

REEVES
Advisory Committee

The Media and California's 1974 Gubernatorial Election

I INTRODUCTION

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INTRODUCTION

I

When California Representative Jerome Waldie stepped out of an automobile in August, 1973, at the Mexican border in San Diego county, and began walking north, in a commitment to "walk the state" he signaled, with the most emphatic public gesture anyone had made to date, that the campaign for the choice of a California governor, to occur fifteen months later in November 1974, had commenced. He set off to meet the voters.

But the aim in Waldie's walk was not quite that, as he strode up the concrete highways and country roads of California, through shopping centers, college campuses and farm clusters, into cities and suburbs, hand out to greet each person encountered, the pleasant grin warm and personal, "My name is Waldie. I hope you'll vote for me for governor," with a little coterie of volunteers flocking behind to thrust a pamphlet at each passerby and gather names. This turned out to be the most extensive encounter between candidate and voter of the entire 1974 campaign. For the human satisfaction that came from meeting directly so many

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People Waldie later said it was worth the whole arduous, plodding, interminable ordeal.

F 1-2
"I love this. I don't mean to be effusive, but I really do like the experience. In all my years of politics, I've done what politicians do, talk to people in the power centers. This is different. I see people who have never seen a politician in their lives, literally. Most are delighted. On the street, for that 20 seconds I'm shaking his hand and looking at him and saying 'Hi, I'm Jerry Waldie, What's your name?' that is a more honest and direct communication than the voter ever gets-- a more honest communication than the TV screen brings him with a candidate reading something someone wrote for him and which he rehearsed."

But Waldie didn't make that walk to meet people. He made it to attract media.

In a state with 21 million people, 13.5 million eligible to vote and 9.9 million actually registered to vote in 1974 (and 6.3 million who did vote), personal contact with 10,000 people is a tremendous achievement. Waldie's campaign reached that many, with names and addresses collected in his wake as he made his way over 1001 miles. No other candidate had anything comparable in the way of personal contact, though another hopeful, George Moscone, state senator from San Francisco, did a three-week jeep trip from the Oregon border to the Mexican in November 1973. Neither of these efforts registered significantly with the public, however.

For a state so large, with a voting population so numerous, such encounters with people is absolutely inconsequential, just as it would be nationally. The only useful means of communication between candidate and voter today is through mass media systems. At least that was the universal 1974 assumption. Waldie knew it. That is why he walked.

As campaign professional Joe Cerrell saw it: "You can ring doorbells for three months. It won't have as much impact as one good television spot."

The "Walk" was Waldie's way to get some television attention. It, like the jeep ride, was a gimmick.

Following examples set in Illinois and in Florida, the walk dramatized Waldie's entry into each community along his route. It gave focus to his presence, without the necessity for further formal "events". It brought this man, on a human and personal scale, the "peoples' candidate" his slogans emphasized, into successive communities in a deliberately modest style. In such a context he could and did command attention from the local newspapers, the local radio and local television. He rated, in his wake, a continuing ripple of stories and pictures, some of the most engaging those which caught him rubbing tired feet with his shoes off. Maybe it wasn't a lot of publicity, but the brief passage through town, he was news; more than that, a very human presence, not a lofty official. And it cost almost nothing.

Lacking money, lacking a name familiar outside his own Congressional district, lacking even that minimal necessity, a press relations staff, Rep. Waldie made an entry upon media awareness by the simple, homely drama of his foot passage. It brought what he sought: a succession of local newspaper attention, a chance to talk on local radio, an occasional interview on local television. But even this small attention didn't happen by chance. Waldie's aides would advance his walk: alert the news reporters, plan timing with the radio station, make sure the television station knew.

California's 1974 gubernatorial election demonstrated with peculiar force the reality that modern elections in this country consist not so much in encounters between candidate and voters as in encounters between candidate and media. This engagement between press-television-radio and the man seeking office has become the focal point of a political campaign, the center of its action.

This, the Candidate-Media Interaction Study discovered to an extent far beyond our initial anticipation.

II

In April, 1974 after roughly a year of preliminary discussion and planning, the California Center for Research and Education in Government undertook a serious analysis of the inter-action between political candi-

dates for the governor's post in the California 1974 election and the media of that state as it reported upon that campaign. The study was initiated with the financial support plus the interest and encouragement of Ford Foundation and John and Mary Markle Foundation. The aim was an empirical observation of just what transpires between these two elements of a campaign-- the media and the candidate.

What we set out to do was to observe, as intimately as possible but objectively, the whole range of relationships and responses which a campaign provokes between media and candidate. We had no thesis to prove, no initial hypothesis. We undertook this study to identify in more detail than scholars have attempted in the past just what relationships actually ensue between these two vital components of a political campaign, how they are conducted and how they affect each other.

After considerable discussion over the most advantageous methods, it was decided that, although this constituted a sociological study, journalists with experience in political coverage would bring a more immediate and more intimate understanding to the task than would academicians. Reporters could move into the campaign scene quickly, with a comprehension of what constituted the campaign side of the activities, and they would know first-hand the necessities placed on all elements of the media by such technical problems as deadlines, news judgement, editorial mandates for

balance, the daily competition for space or time with other breaking news events. The journalists chosen had the further advantage of knowing personally most of the candidates and the campaign managers. However, those participating had not been engaged recently in day-to-day political reporting about those who figured as candidates in this contest, and they did not during the campaign. They had been out of such milieu long enough to gain some objectivity, it was felt.

A group of recognized scholars in political science and the communication fields from University of California and from Stanford University were participants from the earliest stages in planning the project, and then through its research design, and as consultants in the observation, in the focus of the work and in computer analysis of media output.

It must be noted that our study purposely avoided any concern with voter response to the candidates. That area has been and continues to be rich for sociological and political science study. Many of our own findings invite further examination as to the impact on voters. But we purposely narrowed our own examination to one element in the campaign process only: to the interaction between candidates and media.

III

This particular election, it turned out, was extraordinarily opportune for our study. It was the

first wide-open campaign for governor in California since 1958 when then U.S. Senator William F. Knowland and then Attorney General Edmund G. Brown battled each other, that is, the first with no incumbent seeking re-election. A number of state office holders were involved in this 1974 race. None, however, commanded the initial level of public attention which a U.S. Senator would rate, or an Attorney General (a very powerful office in California since Earl Warren fashioned its scope and activities). Hence, none entered the lists with an obvious advantage, except for the name advantage of Edmund G. Brown Jr., and the right-to-inherit advantage Republican lieutenant governor Ed Reinecke originally enjoyed. Reinecke's lead melted away when he became enmeshed in the Watergate catastrophe. In a broad sense, the press, radio and television saw all candidates leave the starting gate even.

This very openness attracted a large number of candidates. A total of 29, 18 of them vying for the Democratic nomination in the June primary election; six for the Republican; three for the Peace and Freedom Party, one American Independent.

As a result we were able to observe many campaign styles and to get a perspective on the campaign from a wide range of "hopefuls" who trailed through the primary and had their own insights into media relations during the course of the campaign. It turned out that losers were more communicative about their difficulties with

press/radio/television than winners. We found some common patterns in their protests. We also had the advantage that some of the "losers" were novices, viewing the experience with completely fresh perceptions, and some were sophisticated and experienced politicians who could measure this year against others.

It might have seemed, at first, that the "apathy" which characterized the year so strikingly, and was described as the prevailing public mood through 1974 would handicap our study. We came to an opposite conclusion.

The public mood was more than mere disinterest. It seemed an actual revulsion against politics, in reaction to the Watergate disclosures. Opinion samplers and media interviews, talk-shows and pundits reiterated that the public was "turned off" from politics. Said candidate William M. Roth: The problem is that the disillusionment is such that people are just turning away from the political process entirely."

Paul Hinkle, Waldie's press secretary said, less than a week before the primary:

In 22 years of campaigning, this is a real strange one I can tell you. Not only at the media level but public as well. I've been walking precincts in Solano Contra Costa County, Santa Clara, etc. People have little interest in the race. They haven't made up their minds. As many as 60 percent to 80 percent tell you they haven't thought about it.

We're finding the same all over. Voters tell us when we work precincts they are just turned off this year. We worked 5 precincts in Sacramento.

People said they were undecided. It is unbelievable this late in the campaign. They'd take our literature and think about it but they said they didn't know....To be unsure this late, we've never seen this.

I think myself Watergate has done it. They are tired of it for one thing. There is an oversaturation point reached. They want to think about more pleasant things.

Campuses, said Vic Fazio, Northern California campaign Director for Assembly Speaker Bob Moretti, "are generally very apathetic and up in the air as much as the general public."

John FitzRandolph, Moretti campaign manager put it this way:

I have an idea that politics as a subject is in disrepute.

