A HISTORICAL-CRITICAL STUDY OF A PRESSURE GROUP
IN BROADCASTING--BLACK EFFORTS FOR SOUL IN
TELEVISION

DISSERTATION

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for
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By

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* * * * *

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UNIVERSITY MICROFILMS.
CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The communication between the Black and White communities of this country during the 1960's was at a very low level. This situation was caused by several elements of the American society. One of the main problems was the broadcasting system in the country which practically ignored the Black population except when crimes were committed. The long summers of 1965 and 1967 brought all the complaints of the Black population to a head when the Watts riot and the 1967 riots occurred. These riots were a reaction to the broadcasting system, the local and national governments of the country, the police and the living conditions of the ghetto.

The conditions which caused the riots of 1965 and 1967 were similar. The results of these riots can be seen through example by looking at the Watts riot. These results included better services to Blacks from the government, and more participation by Blacks in the broadcasting system because of the development of citizens' groups.

In the reports following the riot in Watts, a Black inhabited area in Los Angeles, many sources have placed
the blame for the disturbance on several elements of society. Some of the contributors to the Watts riot are said to have been the police, the social conditions under which the people were forced to live, the city, state and federal government, and last, the media which reported day-to-day occurrences of the riot. No one of these factors is solely responsible, but all were contributors.¹

Exactly how and what prompted the Watts riot of 1965? Incidents had occurred in the country between Blacks and policemen. Civil rights workers staged a nonviolent demonstration in Selma, Alabama and the police and state troopers forcibly interrupted their march. In Bogalusa, Louisiana, Black demonstrators were inadequately protected by the police when attacked by whites.²

But, on the evening of August 1, 1965, as the Watts area of Los Angeles was burdened with a heat wave, Highway Patrolman Lee Minikers halted young, Black driver, Marquette Frye for speeding. The youth appeared intoxicated and the patrolman arrested him. A young Black


woman, who was accused of spitting on the police, was dragged into the middle of the street.\textsuperscript{3} When the police departed, members of the crowd began hurling rocks at passing cars, beating white motorists, and overturning cars, setting them on fire. The police reacted hesitantly. Actions they took further inflamed the people on the streets. The following day was calm. However, thirty hours after the initial flareup, looting and arson began. This was the beginning of a riot which left thirty-four dead, 4,000 arrested, and $35 million in damage.\textsuperscript{4}

The Watts riot was the worst incident of this nature since the Detroit riot of 1943. The media was caught without the proper personnel to handle the Black reporting. There were few, if any, Black reporters on newspapers or magazine or television station staffs who could travel in the area to report factually the news. Therefore, all types of accounts were reported as first-hand factual information. There was a definite breakdown in the communication process.\textsuperscript{5} The communication between Blacks

\textsuperscript{3}"Triggers of Hate," \textit{Time} (August 20, 1965), p. 15.


\textsuperscript{5}Ibid., pp. 366-367.
and whites had not been very strong and after the reporting of the riots the communication was almost non-existent. Stanley Sanders, in an article in _The Nation_, describes the media in its response to the Watts riot as follows:

The problem of communication is not new. Indeed the aftermath of the rioting showed how vast the communication gap has always been. For one thing, the news media lacked proper resources. One of the major metropolitan dailies had to hire its Negro advertising agent to cover the area because it had no Negroes on the reporting staff. A national magazine with offices in Los Angeles nevertheless had no coverage for two full days because there was no one in the local office who could enter the riot area. Also, the news media were wholly without the experience to deal with the Negro population. After the riots had ended, Watts was practically overrun by press, television and radio in search of the facts. But those media could find no available sources of information. It was apparent that most of the reporters were going about the task of covering the riot area in total darkness. The lack of facilities and techniques for communication may have added to the difficulties. Many of the published facts about the riots were not even approximately true. Most outsiders simply could not distinguish between forms.⁶

It is obvious from this statement that the media failed the American public, especially the Black public. For, the media failed to report adequately and analyze racial problems in America. They failed to communicate

to both audiences, Black and white, a sense of the problems America faces and the sources of potential solutions. The media is predominantly white and its reporting is more often than not geared to white audiences, while ignoring either reporting to or exposing their particular grievances, which was the most important issue.

The media coverage of racial news did not improve its coverage until the aftermath of the 1967 riots when the various commissions were established to investigate the riots, and the development role and function of pressure groups in broadcasting. Of these commissions included were the Kerner Commission and the McCone Commission. Within reports made by the commissions the mass media influences on the riots were discussed. The Kerner Commission concluded that:

First, that despite instances of sensationalism, inaccuracies, and distortions, newspapers, radio and television, on the whole, made a real effort to give a balanced, factual account of the 1967 disorders.

Second, despite this effort, the portrayal of the violence that occurred last summer failed to reflect accurately its scale and character. The overall effect was, we believe, an exaggeration of both mood and event.

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Third, and ultimately most important, we believe that the media have thus far failed to report adequately on the causes and consequences of civil disorders and the underlying problems of race relations.  

As mentioned earlier, no one particular entity can be given complete responsibility for the Watts riot or the 1967 riots. But the media must accept the responsibility of contributing to the disorder by reporting unwarranted, false information, that was, at times, rumor. Television and newspapers concentrated on the immediate and the dramatic, while their presentations were often distorted.  

The media, also, relayed unverified information which was certainly not acting in the "public interest."

One of the major results of the media reporting of the riots of the sixties was the development of citizen awareness toward the industry. Citizen pressure groups began to develop throughout the country to expose varied grievances. These groups were given momentum when the United Church of Christ challenged the license of WLBT in Jackson, Mississippi and gained legal standing from the United States Court of Appeals.  

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8Ibid., p. 465.  
standing, however, not to all listener groups, but only to those representing a substantial number of listeners and having a genuine and legitimate interest in the programming of matters of public interest.\(^{11}\)

The long-range importance of the WLBT case can be summarized in a passage from *Broadcasting* magazine:

> The case did more than establish the right of the public to participate in a station's license-renewal hearing. It did even more than encourage minority groups around the country to assert themselves in broadcast matters at a time when unrest was growing and blacks were becoming more activist. It provided practical lessons in how pressure could be brought, in how the broadcast establishment could be challenged.\(^{12}\)

Following the lead of the United Church of Christ, citizens groups focused their efforts on representing the public before the FCC and the courts. One such group was established in August, 1968 in Washington, D. C. by the Greater Washington Area Unitarian-Universalist Association. The group was titled Unity House and its purpose was to create a totally autonomous Black-oriented, Black-directed organization.\(^{13}\) When Unity House was developing


\(^{13}\)The *Unity House 1968 Yearly Report*, p. 1.
its program, it "worked from a basic premise that in order to generate understanding between people, new kinds of communication were necessary."\textsuperscript{14} The most powerful medium, television had failed to communicate to whites a feeling for the difficulties and frustrations of being a Black man in the United States. (It had) not shown understanding or appreciation of—and thus (had) not communicated—a sense of Negro culture, thought or history.\textsuperscript{15}

Unity House felt television should be made more responsive to the Black consumer.

During this same period broadcasters were in the process of pressuring for the passage of the Pastore Bill, S.2004. Passage of this bill would have made it very difficult for consumers to become involved in the broadcasting process. The bill would have lengthened the license renewal period and established competing applications instead of comparative applications. Competing applications occur when both parties have high financial interest, whereas comparative applications would require high interest of both parties guaranteeing careful investigation of a competitor's claims. The latter form would

\textsuperscript{14}Ibid., p. 2.

\textsuperscript{15}The Kerner Report—Report of the National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders, p. 201.
require the FCC to judge in favor of the applicant who
could best serve the public interest. To counter the
large broadcast lobby, Unity House "organized a national
affiliate called Black Efforts for Soul in Television
(BEST), to educate the public as to their right to the
airwaves."16 Thus BEST was established in 1969 as a
pressure group and thereafter began its work.

The BEST organization was funded by the Greater
Washington Area Unitarian-Universalist Association with
grants of $15,000 and $21,000.00. Additional money,
totaling $25,000.00 was secured from a grant from the
Merrill Trust Foundation. The church was unable to sup-
port completely the Unity House projects; therefore, BEST
was always financially in the red.17 This situation,
however, did not prevent them from securing and keeping
the same personnel during their entire existence, or
accomplishing their goals.18 The name BEST was given
to the communications activities of Unity House by the
wife of Chuck Stone during a thought session.19

16The Unity House 1968 Yearly Report, p. 3.

17Interview with William Wright, National Coordinator

18Appendix I.

19Interview with Wright.
In selecting a coordinator of the Unity House Projects, several people were interviewed along with William Wright, who came to the attention of the church through his activities in the Washington area. Mr. Wright was selected and given the first $15,000.00 for office, supplies and space, secretarial staff, and his salary. With this humble start he hired Marrissa Young, Gil Mendleson, and Carolyn Vance. This was the staff of BEST until the organization dissolved in 1973, minus Carolyn Vance, who left in 1971.  

In developing its program BEST sought to accomplish one objective—to increase Black access to the broadcast industry through "programming, jobs and ownership, and participation in the FCC regulatory processes." However, to accomplish this specific objective, the following goals were set:

1) To provide media information to individuals and groups throughout the United States;

2) To increase public participation in FCC regulatory processes and keep minorities informed of general policy decisions and rulings affecting specific local markets;

3) To educate and inform groups of the importance of broadcast media and the general public.

\(^{20}\) Ibid.

approaches to use in gaining access to them;

4) To develop in local groups the capacity to carry out locally determined activities related to increasing media access;

5) To assure minority access to and community participation in cable television;

6) To increase the number of minority group members who are proficient in communications law.\textsuperscript{22}

In order to achieve these services BEST's method was organization as a catalytic agent in the process.

The process began with the premise that people work more effectively when they are free to utilize and develop their full potential. Direction was given only to stimulate project ideas and then transferred to the individuals who were interested in implementation, who now work out of their own sense of responsibility. The effort became theirs, and BEST assumed a supportive role. Transferring the responsibility of leadership allows individual commitment to strengthen as people become "turned on" to themselves.\textsuperscript{23}

There were two skills BEST employed in the catalytic process it developed. These skills are:

1) goal setting, which provided successes in the process of attainment as well as affording solutions that hit at the source of the problems; and

\textsuperscript{22}Unity House/BEST Proposal for Operating Funds, March, 1972.

\textsuperscript{23}Unity House Progress Report, 1969, p. 1.
2) a highly developed sensitivity so that the role change—from leader to supporter—was timely.24

This catalytic method used by BEST can be seen through its work in connection with community groups and the FCC, and this method will be used as the connecting thread throughout this dissertation.

BEST received its legal assistance from Citizen Communications Center. Albert Kramer was executive director of Citizens at the time when BEST used the services. The Ford Foundation funded Citizens Communications Center; BEST never paid them for the services they received.25

Even though BEST never had to pay Citizens, they had other expenses, including salaries and office rent. The only funding the organization received was that previously mentioned and that did not cover expenses. The organization tried unsuccessfully to secure funds from other sources, but because BEST had been labeled as a "militant" group, this proved impossible.26 So, lack of financing was the main reason BEST dissolved. Another

24Ibid., p. 2.

25Interview with William Wright; and interview with Marrissa Young, Administrative Assistant for BEST, Washington, D.C., January 21, 1974.

26Interview with Marissa Young.
contributing factor was fatigue of the personnel. The staff members had capitalized on the issue of securing more participation of Blacks in the broadcast industry and had worked many hours to achieve this goal. Four years of constant struggle with community leaders, FCC personnel, industry personnel and funding agencies was all the staff was physically able to take. It was time either for an entirely new staff or the dissolving of BEST as it had existed. The latter choice was made. The BEST personnel moved on to Cablecommunications Resource Center to tackle new frontiers, and Mr. Wright moved to California.

At present, the work of BEST has been taken over by the National Black Media Coalition. It is composed of more than forty local and regional organizations, representing Black citizens in over thirty cities. The new advocacy group's chairman is Jim McCuller, Action for a Better Community, Rochester, New York. The Coalition was formalized during a two-day conference held at the National Urban Coalition Offices in Washington in November, 1973.27

Even though BEST was plagued with financial problems, the goals the organization set were ones in which the

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personnel were greatly involved and worked diligently to achieve. The results of their work and the effects the organization had on the community groups they helped, the FCC, and the industry need review so that BEST's place as a catalytic agent in the citizens' group movement can be analyzed.

Statement of Problem

This study will seek (1) to relate the historical significance of BEST to securing participation of more consumers, especially Blacks, in the broadcasting process; and (2) to determine the effect BEST had on the Federal Communications Commission and the broadcast industry; and (3) to see what implications an organization can have for communications and mass media theory, between the years 1969-1973. BEST was chosen because its involvement constitutes an important chapter in the history of the broadcast industry, especially as it relates to the nature and function of mass media pressure groups. For this reason BEST deserves close attention and examination. Further, this study is necessary so that BEST's work can be collected in one source, and analyzed as to how it functioned, what successes it had, and the impact of the organization on the broadcast industry, FCC, and Black community groups interested in the media of radio and television.
It is instructive to note that BEST was involved in numerous activities during its existence. Three general areas provided focal points.

1. educating Blacks and other minorities to the laws which give them the right and responsibility to participate in the mass communications system;

2. identification of the broadcast industry as the target for legal confrontation by communities aware that broadcasters were not fulfilling the intent of the laws governing their licenses; and

3. petitioning the FCC to gain support for the concept of public participation in the broadcast system.²⁸

The specific objectives of this study developed from the above general areas of concern will include (1) a review of BEST and its participation in educational activities involving local communities; (2) BEST as a technical assistant in license challenges; and (3) BEST as a monitor of regulatory activities.

**Methodology**

The historical-critical method has been chosen as the principal means of analysis. This method was selected because BEST's history is being studied, and historical research is designed to discover, to correct previous

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errors in, and to interpret critically the story of such matters as objects, events, persons, and institutions. It is grounded in a knowledge of the subject through extension of known sources of information, clearer analysis of the subject, and the placing of it in more accurate perspective in time and significance. 29 This study will reflect the above criteria for using the historical method.

In developing the areas mentioned above, the following chapters have been designated.

Chapter Overviews

Chapter II will be a review of the literature. It will include general material about citizens groups and specific studies about United Church of Christ, Office of Communications and Action for Children's Television.

Chapter III will relate the educational goals of BEST and the methods BEST used to accomplish these goals through their efforts to be a catalytic agent. This section will include the activities BEST sponsored in local communities to sensitize groups to the importance of communications, and the conferences BEST participated in and sponsored.

Chapter IV is divided into two parts; one will relate BEST as a technical assistant in Black employment, helping to establish a communication school at Howard University and assisting community groups in the Washington area when they challenged WMAL-TV; and the other will relate BEST as a monitor of FCC and industry activities including the FCC 1970 Statement of Policy; BEST and the Public Interest Primer; BEST and important petitions to deny; BEST and the Black FCC commissioner; BEST and reimbursement; and BEST and the cable television industry in relation to Black participation. This section is particularly significant because it presents BEST and its activities as a catalytic agent between the larger Black community and governmental agencies, the FCC and the broadcast industry.

Chapter V will present the effects of BEST's campaign on the community groups it helped and the larger minority and Black communities, the FCC and the industry. It will also include a summary and conclusions relating BEST to its historical position as a stimulating agent in the citizens' group movement.
CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

During the period dating from 1969 many pressure groups of citizens were formed to demand concessions from the FCC and the broadcast industry. Numerous articles were written about each group and its activities, and about citizens groups in general and their impact on the broadcasting process. This discussion will present some general information about citizens groups and their impact on the broadcast industry, with specific information about the Office of Communication United Church of Christ, Action for Children's Television, and Black Efforts for Soul in Television.

Krasnow and Longley have written in *The Politics of Broadcast Regulation* that citizens groups are one of the determiners of the regulatory process in broadcasting. They list the others as the FCC, the Industry, the Courts, and the White House. This section of the book mainly speaks of citizens groups through the successes of the Office of Communication of the United Church of Christ and the WLB&T case, and the influence of former FCC Commissioner Nicholas Johnson on the citizen movement.
The long-range significance of the WLBT case was that the Court granted "standing" to those listener groups who represented a substantial number of listeners having a genuine and legitimate interest in the programming of matters of public importance.¹ This case gave inspiration to other citizens groups around the country who began to focus their efforts on representing the public before the FCC and the courts.

A brief history is given of citizens groups and how they first entered into agreements with broadcast stations through the 1969 Texarkana, Texas KTAL-TV case. In this case a petition to deny was withdrawn in exchange for a 13-point statement of policy by the station, covering employment of blacks, minority programming, news coverage, and programs dealing with controversial issues. The FCC endorsed the KTAL-TV negotiations and agreement as a preferred means by which a station could fulfill its obligation to provide service to meet community needs and interests.² The pattern was followed by the 1970 Capcities case (discussed in Chapter Four) and in the

²Ibid., p. 39.
cities of Rochester, Chicago, Fort Worth, Dallas, and Denver, to name a few.

The authors seem to give credit to Nicholas Johnson for encouraging public participation in the process of broadcast regulation. He realized the importance of public participation in the media and used his position as a FCC Commissioner and his persuasive powers to accomplish that goal.

...Until the late 1960's, the FCC had done little to promote greater participation by the public in its proceedings or to encourage a better understanding of the role citizens might play in broadcast regulation. In the late 1960's, however, Commissioner Nicholas Johnson began to use his considerable persuasive powers toward this end. Through various media, Johnson took directly to the public the issues which had been defeated by the whole Commission. At the same time he acted as a gadfly in prompting other Commissioners to take up the cause of greater public participation in broadcast regulation.³

Johnson campaigned through speeches, magazine articles, and a book, How to Talk Back to Your Television Set, to alert citizens to their rights to challenge a broadcast license at license renewal time—as it were, "to vote against or for his continuance as a station operator—which was, within the trade, the most unorthodox and

³Ibid., p. 40.
unpopular thing an FCC Commissioner had ever done.\textsuperscript{4}

Following their discussion on Johnson and his influence on the public, the authors relate the impact of the citizen group on the Fairness Doctrine and the FCC's license renewal procedures. In doing so they list with approval the following comment made by Dr. Clay Whitehead, Director of the White House Office of Telecommunications Policy at the International Radio and Television Society on October 6, 1971.

You've always had criticism from your audience but it never really mattered—you never had to satisfy them; you only had to deliver to them. Then the Rev. Everett Park read the Communications Act. You all know the outcome of the WLBT—United Church of Christ case. Once the public discovered its opportunity to participate in the Commission's processes, it became inevitable that the rusty tools of the program content control—license renewal and the Fairness Doctrine—would be taken from the FCC's hands and used by the public and courts to make you perform to their idea of the public interest.\textsuperscript{5}

The authors Krasnow and Longley emphasize the citizen group movement in its relationship to all the other elements that contribute to the regulation of the broadcasting process. They concern themselves mainly with the citizen


\textsuperscript{5}Speech by Clay T. Whitehead before the International Radio and Television Society (October 6, 1971).
group, United Church of Christ and its accomplishments, but do list a number of other groups and their objectives. These other groups include the following organizations:

Citizens Communications Center, Washington, D. C.

National Citizens Committee for Broadcasting (NCCB), Washington, D. C.

Action for Children's Television (ACT), Newton Center, Massachusetts

Black Efforts for Soul in Television (BEST), Washington, D. C.

NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund (LDF), New York, New York

Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund (MALDEF), San Francisco, California

Stern Community Law Firm, Washington, D. C.

