doubt considerable whistle stopping always will be necessary to aid state and local tickets, but crisscrossing several times on the same ground hardly seems necessary in the television age.  

The editorial goes on to point out the vital necessity of television maintaining neutral, and thorough coverage of political issues and campaigns, for "if either the Republican or Democratic parties should tread on the edge of demagoguery, in the long run it will suffer, and television's usefulness will be dangerously impaired."  

The national political campaign of 1952 was tremendously important to radio and television. Since 1924, radio, and then radio and television, have been building up the respect and the confidence of the American people, as reportorial media. Through an evolutionary process, similar to that experienced by the press, radio and television have been gaining more and more freedoms, and though still not on a par with the press, the goal is more clearly than ever in sight.


The broadcasting media made a long stride toward freedom equal to the press, in their victory of equal reporting privileges won at the Republican National Convention. They may have won another victory in the committee room of the special House Committee to investigate campaign expenditures, for in the closing sessions of their meetings, the Committee proposed further study and investigation of Section 315 of the Federal Communications Act dealing with freedom from libel and censorship of the broadcaster.16

At the 1952 National Convention of Sigma Delta Chi, national professional journalistic fraternity, the issue of freedom of the broadcasting media on par with the press was brought up, and the following statement was made in a report by Palmer Hoyt, publisher of the Denver Post, Oliver Gramling, assistant general manager of the Associated Press, and William Ray, director of news and special events for NBC in Chicago:

> Newsmen learned long ago that part of the campaign (for equal access to news) is a natural evolution of building slowly a public acceptance of methods and devices in gathering news, rather than to force them upon those who are reluctant because of their unfamiliarity with and consequent fear of new methods and gadgets. ....History has repeated itself with the advent of the third major medium, television....It is only a matter of time until radio and television will be allowed access to public functions of government.17

In the 1956 election there will be an opportunity to analyze the


effects of television on the voter, specifically and precisely. It is hoped that such studies will be undertaken. By then television will probably have expanded its coverage of the nation so greatly that sociological pattern of its audience and of the other media audiences, will be substantially different from what it was in the 1952 campaign. The direction of these changes in themselves will be somewhat revealing as to the nature of television's influence.
## Presidental election voters given by millions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Potential voters</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Potential voters</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1916</td>
<td>29.5</td>
<td>1916</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1920</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>1920</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1924</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>1924</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1928</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>1928</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1932</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>1932</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1936</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>1936</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1940</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>1940</td>
<td>49.5</td>
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<tr>
<td>1944</td>
<td>89.6</td>
<td>1944</td>
<td>48.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1948</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>1948</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1952</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>1952</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
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</table>

Taken from the New York Times, 102:4E, November 9, 1952
APPENDIX II

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Day Sessions</th>
<th>Night Sessions</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Women</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Men</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>153</td>
<td>151</td>
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</table>

Day and night Pulse ratings of the Republican and Democratic National Conventions.

<p>| | | | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Viewers per 100 television sets</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Repub.</td>
<td>Demo.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monday</td>
<td></td>
<td>43.8</td>
<td>36.8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday</td>
<td></td>
<td>45.2</td>
<td>20.4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wednesday</td>
<td></td>
<td>44.0</td>
<td>29.4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thursday</td>
<td></td>
<td>44.0</td>
<td>34.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friday</td>
<td></td>
<td>37.9</td>
<td>39.4</td>
<td></td>
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</table>

Night by night Pulse ratings of the Republican and Democratic National Conventions. Each measurement started with the beginning of each evening session and continued until 11 p.m.

Taken from Broadcasting-Telescasting, 43:32, August 4, 1952.
### APPENDIX III

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Medium</th>
<th>Northeast</th>
<th>Midwest</th>
<th>South</th>
<th>Far West</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Television</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Radio</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>69</td>
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<tr>
<td>Newspapers</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Magazines</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Percentages of people in various parts of United States who "paid attention" to the 1952 political campaign through each of the media given above.


### APPENDIX IV

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Medium</th>
<th>Northeast</th>
<th>Midwest</th>
<th>South</th>
<th>Far West</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Television</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Radio</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newspapers</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Magazines</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
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<tr>
<td>More than one medium</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None of the four</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figures represent source of most information gained about the 1952 political campaign from the media given in percent.

### APPENDIX V

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Television</th>
<th>Radio</th>
<th>Newspapers</th>
<th>Magazines</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Voted for Eisenhower</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voted for Stevenson</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Didn't vote</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Percentages give behavior of each group which rated one medium their most important source. *Scientific American*, 188:46, May, 1953.

Broadcasting, 11:20, June 1, 1936.

Broadcasting, 18:32, May 1, 1940.

Broadcasting, 18:58, May 15, 1940.

Broadcasting, 19:70, August 1, 1940.

Broadcasting, 19:22, November 1, 1940.

Broadcasting, 26:14, June 19, 1944.

Broadcasting, 26:11, June 26, 1944.


Broadcasting, 27:11, July 24, 1944.


Broadcasting-Telecasting, 41:24, December 10, 1951.


Broadcasting-Telecasting, 42:64, February 11, 1952.

Broadcasting-Telecasting, 42:54, February 18, 1952.


Broadcasting-Telecasting, 42:30, March 17, 1952.

Broadcasting-Telecasting, 42:28, April 7, 1952.
Broadcasting-Telecasting, 42:40, April 21, 1952.
Broadcasting-Telecasting, 42:30, April 28, 1952.
Broadcasting-Telecasting, 42:78, May 12, 1952.
Broadcasting-Telecasting, 43:26, August 4, 1952.


"Doubts About Campaigning By Radio," Literary Digest, 82:11, August 9, 1924.


Hearings Before The Special Committee To Investigate Campaign Expen-

*Literary Digest*, 121:54, June 6, 1936.

*Literary Digest*, 122:17, October 31, 1936.

*Literary Digest*, 122:8, November 21, 1936.


*Newsweek*, 24:50, September 4, 1944.

*Newsweek*, 24:87, October 2, 1944.


"Political Publicity," *Saturday Evening Post*, 201:9, February 2, 1929.


*Time*, 4:21, July 28, 1924.