There is definately an effect from Watergate in the level of interest. In the Kennedy era, politics was a glamorous activity, interesting, moving, vital part of our culture. It drew excellent talent and it was meaningful. It got a lot of attention and if you were associated with it, you drew attention. Last year simply threw a pall over the whole business. It is a chicken and egg situation. Is the public apathetic because media is disinterested or is the media reflecting public attitude? They are saying it is bad business. It doesn't sell papers. People are tired of Watergate. It is very hard to buck this. If a candidate is in second position it works to his disadvantage. Front runner benefits from apathy. You can't scare up enough interest to get legitimate comparisons going. By not paying attention, the front runner is conceded the spot.

And Reinecke's State Campaign Administrator, Don Anderson, said:

There is not a lot of interest in anyone's campaign. I guess you can attribute it to the poor election climate we are in. An election climate contributed to by in large the whole watergate syndrom. I don't think that you can escape that fact. Now

we Republicans don't like to talk about that but it is a cold fact of the matter. It has pervaded everything. I say that it's all of our faults though because this thing didn't happen overnight. It was a long time in coming. Many many factors in politics-- the whole issue area of campaign contributions, conflict of interest, candidate disclosure of financial assets and liabilities. This has been coming on for a long, long time. The influence of special interests on politics to the extent that it has reached a peak and a kind of explosion-- now Watergate is part of it because those same conditions created watergate, at the national level. But I believe that the same conditions are in the state. I think we are reaching a conclusion of the accumulation of these conditions over a number of elections. The disturbing thing to me is that we haven't yet arrived at solutions in our own minds or convictions in our own minds on the part of the people or on the part of the politicians in government.

This attitude frustrated a large amount of the effort, candidates made in the California elections to enlist public response. It also diminished media interest. As Bob Squier, advertising advisor to candidate Bob Moretti, put it: "It's a vicious circle. The campaign is not getting covered...and so the press say people are not interested. And they are not interested because they are not reading anything about it or seeing it on TV."

Candidate Roth pointed out "...Their contention is that their lack of reporting on the campaign is much related to the apathy of the public....I suppose that must be true...."

FitzRandolph, Moretti's campaign manager, said at another time, "Maybe this indifference to politics is a trend that will change. Maybe the mood will change. My criticism of the TV news media is that it ought not to put down politics so much. A gubernatorial race is

important and they ought to say so and tell about it as though it were important"

Amidst this sea of public disinterest and disengagement we found that the mood tended to enlarge the question of media-candidate relations. It focused attention upon the media's share in the campaign and the candidate's dependence upon it. Both media and candidates were together in contesting the mood of disaffection, or found themselves influenced by it in connection with the campaign. This provoked a considerable amount of serious discussion on both sides about the responsibility of the media.

So critical a factor was this public "mood" that several of the candidates for governor, including Waldie, undertook the race largely because they interpreted the public mind to be turned against professional politicians and hospitable to new less conventional figures, even amateurs, or those willing to challenge conventional systems. Roth judged the public ready to choose a "non-politician businessman". Herb Hafif judged it ready to welcome a completely fresh figure with a lawyer's speech-making ability but no political identification. Waldie judged it ready to embrace a critic of Nixon. Brown talked frequently about "cycles" of public attitude and acknowledged he was consciously riding a surge that looked for a change, a New Spirit. He went so far in defining this periodic reversal of sentiment as to say looking back eight years to his father's defeat by Ronald Reagan:

"This time, I'm Reagan and Flournoy is Brown; I'm the new and he is the symbol of the old".

The general disaffection set editors, reporters and producers as well as candidates to discussing what the media ought to be doing about covering political campaigns. It directed a unique amount of attention to the questions our study approached. Such inquiry did not prompt wholesale media increase in coverage, but there were some noticeable responses in the general election to chagrin or embarrassment at the failure to cover in the primary election. We discovered among many station managers and editors an interest in problems concerning political coverage beyond any we had hoped to elicit. This campaign and the public denunciation of the media by candidates for failure to cover it adequately forced the media to some self-examination, a rationalization of their response to the contest.

One able television reporter said to us: "Television's got to do better. We've got to develop some specialists. We've got to get reporters, real reporters who have the Hemingway bullshit desire to report and who want to report and do it well."

"Political reporting in television as it is today" said he, "could easily be used in the making of a demagogue. Unless you have a medium that is willing to challenge, and informed enough to challenge, you cheat the people. And they can be so cheated somebody could steal the form of government we've got away from us."

One television station manager Russ Couglan, of San Francisco's KGO, suggested that the fault lies with the candidates for not projecting news of interest. "We need a new kind of politician," he said. "People are more sophisticated. They see more news. They grasp things faster. Politicians aren't up to today's communication potential."

Criticism of the media from candidates poured out. There was a storm of it, as we shall point out, an explosion of protest against media priorities, media styles, media interests but above all media indifference to the essential role they fill in the political process. But there was also criticism, efforts at self-justification and thoughtful analysis on the part of some editors, producers, news directors and some reporters.

As expressed by Agar Jaicks, production manager of KGO's morning talk show in San Francisco and by happenstance also Democratic county committee chairman: "The problem is, where does your responsibility lie? Where does the broadcast industry's responsibility lie? Must we put on dull programs? I would submit that if you did, you would soon lose your audience."

On the candidates' side, concern over the media role in political campaigning drew a wide range of comment. Said Herbert Hafif, one of the Democratic candidates:

Media is everything to a campaign. We need to have a different way-- people must shed the apathetic stance and get out and get interested.

Media must play an educating role-- a student doesn't like algebra until he understands it-- a person is not interested in politics until he understands it.

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Our political system is corrupting.

There were a number of speeches, press statements and interview statements during the primary election directing public attention to the problems encountered with media. Direct criticism was lodged in appearances before broadcasters and newspaper editors. Further, official protests were filed with the FCC on at least two occasions and a law suit initiated against television station KNBC by candidate William M. Roth.

In a step even further, candidate Brown presented to the FCC formal proposals that this federal agency should mandate some segments of free television time-- small segments, he suggested, not more than 2½ minutes at once-- to provide some access to the public through television that would not be dependent upon the decision of any individual station.

Just when and how this outrage at the media was triggered, and how expressed publicly in the course of the campaign, and how expressed to us, will be developed in subsequent chapters dealing with the primary and the general elections.

IV

At this point it is important to note that the whole question of what constitutes "adequate coverage" or what coverage is essential to the preservation of our system of government became one of the most serious issues

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Tension between
is not adversary

Tension

raised by candidates in the course of the campaign. It was most evident in the primary. But in the general, as well, the two candidates devoted a great deal of time to discussing whether they felt they were reaching the public via the media, whether they were "satisfied" with coverage and to pinpointing the shortcomings they encountered within each of the three media segments.

We encountered widespread dissatisfaction within the media with the way in which political campaigns are reported to the public and numerous questions being raised by thoughtful journalists at all levels, and in all media, over how the American representative system of government can be better served by modern communication systems. The most responsible and thoughtful of the journalists were the ones who voiced the deepest fears lest conflicting interests of the news media and of the advertising media diminish the access of political contenders to this communication system or lest the media be used by unscrupulous politicians to deceive the public.

We were never sure how much our own inquiry may have enlarged sensitivity to this question; but we were completely sure the issue would have been major in this election whether we were on the scene or not.

It became clear through the course of the study that many elements among the media, varying according to print, radio or television, were dissatisfied with the way this particular campaign was reported; or that they had a general concern about how to improve

political reporting as a function in improving government.

Within the media, there is a sense which wholly escapes the public that changes are underway that alter reporting. This sense of fast-moving development is most pronounced in television and to some degree in radio but most thoughtfully discussed among print editors.

How political campaigns get covered is no uniform formula handed down from a generation back. Within each of the three media a ferment of change can be observed. We will discuss this later. But in this campaign we observed a number of efforts at innovation and a deep awareness that no reportorial process is settled, that all are in some state of change, in part affected by mechanical improvements, in part by faster communication, in part by the amount of education reporters have had which invites them to be more challenging, and in part by their own reaction, one medium to the other.

In fact one of the most provocative points made to us about the difficulty of television reporting on politics these days came from Agar Jaicks, San Francisco television producer who is also San Francisco Democratic Party chairman.

F-6 | He contrasted the politician's style, speaking in bland all-appealing generalities, with that of passionate and emotionally involved leaders who have emerged on the American scene in recent years, the Black Panthers, the

NOW women, Mexican-Americans such as Cesar Chavez, the Indian leaders. The latter spokesmen are deeply committed to a point of view and can express it with an emotional quality that has great impact on a television audience, he said. Whether listeners accept the message or not, they are confronted by an emotion-charged speech. In contrast, politicians carefully skirt specific commitments and pitch their message in the broadest terms possible hoping to appeal to many, rather than a committed few. The result is boredom. They fail to develop any excitement. He suggested that the dullness of the 1974 campaign was so obvious because the audience has become accustomed to speakers of passionate conviction.

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"People who speak out these days on questions that involve the stability of the country are rarely those who seek elective office. Campaigners don't dare venture into saying something challenging or new. The people of courage and intelligence who will try to articulate their views in a persuasive manner are not the conventional politicians. They are the leaders of new causes emerging from the people. When we bring politicians in, they don't really have that much to say that is new. They talk in cliches. The contrast is devastating. People who can articulate state problems interestingly are very few indeed."