In the book previously mentioned, How to Talk Back to Your Television Set, by Nicholas Johnson, the author comments on how the American people can make the media more responsive to them. In the chapters he discusses ways in which television influences the individual lives in society, the growing concentration of ownership and control of the mass media by the few, and the implications this control can have on the content of televised information and opinion. He also discusses the problems of

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corporate censorship, the impact of the mass media on race relations, developing communications technology, and the steps the FCC, Congress and the individual citizen might take to implement a change in the present system.  

The material in this book does not relate directly to the changes citizens groups helped implement because of its printing date, which is 1967. But it does list the formation of such groups as a means citizens might use to help change the broadcast system to parallel the public interest. The incidents he does mention in which citizens used the FCC adversary process include Seattle, Washington, where a voluntary citizen’s council brought interested people together to improve the media coverage of the Black community. At that time citizens in Chicago and Atlanta also had independently protested changes in the programming format of their favorite local stations from classical music to something more popular. John Banzhaf had also established a "fairness doctrine" requirement that broadcasters inform their audiences about the harmful effects of cigarette smoking. These incidents were occurring before more formal groups were organized such as those

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mentioned in the Krasnow and Longley book. Mr. Johnson definitely recognized the need for such groups and through his book urged citizens to organize.

Increasingly, citizens around the country are learning that the FCC's adversary process will only work if they will make it work. For you can only have an adversary process if you have adversaries.... And I think that it is, in most cases, basically healthy for listeners and viewers to be able to participate in the Commission's proceedings. It creates the reality, as well as the illusion, that it is possible to "do something" to make our seemingly intractable institutions respond to popular will, that you can fight city hall. It removes the pressure for revolutionary action that otherwise heats up without escape like infection in a boil. Finally, it should be welcomed by the vast majority of American broadcasters who are responsible, involved with their community, and who are already making efforts to obtain more audience interest in their station's programming.9

Through the influence of Nicholas Johnson in reporting to the American public that they owned the airwaves,10 formal citizens groups organized all over the country. One such well known group is the Office of Communication of the United Church of Christ. Once this denomination became involved in the broadcasting process, its publications offices printed material useful to citizen groups.

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9 Ibid., pp. 164-165.
10 Ibid., p. 15.
How to Protect Citizen Rights in Television and Radio, published by the United Church of Christ, is a pamphlet which introduces to its reader the importance of television in society and how the public can protest if it is not satisfied with what is received. It gives a general background on citizens groups, the different types of groups that have formed and why they formed. The pamphlet also discusses important events in the history of broadcasting and how they affect the citizen. The links in the chain of broadcasting mentioned in the pamphlet are The Communications Act of 1934, the FCC, the Broadcaster's Responsibility, the Fairness Doctrine, and the Fair Employment Rule.11 The missing link in the chain is the public, which the pamphlet gives instruction on how to evaluate the nature of broadcasting in the community. It also challenges the citizens to participate in the broadcasting done in their community. This being done, the pamphlet gives the success story of the United Church of Christ's KTAL-TV case which rounds out the booklet. In sum, the booklet is informative and provides considerable data to sensitize its readers to the process of broadcasting.

11 How to Protect Citizen Rights in Television and Radio, Office of Communications, United Church of Christ, pp. 5-8.
Another pamphlet published by the United Church of Christ was authored by Marsha Prowitt and is entitled Guide to Citizen Action in radio and Television. The booklet was written as a guide to enable citizens to establish two-way communication with local broadcasters. This booklet presents more information for the citizen than the booklet mentioned above, but still is clear and concise. It is also informative and relates to its readers the wide variety of remedies open to citizens to influence broadcasting, the right and obligations of all participants, and the procedures involved in getting action on a complaint. In completing the reading of the booklet one should have learned:

The difference between how the American system of broadcasting works now and how it could, and should, work—if you took part.

The most important (and enforceable) FCC policies and standards that concern you as a viewer.

The highlights of successful actions brought by concerned viewers who have used their rights to affect or change broadcast programming and practice.

The proper form and procedures necessary to make your voice effectively heard in broadcasting. 

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The booklet is a guide to citizens on where to find useful materials, and organizations that might be of help. It can be stated that this particular booklet by Prowitt is a "how-to-do-it" manual for citizens.

The FCC also published material which includes the results of actions they have taken that affect the citizens groups. In general, the actions occurred because of citizen group protest and the FCC is responding to these protests by producing manuals for the public with its final decisions. One such manual is the Public in Broadcasting: A Procedure Manual. The purpose of the manual is to outline procedures available to the concerned citizen and to provide information and practical advice concerning their use. The manual gives a more technical guide to citizens and would be informative for lawyers of citizens groups and community leaders, for it explains all the legal matters that might arise when a group challenges a licensee. The outline of the manual follows:

Proceedings Involving Particular Applicants and Licensees

Initiating a Proceeding

Complaints generally
Political broadcasting
Fairness doctrine
Personal attacks
Political editorials

Participation in Applications Proceedings
General
Informal objection
Petition to deny

Participation in a Hearing Proceeding

Rule Making

Petition for rule making
Rule making without prior notice and public procedure.
Rule making with prior notice and public procedure.
Petition for waiver of a rule.

Reference Materials\(^{13}\)

All of the headings are explained to the fullest extent and in terms that the citizen groups could understand or have explained by their lawyer. It is also a "how-to-do-it" manual, more legal in nature than the Provitt manual—justifiably so, since it is published by the FCC.

BEST published a manual entitled **Guidelines for Community Demands Against Local Broadcasters**. This short manual gives the citizen group a guide on what they should attack when challenging a licensee, how to compile the facts and data about the station, how to discover if the station has correctly and appropriately ascertained the community needs and interests, how to check for concentration of media control of the broadcast and print media,

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whether the station has legally practiced the Fairness Doctrine, and if the station editorialized.

The manual also gives examples about how the FCC handled certain cases involving ascertainment of the community interest, and a licensee. This manual is also a "how to" piece of material. However, it is in outline form and relatively free from excess words and explanations.

Along with the manuals and books written to help citizens groups develop their expertise, articles have been written about their progress and the successes they have had. The articles are usually about how a citizens group or groups affected some FCC or industry proposal.

"Blacks Challenge the Airwaves" by Phyl Garland was an article that appeared in Ebony which gave a brief history of Black participation in the media up to 1970. The story was told in pictures and print. The article details how Blacks have worked to get more Blacks hired in the industry and more Black-oriented shows. The programs that had been aired on television at that time on the national and local levels were "Black Journal," "Harambe," "Black Experience in Sound," "Soul," and "On Being Black," to name a few.14 The citizens group that

was listed as a coordinator of the Black activities was BEST. The broadcasting activities in which BEST was involved that helped the Black community at that time were the WMAL-TV case in Washington, D. C. and the controversial Bill S. 2004 introduced by Senator John Pastore. At this time BEST had also led the fight for a Black FCC Commissioner. In describing the purpose of BEST, the article asserts that "BEST hopes to educate the public as to what rights they have under law and to show people in communities throughout the country that they too can file petitions to ensure better programming and employment practices on the part of the broadcasters in their areas."  

Progress reports of Black citizens groups in different parts of the country were given. A California coalition of community groups was investigating cable TV, while in Chicago a committee was mapping strategy to reinstate a cancelled Black serial. In Atlanta a coalition of community groups was pressuring to get more Blacks into the local media. The article was a general reporting of what Blacks had done to involve themselves in the media, and the obstacles they faced during the process.

15 Ibid., p. 36.
Another article giving the progress of Blacks in the media appeared in *Newsweek* in 1972. The main thrust of this article was Black participation in cable, and the problems Blacks have had in getting cable franchises from city councils and state legislatures.\textsuperscript{16} Mention was also made of the Black FCC Commissioner, Benjamin Hooks and the Mutual Black Network News. The brief essay, moreover, pointed out that Black power doubtless will come to broadcasting when a nationwide network of Black television stations is established, but until that time the Mutual Black Network News on radio is a start.\textsuperscript{17}

* Broadcasting magazine, which often does special reports on different aspects of the media, developed a study on the struggle over who would have access to the media. The results of this report appeared in two parts during 1971 and was an analysis of all citizens groups and their activities involving broadcast access. The article asserted:

> It is hard to find a community of any size without its organizations of blacks, chicanos, Latinos, liberated women, activist mothers or other concerned types negotiating for stronger representation in broadcasting.... Thus far the movement has produced some 50 petitions to deny license renewals. It has


\textsuperscript{17} Ibid.
also led to settlements with scores of stations that agreed to change their practices.\textsuperscript{18}

According to the article all the protesters were disappointed with the media and wanted their interests, their needs and their points of view expressed.

Still other citizens groups have exerted pressure. In Columbus, Ohio, Tony Rocciano, coordinator of a group of Blacks, had filed petitions to deny the license renewals of eight stations. The group wanted more Blacks in policy making positions, more Black programs, better reporting of Blacks in the news, and input from the Black community. Similarly, Diane Watson of the National Organization of Women felt degraded by television, and her group wanted commercials to stop patronizing women. Regelio Flores of the coalition of chicanos wanted television to stop portraying Mexicans as being bean-eating, tortilla-bending, slow, lazy individuals.\textsuperscript{19}

In general the complaints of all the groups concerned news coverage of minority communities, special in-depth programs dealing with programs of particular concern to them (poverty, economic development, special cultural


interests), and the broadcast of their public-service announcements. In terms of employment, the community groups were seeking jobs for their members in all categories, but particularly as newsmen on the camera, and anchormen, in the public affairs department and in other high level jobs.\textsuperscript{20}

Another series of articles about what citizens groups have done to receive more access to the media appeared in \textit{T-V Guide} in 1973. The articles deal with the fear local broadcasters have because of the citizens groups. The author, Martin Mayer, in discussing how some of the citizens groups that have developed are not exactly honest in their approach, noted that all types of people are challenging licenses; some for public benefit, and others for profit.\textsuperscript{21} The article does, however, mention the legitimate gains citizens groups made in broadcasting to that date. Two of the biggest transactions made in 1971 were the Capcities and McGraw Hill actions. Note-worthy concessions were made to community groups in these cases. The citizens groups involved, it would appear, sincerely wanted a chance to participate in the production of minority programs.

\textsuperscript{20}\textit{Ibid.}, pp. 32, 35.

Along with the more general information about citizens' groups, there has been some time devoted to studying one particular group and its effectiveness and impact on the industry. Two such studies have been completed in the last three years: "The Office of Communication: The Participant Advocate--Its Function as a Citizen Group,"\textsuperscript{22} by Ernest Phelps; and "Commercialism and the Quality of Children's TV Programs: An Analysis of Responses to the Proposals of Action for Children's Television--February 1970 to January 1973,"\textsuperscript{23} by Alan Leach. The following discussion will make use of these two works, briefly highlighting the successes of the citizens' groups under study.

The Office of Communication is credited with pioneering community group-station negotiations since it had the most experience in the monitoring procedures.\textsuperscript{24} The primary accomplishments of the Office of Communication, 

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{22} Ernest Phelps, "The Office of Communication: The Participant Advocate--Its Function as a Citizen Group" (Unpublished dissertation, The Ohio State University, 1971).
\item \textsuperscript{23} Alan Leach, "Commercialism and the Quality of Children's TV Programs: An Analysis of Responses to the Proposals of Action for Children's Television--February 1970 to January 1973" (Unpublished dissertation, The Ohio State University, 1973).
\item \textsuperscript{24} Nicholas Johnson, How to Talk Back to Your Television Set (New York: Bantam Books), pp. 64, 196, 200.
\end{itemize}
according to Phelps, included:

1. the initiation and prosecution of the landmark WLBT case which established the legal precedent for citizen group participation in the FCC decision making process.

2. providing legal, research, financial and educational counsel in the KTAL case, thereby establishing a pattern for agreement between licensee and community groups which is widely used.

3. the petitioning the FCC to issue a rule banning discrimination in employment against minorities has had major impact upon the broadcasting industry.

4. the organization of a non-profit corporation, Communications Improvement Inc., which is licensed by the FCC as interim operator for the vacated channel, Jackson, Mississippi, once held by WLBT.

5. a continuing program of social action to combat extremist viewpoints in controversial issues of public importance in broadcasting which has had national implication.  

Because of the above accomplishments and importance of the citizen group movement in broadcasting, the author felt it necessary to investigate the Office of Communication of the United Church of Christ and its function as a citizen group in broadcasting from the years March 1964-March 1971. He chose to research the social, regulatory and legal impact and implications of the Office's activities, its relationships with other major organizations.

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involved in similar social activity, its function as both participant advocate and counseling center in the citizen group movement, and the direction of the future program and project trends in the public interest area of the mass media.  

The Office of Communication functioned at two levels: first as a participant advocate in the landmark WLBT case; and second, as a counseling service in its major programs which challenged discrimination of minority groups by broadcast stations and extremism in broadcast programming. It was successful in these ventures because its structure is flexible and capable of adjusting to sudden change, and because of experience in the media which has been gained through its innovative programs.

In further describing the successes of the Office of Communication, the author relates the programs and projects in social action between the dates studied.

WLBT, Jackson, Mississippi. This case study represents the Office's initial attempt to challenge discrimination against minorities in radio and television. Its most important contribution was on a national level...The awarding of standing before the FCC for the Office of Communication established the legal precedent upon which all following citizen

26 Ibid., p. 4.
27 Ibid., p. 181.
group action is based.\textsuperscript{28}

The Communication Improvement, Inc. This project is representative of the Office's flexibility and willingness to introduce innovative and imaginative programs. It represented an opportunity to accomplish a truly community oriented broadcast facility, local community control over the decision-making processes of a broadcast facility, an opportunity to counter the negative image which Jackson acquired during the civil rights activities of the 1960's and the WLBT case, and an opportunity to establish a sweeping new concept for the FCC's license renewal procedures.\textsuperscript{29}

\textit{KTAL, Texarkana, Texas...}KTAL established three precedents, and brought about the introduction of a fourth. First, the pattern for face-to-face community group-station management agreements was established. Second, the inclusion of the agreement in the license renewal application brought the FCC into the action without requiring a Commission ruling. Third, the agreement called for regular meetings between representatives of the coalition and KTAL's management...Most importantly, these new concepts were brought about without litigation and without involving the FCC until the agreement was complete. This point apparently strengthened the Office position with the Commission.\textsuperscript{30}

The Atlanta Blanket Petition Action. This situation was, for the Office of Communication, the least successful venture in which it took part. The Office field staff representatives were unable to organize the black groups into a meaningful coalition.\textsuperscript{31}

\textsuperscript{28}Ibid., pp. 184-5.
\textsuperscript{29}Ibid., p. 186.
\textsuperscript{30}Ibid., pp. 187-8.
\textsuperscript{31}Ibid., p. 189.
KAYE. The project to combat political extremism has had limited success. It requires a strong landmark decision by the FCC to provide the degree of support necessary to make an effective national movement in broadcast reform. The single most successful project is the KAYE case. The Office provided the Puget Sound Committee for Good Broadcasting with the necessary resources to bring the station to an evidentiary hearing before the FCC. 32

The successful outcomes of the Office of Communications would lead one to believe that this citizens group was a major impetus in organizing other groups. The precedents set by the cases helped the other groups legally and the successes aided the groups spiritually. The following is a summary of the work of the Office by the author which captures its impact and effectiveness.

The Office of Communication's function as a counseling service for citizen groups has established a pattern which is followed on a nationwide basis....the Office has made a major contribution to society's awareness of the social implications of the mass media. The Office's action has brought community groups and broadcast station licensees together; in many instances for the first time. The Office's support functions have provided a counseling service not readily available before the program was undertaken in 1964. National and ethnic minorities have followed the patterns developed by the Office to bring about social pressure on local stations. Concerned community organizations have received help from the Office in making

32Ibid., p. 190.
themselves heard in the communications industry. The Commission has agreed with the Office's petitions to ensure fair employment practices in broadcasting. During a critical period in America's social history the Office of Communication has aided the public in asserting its responsibility in the mass communications media.\textsuperscript{33}

In general, the organization served very successfully as a citizens group member. It affected the FCC policy and set precedents which helped other groups. The authors' description of the Office of Communications as a participant advocate in the citizens groups movement was established. It is still a viable organization and apparently serves the public adequately.

\textbf{Action for Children's Television} has been responsible, in large measure, for giving rise to renewed concern over the effects of children's television programs and the commercials which they contain on their young audience.\textsuperscript{34} It has been one of the most successful citizens groups in the movement and the Leach study discusses the organization as it relates to the responses ACT received from their proposals. The study analyzes the ways ACT developed its strategy, the issues ACT raised, \textsuperscript{35} 

\textsuperscript{33}\textit{Ibid.}, p. 193.

\textsuperscript{34}Alan Leach, "Commercialism and the Quality of Children's TV Programs: An Analysis of Responses to the Proposals of Action for Children's Television--February 1970 to January 1973," p. 1.
the activities ACT participated in as part of their strategy, and the responses these activities received from broadcasters, sponsors, other citizen groups, and the general public.\textsuperscript{35} ACT had a two-pronged campaign to secure better programming for children. The first was geared towards securing government regulation of children's programming and advertising, and the second was directed toward educating the public about the problem.

The program content issues raised by ACT concerned:

1) the amount of programming available for children, 2) the diversity of programming as to content (drama, comedy, adventure, culture, education/information), production technique (live-on-tape, film, animation), and source (local, network, syndication), 3) the degree to which programs are designed for a specific age group (age specificity), and 4) the extent to which children's programs are aired when children are likely to be watching TV (responsive scheduling).

...the advertising...issues raised by ACT before the FCC concerned 1) the amount of advertising permitted on children's shows, 2) the alleged misrepresentation of products in children's commercials, 3) the manipulation of the child by the advertiser, stemming from the child's naive perception of commercials, 4) the family stress which these spots allegedly engender, 5) the allegedly high price and inferior quality of heavily promoted TV toys and other products (over-pricing), and 6) host selling.\textsuperscript{36}

\textsuperscript{35}\textit{Ibid.}, p. 3.

\textsuperscript{36}\textit{Ibid.}, pp. 53-54.
These demands were taken to a hearing that representatives of ACT had with the FCC commissioners. It was a success and the Commission accepted the petition for issuance of a Notice of Proposed Rule Making. Then ACT ran into opposition from the industry and took its demands to the Federal Trade Commission and the Congress. An "Inquiry" was scheduled at the FCC on the issues of ACT and its opposition. However, the FCC, at the completion of the study had not ruled on the case.

ACT has been successful during its existence in making the FCC, the broadcast industry, and the people aware of the poor services being rendered to children through television. However, the types of programming on television have changed little. Leach comments:

...the area where ACT's case appears to be the strongest,...backed as it is by research data and by professional opinion, has seen very little change, on the network level, at least. Some of the violence has been removed, but the upgrading of what was left has been minimal, over the period with which we are concerned, with but few exceptions. The children's programming chiefs seem quite sincere in their desire to improve, but they are restricted by directives from their superiors in the network hierarchy and by sponsors' less than total commitment to "quality" programming.

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37Ibid., p. 59.
In the advertising area, ACT's case before the FCC and the FTC was somewhat weaker, notably on the issues of perception and overpricing. On the perception issue, its arguments were reasonably persuasive in regard to preschoolers, backed as they were, by near unanimity of opinion from child experts. For the older child, however, ACT's arguments on the perception issue are less sound. Child professionals are more prone to disagree on the vulnerability of the six to twelve year-old.  

Even though the programs for children on television have been modified only slightly, the public is aware of their shortcomings and can support groups like ACT to push for better programming. Also, the need for more extensive research on children of all ages, how they are affected by the commercials they see on television, and the types of programs they watch is apparent. ACT's campaign may not have been successful legally, but the fact that they dared to expose the inferior children's programming being aired on television is an accomplishment the FCC, the broadcast industry, and the parents will never forget. Their voice has been heard, even though response is slow. 