We found many who felt that Watergate posed challenges to the media as well as to politicians: that press, radio and television-- like politicians-- should

F 1-2
shake off old routines, improve their reporting on government and commit themselves to a more responsible performance for the public good. Much of this, when uttered by politicians, was discreet and oblique. When uttered by reporters, it was blunt. But the general import was that media is not making government sufficiently understandable to the public.

Most people are vaguely aware that the media has an intimate share in the process of presenting candidates to the voters in the U.S. these days. Books about their participation have been appearing since Theodore White's series on presidential elections began in 1960, followed by various documentations concerning the effect of media advertising, such as McGinniss' "The Selling of the President" after Nixon's 1968 election. The literature related to the modern campaign process is growing. One encounters nowadays, as a common occurrence, an uneasy public concern over that share in the shaping of a campaign which rests upon the initiative and decision-making of the media. Some parts of the public fear that press and politician share a private world from which they are blocked.

In addition, in the wake of Watergate, which provoked widespread public interest in strictures or limitations that might reduce the influence of money and corporate pressures on the election process, there has arisen new sensitivity over media influence on that process, as well. Much of this concern arises from not understanding how

reporters function, how news is generated and covered and how separate it is from advertising.

We set out to open up this mechanism of candidate-media relationship to greater public understanding by choosing one instance, the 1974 gubernatorial contest in California, for a close scrutiny and for analysis.

What we attempted was to study the role of press, radio and television, as well as advertising closely enough to show how they actually participate in the process which we call an election campaign.

Dissatisfaction with the volume of coverage and the interest of the media provoked some discussion before the public over the propriety and the adequacy of resting the communication process between candidate and voter so singularly upon the news-instinct of the media, which in many cases is linked to the profit pressures on management. This year of 1974 turned out to be a remarkable occasion for observing the total dependence of the modern campaign on news media. We saw how our system of choosing governmental leadership is subject to news selection formulas that appear to be shaped-- especially in the electronic media-- by economic necessities which put a premium on news characterized by excitement, crime or simplistic human interest styled and selected often by whim, entertainment factors, or the leverage of "ratings". With striking frankness, media spokesmen, particularly those in the electronic media, disclosed a prevailing attitude that political news, of itself, is "dull" uninteresting to the

public and as a consequence, unimportant. What this led to was extreme frustration on the part of the politicians, which they were frank in uttering, at their inability to get entry into this impenetrable communication system. Media people had their reciprocal exasperations. Many, especially among electronic media at the management level, expressed the view that it is an unfair burden on them, busy with the fast-paced demands of radio or television news production, to expect them to accept responsibility for keeping the government going.

In other words, the divergent goals of the two, media and candidate, and the conflict in their misplaced expectations of each other became strikingly evident in this campaign. These goals often seemed to be in direct opposition.

In this context, three developments became apparent.

① Public opinion polls establishing the relative current standing of the large assortment of candidates (and later of the two main rivals) became extraordinarily important focal points in reports on the progress of the campaign. These, rather than stories developed by the media or policies advanced by the candidates, became the critical turning points of the campaign.

F-3-2 ② Second, the media sought to find or to stir up conflict between the candidates, to produce a livelier situation to report, or to inject a sense of excitement into the contest. But when debates did occur their con-

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tent was given scant reporting and won little media interest. The mere atmosphere of "attack" was what media reported. The most striking media failure in the general election was the acceptance by the electronic media of candidates' own decision as to where and how their six agreed-upon debates would be aired, a limitation imposed on the media by the candidates which no station, radio or television, challenged or violated. In fact, there was some evidence the stations were complicit in determining the limitations.

(M) Third, in reaction to the disinterest of the news media, particularly television, candidates directed a major part of their campaigns to attack, not upon each other, but upon the media.

Among other special features of this California election appropriate to our study was the information it provided on media costs. Thanks to new laws mandating far more explicit information than ever before, concerning expenditures as well as contributions, we were able to report on the spending for television and radio ads, for newspaper ads, billboards and other media forms, at each step of the campaign. During this election year, the people voted overwhelming approval for an even stricter accounting, and this had an effect on the general election, as we shall point out. But data assembled under laws in effect for the 1974 campaign year, although difficult to pull together because of clumsy and ambiguous filing provisions, was nevertheless extensive. In

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fact we felt it provided more information about how campaign funds are spent than had been compiled before in California and some think more than has been provided in any large-scale election in this country.

The most fortuitous element in this campaign for, our study was the unprecedented degree of its reliance upon media.

Customarily, media has constituted one linkage, among many, between candidates and voters. Others would be district organization, party blocs, interest groups such as teachers, labor, business, utilities, banks, minorities, consumers, women: a wide melieu.

What turned out to be unique about this campaign is that these other activities shriveled. There was some trifling group appeal in the final round of the campaign: labor, minorities, consumers, environmentalists were generally committed to a Democratic candidate over a Republican (though not necessarily to this Democratic candidate over this Republican candidate). Group participation however, was actually minimal. Indeed, there was a virtual abandonment of formal efforts to reach people through organization on the part of the Brown campaign. Brown had clearly adopted a strategy and he told party leaders that organization was his "lowest priority."

V

On the Republican side, the disengagement that followed Watergate played havoc with the normal response

members of this party traditionally made. Since the Goldwater-Rockefeller campaign in California, and through the Reagan years, the GOP had mustered a vigorous and effective grass roots organization. It intended however, to the far right in political sentiment. Its impetus was to the support of Reinecke. After his indictment and loss in the primary, with the moderate Republican Flournoy as party champion, this resource evaporated. It was simply not there. The Flournoy Republicans had to start from scratch in undertaking the kind of organization and district support that would turn voters out. This was difficult to manage, in a campaign struggling to its last hour for money, but there were continuing efforts to rally a party turnout.

The combination of disinterest in district organization on the part of this Democratic ticket-leader, and the paucity of funds for campaign work on the part of the Flournoy campaign reduced the active participation of voters themselves in the campaign process to a minimum that was unprecedented in California history. This may well have been the year when California's electoral process involved the smallest number of people ever. And those few were primarily media people.

So striking was the Republican withdrawal that at one point opinion smaplers told us they found it so difficult to get people to acknowledge they were Republicans that they worried about the veracity of their reports. They had to contact larger samplings than originally

planned, in order to get a Republican measurement.

Among Democrats, the primary was divisive, and a legislative struggle over leadership shattering. Party leadership was dissipated among many factions. A large number of energetic party workers, confident they were on the road back to power in California, felt confused by the rivalry, and stood by waiting to respond to the single leadership that would emerge from the primary victory. They waited. And waited. Gradually it became apparant there would be no local organization; that workers weren't necessary.

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The state with the largest electorate of any in the nation observed this campaign with the least percentage of voter participation within memory and the maximum reliance upon media.

It is not that this year provided greater media coverage than in the past. The reverse is true. Eight years prior, in 1966, when Reagan and incumbent Governor Brown were pitted against each other, and television political reporting was a exciting new dimension the amount of coverage and the money that went into enticement of the broadcast media both were far greater. That was a time when candidates could feed their own color film to television studios, or send actualities of their remarks to radio stations virtually at their own discretion, and the material was welcomed.

In 1974 the media was more sophisticated, television refused to be "used" by candidates. Not only did it

resist proffered material from the campaigns, it turned a deaf ear to many pleas for coverage. It was reacting against political wooing. Radio, while it exhibited some journalistic standards higher than were evident in 1966, did give candidates rather generous time availability. Newspaper response to the campaign varied all over the state, and had some interesting differences. But newspaper interest in the primary was relatively small; its coverage of the general was varied, distinguished more by an effort to be balanced than by news development.

It became a cliché of the campaign that because no sensational news was developed, the experience was characterized as "dull". Candidates blamed media for this; media blamed the candidates. Where the responsibility lay became a critical point of dispute.

Some of the factors involved in this mutual exchange of criticism and its cause we shall discuss later. But it seems advisable to mention here that the lack of substantial news related to specific state problems suggests that something deeper than mere media "disinterest" was involved.

It is necessary to set the Los Angeles Times apart from the rest of the media because this newspaper, with its large news space, numerous staff and comprehensive commitment to reporting on politics did an astonishingly complete job. It, more than others, carried stories concerned with "issues". It, more than others, operated on the assumption that political news is never dull.

B

But on the whole, news of the campaign bore little relation to the major problems confronting California and policies that must be developed to resolve them. It almost never seemed to have a bearing upon the life of the citizen. His stake in making a political choice was very unclear. In part, this was because the candidates failed to be specific in their own definition of the course they intended to follow. This was most striking in the general election. It became perfectly obvious that Brown chose to limit himself to generalizations about bringing "a change" or "a new spirit" to government, or "new people", but would not be specific on program. Flournoy who was more specific, was nevertheless boxed in by his need to appease ultra-conservative Republicans whose funds he needed, at the same time he was aiming for Democratic votes, which he had to have to win. This prevented him from defining his objectives with clarity. In addition, the two candidates verged towards agreement on many general points, as did most Democrats in the primary, and this made issue-development difficult.

Lacking specifics, lacking expanded discussion of state problems, this election seemed somewhat divorced from the world of reality. It did not come to grips with solid problems.

In discussing this failure, some media people suggested that complexity of government these days makes campaign commitments impossible. There was a

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tendency to assume that state problems were beyond the voter's comprehension and beyond media's ability to present for general comprehension. The generalizations of the campaign were as a rule accepted by media though there was some effort to wring specifics from Brown. When this failed, there were stories which dwelt on his tendency to generalize.

But in spite of this failure to provide news with substantial impact, and the failure of reporters covering the campaign to find how to develop such news out of the material at hand, this campaign was more media-oriented than any previously experienced in California. Thus it was particularly appropriate to our study. Its activities were almost exclusively scheduled for their likelihood of attracting media interest. Its appearances and "events" were intended to substantiate news releases or provide news photos or engage the television cameras. Because the primary objective was attracting television, and television abhors "talking heads" the projection of news by the candidates was more often than not related to some physical activity which could be pictured, rather than to discussion of ideas. The staging of a campaign designed for the media puts a premium on activity. The principal events depicted became, in large degree, arrivals at airports or at meetings. The campaign was a study of motion, in time.

We encountered some comments that our study was focused upon a relatively unimportant fragment of the campaign process, in directing itself singularly upon

media and candidate. Voters, of course, remain the decisive element. Many within the media were as concerned with voters as with the candidates. For instance Curtis Sitomer of the Christian Science Monitor, traveling California during September, emphasized that his interest for a political story lay not with the candidates but with the "mood of the people". Mervin Field, whose opinion poll has a peculiarly dominant place in the California political scene, told us that he considers media "only one function of the campaign process, and probably the least important." But his remarks were related to the vague mixture of influences which determine voter decisions in an election. We were not trying to estimate what influences voters. We were studying what occurs between candidates and media, and gathering as evidence of this interaction as the product of it, the media output. The news stories in press, radio and television, which we monitored over the course of the campaign represent the result of that interaction.

The importance of this relationship is little comprehended by the public, inadequately researched by scholars and insufficiently regarded by the media itself.

There are three elements to the political process: candidates, voters and media. The absolute dependence of the system upon the connecting link of the media is insufficiently understood, and how it operates little known.

Why
is
that?

This quote
should
not be
used—
promoting
false
confusion

Revers

The Media and California's 1974 Gubernatorial Election

V. TELEVISION

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TELEVISION: THE BACKGROUND

It was late spring in 1974. Chubby, staccato-speaking, opinionated Joe Cerrell, Los Angeles campaign director with 15 years of political and advertising experience, was telling us how he was trying (while running other campaigns) to pick up the fragmented Alioto campaign. His aim, he said, was to concentrate on television.

"There are three key factors to winning a political campaign these days. Number one is television. Number two is television. Number three is television."

"All the survey work we have done always turns up with people saying they voted the way they did because of what they saw on television....This applies to paid and to free. All free media comes ahead of all paid media. Free media is much more important to the voter than paid..."

This exclusive focus on television which Cerrell suggested was not quite accurate as a summation of the approach to media which we found. The trio, television, radio and newspapers, had each one an individual importance in the campaign process,

PROFILE BROADCAST MEDIA

RADIO:

- KFWB -- Westinghouse Broadcasting, all news station, Los Angeles
Monitored during the commute hours -- 7:30-8:30 am,
5-6 pm.
- KABC -- ABC owned and operated, varied programming, Los Angeles
Monitored during Michael Jackson and Ray Briem talk shows
9-10am and 11-12 midnight.
- KCBS -- CBS owned and operated, all news station, San Francisco
Monitored during commute hours, 7:30-8:30 am and 5-6pm
- KSAN -- Independently owned FM station, monitored during primary
news cast 5:45-6:00 pm, San Francisco
- KRAK -- Independently owned station, Country Western programming,
Number one station in Sacramento Valley, ranks fifth
in ratings in San Francisco market area, monitored
during 5 minute news casts in the morning (7:55-8:00am)
and evening (5:55-6pm) and during a 10 minute news cast
at noon.

TELEVISION:

- KNBC -- NBC Owned and operated station, newscasts rank number
one in the Los Angeles Market Area. Two hours of
news each evening monitored -- 5-7pm.
- KTLA -- Small indendently owned station in Los Angeles. Monitored
during principal newscast 10-11pm.
- KGO -- ABC owned and Operated station in San Francisco. Monitored
two hours each evening 5-7PM and 1/2 hour from 11-11:30pm.
- KCRA -- Independently owned station in Sacramento. Largest
news team in the Sacramento Valley. Ranks number 1
in news in the market area. NBC Affiliate. Monitored
from 6:30-7:30 pm.
- KFMB* -- CBS affiliate, in San Diego area. Monitored 5:30-6:30pm
- KGTV* -- NBC affiliate, in San Diego area. Monitored 5-6pm

*Strong competitors in the San Diego market area. Their news shows rank very closely in the ratings. The ABC affiliate in this market area is a UHF station (Channel 39) and it runs a poor third to the two monitored by the Candidate Media Study.

MEDIA

Reviews

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NEWSPAPERS: 219 Days Monitored

	# Clips General	# Clips Primary	Total Clips Prim + Gen
Los Angeles Times	215	164	379
Sacramento Bee	253	194	447
San Diego Union	160	62	222
San Francisco Chronicle	165	189	354
TOTALS:	793	609	1402

BROADCAST: 54 Days Monitored*

Radio:	# Stories General	# Stories Primary	Total Stories Monitored
Los Angeles KFWB	80	9	89
" " KABC	6	1	7
San Francisco KCBS	56	10	66
" " KSAN	11	11	22
Sacramento KRAK	28	5	33
Television:			
Los Angeles KNBC	49	13	62
" " KTLA	12	6	18
San Francisco KGO	51	21	72
Sacramento KCRA	29	20	49
San Diego KFMB	20	6	26
" " KGTV	43	5	48
Totals	385	107	492

- * 46 days were monitored in the General Election Period from September 1, 1974 to November 5, 1974, weekday news broadcasts only.
8 days were monitored during the Primary Election Period, May 22, 1974 to June 3, 1974 for nearly all stations.

TOTAL BROADCAST HOURS MONITORED:

General Election: 609 hours

Primary Election: 87 hours

TOTAL: 696 Hours

to the candidate. While radio and newspaper people conceded television a visual impact they could not approach, no journalist in any medium suggested a campaign could rest upon television only. Each saw a significant role played by his own medium. Television reporters were most insistent that their medium alone could not inform voters adequately about politics. But candidates clearly shared Cerrell's view that television is far and away the most important vehicle, though not to be relied upon solely.

Brown said to us, concerning television:

"It certainly reaches the...that's the way they see you. They see your personality in motion, alive. I think that it is very important."

This was during the primary and he added: "I'd hoped that I'd get coverage here." (He hadn't.)

Peter Finnegan, Brown's Northern California campaign man was asked which medium he felt had most impact: "Definitely T.V. It's the whole ball game."

Flournory said:

Well, there's no question that it reaches more voters than most new print stories does, plus it had a visual aspect-- if you get a candidate that looks good or comes across good on television, it has a good impact; frequently what people think looks like is more important than what they're saying about him. You gotta do it-- it gives you recognition both in name and actual. I don't know what the answer is. Television does not cover you day to day. We've had Heidi with us for a couple days, I was surprised. It's the first time we've had a major television station crew with us for more than-- an event or a press conference. There is a value on the news field that seems to me that the reporters who try and cover the campaign, or have politics or government as their area, to really have some continuity to following the campaign, not just have a one shot impression.

Flournory said on another occasion:

I think it is a difficult thing to use the media in a manipulative way. Television may portray more of the guy than any other medium.

Candidate Waldie came to his conclusions about television importance as a result of the 1974 campaign:

There are some people in the media field that feel that television is the whole ballgame. Well, I am inclined to believe that that is correct. I did not believe it up to this campaign.

The television world is quite aware of the special immediacy it provides politicians in their reach to the people. As Bob Kelly, owner and manager of Sacramento T.V. Station KCRA, put it to us:

Television, I think, has an unique capacity which allows the viewer to see a candidate making his own case. It's as close to being face to face with this turkey as the media can get.

One television news executive, Ray Wilson, news director of San Diego station KFMB, was asked what medium best serves the voter as a source of information about candidates. He said:

There are two main ways in which the candidate really ought to try and take his story to the voters: One is by going out and working the precincts, but for a statewide campaign that's extremely difficult. But failing that, then you pretty much have to use television and radio which allows you, if you're any good at all in speaking, to express yourself pretty well. And of course, all the interview shows you can get on the better off you are.