In conclusion, this section of the chapter has related a study of the United Church of Christ Office of Communications and how it related to the Citizens groups movement as a participant advocate. The study told the

\[38\text{bid., pp. 275-77.}\]
story of the Office and the successes and failures it had during the period of the WLBT case of the 1960's to the year 1971. The Leach study of ACT was of its particular struggle to upgrade children's programming and omit advertising on such programs.

The study included in these pages will be of a citizens group and how it related to the citizens group movement as a catalytic agent between the FCC, the industry, and the minority community people, especially Blacks. None of the other groups mentioned in the Krasnow book were concerned directly with Black problems in the mass media; therefore Black Efforts for Soul in Television took this as its only mission.

There is little literature specifically concerned with BEST's campaign, other than press accounts. There appears to be little research aimed at analyzing BEST's activities, strategies, the issues which it has raised, and the responses to those activities and issues from the FCC, the industry, and the Black community. This dissertation hopefully should begin to fill that gap.

**Chapter Summary**

This chapter has presented a review of some of the literature that relates generally to citizens groups, and how they should work to achieve their goals. Specifically,
the chapter has presented examples of two studies of citizens groups which have used the information to elicit changes in the broadcasting process in this country.

The next chapter will present the educational goals of BEST and the methods BEST used to accomplish these goals through their insistence on being a catalytic agent in the citizens group movement.
CHAPTER III

BEST AND ITS EDUCATIONAL SERVICE

Community groups often contacted BEST because they were dissatisfied either with the way Blacks were being treated by the media or by the failure of the media to respond positively to the needs of the Black and minority communities. These community groups were often not aware of what really could be done to satisfy their complaints. Therefore, one of the main services that BEST provided to the people was that of educating them to the means and methods of using the regulatory process to get more extensive access to the media. "The educational function of BEST combined informing groups of their rights, outlining strategies available to exercise these rights and encouraging the group to take appropriate action."\(^1\) BEST also participated in and sponsored conferences and provided informational service to local groups.

In every city BEST entered by request of a community group, it educated and sensitized the group by sending materials relating to the regulatory process, or it sent

\(^1\) Unity House/BEST Progress Report, January, 1972, p. 2.
a representative, or a representative from a group already assisted by BEST was present. BEST did not file the petitions but helped the community groups develop their expertise and knowledge of the media. This method is unlike the Communications Department of the United Church of Christ, which did not follow this strategy.\textsuperscript{2} United Church of Christ usually filed petitions for the groups it helped; again, BEST was a catalytic agent in the citizens' group movement. Some of the cities in which BEST helped groups include Chicago, St. Louis, Rochester, Newark, and Columbus, Ohio.

The Black Strategy Center of Chicago asked the BEST personnel to conduct a seminar in the area on how to get more access to the broadcasting industry for Black people. The members of BEST who attended the seminar were Bill Wright, Ted Ledbetter, and Tony Rocciano.\textsuperscript{3} During the seminar the group was given a time-table on when and how to file a petition to deny, the structure of the petition, resources, use of the BEST files, and sample petitions from Columbus, Ohio and Atlanta, and generally the spiritual inspiration that was needed. The people in Chicago

\textsuperscript{2}Interview with William Wright, National Coordinator of BEST, Washington, D. C., January 24, 1974.

\textsuperscript{3}Interview with William Wright; and Telephone interview with Harold Lee, Task Force for Community Broadcasting and Black Strategy Center, Chicago, Illinois, May 10, 1974.
were really unaware of what they could do and this seminar opened their eyes to all the possibilities. 4

The Black groups in Chicago were aided by two white groups. They were the Citizens Committee on Broadcasting and the Better Broadcasting Council. Together these groups challenged the licenses of six stations. They were CBS-TV-AM, the ABC affiliate WLS-TV-AM-FM, and WCFL-AM. 5 Agreements were accepted from the CBS and ABC stations because the manpower available from the community became harder to find. However, in the case of WCFL-AM things were different. The petition was discarded and an appeal was made which caused the FCC to recall the case because of the overwhelming deliberate misrepresentation of the programming classifications. A hearing is set for late May or Early June, 1974. 6

The demands by the combined Black and white groups included ascertainment, programming for the population area served, employment (no special quotas, or specific job titles), how the station spent its money, and more

4 Telephone interview with Harold Lee.


6 Telephone interview with Harold Lee.
participation in the station's activities by the community.\(^7\)

The group in St. Louis was composed of both Blacks and whites. It "provided the St. Louis Broadcasting Coalition with materials that related the regulatory processes and remained in contact with the group during the challenge process."\(^8\) Unlike other cities, in St. Louis, BEST only provided information and did not hold workshops for community leaders.\(^9\)

In Rochester the citizens group is the Rochester Broadcasting Coalition. Its founder and chairman is James McCuller, who is also the present chairman of the National Black Media Coalition. BEST helped the Rochester group through the information it provided on tactics and ways to secure more access to the broadcast industry. BEST also alerted that group to the national activities in which the Rochester group should participate--monitoring the FCC, and supporting a Black FCC commissioner.\(^10\)

\(^7\) Telephone interview with Harold Lee.
\(^8\) Unity House/BEST Communications Project, p. 3.
\(^9\) Telephone interview with Nancy Schmidt, St. Louis Broadcasting Coalition, St. Louis, Mo., May 10, 1974.
The relationship between the Rochester group and BEST began in 1972 when BEST held a meeting in Washington to inform different community groups around the country about the importance of broadcasting to Black people. At that time the Rochester Broadcasting Coalition had filed fourteen petitions to deny against local Rochester stations. Presently, the organization is waiting on the FCC decision on the cases. From the work the Rochester group has done, Black programming has increased in Rochester over the past two years (1972-1974) from "sixty five minutes, to six hundred minutes and Black employment has increased from fourteen to twenty-one,"\textsuperscript{11} according to Dave Honig, second in command to McCuller.

In Newark BEST did not help the local group challenge a station's license, but assisted the Committee for a United Newark, who has as its spiritual leader Imamu Baraka. BEST provided basic information on alternatives to the use of commercial broadcasting, Cable, and also provided information on how to involve Blacks in the media at the employment and production levels. The Committee was able to establish a studio which began to train people

\textsuperscript{11}Ibid.
for positions in broadcasting.\textsuperscript{12}

In Columbus, Ohio in August, 1970 Tony Rocciano requested that BEST sponsor a workshop weekend. BEST sent a team which included Albert Kramer, Carolyn Vance, and William Wright to assist Columbus.\textsuperscript{13} The Coalition had used the services of BEST several times as a resource; however, at this point in the Coalition's struggle it needed the manpower of the organization. BEST personnel and Al Kramer directed the writing of the petitions to deny and provided "feeling, inspiration, technical information, support, and legal counsel"\textsuperscript{14} to the Coalition.

As a result of this weekend, with the assistance of BEST, the Columbus Broadcasting Coalition challenged RadiOhio (WBNS-AM-FM-TV), Taft Broadcasting (WTVN-AM-TV, WBUK), and Great Trails Broadcasting (WCOL-AM-FM) when

\textsuperscript{12}Telephone interview with member of Committee for United Newark, Newark, N. J., June 16, 1974. Member would not give name.

\textsuperscript{13}Interview with Carolyn Vance, Research Assistant at BEST, Washington, D. C., January 15, 1974.

\textsuperscript{14}Interview with James Robinson, Columbus Broadcasting Coalition, Columbus, Ohio, May 10, 1974.
their licenses came up for renewal in September, 1970.\textsuperscript{15} The petitions to deny were filed and the Columbus Stations operated on temporary licenses until September, 1973. During this time a change was made in the stations' personnel and programming.\textsuperscript{16} There were no Blacks hired for jobs in management;\textsuperscript{17} however, the talent and public affairs areas were filled with several Blacks. All of the stations have at least one Black who is on the news team. The WBNS station has one who occasionally anchors the weekly 7:00 news and handles the complete news on Sundays. Most of the Blacks are seen as sportscasters and weathermen. However, they are also reporting special news stories. There is a traineeship at WLW-C (not a challenged station, but one that made needed changes in programming and personnel). Black students from the Ohio State University have attended. The WLW-C station also

\textsuperscript{15}Interview with Anthony Rocciano, Coordinator of the Columbus Broadcasting Coalition, Columbus, Ohio, April, 1971; also see Columbus Broadcasting Coalition, Rap Back, November 30, 1970, p. 3; "Area Stations Targets Of Black Action," Columbus Dispatch, September 1, 1970, p. 8B; and Kenneth Cox, "Black Groups Attack Local Broadcasting," Columbus, Ohio Citizen Journal, September 2, 1970, p. 2.

\textsuperscript{16}Seen by the writer through observation of Columbus, Ohio television for the past three and one-half years.

\textsuperscript{17}Interview with James Robinson.
has a Black newscaster on its 6:00 news.

The basic needs and concerns of the Coalition were divided into five parts which were employment and job training, programming, ascertainment, advertising, and other areas of concern. The Coalition had numerous specific concerns under each major one and they all can be located in Appendix V. From viewing the challenged stations during the three-year period that they had temporary licenses, it can be seen that the stations did begin to satisfy the Coalition's demands on most issues. An evolution is clearly visible, but much work still can be done. The Coalition's work was a start. Presently, the group that is attempting to begin work where the Coalition left off is the Columbus chapter of Operation Push which is headed by the Reverend Cameron Jackson. ¹⁸

When speaking with a member of the WBNS staff about the effects of the Coalition's actions, I was told he was unable to respond because that station is still involved in litigation with the Coalition. Interviews were secured from Fred Von Stode, general manager and Pat Cramer, public affairs director of WTVN-TV; and Ann Walker, community service director of WLW-C, the unchallenged station.

¹⁸Interview with James Robinson.
Mr. Von Stode felt that in relation to his station, the Coalition affected the programming and employment of WTVN-TV. After the challenge WTVN began having more programming related to minorities. Minorities, women, and the handicapped were always employed at the station, but after the challenge more were employed. A new department was formed, the Community Service Director. This person, who works with the radio and television stations, is a Black woman. The station also began to ascertain the public interest of the entire city more extensively. This was as a result of the Coalition challenge and the FCC. In conjunction with this ascertainment, the station sponsors the First Thursday Luncheon which gives the station personnel an opportunity to speak directly with community people. The majority of these luncheons are with minority people. A training program for engineers was also initiated and has trained four Blacks and one woman.19 Mr. Von Stode seemed very interested in new ideas for the station and revealed an attitude of openness in the interview. However, this station, according to Mr. Rocciano and Mr. Robertson of the Coalition, was one of the most difficult during the negotiation process.

19Interview with Fred Von Stode, General Manager WTVN-TV, Columbus, Ohio, June 25, 1974; and interview with Pat Cramer, Public Affairs Director WTVN-TV, Columbus, Ohio, June 25, 1974.
When a group of stations are challenged in a city and one is not, the one not challenged usually attempts to improve its service to the community. This was the case with WLW-C in Columbus. The station was not challenged largely because of one Black lady, Mrs. Ann Walker. At the time of the license challenges she was the only Black employee in a responsible position at the station, that of Community Affairs Director. Now there "are seventeen Black employees out of 104."20 The Coalition felt that because of Mrs. Walker and the programs she initiated, WLW-C was making an effort to have an on-going program to help minorities and Blacks in the Columbus area.21

Two of the programs at the station for minorities and women were initiated by Mrs. Walker. They are the Field Work Student Summer Plan, and the Student Trainee Program. The first one lasts for an entire quarter and the student gets school credit. The second program covers four weeks and gives the minority person participating an introduction to the commercial end of broadcasting. The schedules for these programs can be found in Appendix VI.

20Interview with Ann Walker, Community Affairs Director WLW-C, Columbus, Ohio, July 1, 1974.

21Ibid.
The results of the Columbus Broadcasting Coalition's efforts through the assistance of BEST, for just one weekend, can be viewed as having very positive results. BEST was able to educate the members of the Coalition in such a way that the Coalition was successful in acquiring most of its demands. The Coalition did all the monitoring and handled the conferences with the licensees, while BEST personnel helped with the writing of the petitions.\footnote{Interview with James Robinson; and interview with Anthony Rocciano.} From the experience the Coalition had with filing its own petitions and the preparation that was required to monitor the stations involved, the Coalition members sent a team to Chicago.\footnote{Interview with Harold Lee; and interview with James Robinson; Unity House/BEST Communications Project, p. 3.} BEST, by being a catalyst between the Columbus stations and the Coalition, was able to train the Coalition members and help others. The Coalition, in turn, became a stimulating force and worked with the Chicago group in arranging a workshop conference. The result was the previously mentioned challenge of the CBS- and ABC-owned radio and television stations in the Chicago area.
BEST Workshops

In addition to the educational services the BEST organization offered to communities, they participated in workshops to acquaint further the Black community with the broadcasting process.

As a result of the workshops held by BEST at the Congress of African People in September, 1970, Pluria Marshall asked BEST to speak to the Houston Operation Bread Basket. Mr. Marshall (executive director of Operation Bread Basket) was also chairman of the Houston Broadcast Coalition, which Mr. Wright was responsible for helping the Black citizens of Houston form.

In a response to the request of Mr. Marshall, BEST sent Mr. Wright to Houston. His task while in Houston was to conduct workshops and seminars with community groups and aid the groups in developing skills to deal effectively with the local Houston broadcasters.24 In doing this the community group was provided with the "grassroots type of direction"25 that was necessary to develop a Black perspective and instill in the people what was needed to get the

24 Unity House/BEST Communications Project, p. 3.

job of challenging a licensee done.\textsuperscript{26}

From this initial visit by Bill Wright, the Houston group was inspired to continue study and develop their knowledge and expertise about broadcasting. Thus, in 1971 they successfully challenged radio stations KYOK and KCOH in Houston. The stations were to serve the Black community completely, but they were failing in their focus of being Black-oriented. The demands were that the news staff be expanded, that the programming should include 70\% local news, both stations should play jazz in prime time, that deceptive advertisers were no longer patronized, and that "rip-off" furniture and appliance companies were not to be allowed to advertise on either station.\textsuperscript{27} All of the demands were met.

The Houston group has now changed its name to Black Citizens for Media Access, and they are in the process of filing license challenges against television stations whose renewal date is August 1974.

Mr. Marshall has responded to the help BEST and Bill Wright gave the Houston group by the following statement:

\textsuperscript{26}Ibid.

\textsuperscript{27}Interview with Pluria Marshall; also see "Blacks Object to Soul Station," \textit{Broadcasting}, July 5, 1971, p. 45.
We all feel deeply indebted to BEST and Bill Wright because he gave to us the kind of solid foundation to carry on and pass on to other younger Black folk who are interested in this same area. We feel that without that direction we still would be floundering around through all of the rhetoric instead of being pointed in the direction of where the work is that could provide results.28

BEST had extensive dealings with the Virginia Human Relations Commission and provided it with materials. With the assistance and participation of BEST, a conference was arranged with the community groups and the Richmond broadcasters. As a result, according to the BEST files, a dialogue developed between the community people of Richmond and the broadcasters.29 The author was unable to receive verification of this claim from a member of the Commission.

Along with the workshops BEST held for different community groups, it worked to sensitize numerous Black groups to the importance of communications to the minority communities. One important goal of BEST as an educational catalyst was to sensitize national organizations in the early seventies to the great effect the media has on society, especially the Black segment of society. BEST contacted leaders of national Black organizations who were concerned with Black equality. The contacts were

28Interview with Pluria Marshall.
made in the hope that these organizations would see the importance of the media and its relationship to the advancement of their objectives.

During the years 1970-1972 BEST worked closely with the president of the National Urban Coalition, who is Carl Holman. The Coalition was and is interested in helping new organizations like BEST develop in whatever capacity they can. Therefore, when BEST approached the Coalition, according to Florence Tate—Communications Director of the National Urban Coalition, it assisted the organization in developing their program and allowed BEST to use their resources whenever necessary. In the fall of 1971, according to the BEST files, it "conducted a workshop for the Washington, D. C. chapter directors on how they could become involved with broadcasting and CATV development in their local chapters." BEST had an on-going communication with the National Black Caucus. When the twelve Congressmen were unable to respond to a Presidential address by Richard Nixon, BEST aided them in their attempt to utilize the Fairness

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30 Telephone interview with Florence Tate, Communications Director of the National Urban Coalition, Washington, D. C., May 13, 1974.

31 Unity House/BEST Communications Project, January, 1972, p. 6.
Doctrine. However, all the efforts were in vain and the attempt was unsuccessful.

The Caucus under the direction of William Clay of Missouri conducted research and developed its own report on the media—Black Congressional Caucus Report on the Media—which contains vital information and statistics on Black employment, and general participation of Blacks in the media. From this point on the Caucus has actively participated in trying to secure more participation of Blacks in the media. The Caucus as one of its activities testifies before the FCC. In March, 1972 it charged the FCC with not assuring the full participation of all people in the media. From this two-day hearing the Caucus urged "the formation of local media watchdog committees working with lawyers to document unfair practices of hiring, promotion, and coverage involving Black Americans." The Caucus wanted the watchdog groups not only to monitor the fairness of the industry but file petitions

\[\text{32} \text{Black Scholar, Vol. 5, No. 1 (September, 1973), pp. 2-3.}\]


\[\text{34} \text{Ibid.; see also "Blacks Rap the Media," Broadcasting (March 13, 1972), p. 44.}\]
to deny against stations and file lawsuits against broadcasters and print media.

Wayman Wright, National Business League, was formerly the Public Relations Director of the Caucus. He verifies the relationship of BEST and the Caucus. During his stay with the Caucus he planned hearings where Bill Wright testified about the media and its relationship to Blacks. In other capacities BEST served the Caucus as a resource on anything related to broadcasting.\textsuperscript{35}

Conferences

In addition to alerting groups or leaders to the importance of communications, BEST also planned or helped organize conferences. It also participated in several.

In January, 1972, BEST helped design a media conference for a group of Black community leaders from across the country. This was the same conference that acquainted the Rochester group with BEST mentioned earlier in the chapter. The conference's purpose was to bring together: "...people in various areas of communication—production, advertising, education, ownership and community

\textsuperscript{35}Interview with Wayman Wright, National Business League, Past Public Relations Director of the Congressional Black Caucus, Washington, D. C., June 24, 1974.
organizing—to develop an overall understanding of the common problems and the need for unified action.\textsuperscript{36} BEST also provided information to the participants on how to challenge the regulatory processes.

BEST participated in numerous conferences. Another important one is related later in the discussion of cable. Some of the other conferences include "The National Conference on Youth, the Beardsley Ruml Colloquium of the University of Chicago and Federal City College." Television appearances included "Black News" WTTG, Washington; "Harambee" WTOP, Washington; "David Eaton Show" WRC, Washington, and "Black Journal" NET, New York.\textsuperscript{37}

BEST, through its educational services, provided much information for groups around the country. These services have aided the communities in challenging local broadcasters to better the service provided to the Black community. The community members see only the results of BEST work through more Blacks on the air, more and sometimes better local Black programs, non-partisan reporting of news about Blacks, and more Blacks in policy making.

\textsuperscript{36}Unity House/BEST Communications Project, January, 1972, p. 7.

\textsuperscript{37}Ibid., pp. 8-10; and interview with William Wright.
positions at stations. The workshops and conferences sponsored by BEST to sensitize consumers to the power of the broadcasting industry and its effect on each individual life in this country was a service greatly needed in the Black community. The sensitizing process helped to bring greater awareness and understanding to community people, and leaders of organizations so that they could first see what they were being denied and then see how they could work to change the broadcasting system to better the Black community.