The first "interaction" point which must be confronted in a discussion of television is the relationship which professional campaign people see between paid television ads and television news. We intend to keep a clear distinction between the two, as we analyze their relationship to the campaign. But we came to recognize that there are subtle interrelations and that these interrelations are very apparant to campaign strategists.

Candidates showed some awareness of the interplay between

ads and news. But with some specific exceptions, the candidates appeared to want a distinction made. Both Brown and Flournoy voiced repugnance at the idea of "packaging" a candidate "like soap". They participated in developing advertising styles for this year which were deliberately patterned upon campaign styles. The aim was to eliminate a sense of polished make-believe. They and their advertising advisers felt this was a year for "honest" ads, for stark authenticity. (See chapter on advertising for more details about this approach.) But, unavoidably, when the ad "spots" were actually lifted from campaign news events, as in Brown's case, or produced in a studio-interview situation, as in Flournoy's case, emphasizing natural campaign-situation settings, they came to parallel news shows. Hence a viewer, despite any skepticism he might have adopted about resisting the influence of advertising, saw the candidate in his ads very like what he saw on news, its principal difference being the brevity (30 seconds) and the repetition. It would seem logical to assume that one television form reinforced the impression of the other.

When we were talking with candidate Roth about his television ads, he noted that their polls indicated people form opinions of candidates primarily through unpaid media. He said: "I take that with a grain of salt. People like to say they are not influenced by advertising....I am convinced that they tend to confuse the two."

Our staff members who accompanied print reporters on "polling" expeditions, plus other remarks heard during the campaign, strongly suggested that advertising messages got through to the public, without conscious distinction between ads and news.

Another aspect to this interaction between ads and news on television: both convey image or personality more powerfully than content, or ideas. Since issues in this campaign melded into a commonality which the main candidates shared, many observers and campaign people felt the impact of the candidate's person would make the difference in this election: ads conveyed this quite as thoroughly as news.

Reinecke's advertising man Doug Anderson summed up how they came to do the five-minute TV spot in an attempt to justify him in the face of his Watergate indictment: "Television is a very accurate way to portray what a candidate has to say and at the same time the viewer can see how he is saying it. We think that is very important. Television is, perhaps the most powerful of all mediums for this kind of presentation." They chose an advertising spot for the kind of statement normally considered news.

In short, campaign managers considered television ads not only a reinforcement of what television news could convey but a substitute for news when the news coverage failed them. It was an available alternative, while the money held out, when TV stations did not respond to their publicity efforts. It became clear that campaign managers, while pursuing television news with all the adroitness they could command, were equally concerned, and in some cases more concerned with television ads. This was where they projected what they wanted to say and show precisely as they wanted to. Not all ads ended up satisfactorily. They still had the candidate to cope with. But the fundamental control was theirs.

Flournoy campaign director Spencer replied, when asked:

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When you start with the press media and the paid media, what is the relation between the two? Well, you can totally control the paid media. You can buy it, you can dictate it, the only leavening factor is dollars. Without dollars you can't do the job. So that is a strategy that is totally controllable.

Bob Squier, the Washington-based consultant who directed Moretti's primary-campaign advertising told us:

The first shock in the Moretti campaign came when we discovered that TV was giving no coverage at all to the race. We simply had not anticipated that. If we had known in advance some different conclusions might have been made. We would have had a different strategy.

Squier continued:

In terms of TV coverage - there was almost none. We don't know how to cover 18 candidates, the station people would say. So they just didn't. We urged them, we talked with the station news managers. We said to use your news judgement. Figure out who are the significant candidates and cover them. It raised a lot of controversial questions. They just didn't want to get into it. The New York mayoralty was crowded. But it didn't happen there. The TV stations covered it. I've done 2 recent campaigns in NY so I can compare LA and NY and I think TV is far less responsive in LA.

In New York, He said, there was "heavy" coverage of the primary. "In California TV didn't care. It just laid down and died."

It was this absence of television news which drew campaign directors into extra reliance upon television ads, or so they said. We have pointed this out in discussing the primary. But it is important to note it again, for the interplay between the two becomes important in a campaign.

Squier, Moretti's advertising man, said after they had turned to heavy ad use. "If you look at the political coverage you find reporters are analyzing the politics of the situation, the background. The real issues that are pivotal

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don't get talked about. The content was in the advertising. If you examine those spots, you'll see they dealt with issues. The frills were in the news stories."

Criticism of television news coverage was not so blatantly an issue in the general election after the Flournoy speech to the Broadcasters' Association of Northern California on July 15th, at Carmel. At that event, he charged: In the day-in, day-out business of covering politics and covering government, you've too often been lazy, naive or indifferent." He called upon the industry for "intellectual honesty". His attack made news. But after the November 5th election Flournoy campaign people, including his press secretary, Peter Kaye, were severe in their criticism of television for failing as well to give the fall campaign adequate news coverage. They had clearly been disappointed in their summer-time anticipation there would be ample coverage through the fall months.

It is worth noting that the television ads were so prominent, and judged so significant a part of the campaign in the primary election that some newspapers wrote stories about them. This was in addition to the stories focused upon media attacks by the candidates, who criticized television's failure to give coverage. The Chronicle, in San Francisco, did a feature piece on the scatter-gun spread of 30-second ads, and the Los Angeles Times, prompted by internal discussions among reporters and editors, did a piece on the whole impact of television on the campaign, though it had originally started out as a story about the TV ads.

It was interesting, however, that not one television

reporter at any time discussed television ads in the campaign with us. One or two news directors, discussing TV's capacity for conveying a candidate's "image" or personality, referred to news and advertising spots as comparably suited for this purpose. But no reporters touched the subject. It struck us that reporters, as participants in television news, simply blocked them out as pure advertising having no relationship to the television news they produced. They often spoke disparagingly of advertising as a whole, for having too much influence on the news-handling, but never referred to the candidates' ads, with two interesting on-camera exceptions, both in the primary.

One, on public television in San Francisco, before the KQED strike, Rollin Post carried a rather extended program discussing the prevalence of the 30-second spots and showing a number of them to his television news audience with comments, largely drawing attention to the unprecedented volume of television ads. The second television news report which deliberately remarked upon TV ads was by Bill Stout on KNXT. He discussed the startling Alioto ad near the end of the primary which showed the Mayor with a desk loaded with guns, all allegedly collected from Los Angeles schools. He showed the ad and talked about its powerful "law and order" appeal.

The whole question of television advertising, its style, its placement and timing, its cost, its format, its producers, together with what other small amount of advertising modes occurred, such as newspaper, direct mail, billboard, etc, will be discussed in a separate chapter. We will also discuss expenditure figures at that time.

But it is important to recognize at the outset in discussing television how close are inter-relations between advertising and news in this medium as seen by a campaign staff.

Another, more serious and far-reaching inter-relationship was discussed with us by candidate Waldie, when he said a Los Angeles Times political writer told him he could not be considered a serious and viable candidate because he lacked television advertising. (For details see Chapter 4.)

The spiral relationship between getting adequate advertising to increase name recognition so that a candidate's position in the polls might be improved, so that the news media would be impressed and give the candidate more serious coverage, was one of the most interesting, intricate and thought-provoking aspects of the media interaction we encountered. Waldie's experience was the most forthright. But Hafif and Roth recognized the same interplay, felt and said that advertising did have a bearing on news media's interest in a candidate. Reporters did say that no candidate can attempt a serious effort without adequate money these days, and since the money was needed 75 percent (by most estimates) for advertising, they clearly meant no one can be taken seriously by news media who are not strongly represented in television advertising. (For details, see chapter on advertising.)

However, considering the moves to limit campaign expenditures, represented by California's election law reforms, it may be the 1974 campaign saw a more extravagant reliance upon the place of television advertising in a campaign than will be repeated in the future.

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Some suspicion was voiced to us in the camp of some primary losers that television stations may have ignored political coverage for the deliberate purpose of forcing candidates to buy ads, to increase their revenue. Despite all the criticism of advertising which we encountered with television reporters and other close to the campaign scene, we never found any evidence to support this idea, not even among those most disgruntled over inadequate coverage. Most station sales people indicated that political advertising is more annoyance than advantage, in part because it claims the lowest rates and in part because its timing is last-minute and hectic and calls for rejuggling of schedules and extreme cautions over equal time.

One station manager, Robert Kelly of KCRA in Sacramento, told us he personally would favor a law to prohibit politicians from buying any radio or television advertising because "it raises Cain with our legitimate advertisers".

We ourselves tried unsuccessfully to get some evidence of the relative importance of total television advertising revenue to the stations we observed, to judge whether it might be so large as to constitute an economic factor they would seek to magnify. We wondered if there was a connection between minimum coverage and maximum advertising. We were not able to find a link. Solid figures in relation to total station advertising income to measure the importance of political advertising were impossible to come by. The reported totals for candidate expenditure for television advertising was available, however, broken down by station from state records. Gathering it from the complex forms was difficult. But what California accumulated this year under its new purity-of-

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election laws was the most complete record ever before made public of just how much money goes directly into television advertising, and what share that represents in total campaign costs.