BEST through its educational services can be seen as a catalyst between station owners and community leaders and organizations, community groups and their ignorance of the broadcasting process, and community leaders and their constituents. From interviews with people involved in community groups all over this country reported in this dissertation further support is given to this analysis. As William Wright says, "BEST was the resource from which many hundreds of Black people all over this country were made aware of the broadcasting process."

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38 Interview with David Honig; interview with Harold Lee; interview with James Robinson; and interview with Pluria Marshall.

39 Interview with William Wright.
Chapter Summary

This chapter has presented BEST as an educational and sensitizing organization. It included the activities BEST sponsored in local communities to make groups aware of the importance of communications, conferences BEST sponsored and participated in, and the informational services BEST provided. BEST helped in the license challenges discussed in this chapter because the community groups asked for their assistance.

The next chapter will present BEST activities as a technical assistant in Black employment and establishing a communications school at Howard University. It will include BEST and its efforts to monitor the activities of the FCC and the industry. The license challenges presented in this chapter are those where BEST monitored the FCC and the industry, then contacted community people who could reply to the particular action.
CHAPTER IV

BEST AND ITS TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE AND MONITORING
OF THE FCC AND INDUSTRY

Along with the educational services BEST provided to the Black communities, it also sent technical assistants to groups interested in Black employment. BEST was also one of the main forces that helped develop a communications resource center for Blacks at Howard University, in the form of the communications school.

In keeping with the goals of the organization, BEST found it imperative to involve itself in the workings of the FCC and the industry. Through its participation in these activities the organization gained respect from the FCC and the industry and developed political clout as a pressure group. One such activity which made students of communication aware of BEST was the FCC 1970 Statement of Policy. BEST was a constant monitor of the FCC and the industry activities, surveying their potential effects on the Black community. From this BEST remained alert to any action by either of these agencies that would prove to affect the minority, especially Black communities. This
gave BEST the ability to inform communities when it was apparent that a petition to deny was needed to stop an action of the industry.

There have been several activities in which BEST allegedly participated which will be deleted from this manuscript because the incidents could not be verified with outside sources. In some instances, potential sources did not answer letters or return telephone calls. A clear picture of the effects BEST had can, hopefully, still be ascertained from the information included.

**BEST As a Technical Assistant**

BEST, through its direct contact with community groups all over the country, developed a method of providing technical assistance to them. Naturally, the methods differed with the group, problem, and location. In general the following outline was developed and executed by BEST personnel.

1. The educational function (outlined in chapter one), brings the group to a maximum level of awareness, and motivates them to take action;

2. A station research team is designed to document the performance of the stations and any specific grievances. BEST explains the type of facts to look for, where to find them and how to document them;

3. A community organizing team is formed. BEST shows the team how to educate other members
of the community and involve them in the project in order to achieve the widest possible community base;

4. Negotiating teams take the data developed and the concerns of the community to the stations to talk with broadcasters. BEST devises mock sessions in order to prepare the team for the broadcasters' responses and to sharpen their demands;

5. Finally, the three teams are brought together with legal experts to prepare a formal complaint to the FCC or to approve the negotiated settlement.¹

One of the main purposes of the BEST organization was to sensitize particular groups to the importance of communications and the broadcast system to the Black community. Then BEST provided these groups with the necessary technical assistance so that they could begin to demand better service for the Black community.

There were some community groups that organized around Black employment; BEST provided them with technical assistance. One such incident occurred on April 21, 1971. This involved Marion Watson and station WNEW-TV in New York. She was dismissed by the producer from her job as co-host of "Black News," one of the relevant Black shows in that area. The producer gave no reason when he decided to fire Ms. Watson; therefore she attempted to investigate

¹Unity House/BEST Communications Project, January, 1972, p. 11.
the issue herself. In the meantime the community had gathered support for Ms. Watson and spoke to the producer, who gave them no reason for the release. Following talks held with Ms. Watson and the producer, the community decided to speak with Metro-Media, the owners of the station.2

At this point BEST was called in to advise the community on the techniques to employ when they spoke to Metro-Media. Direction was given to the community through this effort. BEST also supported the issue by writing letters to the station manager of Metro Media and to the FCC in support of the rehiring of Ms. Watson. The BEST support, along with the community in New York and about four hundred letters and telegrams from community people all over the country, enabled Watson to get her job back in one week.3

Shortly following the above episode, Carol Randolph was dismissed from her position as co-host of another Black show "Harambee," WTOP-TV, Washington, D. C. When the idea of the show "Harambee" was first initiated there


3 Interview with Marion Watson; also see Unity House/BEST Communications Project, January, 1972, p. 13.
were many problems generating from the staff and management. Everyone had his idea of what the show should do. At this point, Bill Wright was called in because of his knowledge of the industry to assist in planning the show.4

From the above association of Bill Wright and Mrs. Randolph, when she lost her job, BEST was there to assist in any way possible. BEST and other community leaders were able to persuade the officials of the station to rehire Mrs. Randolph and to hire a Black candidate in management. In addition, the organization initiated Black shows on WTOP-TV (Mrs. Randolph now hosts "Every Woman"), established a training program, and increased the budget for "Harambee."5 The only thing that did not happen and has not occurred at this time is acquiring a better time-slot for the show.6

The employees of a Black soul station in Columbus, Ohio, WVKO-AM, became disenchanted with the station's policy. Through the help of Tony Rocciano and Jim Robinson, the employees were able to contact BEST. In


5 Interview with Carol Randolph, also see Unity House/BEST Communications Project, January, 1972, p. 13.

6 Interview with Carol Randolph.
a weekend planning session in Washington, D. C. the two groups were able to develop strategy and tactics that the disc-jockeys employed to regain their jobs. 7 "BEST gave them assistance in planning strategy along with the inspiration of having a national level organization's support." 8

During the weekend the disc-jockeys spent in Washington, they developed their demands. Every one involved in the incident wanted to receive the most from the venture without causing the owners of the station to completely change the station format and fire the personnel. Therefore the following demands were developed.

1) Increased salaries

2) No limitations in terms of programming

3) Elimination of forced programming

4) Elimination of general racism that existed in the interpersonal relationships at the station. Between the talent that was Black and the management that was white, a plantation system existed.

5) Black input into management

6) Total Black control of programming. 9

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7 Unity House/BEST Communications Project, January, 1972, p. 13; and interview with James Robinson, Columbus Broadcasting Coalition, Columbus, Ohio, May 10, 1974.

8 Interview with James Robinson.

9 Ibid.
All of the demands were met and one of the disc-jockeys, Les Brown, was appointed Programs Information Manager and has direct input into the hiring policies of the station. All of the disc-jockeys were rehired.

**BEST, Howard University and Its Communications School**

In an effort to develop a technical assistance center for Blacks, BEST worked with Dr. James Cheek, President of Howard, in developing its School of Communications. BEST informed Dr. Cheek about the resources within the Washington community, and alerted him to the process by which license challenges are conducted in efforts to secure participation of Blacks in the broadcasting process.

In order that the School of Communications have a facility that would ensure continuous operation, BEST began working with the University to locate such a facility. The last open FM frequency in the Washington area also was being sought by the Pacifica Foundation. The University had been rejected by the FCC when it sent an application for the frequency. At this point, BEST began to aid Howard in retaining legal counsel to protect its rights in the proceeding. Howard was able to obtain pro bono legal counsel and challenge the decision of the FCC in the courts.
This minor setback did not keep Howard and BEST from exploring other avenues for securing a communications facility that would not involve a legal battle with the FCC or one in the courts. The result of these endeavors was the donation of the FM facility of the Post-Newsweek station, WTOP, for the school. Following the initiating of discussion between Howard and the owners of WTOP, BEST became a consultant to Howard. These discussions resulted in an announcement by Post-Newsweek in September, 1970 to donate the facility to Howard.\textsuperscript{10} All the transactions were completed and the Howard University station (WHUR) began operations on December 10, 1971.

All of the above information about Howard is from the BEST files.\textsuperscript{11} However, Tony Brown, Dean of the Howard School of Communications, in an untaped telephone interview, remarked that BEST had had nothing to do with the development of the school to his knowledge.\textsuperscript{12} The BEST


\textsuperscript{11} Unity House/BEST Communications Project, January, 1972, pp. 14-16.

\textsuperscript{12} Telephone interview with Anthony Brown, Dean of the Howard School of Communications, Washington, D. C., May 10, 1974.
files do not mention Dean Brown, but only Dr. James Cheek, President of Howard, as its contact.

When the author contacted Dr. Cheek, his office replied in a letter that William Wright and BEST were "involved in the preparation and submission of A Preliminary Design For The Use of Telecommunications at Howard University." This general response when combined with the claim of Dean Brown, suggests that BEST's overall influence on Howard University is not as clear as BEST implies.

BEST became involved with Howard and Pacifica in the disagreement over the last FM facility in Washington. This dispute was finally resolved, Howard and Pacifica discovered that they had common goals. "the development of an attitude and spirit of cooperation between them while waging a legal battle...." This "was an important contribution to the development of community radio."  

At the present time, Howard has an effective communications school under the direction of Anthony Brown, who is also the host of "Black Journal." Each year it sponsors a job fair which attracts many people in the industry and different corporations who hire qualified Blacks for

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14 Interview with William Wright, National Coordinator of BEST, Washington, D. C., January 24, 1974; also see Unity House/BEST Communications Project, January, 1972, pp. 15-17.
open positions. These Blacks come from colleges and universities all over the country and are trained in broadcasting.

In addition to the School of Communications and the radio station, the Howard personnel have projected the following:

1) The creation of an AM carrier system in radio broadcasting for the entire campus.

2) The creation of a University-wide cable-vision system for the entire campus to be used for on-campus information dissemination, instruction, on-campus production of programs by the various schools, colleges, and departments of the university.

3) The acquisition of an over-the-air television license on an educational channel to be operated as a Television Broadcasting Training Laboratory for students enrolled in the School of Communications.\textsuperscript{15}

The WMAL Case and BEST

The challenge of station WMAL-TV was the first step BEST took in getting involved in the license challenge process. At the time the petition to deny was filed against WMAL-TV, BEST had not been officially formed, but Unity House and William Wright were the signers of the petition. The type of assistance that BEST gave to the other members of the group filing the petition was

\textsuperscript{15}Letter from James W. Butcher.
technical in nature.

In this challenge, made prior to the formation of BEST, the Unity House staff supplied technical assistance and organizing, but originated the idea of applying the WLBT precedent against southern discrimination to the problem of urban racism.\textsuperscript{16}

On September 2, 1969, a group of individuals filed a petition to deny the WMAL-TV renewal application. WMAL-TV is owned by the Evening Star Broadcasting Company.\textsuperscript{17}

There were sixteen individuals who signed the petition and claimed to be residents of the WMAL-TV service area and responsible representatives of the listening public. Those who signed the petition included Julius Hobson, Association of Community Teams; Charles Cassell, D.C. School Action Council; Douglas Moore, Black United Front; Chuck Stone, Committee for Excellence and Equality in Education; William Wright, Unity House; and Channing Phillips and Walter Fauntroy.\textsuperscript{18}

Another contribution made by the Unity House Staff was according to the BEST files, arranging with the

\textsuperscript{16}Unity House Progress Report, 1969.


\textsuperscript{18}FCC Decision of WMAL-TV Case, File No. BRCT-23, February 5, 1971, p. 2.
Institute for Policy Study to monitor the service of the local Washington stations to ascertain their performance in relation to the Black community. The Urban Law Institute was brought in to develop the legal arguments. Unity House personnel were then responsible for organizing the Black community leaders who later supported the petition against the WMAL station which, it was discovered, had the worst track record with the Black Community.19

The petitioners had numerous concerns which are listed below:

1. ...station WMAL-TV, aside from very occasional and irregular presentations on news programs, does not regularly or substantially present programming on topics which are of general, as well as specific, interest to its very substantial Black Audience.

2. The appearance of Black people on Station WMAL-TV, both by their roles, is still insignificant compared with their proportion in the prime viewing area....

3. The licensee has failed to present public service announcements by and on behalf of local community organizations which request and serve to advance the interests of members of the Black community.

4. The licensee has devoted an insufficient amount of broadcast time to religious programming, which is contrary to the public interest because of the particular significance that religion has for a great number of the Black people of the District of Columbia.

19Unity House/BEST Communications Project, January, 1972, p. 12.
5. The licensee has made almost no effort to portray Black problems and feelings to its audience.

6. The licensee failed to present "The Black Cultural Experience" to its audience, both Black and White; programming to which the audience is allegedly entitled under any reasonable definition of the public interest.

7. WMAL-TV has in numerous ways falsely and misleadingly portrayed members of the Black race or otherwise associated blackness with undesirable attributes.

8. WMAL-TV fails to adequately serve the public interest in such vital areas as news programming, public affairs programming, local and regional news, and in expectations and indications for improvements in these areas.

9. Finally, Petitioners contend that it would be contrary to the public interest to renew the WMAL-TV license because it would contribute to and increase the tremendous concentration of control in the broadcast media, particularly relating to the Evening Star Broadcasting Company, and generally to corporate entities in the District of Columbia and the nation.  

On October 3, 1969 the licensee defended its renewal application by presenting evidence to counteract the petitioners. The main problem was the poor way in which WMAL-TV had ascertained the public interest. It insisted it had surveyed the community by including 130 individuals

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classified as public officials, educators, labor leaders, business leaders, professional leaders and cultural leaders. The licensee conducted the survey by means of direct consultation with the community leaders by management personnel, by its close personal association with various officials, leaders and representatives of organizations. In reply to the licensee, the petitioners on December 17, 1969 filed an Opposition to the Petition to Deny and reiterated their allegations. The petitioners therefore requested that the Commission designate a misrepresentation issue regarding the licensee's survey process.21

The FCC found in favor of the licensee and granted the application for renewal of the license of station WMAL on February 5, 1971.22 The petitioners then filed for a court hearing. But on June 30, 1972, the U. S. Court of Appeals affirmed the FCC decision and the WMAL-TV license renewal application was approved.23

21Ibid., pp. 3, 8-9.


From the experience Unity House gained in helping organize the challenge of the WMAL-TV station, the BEST section of the organization developed as its communication division. The WMAL petition became a model for many other groups helped by BEST who later filed petitions to deny. From the experience the BEST personnel received through their work on this case, they were able to monitor the activities of the FCC and the industry more successfully.

**BEST as a Monitor of Regulatory Activities**

Broadcasters in this country have struggled to guarantee themselves license renewals without intervention by the public. BEST worked continuously to keep the avenues open for communities who wanted to challenge a station license so that the public could have a voice in the broadcasting process. In accomplishing this goal, BEST adopted a plan that involved them in the regulatory process at two levels:

1. BEST monitored the activities of the FCC and the industry in making industry wide policy at the Washington level;

2. BEST acted as a monitor for innumerable Black and community groups and kept their eyes on actions by individual broadcasters or the FCC that potentially affected...local markets.24

24Unity House/BEST Communications Project, January, 1972, pp. 16-17.
In January, 1969 the FCC startled the broadcasting industry. It did so by denying WHDH-TV, Boston, its operating license and awarding channel 5 to a competing applicant, on the basis of WHDH's multimedia ownership.

The commission gave the license for channel 5 in Boston to a group of businessmen, calling themselves BBI, Boston Broadcasters, Inc. BBI and another group, Charles River Civic Television, Inc., had challenged the Boston Herald-Traveler Corporation, owner of WHDH, Inc. and won the station on the basis of the Herald-Traveler's other media interest. The Herald-Traveler Corporation publishes two dailies and a Sunday newspaper in Boston, owns WHDH-AM-FM-TV, and holds controlling interest in Entron, Inc., an equipment manufacturer and CATV operator. The new licensee, BBI, had no other media alliance. Because of its holdings, the FCC ranked the Herald-Traveler a poor third in the matter of diversification, behind Charles River Civic Television, Inc., whose president, Theodore Jones, was also owner of WCRB-AM-FM, Waltham, Massachusetts, and WCRQ-FM, Providence, Rhode Island.

In ruling on the case, the commission discounted the station's past performance as a positive factor in the renewal process. The commission said consideration of a station's past record would place new applicants at a
competitive disadvantage, and thereby established relatively new standards in the license renewal process.

As the result of this decision, broadcasters became very anxious about their licenses. In a step to calm the broadcasters, Senator John Pastore, chairman of the Senate Communications Subcommittee, introduced an anti-strike bill which would have required the FCC to find a licensee disqualified before accepting other applications for his facility. This bill S.2004 caused the citizens' groups to voice their opinions about how it would affect consumers.

Many citizens and citizens' groups testified against the "Pastore" bill. William Wright, in his capacity as national coordinator for BEST, made the following statement, insisting that the bill was, from the community viewpoint, racist.

S.2004 is an insult to the intelligence of the American people, and a proscription of their right to a responsive television industry....Petitions to deny are inadequate because there is no guarantee that the commission will even grant a hearing....S.2004 takes away the right of competition for the use of the public airwaves. The so-called right to complain would remain but even in a dictatorship one can mutter complaints, but citizens can't affect policy....[This is] a racist bill.25

This was the first public appearance of BEST as a national organization and from its appearance at this committee meeting, the work of BEST as a monitor of FCC and industry activities began.

Following the disapproval by the citizen's groups of S.2004, the Commission in January, 1970, adopted a Statement of Policy on License Renewals. The Commission "guaranteed renewal of a licensee if its performance had been substantially attuned to meeting the needs and interest of his service area."26 This policy would also negate the problems of monopoly concentration of control, or lack of local management and ownership. This obviated the need for legislation--it would freeze the existing all-white licensee structure, and exclude minority group bids for media ownership.

BEST joined Citizens Communication Center to launch several challenges to the legality of the Policy Statement and forestall its adoption.

In the brief that BEST and CCC submitted they listed the following issues as those that warranted consideration in the case:

STATEMENT OF ISSUES

1. Does the FCC Policy Statement, J. A. 5, deprive a new applicant for an existing broadcast license of a full comparative hearing on the merits of his application?

2. Does the Communications Act of 1934, 47U.S.C. §§ 307-309, require such a hearing?

3. Does the FCC Policy Statement violate the Communications Act and usurp the legislative power of Congress?

4. Does the FCC Policy Statement inhibit access to a mass media voice in violation of the First Amendment to the Constitution?

5. Does the FCC Policy Statement choke off the opportunity of minority groups to gain access to a mass media voice in violation of the Equal Protection Clause of the 14th Amendment to the Constitution?27

In addition to filing a petition for review of order, "BEST and CCC filed requests for injunctive relief and petitions for rulemaking, and replies of briefs for review of order."28 To add to the issue, WTAR Radio-TV Corporation, RKO General, Inc. (RKO), and Dudley Station Corporation filed in favor of the FCC, as intervenors in the case. WTAR and RKO felt that the issues raised by BEST


28Ibid.
and CCC were not "ripe for judicial review." At that
time WTAR as intervenor went on to state:

...the Commission's Policy Statement is
simply a clarification of existing policies
which are to be applied in future comparative
hearings involving renewal applicants--
the Statement vests or denies no rights and
does not impose any legal obligations or
liabilities. Nor is it a "final order"
which can be reviewed by this Court--the
issuance of the Policy Statement creates
no immediate harm or irreparable injury
prior to its application in a particular
case. And, for these same reasons, the
jurisdiction of this Court cannot be
invoked by the Administrative Procedure
Act."

RKO intervenor had the following comment:

The 1970 Policy Statement's purpose was
to clarify the Commission's policies as
to contests between applicants for renewal
of license and new applicants for the same
facilities so as to assist hearing exam-
iners in deciding such cases, expedite the
hearing process, promote consistency in
agency decisions, and finally, to inform
the broadcast industry and the public of
the applicable decisional standards.

The Commission rejected BEST's and CCC's request to
repeal the Statement of Policy, and the organizations then
appealed the decision to the courts. Petitioners in the

29WTAR Petition Intervenor in FCC 1970 Statement of
Policy, p. 5.

30Ibid., pp. 3-5.

31RKO Petition as Intervenor in FCC 1970 Statement of
Policy, p. 2.
case also included Hampton Roads Television Corporation and Community Broadcasting of Boston, Inc.

In June, 1971, the court ruled on the case in favor of BEST and CCC. S.2004 had since been withdrawn. The United States Court of Appeals ruled that the Policy Statement would "perpetuate this dismaying situation"\(^{32}\) of only twelve radio stations out of 7500 owned by minority groups.\(^{33}\) The Policy Statement was declared illegal by the Court which stated:

> It is the right of the viewers and listeners, not the right of the broadcasters, which is paramount. Our decision today restores healthy competition by repudiating a Commission policy which is unreasonably weighted in favor of the licensees it is meant to regulate, to the great detriment of the listening and viewing public.\(^{34}\)

These court decisions were the first time the authority of the Commission had been challenged by a citizen group. The Commission was forced to respond to an issue that would affect the superiority of broadcast service without the public being solicited for prior consultation.

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\(^{32}\)Red Lion Broadcasting Company v FCC supra Note 36, 395 U. S. at 390.

\(^{33}\)Unity House/BEST Communications Project, January, 1972, p. 18.

\(^{34}\)BEST, CCC et al. v FCC at United States Court of Appeals, June 11, 1971, pp. 28-29.
BEST and the Public Interest Primer

In December, 1969, Commissioner Bartley "met in closed session with representatives of the Federal Communications Bar Association, a private bar of lawyers representing various broadcasting industry interests." The Federal Communications Bar Association wanted to help the Commission define its policies and requirements regarding broadcasters' ascertainment of community needs. Representatives of the public were not invited.

Even though the public was not invited to the meeting, Bill Wright and Al Kramer attempted to attend. They were unable to do so and made comments on the effect of such a meeting on the rights of consumers.

...the meeting illustrates the commission's practice of resolving problems by means of closed sessions with the industry instead of in open forums where the issues can be subjected to critical public scrutiny....a clarification session—which was how the meeting was described—is by definition not neutral. By bypassing the commission's staff and legal department, the industry indicated it was seeking more than mere technical advice about how to comply with the commission's policies in this area... no issues should be resolved without active participation of groups with differing points of view. 36


36 Ibid., 43.
Distributed at the meeting by the Commission was the draft of its proposal on ascertainment of the public interest. According to the BEST files, it urged the FCC to let consumers respond to the proposal. From the intervention by BEST and CCC, it is believed by the BEST personnel, that the Commission was influenced to release the draft for public comment.\textsuperscript{37}

Since BEST and CCC were the only citizens' groups that attempted to attend the meeting and protest the actions of Commissioner Bartley the previous statement can be considered sound. Moreover, Frank Fletcher, chairman of the bar committee, expressed the hope in the meeting that the commission would issue the primer for comment. This would give all interested parties—including citizens' groups—an opportunity to give their views.\textsuperscript{38} However, Commissioner Bartley reportedly said this might involve a rulemaking proceeding—a time consuming process that the commission probably would not want to undertake. If Mr. Bartley's comments were to be taken as a consensus of the commission, then it was fortunate that BEST did protest

\textsuperscript{37}Unity House/BEST Communications Project, January, 1972, p. 19.

\textsuperscript{38}"Needs Meeting Bars Two Citizen Groups," Broadcasting, December 8, 1969, p. 43.
the meeting so that the consumer's voice could be heard.

BEST "filed comments, and encouraged other citizen and community groups to participate in the proceedings."\(^{39}\) Some of the other groups that filed comments were the Office of Communication of the United Church of Christ, the Urban Law Institute, the National Organization for Women, the American Civil Liberties Union, and the National Urban League.\(^{40}\)

The primer finally adopted was not as strong toward consumers as BEST thought it should be, but community groups at least had an opportunity to voice their opinions at the FCC. Through their monitoring of FCC activities, BEST was able to serve as a catalyst between the FCC and community groups interested in making comments on the ascertainment of community needs.

**BEST and Filing in Support of Other Groups**

BEST filed comments in support of other citizens' groups. Action for Children's Television wanted the FCC to remove commercials from children's shows and initiate more children's programs (check chapter two for complete discussion). BEST supported ACT's proposal before the

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\(^{39}\) Unity House/BEST Communications Project, January, 1972, p. 19.

Commission.

BEST also supported efforts by the National Citizen's Committee for Broadcasting when they petitioned for new rules that would require broadcasters to disclose their financial statements. In the comments made by BEST, it emphasized the impact of such a proposal on the greater Black and minority communities. Without intervention by BEST many policy decisions would be made without any knowledge or concern for their effect on the Black community.

BEST and Important Petitions to Deny Capcities:

In one of the highest-priced purchases in broadcasting history, Capital Cities Broadcasting Corporation, New York, agreed on February 13, 1970 to buy cornerstone properties of Philadelphia-based Triangle Publications, Inc. for $115 million in cash and notes. The stations involved were WFIL-AM-FM-TV Philadelphia, WNHC-AM-FM-TV New Haven-Hartford, Connecticut, and KFRE-AM-FM-TV Fresno, California. Also in the sale was Triangle's program-syndication division. However, the transaction ran into a snag when on November 6, 1970, a petition was

filed to block the sale.42

The petition was based on the results of twelve students' three-month study of FCC processes. The students, who represented six law schools, were sponsored by Consumers Union, National Citizens Committee for Broadcasting, Robert F. Kennedy Memorial Children's Foundation and Boston College Law School.43 They were recruited by Citizens Communications Center.

The students petitioned the FCC either to dismiss assignment applications or set them for hearing, and said "that Capital Cities sale of six radio stations it had planned to acquire from Triangle would violate the commission's rule against disposing of broadcast properties less than three years after they were acquired."44 The stations were to be acquired for the purpose of immediate resale in a Capcities sell-off. The approval of this transfer would also have tripled the potential number of television households in the top-fifty markets which Capcities would have served.

43Ibid., p. 9.
44Ibid., p. 10.
The petition set forth seven reasons why the Commission should not affirm the applications of Capcities and Triangle Broadcasting. A brief summary of each reason follows:

A. Capcities is Violating the Commission's Three-Year Rule

Section 1.597 of the FCC Rules, 47 U.S.C. §1.597, requires that all applications for assignment of stations held by the assignor (Capcities in the Capcities spin-off) for less than three successive years be designated for hearing. The hearing requirement is mandatory unless the assignor has made an affirmative factual showing which establishes that due to the unavailability of capital, death or disability of station principals, or changed circumstances occurring subsequent to the acquisition of the station, Commission consent will serve the public interest.

The six radio broadcast licenses which Capcities plans to acquire as part of the Capcities-Triangle transaction KRFE-AM-FM, WNH-C-AM-FM, and WFL-AM-FM are to be acquired solely for the purpose of immediate resale in the Capcities sell-off. Capcities will not have held them for three years....

B. Capcities' Intention to Sell Stations for a Profit Without Rendering Public Service is Trafficking in Station Licenses

The FCC's stated policy, in accordance with Section 311(c)(3) of the Communications Act, is to discourage speculation in broadcast licenses by promoters or brokers. ...Capcities plans to sell immediately and simultaneously the licenses of the six radio stations it is acquiring from Triangle to outside buyers without first operating these stations and rendering any public service. It is thus acting as a broker in the sale of these stations.
Section 310(b) of the Communications Act requires that the Commission have full information with respect to contemplated assignments of broadcast licenses in order to determine if the sale accords with the "public interest."

C. The Assignment to KFRE Broadcasting, Inc. Would Result in a Diminution of Service

Through the brokerage function of Capcities, KFRE Broadcasting is to become the licensee of KFRE-AM, Fresno, California. But KFRE Broadcasting's program proposals do not satisfy the public interest standards.

D. The Assignment to Metro Connecticut Media Corporation Would Result in a Diminution of Service

Through the brokerage function of Capcities, Metro Connecticut Media Corporation is to become the licensee of WNHC-FM, New Haven, Connecticut. But the proposed programming of Metro Connecticut does not meet the public interest standard. There are significant reductions in key programming categories.

E. Allowing Capcities to Become the Licensee of KFRE-TV, WNHC-TV, and WPIL-TV by Assignment from Triangle Would Result in a Concentration of Control of Television Broadcasting Licenses Contrary to the Public Interest

FCC Rule 73.636 prohibits the granting of a television broadcast license when the grant of such license would result in a concentration of control of television broadcasting in a manner inconsistent with the public interest. Approval of the transactions will violate the FCC's policy against media concentration by allowing Capcities to "trade up" in order to increase its concentration of control within the top fifty television markets.
F. The Proposed Assignments Would Result in an Undue Regional Concentration of Control of the Media

The concentration of control problem in the top 50 markets is exacerbated in this case by the presence of a regional concentration of control. The grade B contours of WFIL-TV and WNHC-TV almost overlap. The latter reaches all the way to the most southerly of the New York City northern suburban area and to the suburban area northwest of the city, and into the city itself. The grade B contour of WFIL-TV reaches the northern-most suburbs to the south of New York City and the Southwestern suburbs. The viewing audience of these two stations includes residents of Maryland, Delaware, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, New York, Connecticut, Massachusetts and Rhode Island. The combined signals of the two stations stretch across the heart of the richest market in the United States—north to the southern suburbs of Boston, south to the suburbs of Baltimore, and including in between overlapping markets of Philadelphia (fourth largest in the United States), metropolitan New York (first) and New Haven (twenty-first).

G. The Proposed Assignee of WTEN-TV, Albany, New York Should Not Be Granted a Broadcast License Until It Clears Itself of Serious Misconduct Charges

Capcities plans to assign WTEN-TV, Albany, New York to Albany Television, Inc., which is 100% owned by the principals of Poole Broadcasting Company....Poole is presently charged with abusing its license privileges by monopolizing national spot television in Michigan and engaging in a conspiracy with an audience survey company to hypo its ratings, matters clearly within the Commission's domain of interest. 45

45 Capcities Petition to Deny, pp. 10–24.
The petitioners felt that any one of these reasons could have blocked the sale of the stations and the FCC could have called a hearing to dismiss the applications.

The BEST personnel became aware of the petition filed by the CCC students through their contacts with Al Kramer and Citizens. The students had filed the petition objecting to the transfer on behalf of the citizen groups of Philadelphia, New Haven, and Fresno. Capcities agreed to meet with the members of each community and negotiate a settlement in hopes of not holding up the sale. A BEST representative went to each community and reviewed the background and significance of the transfer. They also aided each group in developing their list of concessions. Finally, BEST worked with each group and prepared them for the negotiations with the Capcities management.46

After one month of negotiating agreement was reached between the communities and Capcities officials. The Capcities corporation agreed to a million dollar production fund. The fund would provide for the production of six hours of prime-time minority-directed programs. Financial and production control of the programs would come under the

46 Interview with William Wright; also see Unity House/BEST Communications Project, January, 1972, p. 21.
control of an advisory board of community residents.\footnote{CapCities Minority Program Project, pp. 1-2.}

The complete outline of the agreement follows.

1. Capital Cities will commit a total of $1,000,000.00 over the three-year period following Federal Communications Commission approval of its acquisition of Stations WFIL-TV, WNHC-TV, and KFRE-TV to the development of programming which reflects the views, aspirations, problems and culture of black and Spanish-surnamed (Chicano, Puerto Rican, etc.) minority groups within the three television stations. The three-year period will begin to run from July 1, 1971, and yearly periods shall be measured from July 1 to June 30.

2. The funds to support this effort will be deposited in a minority owned or controlled bank at the commencement of each year, with no less than $333,333.00 deposited each July 1 of the three-year period. Funds will be drawn upon as needed.

3. Capital Cities anticipates that, after a period of 3-6 months for purposes of organizing the effort (this period to be measured from the date on which the stations involved are acquired), sufficient program product will be produced to allow each of the subject stations to telecast a minimum of 6 hours of programming in this field per year (with each program at least 1/2 hour in length). Capital Cities anticipates and intends that a minimum of 50% of such programs will be telecast in prime time....

4. To ensure that programming designed as an outlet for minority groups is responsive to the views of the minority groups in each community with which it deals and that such minority groups have an adequate opportunity to express their views concerning overall
station operation to key Capital Cities personnel, the following steps will be taken:

(a) The general managers of the three subject stations will each appoint an advisory committee composed of leaders from the relevant minority groups within the service area...

(b) Each year, for the purposes of planning, the overall sum of $333,333.00 committed to the project will be allocated to the three communities as follows: Philadelphia $135,000.00; New Haven $110,000.00; Fresno $88,333.00...

(c) Each station manager and/or other relevant station personnel will meet with his community's advisory committee during the course of each year with sufficient frequency to permit not only the discussion of proposals by the station or the committee as to programs to be planned and produced but also the presentation of the committee's reactions and criticisms of specific programs and the overall project...

(d) At least once each year, the Chairman of the Board of Capital Cities and/or the President of the Broadcasting Division will meet with the advisory committee in each community...

(e) Responsibility for all decisions concerning the expenditure of funds or the telecasting of any program will rest with Capital Cities...

5. Whether programs are produced by individual stations or at the corporate level, a maximum effort will be made to obtain and utilize the talents of minority group members in technical, artistic, writing, directing, and producing functions...
6. The project described in paragraphs 1-5 will not be limited only to programs of a documentary or public affairs nature. It will in addition seek to expose and portray the problems and views of minority groups through all forms of expression,

7. In determining whether and when to schedule any program produced by this project, no Capital Cities station will take into account the availability or unavailability of sponsorship. In the event that any such program is sponsored, all revenues less sales commissions received will be added to the fund committed by Capital Cities to the community of the station obtaining such sponsorship...

8. Any program produced by the project may be telecast by any television station licensed to Capital Cities...

9. Capital Cities will make a good faith effort to provide adequate promotion for the programs produced pursuant to this project....

10. Over and above programming specifically produced by the project, each of the television stations involved will actively seek ways in which to incorporate program ideas suggested by the project into existing programs of wide audience appeal, with a view to obtaining maximum exposure for them.

11. Each Capital Cities station presently has under development an Affirmative Action Program in the field of Equal Employment Opportunity, to be filed with the Commission in accordance with its regulations.\(^\text{48}\)

The Minority Advisory Council that has been the most successful has been the Fresno group. It has produced

\(^\text{48}\text{Ibid., pp. 2-12.}\)
numerous shows that were well received by their communities. Mr. Wright is now in consultation with Capcities to try and extend the project in the Fresno area.\(^{49}\) The Capcities acquisition of Triangle Publications was approved on February 23, 1971.

From one petition to deny in the Capcities case, the industry was shown that citizen groups can be very powerful organizations. In the words of Mr. Wright: "Capcities was the turning point between television stations and communities. They knew communities had a weapon and it cost money to fight them." From the workshops BEST held with the individual communities involved in the Capcities case, minority people were educated to the point that they were able to see the significant role each could play in determining what was seen on their television sets. Capcities was indeed a turning point, for the industry as well as the communities.

Another significant factor in this case was the time element. It would have been difficult for the commission, and impossible for the courts to dispose of the petitioners' complaints before the contract deadline ran out, if there had been no agreement. As it was, the commission

\(^{49}\) Interview with William Wright.
hastily approved the $147 million sale, a week before a March 1 deadline that Triangle had said would not be extended. 50

McGraw-Hill:

Another sale in 1971 which was described in Broadcasting as one of the "big ones" was the Time-Life, McGraw-Hill transfer. The stations involved were KLZ-TV Denver, WFBM-TV Indianapolis, KOGO-TV San Diego, WOOD-TV Grand Rapids, Michigan and KERO-TV Bakersfield, California. McGraw-Hill paid $57,180,000.00 in cash and notes for the stations. 51

All of the community organizations that challenged the transfer were aided by national citizens groups. The Office of Communications of the United Church of Christ aided the groups in Bakersfield and San Diego. The Denver Mass Media Task Force was helped by BEST. The Mexican-American groups were aided by Albert Kramer of Citizens Communications Center. Included in the Mexican-American groups were the Colorado Citizens Committee for Broadcasting, the Colorado Committee on Mass Media and the

51 Ibid., p. 25.
Spanish Surnamed; the Community Service Organization of Bakersfield and Los Angeles; and the Associated Migrant Opportunity Service of Indianapolis. They also were represented by the Mexican-American Legal Defense and Education Fund.

BEST personnel learned of this transfer in the summer of 1971. They informed the Black community leaders of Denver about the sale and its possible effects on the Denver Black community. Then BEST sent a representative to the Denver group, reviewed the background of the transfer and helped them to prepare their petitions to deny.52 In the petitions the Denver group contended that "the transfer was anticompetitive, that McGraw-Hill was not sensitive to minority needs, and that McGraw-Hill was reducing the amount of local service."53 In response to the petitioners McGraw-Hill made the following commitments:

1. The establishment of minority-advisory councils in each of the four affected markets. The groups, called MAC's, will be divided in membership between chicanos and blacks, and will be regarded as principal consultants in developing programming.

52Unity House/BEST Communications Project, January 1972, p. 22.

2. The local MAC's will produce eighteen "La Raza" programs dealing with Mexican-American culture and history and present them in the four markets. It will present a total of 36 prime-time specials dedicated to minority programming over the next three years—twelve, which will be locally produced, will be on minority cultural subjects, twelve on the achievements, interests and problems of chicanos and a like number on those of blacks.

3. Within three years, at least 15% of the employees at the four stations will be from minority groups—at least 10% at each outlet. At least 25% of the minority employees at each station are to be in professional, managerial and sales as well as technical categories by the end of the first year. Each year three minority persons will be trained in each of the three larger markets and two in Bakersfield.

4. McGraw-Hill will use its resources to assist in improving the competence of minority businessmen in managing their businesses, particularly in the areas of marketing promotion. It will conduct know-how panels, featuring experts, for minority businessmen in the local markets.

McGraw-Hill failed to make a financial commitment similar to that of Capcities. However, the commitment did require that McGraw-Hill only acquire four of the five television stations it had contracted to buy from Time's broadcast subsidiary—despite FCC approval in March of 1972. Another provision made it clear "that the truncation

of the sale was part of the deal McGraw-Hill was required to pay to persuade the groups to withdraw the suits they had filed in the U. S. Court of Appeals in Washington to overturn the commission's approval of the sale." The appeals were dismissed with the signing of the settlement. The station dropped from the transaction was WOOD-TV Grand Rapids, Michigan, for the purpose of enforcing the commission's top-50 market policy. This was significant because "it was private enforcement of a public law, marking the first enforcement of the top-50 market policy, adopted in 1968."  

AETC:

The personnel at BEST feel that the largest and most important petition to deny that they submitted under the BEST name was the case involving the renewal of the license of the Alabama Educational Television Commission (AETC). On June 29, 1970, the Commission decided to grant the renewal of the Alabama stations. BEST filed in conjunction with Anthony Brown, representative of the National Association of Black Media Producers ("NABMP"). In the


56Ibid.
petition it asked the Commission to reconsider its grant of a renewal to the stations and to order a hearing to determine whether a grant of the renewal would serve the public interest. The stations in the case were WAIQ, Montgomery; WBIQ, Birmingham; WCIQ, Cheaha State Park; WDIQ, Dozier, WEIQ, Mobile; WFIQ, Florence; WGIQ, Louisville; and WHIQ, Huntsville.