The television stations we chose for special observation were KGTV and KFMB, Channels 10 and 8, in San Diego; KNBC and KTLA, Channels 4 and 5 in Los Angeles; KGO, Channel 7, San Francisco; and KCRA, Channel 3 in Sacramento.

KGTV, Channel 10, is the NBC affiliate in the San Diego market area. The station's 5 to 6 P.M. newscast is in strong competition for 1st place in the ARB and Nielsen ratings with station KFMB the CBS affiliate. KFMB, Channel 8, the CBS affiliate in the San Diego market area uses an ACTION news format, "we don't like to have the talking head very much. We rely heavily on film reports," said Fred Borstin in the promotion department when asked about the 5:30 to 6:30 evening news. KFMB "beat out" KGTV for the number one rating for early evening news during the last survey period (November 1974 book). The San Diego market area has a third station which is affiliated with the ABC network; however, the UHF Channel, Channel 39, runs a poor third in the evening-news ratings to the other two stations.

In Los Angeles, the 2nd largest market in the U.S., the NBC owned and operated station, KNBC, ranks number one in the market in the early evening news with a two-hour local news show. According to the station News Director the station has attempted to stay away from the "happy talk" and maintain a straight-forward format. KTLA, is a small, independent television station with two news programs a day, one at 2:30 on weekday afternoons and the other at 10:00 PM on weeknights.

The bulk of the news reporting comes from the wire services, UPI and CNS - City News Service.

KGO, Channel 7 in San Francisco, is an ABC owned and operated television station. It is considered to be the number 2 ranked station for early evening news and the number 1 ranked station for the last night news. KGO, like KNBC a network owned and operated station in Los Angeles, devotes 2 hours to local news, each weekday evening. This two hours format began on April 1, 1974.

KCRA Television is an independently owned station, as NBC affiliate, in the Sacramento market area. The station provides two hours of locally produced news in addition to the half hour network news. Channel 3's slogan is "where the news comes first" and from the consistent first place ratings the public must appreciate their efforts.

TELEVISION: INTER-ACTION ENCOUNTER AREAS

Putting aside, now, any further concern with television advertising, it is our purpose here to consider the role of television news in this campaign and television inter-actions with the gubernatorial candidates. This was a factor more conspicuous for its absence than its presence. If any one characteristic marked this campaign as unique, it was the minimal amount of television news coverage, especially in the primary. Not minimal merely in relation to candidate expectations, but minimal in terms of voter comprehension of the competing candidate's statements, personality and approach to government.

We want to point out that there were certain factors which distinguished this campaign which may not appear in other campaigns in other states, and under other circumstances. We have examined what occurred here in this particular situation. We are not able to estimate whether this is a trend to be followed by subsequent campaigns, either in California or in other states or on a national basis.

But we did perceive one aspect about television which seemed very significant: it is an evolving medium. It is subject to many pressures.

One particularly able television reporter said to us: "Just because there is less political coverage today is no reason to think it will be that way forever. There is a lot of thinking and agonizing going on about it in newsrooms."

It is also necessary to point out that this discussion of television concerns the handling of a statewide campaign by local television stations. It does not evaluate the concern for political coverage of the network. Actually the networks did come into California with crews to report on the Brown-Flournoy race, just as eastern newspapers sent their reporters out. Both candidates were pleased with the footage they received. Networks also sent staffers through the state to gather information in preparation for their election night coverage.

Nevertheless, considering the size of the state, the size of the electorate and the total number of available television stations this may have been the least reported major political campaign since television moved heavily into politics in 1960. What California witnessed this year was a marked turning away from television interest in politics as news, a move initiated within the industry over the past four or five years, and given a further push by the Watergate ennui of 1974. The alleged "apathy" which the industry claimed deterred people from interest in politics was merely one additional justification for their own withdrawal from this news area, topping a move they had clearly decided earlier.

One thoughtful reporter who has been in television 16 years recalled the "exciting" programs on government and politics which he had produced in the middle west, in the '60s. "Then, in the late '60s, the worst thing happened. They discovered they could make money out of news. Television news has gone down hill since."

Another said: "News is just a filler between advertising".

Another television reporter said to us: "I can't think of any news need more profound than the need for political reporting. It is not being answered. It's because TV has become so action-oriented. Its news job now is to fill space between commercials, with events so interesting people will hang around until the next commercial."

Again and again, we heard station managers and producers categorize politics as mere "talking heads" uninteresting to the public at large and anathema to current television. The word "dull" became the most frequent descriptive term for politics and this campaign with the responsibility for dullness lodged against politicians, not reporters. The most conspicuous evidence of the industry's distaste is the withdrawal of specialists from the field. Although there are many men in television in California with experience in political coverage who have in years past been designated political reporter, and stationed at the state capitol, today there is only one man in television in the state bearing that title, and he is with public television, KQED, in San Francisco, Rollin Post. Men moved out of Sacramento state politics bureaus have gone into totally different assignments, into executive posts or they use their backgrounds on interview shows.

One news director after another insisted they strongly oppose any specialization or "beats" among reporters, acknowledging they eliminate politics deliberately. They need in their state above all, flexibility, they said. They want reporters who can do anything that comes along, not cover one special field. They need brevity, not such depth of knowledge a man wants to explain everything.

The contrast was stunning between the views of many reporters indignant that political coverage is so little, and the station managers as a whole who insisted the campaign had been given all the time justified by its "news value". The campaign was in general dismissed as a "non-event" by television producers or editors. Yet reporters voiced "shame" or "dismay" at the lack of coverage. Even those reporters notable for the most time commitment in assignments covering this campaign bewailed the industry's indifference to political news.

One of the most telling indices of the television industry's attitude towards political campaign coverage was the frequent reference made to it as conflicting with or distracting time and staff from "real" news. Some television reporters interested in political coverage told us they often tried to schedule coverage of a political event in a way to permit swinging by some other "real" news event to appease an assignment editor who felt they would otherwise waste time. "Real" news, it becomes clear, was exciting news: pictorial events like fires, police action, accidents.

We have already seen through earlier chapters that candidates devote themselves above all else to pursuit of television news coverage. This is the objective around which their activities are structured. It is worth while to

refresh this recollection and re-emphasize it: seeking television coverage is the main aim of the campaign process. Among the three media, television is prized highest by the candidates. And of the three, television demonstrated the least interest in political news. This was the central "interaction" in the 1974 campaign in California. Candidates wooed. Television resisted.

But that generalization needs analysis.

In the primary election, we said earlier, there was very small attention to the political campaign as a whole, almost no coverage of press conferences, no attention paid to tantalizing visuals prepared by candidates, and a deliberate policy of not inviting the major candidates into the studio for programs lest the minor candidates lodge a complaint. There was some interest in getting a last-minute debate between the top candidates but fear over "equal time" prevented most stations from proposing this. KNBC, however, had a standing "news conference" Saturday show which lent itself to the political debate format (back-to-back appearances, not real debates) and this, they felt, permitted them to avoid the "equal time" proviso. We have seen earlier that Roth protested their exclusion of him.

In the general election, with the two major candidates and two minor candidates, there was more interest on the part of television news. This is the coverage that developed:

One station in California, only over KNBC in Los Angeles, undertook a continuing consistent effort through the general election to carry to its viewers a report on the gubernatorial campaign as a developing process, from Sept. 2 to Nov. 5. It had also done some coverage in the primary. It assigned

two reporters to this "beat" and purposely switched them between candidates to enlarge their own perspectives, to guard against bias and to make sure neither became identified in the viewer's mind with just one candidate.

One other station in California, KGO (ABC) in San Francisco, assigned crews to travel with each candidate three days. They collected film and reports for separate four-day special showings within the regular evening news programs. These were shown during the two weeks prior to election day.

This was the maximum coverage.

At the next level, some major stations (such as KNXT and KTLA in Los Angeles; KCRA in Sacramento; KPIX in San Francisco; KFMB and KGTV in San Diego) invited the candidates to their studios for live interviews or they filmed one-shot special features on the candidates. They might run from three to 15 minutes. KGO and KNBC did this also. A few ran panel question shows with the candidates. All that had talk shows were hospitable to the candidates.

These stations, plus stations in Sacramento, Santa Barbara, Fresno, in San Jose, etc., covered the candidates in local news reports at least some of the times (not necessarily all of the times) when they appeared in their respective communities. The smaller the town, the more attention the candidate drew because the appearance of a figure of such importance was more rare. These news reports usually ran from half a minute to 1 ½ minutes. A few interviews might go two minutes.

One station which might have been expected to show major interest in the campaign, Public Television Station KQED

San Francisco, was on strike for the entire period of the campaign, and carried no California-originating news.