BEST did not challenge the Alabama stations when they came up for renewal because it was felt that enough evidence had been presented to the FCC to deny a renewal of their licenses. However, this proved not to be the case. Therefore, BEST decided to file a petition for reconsideration and make their objections to the renewal of AETC more explicit.

BEST felt that the case was a simple one. The Alabama network had failed to air relevant programming for the Black community. The most important concern was the complaint that the network had failed to air "Soul!", "On Being Black," "Black Journal," and the Denver Panther Trail.57 The Commission supposedly received complaints about the network not airing these shows, according to Mr. Wright. The question BEST placed before the FCC was

57BEST Petition for Reconsideration—Alabama Educational Television, p. 3.
whether the licensee had discriminated against the Black people in their listening area by the FCC granting the renewal of the AETC stations.\textsuperscript{58} The petition states:

Whether it is by administration indifference or by malevolent design, both the AETC and the Commission have failed to fully account for those factors which should determine the relevance of particular programs to the educational needs of blacks. The AETC has never demonstrated any reliance on the black community in Alabama or elsewhere in formulating program schedules; and it remains unclear as to whether or not the Commission itself—whose individual members are white will consult with the FCC's very few black staff members or black educators before rendering its decisions in this and similar matters. In effect, both the AETC and the Commission have imposed their respective standards on programs directly related to blacks without first engaging in any effort to understand the educational needs and values of the black community. In this respect, the Commission has no factual basis to determine whether or not AETC's 257 integrated programs are an adequate response to the black community in Alabama.\textsuperscript{59}

The remainder of the petition goes on to state the reports of other stations on how excellent the aforementioned programs are, newspaper comments on the programs' quality, comments on where the Alabama Educational Stations receive their funding (Federal and state taxes, HEW), and

\textsuperscript{58}\textit{Ibid.}, p. 3.

\textsuperscript{59}\textit{Ibid.}, p. 6
synopses of the programs that the AETC omitted from their schedules.

The AETC responded to the petition for reconsideration immediately. The AETC was organized in 1953, and in the years since that time had developed into the nation's first statewide, interconnected educational television network. They have a program board that interprets the policy of the Commission; they are appointed by the governor of the state. The authority for the day-to-day operation of the network is delegated by the AETC to a general manager, whose staff includes a director of programming. Effective on July 1, 1969, the AETC formally became a NET affiliate and began to receive NET programming at the Birmingham outlet.60

The AETC rejected the programs because it felt that the standards of "decency and good taste" were in jeopardy.61 The program policy of AETC states that "the program content of any and all programs aired on the State ETV Network are subject to FCC regulations and to highest professional standards of good taste and decorum."62 They


61 Ibid., p. 3.

also stated the AETC-NET affiliation agreement, which reads:

All N.E.T. programs will be broadcast by Station in full without any deletions or other changes, and Station will not omit or replace any portion or segment thereof without prior consent from N.E.T. Station may, however, reject or refuse any N.E.T. program in its entirety which Station reasonably believes to be unsatisfactory or unsuitable or contrary to the public interest, or may substitute a program which, in Station's opinion, is of greater local or national importance.

The AETC assumed this to mean it could "take it or leave it" as the situation arose. The AETC gives first priority to Alabama-originated programming and when time is available, to programs from NET. Therefore, AETC decided not to air the aforementioned programs.

There should be no mistaking one fact. The programs about which petitioners complain are not educational or cultural in the real sense of those words. Informative, controversial, sometimes good, sometimes mediocre, sometimes tasteful, sometimes tasteless, sometimes radical, occasionally revolutionary: yes, but educational or cultural: no. Nor, of course, are they automatically acceptable for broadcast under broad public interest standards simply because they are available....

The point is that any licensee, knowing his area of service, has an obligation to determine whether a particular program

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63 Alabama Educational Television-NET Affiliation Agreement, Paragraph 5.
will meet the needs of the public it serves. In every sense of the word, minority needs must be considered and met as well as majority needs.\textsuperscript{64}

The remainder of the opposition to the petition for reconsideration submitted by AETC has numerous exhibits which further supported its decision not to air the shows.

The BEST petitioners replied to the opinion of AETC that the programs were not in good taste, with the following comments:

> If educational television programs are to be a meaningful part of the black man's education in Alabama, the AETC should not be permitted to systematically exclude programs which specifically relate to black culture. If there are a few obscene words in some of the programs, and if some of the material is emotionally disruptive, it is only because the black experience is not an idyllic world of contentment. If the material in programs is sometimes brutal, it is only because the black experience in Alabama and elsewhere is often replete with bitter frustration, personally and educationally. The education of black children and adults will not be furthered by divorcing them from reality.\textsuperscript{65}

After considering the AETC case for a year, the FCC decided to hold a hearing. This was a landmark case, being one of only five times that the FCC had granted a hearing

\textsuperscript{64}Alabama Educational Television Reply to BEST Petition for Reconsideration, pp. 22-23.

\textsuperscript{65}BEST Petition for Reconsideration—Alabama Educational Television, p. 7.
to a citizen's group. The FCC wanted to get all the information it could so that it could review the renewal of the licenses of AETC. The hearing was held and the documents of the case filed. The hearing examiner or judge who heard the case recommended that the licenses be renewed. He said that the stations' activity in the sixties was poor, but it had improved, and since it was a very sophisticated network, renewal was recommended. BEST and the other petitioners disagreed because the law says if a station does not serve the public interest, its license should not be renewed. 66 It was admitted that a poor job was done, so why renew the license? At present, all the parties concerned are awaiting a decision from the entire Commission who is reviewing the information from both petitioners and the AETC. 67

This case was the first time that a citizen's group had challenged an entire state. It was the most significant petition that carried BEST's name, according to Mr. Wright. It highlighted what could be done by citizens, not only in relation to one station, but in regard to a

66 Federal Communications Act, 1934 as amended, Allocation of Facilities; Terms of Licenses, Section 307(d).

whole state. It was another instance where BEST functioned as a catalytic agent in monitoring activities of the industry and FCC, to aid the Black and minority communities.

**BEST and the FCC Commissioner**

In 1970 when Commissioner Kenneth Cox's term on the FCC was about to expire, BEST began lobbying for a Black commissioner. Blacks at that time were beginning to become aware of the importance of appointments to federal agencies such as the FCC. Three Black candidates received most attention from the White House. They were Judge Benjamin Hooks, a Black lawyer-minister from Memphis; Theodore Ledbetter, Jr., a Washington communications consultant supported by BEST and Senator Edward Brooke of Massachusetts (Ledbetter also worked at BEST when the need arose); and Revius Ortique, a New Orleans lawyer who received support from Senator Allen Ellender and the late Hale Boggs.

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68 Interview with William Wright.


70 "Judge Hooks Finally Gets the Job," *Broadcasting*, April 17, 1972, p. 23.
The White House chose Judge Hooks, who was supported by Senator Howard Baker of Tennessee, a member of the Senate Communications Subcommittee; and he was confirmed in April of 1972. Even though the BEST candidate, Ted Ledbetter (considered by some Blacks long active in broadcasting as the most qualified Black who had been under consideration)\textsuperscript{71} was not selected, William Wright and the BEST staff did not let this hinder their commitment to Judge Hooks.

And William Wright, of Black Efforts for Soul in Television, intends to do an educational job. Along with other members of the black community, he said, he plans to spend "considerable time exposing Judge Hooks to the most important issues in broadcasting facing minorities. We hope that within the shortest possible time he can get a firm grip of the issues facing minorities and add to the Commission's sensitivity to minority needs and interests."\textsuperscript{72}

Judge Hooks was given the task, when he began working on the Commission, to implement the Commission's equal-employment policy. He immediately began to do his job. In one proceeding in October, 1972, he urged the commission as a matter of policy to assign "preference" for black ownership in deciding among competing applicants in

\textsuperscript{71}\textit{Ibid.}, p. 22.

\textsuperscript{72}\textit{Ibid.}, p. 23.
a comparative proceeding involving a new facility. This is essential, according to Commissioner Hooks, "in view of the dearth of minority ownership of broadcast facilities." He was careful to state that "preference" for Black ownership should be computed along with the other criteria normally employed by the commission and that his proposal was limited to cases involving a "new facility where no license is lost and no existing owners are displaced--black or white." The Commission, with the help of Commissioner Hooks, adopted rules barring discrimination and requiring broadcasters to submit annual employment records in areas where the population was 5% Black.

In an interview on the "Today" show on NBC in September, 1972, Commissioner Hooks made the following remarks which speak to his dedication to helping minorities in broadcasting through his position on the FCC. His remarks concern discrimination in hiring in the industry and the image of Blacks on television.


74 Ibid., p. 31.

Commissioner Hooks also dealt directly with the complaint of some whites that they have become the victims of reverse discrimination as a result of the growing effort to employ blacks in broadcasting. Commissioner Hooks, after a brief reference to the indignities he suffered as a result of segregation in the South and to the long history of discrimination against blacks, expressed little sympathy for the whites' complaint. "I say, What the devil? So you're at a disadvantage temporarily--only for a moment or two. And I don't really believe it anyhow."

The blacks usually seen on television are athletes, entertainers or militants. "There are thousands of black lawyers and doctors and teachers and college presidents who are involved in the business of trying to make this a better world, but it is not unusual for television, in its news programs to fail to show a black man in a meaningful role. To the extent television does this is not fair; it is robbing 25 million black people of their great heritage." "I am going to spend my seven years on the commission trying to break through this type of almost unconscious conspiracy that keeps a balanced black program from being shown."76

With the problems of discrimination in the industry toward Blacks and minorities, it appeared necessary for a Black person to be appointed to the FCC. BEST, the only citizen's group representing Black communities, sensing a void on the FCC in regards to minorities, lobbied for

a Black commissioner. It would seem that without BEST and its efforts, a Black FCC Commissioner would not have been nominated or approved. For BEST personnel initiated the thought and worked to make the idea a reality. Again, working in their capacity as a catalyst between the Black community, the industry and FCC, BEST helped to ensure more opportunities in the media for Black and minority people.

**BEST and Reimbursement**

In October, 1972, the FCC heard comments on the matter of the broadcast licensee reimbursing the citizen's groups for the expenses incurred for being a consultant to the particular station. The challenger would drop its petitions to deny in return for a paid consultancy fee or other remuneration. This type of action was met with serious objection by the licensees.

The Storer Broadcasting Company remarked that "the kind of consultancy agreement in question here is no more than a money payment extracted as the price for withdrawing a petition to deny--or for not filing one." Five other

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77"Hooks, Ledbetter, Ortique?" Broadcasting, March 6, 1972, p. 17.

78"When Do Challenges Become 'Extortion'?" Broadcasting, October 9, 1972, pp. 31-32.
licensees represented by the law firm of Dow, Lohnes and Albertson remarked,

"Ambush is frequently (the challenger's) tactic of the day; confrontation, not reasonable negotiation, is a common characteristic....The popularity of the petition to deny syndrome had made the process as much an ideological joy ride as a genuine effort to improve the quality of American broadcasting."79

Storer mentioned cases where Blacks had used less-than-honorable methods in negotiations. A Black public relations firm offered Storer counseling services in handling the Black community at the fee of $1,000 per month for twelve months with additional direct billing for any additional work. Storer refused; when a committee making demands on one of the stations served them, it included that the Storer Company hire a Black public relations firm to give answers and guidance to matters pertaining to the Black community.

BEST also filed comments at this hearing along with the National Organization for Women. In its comments, BEST also relied on specifics to document its argument that licensees should reimburse citizens groups. It noted that when Faith Center, the California religious institution,

79Ibid., p. 32.
filed a transfer application at the FCC covering WHCT (TV) Hartford, Connecticut, its program proposal consisted of a single page and its discussion of community demographics, three pages. But, after the petition to deny the transfer was filed by a local citizen coalition, BEST stated, "the center augmented its original proposal with a 102-page amendment containing eight times as much information." 80

BEST used this case to illustrate its contention that citizen group activity in broadcast proceedings can achieve worthwhile ends. But, they continued:

...the overwhelming majority of these groups are substantially without resources, Adop-
tion of a ban or unreasonable restrictions on compensation to such groups can have no effect but to continue the exclusion of groups that cannot participate in commission proceedings in the absence of some respon-
sible provision to cover expenses. 81

BEST also took issue with the questions raised by the FCC.

1. The Commission views "the broad issue" as whether it is in the public interest to allow agreements for reimbursement of future expenses "to a group which has filed and later dismissed a petition to deny" an application.

80Comments by BEST-Reimbursement for Legitimate and Prudent Expense of a Public Interest Group for a Consultancy to a Broadcaster in Certain Instances, October 3, 1972, p. 8.

81Ibid., p. 24.
BEST believes it would be erroneous to limit reimbursements to groups that have filed and subsequently dismissed petitions. Such a policy encourages the filing of petitions rather than pre-filing resolution of differences.

2. Reimbursements can be given only to organizations which file a meritorious good faith petition to deny.

BEST finds such a limitation unwarranted and contrary to law.... the court did not mention that a "meritorious petition to deny" must have been filed as a prerequisite to reimbursement. If the agreement serves the public interest, the reimbursement should be approved.

3. There should be timely negotiations.

Nowhere is the term "timely" defined. In an assignment or transfer proceeding notice of the transaction may only be published five weeks or so before the last day for filing petitions to deny. Community groups may barely have time to acquaint themselves with the application, call a meeting, and arrange for a discussion with the licensee a week or so before the petition is due. Is this timely?

4. There should be solid and substantial results.

This criterion should not be included. What is a "solid and substantial" result varies enormously from market to market, is dependent on whether a station is TV or radio, VHF or UHF, AM or FM, etc. If the Commission believes that the agreement serves the public interest, that is a result that is substantial enough.

5. There should be a good faith agreement.

The test of good faith must again be the public interest. If the Commission is willing to grant an application as serving the public interest, that is adequate evidence of good faith.
6. There should be dollar limitations.

The Commission should set no limitations. Apart from the fact that market and stations vary so greatly in terms of needs, capacity to support these activities, costs of activities, nature of activities, etc., limits tend to become both a floor and a ceiling.

7. Specify services.

The majority of agreements do specify the services to be performed. But there must be some flexibility to respond to changing circumstances over the life of the agreement.

8. Time limitation.

Again, BEST believes it premature to attempt to specify time limits.

9. Periodic reviews and review procedures.

Again we feel it is premature to adopt inflexible review procedures. There should be a period of experimentation during which discretion to try different procedures is accorded licensees. We believe all agreements should be filed with the Commission and available for public inspection.\(^{82}\)

BEST, at this hearing, was the only citizens group representing Blacks. Normally Black groups challenging a licensee have limited funds, and yet find the need to file a petition to deny. It would be most helpful if they could be reimbursed with a consultant's fee in exchange

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\(^{82}\)Ibid., pp. 29-35.
for withdrawing the petition. Both licensee and community group, from this activity, could possibly attain their goals--the licensee, his license and the community groups, the commitments they want from the licensee. BEST personnel, realizing this point, interceded for community groups already in existence and those of the future by commenting at these hearings to ensure that they would be able to receive some type of reimbursement for the money spent to challenge a licensee. There has been no decision by the FCC. However, again BEST's goal as a catalytic agent was reached.

This chapter, up to this point, has related the activities BEST has participated in as a technical assistant to community groups and other groups and institutions interested in Black participation in the media, and how BEST served to help specific communities in monitoring the activities of the FCC and the industry, by either helping them file petitions to deny, lobbying for an FCC commissioner, or making comments at the FCC. The remainder of the chapter will discuss BEST and its relationship to cable television and the Black community.

**BEST and Cable Television**

Black participation in the area of commercial broadcasting was and is at its "irreducible minimum." CATV
presented an area where Black people could get involved at the beginning. This would mean that they could own and control their own stations in the Black and minority communities. BEST then began to make cable television ownership by Blacks one of its main concerns. Some of the activities in which it participated to ensure Black control were "educating people to the potential impact of cable, providing technical and organizing assistance to community groups and monitoring the FCC and other policymaking groups to ensure that Blacks had input in decisions being made."\(^{83}\)

Cable television was created and developed by service men in small towns and rural areas where reception was poor or nonexistent. Until recently, these areas were the only places receiving cable television. One reason for this phenomenon could be the pressure of the commercial broadcasters on the FCC. Broadcasters want complete control of the media and are protecting their markets. However, the summer of 1970 brought a change in this FCC policy. The FCC proposed numerous rule changes that would allow cable systems to expand into the cities. At that time, "BEST formed a Cable Task Force, headed by Bill Wright and Ted Ledbetter (Urban Communications Group), in order

\(^{83}\)Unity House/BEST Communications Project, January, 1972, p. 23.
to develop responses to these proposals that could reflect the interests of the substantial Black urban population."\textsuperscript{84} BEST stated as one limitation,

\ldots the critical lack of FCC attention to the problem of public access to this new form of communications and urged that the Commission allow local communities to license cable franchises as opposed to the federal system of licensing which permitted no Black owned commercial stations.\textsuperscript{85}

The BEST personnel devised its own method of presenting the potential value of cable television to the Black community. The organization wanted to broaden the awareness of the Black community to cable television and its effect on greater Black participation in the industry. During the fall of 1970, with the issues developed, BEST made the following comments in a petition before the Commission.

The proposed MDS (multipoint distribution service) offers a significant opportunity for Black involvement in a new communications industry which is to be geared to inner city business, social, economic and entertainment services. Unfortunately, the tenor and scope of the Commission's proposals restrict any and all participation for the first MDS channel to the applicant who initially filed. Moreover, the rules encourage patterns of concentration in this new industry in contravention of long standing Commission policy and regulation.

\textsuperscript{84}\textit{Ibid.}, p. 24.
\textsuperscript{85}\textit{Ibid.}, p. 24.
The Commission can and should act now to open this new service to qualified and interested applicants and should establish firm guidelines to limit concentrations of ownership and to encourage maximum competition. For too long Blacks have had virtually no opportunity to participate in the communications industry which affects their lives and their communities. Now there is an opportunity. The question is: will the Commission seize that opportunity and take its first move to open the communications industry to Blacks? 86

In the spring of 1971, the FCC planned a two week set of hearings including a four-day panel discussion that would include speakers from the public. 87 It was discovered by Bill Wright, one of the speakers, that the schedule of the hearing did not include a sufficient number of representatives from the Black community. Therefore, BEST and Ted Ledbetter of the Urban Communications Groups urged that the speakers include Ossie Davis and Tom Adkins, and other Blacks interested in cable television. 88

86 Amendment of Parts 1, 2, 21 and 43 of the Commission's Rules and Regulations to Provide for Licensing and Regulations of Common Carrier Radio Stations in the Multipoint Distribution Service, 33-34.


"prepared background research papers for the panels and held briefings with each Black participant, reviewing the testimony to be given."  

BEST, according to its file, also worked with speakers from the National Urban League, Howard University, and other public interest groups in preparing their testimony. Again, BEST was able to present the desires of the Black community before a governmental agency, the FCC.

Ownership was an aspect of the cable picture that BEST wanted the Black community to investigate. The only way the Black community can truly play an integral part in the cable system, it would appear, is if they own franchises. The Urban Communications Group and the Urban Institute, along with BEST, arranged a CATV workshop for Black businessmen and community people interested in community development. The purpose of this workshop was to "give this group, who already possessed business experience, and had some access to capital, an awareness of the importance and potential impact of CATV."

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91 Ibid., p. 27.
results of the conference were published in a book called *Cable Television in the Cities*.

The workshop was held in Washington, D. C. between June 24-27, 1971 at the Sonesta Hotel. There were 110 participants who represented Community Development Corporations and other community-based organizations. Others participating were "communications experts, foundation personnel, representatives from national organizations concerned with minorities and communications, and staff personnel from federal agencies involved in communications and minority economic development." 92

The workshop included participants who had knowledge and expertise in the legal and business areas of cable television. The tone set for the workshop by the keynote speaker was one of concern and dedication. Charles Tate stressed the "need for immediate involvement in this developing industry and the importance of understanding the political strategies needed to get minority control." 93

Mr. Tate, then of the Urban Institute, now of Cablecommunications Resource Center, also indicated the main objective of the workshop.


93 Ibid., p. 74.
...the workshop's primary objective was to make minority economic developers, bankers and technical assistance organizations collectively aware of the economic potential of cable communications technology, and thus stimulate minority leaders to develop cable projects in their own communities. 94

The main issue of the workshop was whether Black and minority people would be able to become a part of the cable industry initially, or be left in the same situation they are with commercial broadcasting—"demanding jobs and access to a system totally owned by someone else." 95

Through the efforts of BEST and the other groups, Black people will be able to get into the cable system in its infancy. This has already occurred in several cities. Black owned franchises of cable systems as of May, 1974 is located in Appendix IV. This workshop, again, presents BEST in its role as a catalytic agent between Black people and the broadcasting process.

Another aspect of BEST's work (along with Urban Communications Group) in cable has been the publishing of a handbook by Theodore Ledbetter and Gil Mendelson, which "reviews provisions which should be included in local

94 Ibid., p. 74.
95 Ibid., p. 74.
franchises to ensure maximum public participation." The Ford and Markle Foundations' Cable Advisory Service is distributing this primer along with Cablecommunications Resource Center.

Chapter Summary

This chapter has presented BEST in its role as a technical assistant and monitor of the activities of the FCC and industry. These areas of BEST work are those where it had most impact on the Black community, the FCC and the industry. It has included its work in Black employment, establishing a communication school at Howard University, and the WMAL-TV case for the activities it has participated in as a technical assistant. In monitoring the activities of the FCC and the industry, BEST was able to file, and help file petitions to deny, comment on present or future rulings of the FCC, lobby for a Black FCC Commissioner, and work to get Black involvement in cable television. This last area, part two of this chapter, has been where BEST had its greatest amount of success and impact as a citizens group.

The next chapter will present the impact and effects of BEST's campaign on the community groups it helped and the greater black community, the FCC and the industry. It will also include a summary and conclusions relating BEST to its historical position as a catalytic agent in the citizens' group movement.
CHAPTER V

SUMMARY AND IMPLICATIONS

The BEST organization served many people and agencies during its existence. It also was responsible for numerous changes in the broadcasting system in relation to Blacks and other minorities. In the previous chapters BEST has been discussed as an educational source, a technical assistant, and as a monitor of regulatory activities at the FCC and within the industry. BEST served as a catalytic agent in these three processes. This dissertation sought to relate three ideas about BEST. It attempted to look at the effects of the BEST campaign as a catalytic agent in relation to securing participation of more consumers, especially Blacks, in the broadcasting process, to determine the effect BEST had on the FCC and the broadcast industry, and finally to relate the implications for communications and mass media this organization may have.

The purpose of this final chapter is to summarize, discuss, and evaluate the answers to the questions that have been highlighted throughout the study.

One of the goals as stated in Chapter I was expressed as follows: to what degree did BEST secure more
participation by Blacks in the broadcasting process? In answering this query, this study has demonstrated that BEST affected the Black community.

BEST affected the Black communities in this country through its programs which educated and sensitized Blacks to the process of broadcasting. The BEST personnel worked with different community people all over the country, speaking to groups who were interested in becoming involved in broadcasting. Through this process community people were influenced to challenge a licensee that they felt was not representing the Black interest sufficiently, or at least meet with the station managers for discussion on how things could be improved. Of course, as mentioned in Chapter III, one of the most successful sensitizing efforts involved the twelve Black congressmen who form the National Black Caucus. In holding an ad hoc hearing and news conference on the mass media and the Black community in March, 1972 to protest the employment practices and news coverage of Blacks, the Caucus followed the help BEST had given them when the Caucus had unsuccessfully tried to enforce

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the Fairness Doctrine to reply to a speech by President Nixon.

One of the most successful educational services BEST provided to a community could be considered the services they rendered Columbus, Ohio and the Columbus Broadcasting Coalition. As discussed in Chapter III the personnel of BEST spent three days in Coalition Chairman Rocciano's basement educating the Coalition on how to file a petition to deny, how to monitor a station's services, and the language to use when discussing broadcasting with people whose life work was broadcasting. This effort by BEST and the Coalition informed the Blacks in Columbus and the entire mid-Ohio region who are exposed to television from Columbus. The Coalition, in turn, took its knowledge to Chicago, as we have seen, and educated the community groups there on filing a petition to deny.

These two incidents are but two of the ways BEST helped to sensitize and educate people about communications. By looking at the participants involved in these two cases, one can see BEST's impact in this area. Largely the Black

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2 Interview with William Wright, National Coordinator of BEST, Washington, D. C., January 24, 1974; Interview with Anthony Rocciano, Coordinator of the Columbus Broadcasting Coalition, Columbus, Ohio, April, 1971; and Interview with James Robinson, Columbus Broadcasting Coalition, Columbus, Ohio, May 10, 1974.
population has benefited through the help BEST gave the Black Congressional Caucus. They became aware of the importance of communications and the effect it has on each life in America. Through this knowledge the Caucus, hopefully, can better serve the constituents they represent. In the Columbus, Ohio case, people in Ohio have responded favorably to the improved broadcasting services of the Columbus stations. The Chicago area residents also benefited because of the help the Coalition gave. These types of results, as noted throughout this study, were clearly occurring all over the country as a result of the efforts of BEST.

BEST also worked to secure more visibility of Blacks in the area of the mass media. In 1969 few Blacks appeared on television in programs, commercials, or as news commentators, but as the BEST program progressed, more Blacks participated. The numerous agencies BEST helped in its educating and sensitizing process worked in their individual communities to get more Blacks involved in broadcasting areas and before long the entire country was viewing Black faces on the tube—doing more than singing and dancing. Blacks could look to BEST and its successes, identifying with and taking pride in the organization's accomplishments.
BEST not only worked to sensitize people to the importance of broadcasting in America, but successfully lobbied to have a Black person appointed to the governmental body which regulates communications, the FCC. The Commission regulates in addition to television and radio stations, telephones, telegraphs, satellites, cable and cable casting, and microwave relay of computer information. All these areas of technology affect Black people in this country. It was very important that a Black person be appointed to the FCC in order that the decisions involving these technologies have Black input. BEST saw the need for such a person and lobbied successfully along with other Black groups on their second attempt to have one appointed.

In still another important area, BEST made a significant contribution. Community groups and Black businessmen have now begun to invest in cable television—a form of mass communications that holds considerable promise for Blacks. BEST, as we have seen, helped in this effort through consulting groups about cable, sponsoring conferences like the one on Minority Business Opportunities in Cable Television held in June, 1971 in Washington, D. C., and participating in FCC hearings about cable proposals.

In serving as a link to help involve Black people in the broadcasting process, BEST functioned as a catalytic
agent between the Black community and agencies in the communication system. Among other things, it helped them learn how to challenge a license of a station and negotiate with that licensee, worked to get more Black input concerning who is on television and what is seen, lobbied for a Black FCC commissioner, involved the Black congressmen in the broadcasting process, and encouraged the importance of the ownership of cable systems by Blacks.

As a technical assistant, BEST affected the Black community by the work it encouraged in Black employment. In working to get Blacks hired in policy-making positions, it sought to increase the Black voice in a particular station. That this affected the members of the Black community may be seen by the fact that shows were beginning to be considered with Blacks in mind. Another aspect of the Black employment drive was the success in getting more Blacks on the air. Black people, especially the children, could now have additional positive images to emulate. They were able to see that Black people could hold more diverse positions in the media. For example, Blacks could host talk shows and issue discussions as well as be anchormen for the news.

One of the major ways BEST sought to influence the Black community through its technical assistance program was working with Howard University during the preliminary
stages of the development of the Howard School of Communications. Black people needed a technical assistance center for their work in communications. Howard was a very logical place; it is one of the oldest and largest Black institutions of higher learning in this country; it is located in Washington, D.C. where all the agencies and institutions that regulate communications have their offices; and the president of Howard expressed a desire for the facility on the campus. BEST, as suggested earlier, worked with Dr. James Cheek, and numerous interested people to establish the school. Now the Howard facility can be used as a resource for information about Blacks in the broadcasting arena.

The second goal of this study as stated in Chapter I was to determine the effect of the BEST campaign on the FCC and the industry. Chapter IV concluded that the FCC and the Senate governmental agencies felt the influence of the BEST organization. Through pressure placed on the FCC by BEST and other citizen groups, this agency under the leadership of the former Chairman, Dean Burch, established a program for minority hiring in the industry. Pressure from the FCC caused local stations to hire more Blacks and other minorities to ensure relicensing. BEST, in this instance, served as a catalyst between the Black community and the FCC, which in turn made changes in the
hiring policies in the industry.

BEST also affected the Commission through the comments it made on FCC rulemakings. BEST was the voice of communities who did not have the legal assistance and/or financing to file comments whenever necessary. Through these comments BEST relayed the opinions and concerns of local groups to the FCC.

Probably the most important impact of BEST's campaign on the FCC is the fact that now the FCC recognizes and acknowledges the minority position in broadcasting. With Commissioner Hooks ever-present, the minority demand is difficult to ignore. But before this appointment, BEST was a constant reminder to the FCC that the Black people in this country who watch on the average of seven hours of television per day deserve a fair share in the broadcasting process.

The Senate is an agency that has not been mentioned frequently in this discussion. However, BEST has had an influence on that governmental body also. Broadcasters will no longer go to the Pastore Committee with overly biased or flimsy legislation and think it will pass without some intervention by the Black community. Although such strategy all too often was used in the past, it will be less persuasive in the future. After the long battle
over the license renewal bill of 1969, Pastore and the broadcasters became aware that citizens were prepared to fight such action. The citizens came to the Senate knowing the laws and the legislative process. Thus, the Senate felt a need to listen to the demands of community people. If they did not, groups organized to direct grievances to the Senators' constituencies in their home states.\(^3\) BEST testified at hearings and submitted papers so that the Senate would know precisely the position Black people held on issues concerning the broadcasting process. In functioning as the voice of the Black community, BEST reminded the Senate members that Blacks did exist in this country and their intention was to be heard.

The broadcast industry also was influenced by the BEST organization. Through the educational and sensitizing sessions held by BEST all over the country, community people, as stated earlier, were learning how to file petitions to deny licenses to local stations. The licensees were forced to deal with the community and satisfy some, if not all, of their demands. More Black people, as we have seen, were hired for jobs, both on the air and behind the scenes in policy-making positions. Training programs were instituted by some stations like

\(^3\)Interview with William Wright.
the one in Columbus, Ohio at WLWC-TV. In the shows originating locally, more Blacks are participating.

The industry people recognized most importantly that their whole structure and money-making apparatus were understood and could be controlled by the organization of community people. This situation was a threat to their entire economic stability and this factor, more than anything else, changed the attitudes of broadcasters. As Richard Wolfe, owner of WBNS-TV in Columbus, Ohio asserts, "What troubles me, and other broadcasters engaged in confrontation with community groups, is the cost, in money and time, in responding to petition to deny." BEST has contributed to the broadcasters' willingness at the present time to discuss with citizens' groups. With the success it achieved with the Columbus, Ohio petitions, Capcities, and McGraw-Hill petitions, it was definitely an organization of significant power and influence to be given more than passing consideration.

Another goal set forth in Chapter I of this study dealt with implications for rhetoric in the mass media. The first major implication deals with the area of rhetorical strategies. Let us consider, for example, the method

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BEST used in negotiating with stations for more participation by Blacks in broadcasting.

In selecting stations the organization would challenge, BEST personnel looked at the stations' record, attempted to speak with the station's management, and—if this was not successful—challenged the station with a petition to deny. Stations chosen were those which had not served the Black community properly, or as in those cases of Capcities and McGraw-Hill transfers, monopolized broadcasting markets (too many stations in the top-fifty markets were owned by the same corporation). According to rulings by the FCC, monopoly of this kind is against public policy. As was mentioned previously, BEST did not place its name on any petitions to deny except the Alabama Educational Television petition. The reason for this procedure was because BEST did not want credit for the challenge, but wished only to train community people so that they could carry out the negotiating plans developed in workshops or sensitivity sessions. Therefore, BEST, in choosing test cases, alerted Blacks about communities where transfers were being planned. They also selected cases that would draw national attention so that publicity could be gained for BEST, and the particular Black community involved in the challenge. This activity helped the organization receive the needed public attention it could
not employ a firm to provide.

When BEST began negotiating with one or more stations, it had monitored the station's activities and knew its schedule and policy for employment. The organization spoke with management first and attempted to reach agreement on methods of ascertaining the public interest, and programming and employment. If negotiating sessions with management were not successful, the organization wrote and filed petitions to deny against the station during its license renewal period. When the FCC reviewed the case (which takes about three years) and usually granted the renewal of the particular station's license, BEST would appeal to the courts for settlement. This is the process the organization followed and taught to Black communities throughout the country that filed petitions to deny and were assisted by BEST. BEST proceeded in negotiation from top management to the FCC and finally to the courts as each action, in its turn, resulted in dissatisfaction.

Through the above method dealing with stations BEST gained expertise and was able to secure legal thrust and public recognition. It also secured thrust from working with other citizen groups on issues which affected each constituency. BEST illustrated its faith in cooperative persuasive efforts by working with Action for Children's
Television, United Church of Christ, the Urban Law Institute, the National Organization for Women, the National Citizens Committee for Broadcasting, Citizens Communications Center, and Mexican-American Groups.

It must be further noted that through working with these other groups BEST for the purpose of gaining wide political impact conformed to the teachings of Chaim Perelman's theory of "presence." In discussing the definition of "presence," Perelman and Tyteca remark:

Presence acts directly on our sensibility....By the very fact of selecting certain elements and presenting them to the audience, their importance and pertinency to the discussion are implied....The thing that is present to the consciousness assumes thus an importance that the theory and practice of argument must take into consideration.\(^5\)

As shown in this dissertation the issues BEST graphically presented to the FCC or Courts, in conjunction with others, as well as the powerful influence spawned by the past action and support created "presence." Moreover, this "presence" nurtured the climate needed for all programs of the organizations involved to have more visibility. The FCC, the broadcast industry, and the Courts were made aware of the challenge to recognize these organizations as having

power within the larger community in this country.

BEST was able to accomplish, on a small scale, public relations which constantly lobbied to keep the name BEST on the minds of the members of the FCC, the Senate, and broadcasters. The organization employed several low cost means of disseminating information. Letters to the editors of the major newspapers, being guests on established television programs which were Black oriented, and sending press releases were a few of the approaches used. Through these methods BEST gained "presence" and power within the pressure group movement and the entire communications process.

BEST did not only work with other groups to gain "presence" but attempted to make the individual aware that he had power in his own right to make change, and develop "presence" of his own. This can be illustrated through the experience of the writer. Through the influence of Bill Wright and BEST, the author wrote a letter to Senator Pastore, Chairman of the Senate Sub-Committee on Communications, requesting an invitation to appear and testify at hearings on a candidate for the FCC. The experience gained in this endeavor afforded her the opportunity to testify again during the hearings for the 1974 license renewal bill. The procedure provided an insight in gaining "presence" through working with BEST and the newly formed National
Black Media Coalition. It also reaffirmed the philosophy of BEST that the individual does have the ability to influence change.

In conjunction with the previous strategy of selecting specific test cases, BEST also adhered to a specific pattern of choice. The organization did not fight cases before the FCC which it felt would be lost. BEST personnel feared the negative decisions and reactions a lost case would have on future citizen group litigation. This strategy, which was adopted in the beginning and pursued throughout, contributed to the increased persuasive impact of the organization. Apparently BEST correctly believed that select promising test cases would provide the needed "presence" to emphasize its message.

BEST also chose to fight local stations, and not the three networks, because of the organization's size and power base. Thus, BEST was alone among national Black groups in its inability to utilize the media on a large scale. Unlike such organizations as SCLC, N.A.A.C.P., and SNCC, BEST, in the opinion of the media operators, was viewed as a threat or challenge to their entrenched self-interest. Successful confrontation with local stations enhanced the reputation of BEST, thereby strengthening its status before the FCC.
It is instructive to note that the organization rarely made an effort to utilize the established Black press as a means of publicity. Apart from the Ebony article cited in Chapter II, the author was unable to find any extensive detailed discussion of BEST activities in Black journals or newspapers. BEST seemed to use the Washington Post and Star-News because of their larger circulation and wider reading audience. To reach the Black community, BEST, it would appear, relied more on the Black "grapevine" to make its issues known to people in the communities. As Pluria Marshall, Head of Operation Breadbasket, Houston, Texas, noted: "We all feel deeply indebted to BEST and Bill Wright because he gave to us the kind of solid foundation to carry on and pass on to other younger Black folk who are interested in this same area...."\(^6\) This practice of relying on communication through personal contact constitutes an important part of the oral tradition of Black Americans.

It would appear then that the communication strategies used by BEST stressed the value of combining

cooperative persuasive efforts with individual campaigns in order to provide maximum rhetorical force. In addition, the strategies demonstrated the importance of using select test cases as a means of creating "presence." Also the strategies reflect the importance of selecting which cases should be fought before the FCC and who should be challenged in these cases. Finally the strategies reveal the significance of employing the negotiating procedure that begins at the bottom and progresses through upward stages.

A final implication demonstrates how the strategies BEST utilized conform to the rhetoric of social agitation and protest. Agitation as defined by John Bowers and Donovan Ochs "exists when (1) people outside the normal decision-making establishment (2) advocate significant social change and (3) encounter a degree of resistance within the establishment such as to require more than the normal discursive means of persuasion."\(^7\) When reviewing the operation of BEST as reflected in this study, it can be regarded as an organization that employed this definition of agitation in its operations.

Bowers and Ochs describe two kinds of agitation. The following distinctions are made:

Agitation based on vertical deviance occurs when the agitators subscribe to the value system of the establishment, but dispute the distribution of benefits or power within that value system. Agitation based on lateral deviance occurs when the agitators dispute the value system itself.\(^8\)

BEST employed the ideology of vertical deviance in developing its strategies of agitation. The issues in this type of agitation are simple and easily understood. The objective of BEST was to make its demands clear and direct. BEST, in seeking through its program to alter the power held by the white majority in broadcasting by supporting the rights of Black Americans to have their fair share of the industry, employed the rhetoric of agitation.

Bowers and Ochs list nine strategies which agitators may use for persuasion. Of these, BEST used the methods of petitioning the establishment and solidification. The strategy of petitioning the establishment include the tactics "governing selection of motive appeals, selection of target audiences, selection of types and sources of evidence, and selection of linguistic type.\(^9\) Alone, this

\(^8\)Ibid., p. 7.
\(^9\)Ibid., p. 17.
strategy does not satisfy the definition of agitation described by the authors. However, coupled with that of solidification BEST qualifies as an agitator of social change. The latter strategy occurs within the organization rather than outside. Solidification "reinforces the cohesiveness of its members, thereby increasing their responsiveness of group wishes."\textsuperscript{10} The tactics include increasing their plays, songs, and in-house communications.