On the whole, what this television coverage focused upon was the six "debates" which attracted attention as potential confrontation possibilities; on quick interviews when the candidate came to town for meetings, on occasional (but rare) coverage of such a speech, and near the end of the campaign, some "meet the people" walks in colorful settings. Television rarely projected an awareness of the campaign as a statewide event, rarely used film of the candidate outside the station's own community.

Douglas Kranwinkle, Flournoy's campaign manager noted the tendency to cover state politics only on a local approach when he said: "We get on T.V. more down here, if we hold a press conference down here. Even though the networks cover it up there (Sacramento or San Francisco) they send it down (to the Los Angeles stations).

He went on, about press conferences:

I don't know the other candidates view regarding TV coverage in the campaigns, but I think that everybody is complaining about it. They simply won't turn out. It is not covering at all. We get some of the local channels. You've got to streak or something. But the networks simply won't respond.

In San Diego, there was a certain smugness to the attitude expressed that they did not need to travel: candidates always came to them. In Sacramento a small amount of movement was permitted to nearby towns within the viewing area to the agricultural center of Stockton or the university community of Davis; sometimes, rarely, to San Francisco. With the single exception of KNBC, whose reporters would turn up at major Sacramento or San Francisco events, the stations showed

themselves reluctant to tie up a camera and reporter for long periods, or to spend the money for the transportation. They have the technical capacity for picking up film from other cities via a network link between stations but not used for political coverage.

Chris Wise, TV columnist in Sacramento, called attention to this regionalization of coverage when he was discussing the failure of Waldie's "walk" to generate large-scale, statewide attention:

That was a great gimmick, especially for a man of his stature. If I decided to run for Governor by walking all over the State of California, it would be a gimmick but here, a man of Jerry Waldie's stature walking all over California...but somehow it just never got off the ground. The day he arrived in Sacramento, we carried it locally. The day he went through Fresno, Fresno carried it locally, but the impact of this as publicity; the impact of his walking campaign would have been the day he passed through Los Angeles for us to carry and Fresno to carry it and the day that he walked through Fresno, for Los Angeles to carry and us to carry it. He only made each town's news once.

The difference between highly concentrated urban areas and rural or suburban areas in their degree of responsiveness to a candidate's presence was emphasized repeatedly. Wire-service bureau chiefs insisted that small papers showed far more concern for state politics than metropolitan papers and gave a higher percentage of their news space to state affairs. In television, we were repeatedly told by candidates that the amount of coverage and interest in small towns far exceeded that in urban centers. They did sometimes concede that questions were not as relevant to the latest news development,

a point elucidated somewhat by discussions of the technical multi-demanding obligations that rest upon a small-town television reporter who must be in all places, develop his own film, cut and edit it before he goes on the air to show it.

Nevertheless, almost every candidate at some time made a point to us that he found small-town or rural areas more concerned about politics than cities.

With many stations recently shifted to two-hour local news programs, the need for film to fill that time is great, but the costs of a crew are high. They are limited in staff. Hence they must work them to produce a maximum number of pictures of local events, rather than permitting them long travel time for footage which would run, at best, 2½ minutes.

But they did not always cover local events. One of the most startling evidences of this in the general election was the noontime Flournoy speech before the prestigious San Francisco Commonwealth Club. KNBC flew a reporter from Los Angeles to cover it. But local television did not; not one local station. Even the KNBC reporter was shocked at this.

The result of confining television reporters and cameras to strictly local operation was to maximize candidate travel. The candidates were well aware that the California media market breakdown is like this: Los Angeles media reaches 50% of the people; San Francisco reaches 25%; Sacramento reaches 12%; San Diego reaches 6%; Fresno reaches 2%. On many occasions Brown or Flournoy

would be in four or five major cities in one day, flying from a breakfast event to a mid-morning appearance, then a luncheon speech half way up the state and an evening cocktail hour reception elsewhere. The one time when television really traveled for such coverage was Labor Day, the dramatic "kick off" for the fall campaign. (name stations). However on the last day, Monday before election day, the candidates again were state-hopping. They were met at the major airports as they paused by television areas. Not, by any means, all television, but on that day, by most.

Let us review, now some aspects of "inter-action" between this medium and the two major candidates.

We have noted that press releases inundated stations in the primary. They got considerably more attention in the general election, but they were used more as a scheduling guide for television, or to background reporters sent out to pick up a visiting candidate. For radio, they often suggested topics on which voice cuts might be welcomed. But for television, the one communication out of the candidate's headquarters which was important was the schedule.

Paul Thompson, KCRA editor and news manager, said:

The campaigns send the editor a flood of stuff. It is also interesting how ignorant some people are about the impact of television. Because the aware people who understand the impact of television-- the assignment editor gets an itinerary of the candidate from the time that he gets up in the morning until the time that he goes to bed at night, every day of the week. The people who don't understand it-- we have to call them up and ask where their candidate is and where he is going to be because it is about time that we covered him.

In San Diego, at station KGTV, Ron Mires, news director and Terry Crofoot, assignment editor, told us they found many politicians don't know how to set up a news conference or understand about fitting its timing to their own schedules.

The calendars of what was occurring in each locale got compiled at each TV station for the day, a great deal of it from wires or from City News Service in the Los Angeles area. The effort involved in filtering into a single diary the likely news stories of the day was considerable. A number of people referred to the responsibility within their news offices for putting together from calendars and accumulating date-files the anticipated news events of the day. From this, the assignment editor made his decisions, with candidate schedules at hand. The press releases were usually faced by some flunky early down the line.

At this point, press conferences became a major question: To cover or not to cover.

The attitude of the television news desks was almost unanimous. It did not always coincide with the view of reporters. We concluded that reporters sometimes had persuasive power and could tempt news desks into including a press conference in the day's agenda which normally they would not want to cover.

It became evident to us that desks were automatically against press conferences-- unless there was some striking reason to think news might light up from it. But reporters had a kind of perpetual hope that it might be

interesting and were far more prone to want to cover them.

One TV reporter said:

Talk to news directors. You'll hear more than one say, 'well, so many political stories are talking-head stories. You know, its a news conference where somebody is talking before a curtained background'. And unfortunately, a lot of coverage not only by television, but by newspapers, is talking-head coverage. They go to the candidate's schedule and they hear that the candidate is going to be arriving and they go to the airport and they go out and interview him just because he's there and maybe the majority of the coverage both by television and newspapers is that kind of coverage.

"Well, I have heard in resistance against this that there's some effort to try not to cover press conferences."

I would say generally fewer news conferences are being covered today than were covered a few years ago. There's a feeling, I think, that news conferences are kind of modern-day phenomena; at least in their proliferation-- or a modern-day phenomena contrived by the news conferee to his advantage to command some highly controllable coverage about himself.

"And television people are beginning to say we don't want to come in on his terms-- we want to-- in other words the adversary sense of approaching a person who has something to say is asserting itself, is that right?"

Yeah, I think so. When I used to cover Reagan it seemed to me we would more often than not get through the press conference-- of course Reagan is very handy at press conferences, he's the best in the country. And we'd say, you know we didn't lay a glove on him-- we did not lay a glove on him and...

"Because you were not able, through your questions, to get him either in to something else that he didn't want to talk about or..."

Right, and there were so many people there, you know 40 some odd reporters usually and there was little opportunity for follow up.

Bill Fyffe, news director of KABC in Los Angeles, said:

In past years, TV stations were less wary in campaign coverage, did more that came under the head of covering what was simply image-building. There was a feeling of being stung, of being manipulated. They're more careful now. We don't set ourselves up as gods or judges, but we look carefully for news value.

Lew Rothbart, KTLA executive producer, said:-

Covering news conferences and other events involving the candidates came under the fairness doctrine, not equal time. There was almost like a daily fight between me and our assignment editor on whether to cover press conferences. Rothbart wanted to cover more than the assignment editor, Ken Butcher, wanted to. It was, in fact, a problem.

For the last two or three weeks before the election, you could literally fill our entire program with news conferences-- if you covered all of them, for all races. For the most part they are pseudo events, staged for the media, not real news. How creative a candidate's campaign people are determines somewhat what press conferences get coverage.

In spite of his side of the argument with Butcher he says that "in general we tried to avoid them (press conferences) as much as possible". (And, in fact, Butcher said they covered no press conferences by gubernatorial candidates in the primary.)

Rothbart said that TV stations used to cover more press conferences. But they felt that recording a guy sitting at a table and talking was "not necessarily good television." Now they seek out what's really news.

In fact, Rothbart said the media should take the initiative, not wait for a candidate's call, but ferret out news.

I feel it is the news media's responsibility to actively seek out information on candidates and issues and to present it in a form that's understandable and informative to the viewer.

This high-minded objective was precisely the sort of rhetoric we often encountered from television executives-- with exactly the kind of follow-on reality which we encountered at KTLA. Without realizing the inconsistency between his lofty creed and his performance, Rothberg had to do a lot of thinking when pressed for just one example of their political coverage other than the despised press conferences. He finally recalled one: They sent a crew to film Moretti visiting the East Los Angeles Skill Center, as an example of how a candidate goes about campaigning. Other than that, he didn't think they had done any coverage with their own crews-- until the day before the election. His assignment editor, who had arrived on the job May 1, concurred.