In the work accomplished by BEST, it petitioned the broadcasters, FCC and the courts—a fact which has been stressed throughout this chapter. In its efforts the organization, in following the practice of employing persistent pressure employed a tactic of the strategy of the non-violent agitator.\textsuperscript{11} However this is the only tactic of this strategy employed by BEST. Through using the solidification strategy, BEST was able to send letters of information and instruction to its local contacts. BEST was constantly reinforcing the importance of Black people becoming more involved in the broadcasting process. Through employing the strategies of petitioning the establishment and solidification, and the tactic of persistence, BEST demonstrated the relevance of some of the descriptions set

\textsuperscript{10}Ibid., p. 20.
\textsuperscript{11}Ibid., p. 33.
forth by Bowers and Ochs. But it is important to note that the other seven strategies—promulgation, polarization, nonviolent resistance, escalation/confrontation, guerilla and Gandhi, guerrilla, and revolution—recommended as being essential elements of the rhetoric of agitation and social control were not used. This conclusion suggests that other minority groups seeking to involve themselves in the task of influencing the media might emulate BEST by relying primarily on the social protest strategies of petitioning the establishment and solidification, and the tactic of persistence.

Despite the positive advantages there were several limitations which adversely affected the above strategies employed by BEST. These limitations included the image, funding, manpower, media coverage, and leadership of the organization.

The image as defined by Kenneth Boulding is the subjective knowledge structure of the world.\textsuperscript{12} In his discussion of "Image of Man and Society," Boulding relates the image to ten classifications. One of these is the personal image which he defines as "the picture of the individual in the midst of the universe of persons, roles, and organizations around him."\textsuperscript{13} People relate to things around them


\textsuperscript{13}Ibid., p. 47.
because of the images they possess. Similarly, people react to organizations because of their image of them. It is the experience of that individual which causes an image to develop. In this connection, an image developed about BEST in its formative years by people in the broadcast industry. In the press BEST was termed a militant group. Since the image such a word connotes causes people to react negatively, the very selection of the word "militant" can be stated explicitly as one of the main reasons funding agencies shied away from financing BEST.

Names and titles, Richard Weaver tells us, are very important in this society. Some of these terms are "bad" and others are "good." The "bad" terms are those to which the public reacts in a negative manner and the "good" are those to which they react in a positive way. Weaver speaks of the good words as "god terms" and the bad words as "devil terms." He relates the following distinctions:

...By "god terms" we mean that expression about which all other expressions are ranked as subordinate and serving dominations and powers. Its force imparts to the others their lesser degree of force, and fixes the scale by which degrees of comparison are understood.14

...Some terms of repulsion are also ultimate in the sense of standing at the end of the series, and no survey of the vocabulary can

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ignore these prime repellants. The counterpart of the "god term" is the "devil term,"... One cannot explain how they generate their peculiar force of repudiation. One only recognizes them as publicly-agreed-upon devil terms. 15

Unfortunately the devil connotation related to the notion of militancy is associated with the more unfavorable term "unAmerican." The two taken together presented an image of BEST, it seems, which made it difficult to secure adequate financial support.

But the negative image which caused a lack of funding was not the only limitation within the organization. Another factor which may have contributed to the organization's short life was its reliance upon limited manpower. There were only two full-time employees in addition to Bill Wright. This shortage of work force, compounded by inadequate funds, led to a fatigue which made it difficult for the personnel to sustain their energy and perseverance. Consequently, the organization's work had to be discontinued at a time when the challenge was steadily increasing.

As stated earlier in this chapter one of the strategies BEST used was not to challenge the networks. BEST was not given the opportunity to receive national media

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15 Ibid., pp. 222-23.
coverage. This strategy turned into a limitation. Therefore BEST was unable to utilize the media to develop a broader base in the Black community or gain sympathy and finances from individuals.

Another limitation became evident in the interviews conducted by the author with people associated with BEST. With considerable consensus the interviewees took pride in the fact that BEST and Bill Wright were synonymous. This tendency to equate the leader with the organization provided centrality and cohesion in leadership. Although this fact is a tribute to the dedication of Wright to BEST, it suggests an important shortcoming in leadership roles. For as the Cathcart and Samovar volume on group dynamics suggests, excessive dependence on a single individual tends to inhibit organizational development.\(^{16}\) Another element of the organization that was affected by its dependence on a single individual was the fact that no significant changes occurred in strategy throughout the existence of BEST. In order to understand the non-varying nature of the rhetorical strategy it is important to review briefly the philosophy of Mr. Wright. His reading of history led him to conclude that any successful

revolution begins with control of the broadcasting facilities. It was against this background that choosing select test cases and focusing on community television stations became essential elements in his strategy. Once he had come to this belief he was not inclined to alter his approach. Such a philosophy could not help but hinder organizational development, but it did not affect organizational success.

It can justifiably be said that BEST, despite its limitations, was a major force that caused participation by Blacks in the broadcasting process, and affected the FCC, the Senate, and the broadcast industry. Through the efforts of the newly formed National Black Media Coalition, it is hoped that the accomplishments of BEST can be used as stepping stones to secure more participation by Black people in the broadcasting process.

In commenting on BEST and the successes it had as an organization, Mr. Wright said:

There's no academic committee that's going to totally understand at this day and age what it is you will be presenting to them. And it has nothing to do with the sincerity of academic people transferring their skills to you. But, what it has to do with is the whole point of references and the whole environmental situation. They have looked at it from only one perspective. They cannot look at it from your perspective because they are not in your position.
However, ten years from now, what you're doing will end up being much more important because they will be able to see the foundation for what develops ten years from now involving Blacks and the media. They will be able to trace back because they will have some kind of document. Because I foresee in the future in the Sunday Parade magazine somebody asking the question "Who do you think is responsible--individual or organization, or what--for the advancement of Black Americans in the communication industry," and I will bet you know that they'll list some white man. And it was not a white man, but it was 1000 Black folks from one end of this country to the other.\[17\]

Hopefully, the prediction of Mr. Wright will not occur. BEST personnel and Black people put in too many hours of work, and accomplished too much for Black people for the credit to be given to anyone else. This study will hopefully help prevent this situation.

\[17\] Interview with William Wright.
## CHART OF BEST ACTIVITIES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Service</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Nature</th>
<th>BEST Filed</th>
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*Chicago  
*St. Louis  
*Rochester  
*Newark  
*Columbus | CBS/ABC license challenge  
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CATV Franchise Consultant  
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|                | Workshops:  
Va. Human Relations Commission  
Congress of African People  
Houston Operation Breadbasket  
Staff of Senator Mervyn Dunally |              |              |              | X |
|                | Sensitivity:  
National Urban Coalition  
Congress of African People  
National Black Caucus |              |              | X |

* = Successes of legal proceedings
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* = Successes of legal proceedings
BLACK OWNED RADIO STATIONS

Alabama

WEUP Radio
2609 Jordan Lane, Huntsville 35806
(205) 536-0713 Leroy Garrett, Owner
5000 watts. Greener, Haiken & Sears rating.
Owned by Garrett Broadcasting, Inc.
(estab '58, empl 12, sales $90,000)

Georgia

WRDW Radio
1480 Eisenhower Drive, Augusta
(404) 738-2513 James Brown, Owner
5000 watts. Owned by JB Broadcasting.
(estab '69, empl 19)

Illinois

WMPP Radio
100 Lincoln Highway, East Chicago 60411
(312) 785-0262 Charles J. Pinckard, Owner
50-mile radius includes Gary and Chicago.
(estab '62, empl 18)

Indiana

W TLC-FM Radio
1734 Villa Avenue, Indianapolis 46203
(317) 784-4471 Frank Lloyd, President
Owned by Calojay Enterprises.

Maryland

WEBB Radio
Clifton & Dennison, Baltimore
(301) 947-1245 James Brown, Owner
500 watts directional. Owned by JB Broadcasting.
(estab '69, empl 18)
Michigan

WCHB-AM and WCHD-FM Radio
32790 Henry Ruff Road, Inkster 48141
(313) 278-1440 Dr. Haley Bell, President
WCHB-AM transmits 1000 watts directionally in metro Detroit, Wayne County, and Toledo, reaching 5 million with soul music. WCHD-FM has 75 mile radius and jazz music. Owned by Bell Broadcasting, Inc.
(estab '56, empl 40)

WGPR-FM Radio
2101 Gratiot Street, Detroit 48207
(313) 961-8833 William V. Banks, President

WWWS-FM Radio
2721 South Washington, Saginaw 48607
(517) 752-7166 Ch. Grazen, Director
400,000 people in 70 mile radius to Lansing, Flint, and Pontiac. 5000 watts effective power. Owned by Clark Broadcasting
(estab '69, empl 14)

Mississippi

WORV Radio
604 Jussia Avenue, Hattiesburg 39401
(601) 582-7013 Vernon Floyd, Owner

Missouri

KPRS-AM and KPRS-FM Radio
2301 Grand Avenue, Kansas City 64108
(816) 471-2100 Andrew Carter, President

KWK Radio
500 Terminal Building, St. Louis 63147
(314) 868-6440 Dr. Robert Bass, Partner
Owned by Bell Broadcasting Corporation

North Carolina

WVOE Radio
Route 2, Box 124-A, Chadbourn 28431
(191) 654-3991 Dr. G. W. Carnes, President
Owned by WVOE Enterprises
(estab '62, empl 9)
Ohio

WABQ Radio
2644 St. Clair Avenue East, Cleveland 44114
(216)241-7555

Tennessee

WJBE Radio
2108 Prosser Road, P.O. 281, Knoxville
(615)546-2210 James Brown, Owner
General Rank 3. (estb '68, empl 12)

FM Stations located on black college campuses

WCSU-FM
Central State University
Wilberforce, Ohio

WHOV-FM
Hampton Institute
Hampton, Virginia

WSHA-FM
Shaw University
Raleigh, North Carolina

WHUR-FM
Howard University
Washington, D.C.
APPENDIX III
BLACK OWNED TV STATIONS

WGPR-TV, Detroit, Mich.
Channel 62
President: William V. Banks
FCC permit issued June, 1973

Channel 50, Washington, D.C.
President: Theodore S. Ledbetter, Jr.

Channel 17, Nashville, Tenn.
President: James R. Lawson

WBNB-TV, Charlotte Amalie, St. Thomas, Virgin Islands
Channel 10, District Communications Inc.
President: Theodore S. Ledbetter, Jr.

WSVI-TV, Christiansted, St. Croix, Virgin Islands
Channel 8, Peoples Broadcasting Corp.
President: Albert Sheen
APPENDIX IV
CATV FRANCHISES GRANTED

Gary, Indiana  
Seattle, Washington  
Atlanta, Georgia  
Columbus, Ohio  
Watts, California  
Los Angeles, California  
Kalamazoo County, Michigan  
Tuskegee, Maine  
Compton, California
APPENDIX V
EMPLOYMENT AND JOB TRAINING

25% of employees Black - no more janitors and PBX-receptionists counted in percentage, only technical, managerial and talent

Black anchor man on 6 o'clock news

Chet Long - no coverage of hard news

Blacks as a vice president - department heads - editorial board

Roy Briscoe contained (no derogatory terminology)

Charismatic Blacks hire with new Black image

Blacks hired to receive thorough training and support

Black news reporters to deal with relevant progressive Blacks in the community with some autonomy to decide which stories about the Black community need to be covered, from which angle.

Black artists as art and prop assistants

Black female talent such as Vi Clark for TV

Remove incompetent Blacks as quickly as incompetent whites

Black Public Affairs Director

Scholarships and traineeships for high school Blacks interested in broadcasting

(NOTE: Funds for such available from Labor Department as well as foundations

On-the-job training possible for engineers. Station could pay for accompanying electronics course - could be recruited from vocational schools, electronics-trained G.I.s)

Recruitment methods for Black different than Whites
PROGRAMMING

Black theater, art and music presented by Black community
Weekly talk show giving variations of Black thought
Education series on such as Swahili, Black history
Community education aimed at such as:
   instances of positive bussing
   educational parks
   student rights
   myths perpetuated about Blacks
   economic inequities in Black community
   findings of Housing Opportunity Center
   inequities in trade unions
   broadcaster's responsibility to total community
Black imput into program direction; at least one Black
produced and directed show (i.e., "the Drum,"
Boston; "Harambee," D. C.)
Contemporary Black singers, musicians, bands on radio
throughout days' programming - no more Louis
Armstrong stereotypes
More coverage of cause and effects in reporting of crisis
events
No editorializing in newscasts (inflection, gestures, etc.)
Local news on FM radio
Coverage of Black youth events, i.e. sports, social,
projects
No movies showing negroes and coloeds in old way of life
ASCERTAINMENT

Majority of Blacks ascertained should be those whose answers can't be influenced by funding needs

More diversity in Blacks chosen to be ascertained - Blacks of representative ages, philosophical beliefs

Blacks to be ascertained in face to face conversation, not phone

Blacks to be ascertained on a routine day as opposed to immediately following an explosive event

News interviews and panel shows are not to be considered ascertainment - nor are phone conversations when complaints are made

Should build programming around results of ascertainment and not ignore relevant Black concerns voiced in ascertainment as has been done in past
ADVERTISING

Blacks involved in local commercials

New policy on advertising - none accepted which are known to discriminate for race, color, creed

Spot announcements made announcing new policy on advertising stating anyone knowing to the contrary that your advertisers do discriminate should notify management of station.

All housing advertisement must state housing open, Blacks should be viewed being shown apartments, houses

OTHER AREAS OF CONCERN

Sensitivity sessions with key personnel of station given by Coalition members

Station to pay costs Coalition has incurred preparing Petition

Ongoing dialogue with Coalition such as monthly progress meetings

Help in sponsoring of media conference with local broadcasters, public relations, advertising firms, as well as newspapers to lead way in changing community attitudes

Term, "Black" used, not negro or colored

Monetary investment in Black community: banks
Communiversity

Establish time clause re implementing changes
FIELD WORK STUDENT SUMMER PLAN  
Beginning June 18, 1973  
Ending August 10, 1973

Following is an outline of study for the summer plan:

Week 1  PROGRAM LOG & FCC REGULATIONS
- Familiarization with program log and an understanding of guidelines for accepting PSA material. (throughout 8 week period.)

OFFICE PROCEDURE
- Mailings, printing, routing, filing, computer data, reports. (throughout 8 week period.)

Week 2  CONTINUITY
- Write copy from release and contact info, PSA, check conditions of visuals/copy. (throughout 8 week period.)

OTHER DEPARTMENTS...FAMILIARIZATION
- Spend a day in the Graphics Department.

Week 3  FILM & VTR
- Preview, catalog and schedule PSA's. Document PSA count from FCC log for Composite Week info. Compute and send PSA count and dollar amount per organization.

MAIL LIST
- Update and maintain list...become familiar with mailings for editorials, workshops.

OTHER DEPARTMENTS...FAMILIARIZATION
- Spend a day in the Promotion Department.

Week 4  OTHER DEPARTMENTS...FAMILIARIZATION
- Spend a day in the Sales Department.

Week 5  COMMUNITY NEEDS AND INTERESTS
- Learn various ascertainment procedures for developing new program ideas and documentation for license renewal purposes.
OTHER DEPARTMENTS...FAMILIARIZATION
- spend a day in the Traffic & Computer Facility Dept.

PROGRAM PRODUCTION
- practice air work; i.e., interview techniques, preparation of script.

PHOTOGRAPHY
- learn to shoot 35mm slides, operate audio tape recorder.

OTHER DEPARTMENTS...FAMILIARIZATION
- spend a day in the Engineering Department.

FILM & VTR
- see week 3

DIRECTING
- learn the basics of calling the shots of putting a program together.

OTHER DEPARTMENTS...FAMILIARIZATION
- spend a day in Program/Production.

OTHER DEPARTMENTS...FAMILIARIZATION
- spend a day in News
- spend half a day in business

ALL 8 Weeks MEETINGS - TOURS
- attend and evaluate

PROGRAM PRODUCTION
- assist in supplying guests for various programs under jurisdiction of CSD. Observe CSD programs in production.

WORK WEEK - Monday and Wednesday from 7:30 PM to 9:30 PM and Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday from 8:30 AM to 12:00 Noon.

An overall program has been designed to expose interested students to the commercial broadcasting world. The Community Services Department supervises the students although such students will be attached to all other departments at various times during the plan.
WLWC FIELD WORK ASSIGNMENT SCHEDULE

5 hours credit

WEEK #1 - January 2, 3, 4, 7, 8
News Department (8:30 AM - 5:30 PM)

WEEK #2 - January 9, 10, 11, 14, 15
News Department (2:30 PM - 11:30 PM)

WEEK #3 - January 16 - Continuity Department (8:30-5:30)
January 17 - Promotion Department (8:30-5:30)
January 18 - Sales Department (8:30-5:30)
January 21 - Traffic/Computer Systems (8:30-5:30)
January 22 - Community Services Dept. (8:30-5:30)

WEEK #4 - January 23 - Engineering Dept. (8:30-5:30)
January 24 - Program/Production Dept. (8:30-5:30)
January 25 - News Department (8:30-5:30)
January 28 - News Department (8:30-5:30)
January 29 - News Department (8:30-5:30)
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Telephone interview with Florence Tate, National Urban Coalition—Communications Director, Washington, D. C., May 13, 1974.


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Interview with Marissa Young, Administrative Assistant of BEST, Washington, D. C., January 21, 1974.

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Interview with Anthony Rocciano, Coordinator of the Columbus Broadcasting Coalition, Columbus, Ohio, April, 1971.


Interview with Fred Von Stode, General Manager of WTVN-TV, Columbus, Ohio, June 25, 1974.

Interview with Pat Cramer, Public Relations Director of WTVN-TV, Columbus, Ohio, June 25, 1974.


Interview with Mrs. Ann Walker, Community Affairs Director of WLM-C TV, Columbus, Ohio, July 1, 1974.

Telephone interview with member of Committee for United Newark, Newark, New Jersey.

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Unity House Technical Assistance Report.
Memos

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Guidelines for Community Demands Against Local Broadcasters.

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Amendment of Parts 1, 2, 21 & 43 of the Commissional Rules and regulations to provide for licensing and regulations of common carrier radio stations in the Multipoint Distribution Service. Docket No. 19493.


Reimbursement for Legitimate and Prudent Expenses of a Public Interest Group for a Consultancy to a Broadcaster in Certain Instances. Docket No. 19518.

Wright, William. Testimony at Hearings Before the Communications Subcommittee of the Committee on Commerce. 91st Congress. First Session on S. 2004, pp. 588-600.

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Renewal of the License of Alabama Educational Television Commission:

*--Petition for Renewal Reconsideration by BEST
--Opposition to Above Petition by AETC
--Reply to Opposition by BEST

*Note: Each entry is a separate document.
For Renewal of License of Station WMAL-TV--The Evening Star Broadcasting Company, Washington, D. C.:
--BEST, et al. Petition
--FCC Decision
--United States Court of Appeals Decision

Policy Statement of FCC:
--BEST Petition and Reply to Opposition
--FCC Decision
--BEST Reply to FCC and Intervenors--WTAR and RKO
--Court Decision

Capcities License Renewal Challenge:
--Petition to Deny
--Minority Program Project

Red Lion Broadcasting Company v FCC supra Note 36, 395 U.S. at 390.

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--Petition to Deny

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"Double Trouble on Minorities." Broadcasting, March 2, 1970, p. 27.


"For Black Viewers." Black Enterprise, August, 1971, p. 49.


"Hooks, Ledbetter, Ortique?" Broadcasting, March 6, 1972.

"Hooks Starts Delivering on Commitment to Blacks." Broadcasting, October 9, 1972.


"Judge Hooks Finally Gets the Job." Broadcasting, April 17, 1972, pp. 22-23.


"Where All That Talk About Cable May Lead." Broadcasting. March 29, 1971, pp. 80, 82, 84-86.

"When Do Challenges Become 'Extortion'" Broadcasting. October 9, 1972, pp. 31-32.

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Afro-American, April 17, 1971.

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