If Flourney had difficulty drawing television to press conferences, Reinecke had more. Earl Parker, his press secretary, told us:

...so we schedule him into those things (bars-- shopping centers-- shaking hands) hoping that TV will cover them because this is the kind of media it is and they said that they wanted to cover a candidate in action and they never show up.

"What about television news coverage?"

There has been nothing-- just ITT.

"Has anyone interviewed Reinecke in depth and gotten into anything but ITT?"

I first started to say that they get into issues, but during an hour they might talk about-- Ed Reinecke has to bring it up. He'll say we've been talking about ITT for 40 minutes and I'd like to talk about

the issues. So they say fine let's talk about the issues. Then they say "what do you want to say?" Well that's a fine way to present it to him! Then he says what he wants to and then they say "well back to this ITT thing." So he has to sit there and go over and over-- and you know what it does? It condemns a man because people start thinking in the minds that he's protesting too loudly. He becomes defensive after a while.

"TV news shows? What kind of clips of Ed have they been running?"

Pictures of him walking in and out of court. In and out of press conferences.... Very little on campaign activities.

"How much campaign activity have you been able to carry out?"

That's been the problem. It doesn't take much money to move a man around. When we go to shopping centers and shake hands, the way Ed Reinecke always campaigns, the cameras never show up.

Harold McKean, Moretti's press secretary, said:

We held a news conference where Moretti did a good dissertation-- that is, we held a conference on a major policy question, the LA smog basin, and I think that four people showed up. Before that, Jerry Brown had held a news conference on a major education statement and only two guys showed up.

If they go to a news conference and think that it is not newsworthy they will fish around because they have taken their time to get there.

Between me and the tube is an assignment editor, a reporter, an editor and a producer.

"And all of them with the judgement of what is news?"

Yes, all of them with the power of ending it.

William Roth told us:

When you get to television you get into another area known as visuals where you try to make an event. You have some news and some visual....I've done many of them. Once TV cameras were on the way and Richard Burton's eighteen year old girl friend decided to give a news conference. I have had several where there were no newspapers, no cameras, no anything.

"Literally no one came?"

Yes, but you know the newspaper people don't like to get in on those, they feel that they are television visuals, which it is.

"They feel that it is not really news?"

No, not necessarily, they can just sit back and use the news release.

"What kind of visuals did you have that you didn't get to use?"

One was a transportation museum in Los Angeles with old cars referring to transportation. Sometime they work when the cameras are already there. Like when I want to see if the PUC would open their meetings a couple of weeks ago....

One Los Angeles television producer said:

I think that if you read the CNS budget everyday, and you monitor the KNXT news, you will prove this premise-- that the candidates who get time on the air are the ones who schedule news conferences where they are making some charge, or doing something which seems really newsworthy. We don't film some guy who is out campaigning, per se.

Charles Rossie, assignment editor at KNBC in Los Angeles, said:

Our overall philosophy is that we make every effort not to specifically identify political news from the other news. We don't have political news or women's news or economic news. We just have general news. That means that lots of politicians hold news conferences that we don't automatically cover. I think Moretti was the best example during the primary of a candidate who held non-events. He announced news conferences and it reached the point where no one went. They are used to that in Sacramento. Politicians just hold a news conference and then everyone sits around and tries to figure out what he said that was new, and they write a story about that. That's not to say we don't sometimes cover news conferences, if the guy has something to say, or when we want his reaction to something. It that's where he is, we'll get him there.

We have discussed earlier the tendency in the primary period to accord television news attention (or press or

radio news attention) to candidates if they would speak out on subjects apart from their own candidacy, if they would plunge into some topic already clearly defined as newsworthy, such as the Hearst kidnapping, the SLA, the Zebra killers or Watergate.

Waldie was particularly the beneficiary of this attention from the electronic media. They welcomed his remarks about the judiciary hearings on the Nixon impeachment. In fact, his staff reported to us television people came to know him so well from these contacts "some of them told us he was their personal candidate".

Waldie told us:

I thought that radio and television were particularly generous in coverage of my campaign, at least. I never ran into difficulty in appearing on any program-- if anything they bent over backward because of my connection with the impeachment inquiry.

"Do you think that even TV gave you good coverage?"

Yes.

"Even when you weren't talking about impeachment?"

Well, that is difficult to say. There were few times when I was not, or when I was having access to television when they didn't ask about that. So I can't really separate that.

"Some of the other candidates were complaining that television was not giving enough coverage in general to the campaign."

That could be, I just can't separate the two because I was gone a lot and so I suspect that it was because of the impeachment rather than of the gubernatorial campaign. But they always added a little bit at least of the latter. They were good in any event.

In San Diego at KGTV, Ron Mires, news director,

told us of picking up film from the Today show with Waldie because of the station's network affiliation. And he said that Alioto, because of the Zebra killings and Hearst kidnapping, had gotten a lot of media attention "because he figured in legitimate news stories."

In fact Mires and Crofoot, KGTV's assignment editor, said flatly: "Crime in San Francisco, Reinecke's indictment and similar non-campaign events have made news rather than the candidate's efforts or remarks on issues."

They summed up the primary as a dull campaign and said "it is not the newsman's business to make it exciting."

At another station, KTLA, in Los Angeles, the executive producer Rothbart, also told us that news linked to incidents apart from the election was more significant than news of the election itself. He said Alioto, as mayor of a major city, rated some attention and added:

...one of the best things that ever happened to Alioto was the Zebra business which established him in peoples' minds as the law-and-order candidate.

Butcher, KTLA assignment editor, pointed out they wouldn't cover press conferences because:

I don't want my news coverage in any way to lean toward one candidate.

He felt the only way to be fair "without sitting down with a stop watch" was to "let them speak their piece on our shows."

Hence KTLA invited candidates to appear on their own interview shows.

This was an example of a significant shift we dis-

cerned that is occurring in the relations between media and candidate: Media is refusing to respond to press conferences, which they consider the politician is more likely to control. (This, despite frequent complaints from press-relations people that the media would run away with a press conference, and turn it to subjects other than the main objective of the candidate).

As an alternative to press conferences, television, and to some extent also major radio stations, have invited candidates to appear on interview shows, or have opened up some regular panel discussion to the political contenders.

Butcher said:

KTLA invited all gubernatorial candidates to be interviewed for one of their news shows-- the 2:30 PM or 10:00 PM. I felt we had done our obligation as far as covering gubernatorial candidates by giving them a chance to speak on our programs.

He didn't mean that that was all the news KTLA carried, but that he didn't feel obliged to give the candidates other exposure in front of KTLA's own cameras.

He resents tricks by candidates to "try to roust us to give them some time." KTLA has only two news programs, two camera crews, and "we're a news room-- not a political forum."

KTLA wasn't thoroughly successful in getting everybody on their interview show. Brown didn't show up for the interview that had been scheduled with him. His office didn't even let them know he wouldn't. The station called campaign headquarters the day before to check, and was simply told that Brown wasn't going to be able to make it.

Herb Hafif's man was onto him every day.

The exception to KTLA's non-coverage of gubernatorial candidates was on Monday and Tuesday, June 2 and 3. They covered the leading candidates when they came through L.A. on their statewide final sweeps, and they covered them the next day voting.

In the movement towards interview programs as the best political show-case an interview format was substituted in San Diego on Station KGTV (10) for the debate they were unable to get set up in prime time. Reporter John Beatty asked each separately the same seven questions. Portions of the films prepared were then run on three separate shows, October 10, 14 and 15, permitting Brown and Flournoy to be shown answering the same questions, each responding in turn, simulating a debate situation. One question was: Why do you think you are qualified to be governor? Another: What is your number-one priority?

One question had to do with the San Diego issue which had flared up in the general election, the Hotel Del Coronado and Larry Lawrence's involvement. Others concerned unemployment and economic questions.

At the Sigma Delta Chi meeting after the election, Bob Rollen assignment editor for KNXT discussed some of the coverage problems and how they developed special programs on the political candidate:

The words are adequate and fair for an assignment editor. Adequate is whatever you can do in terms of reporters, crews, money and time. Fair, I don't know. Fair, I couldn't tell you. About KNXT's coverage of the campaign this year, I can say a lot of negative things...one positive thing:

we thought about it. We really did. What we decided may have been wrong but we, you know, did think about it. We don't have the resources of the Los Angeles Times, the redundancy of the Los Angeles Times, the backup, the stretch. None of those things are negative; it's body count; body count is terribly important in television. There aren't many of us. KNXT is 90 people, KNXT NEWS. I have no idea what the Los Angeles Times is. A film crew costs \$85,000 a year; that's a camera man and a sound man. Those things are important, I suppose. At least they're factors.

We assign each constitutional race to a reporter two months before voting day. The reporter was told he was responsible for knowing the candidate. We made a conscious effort to avoid what Timothy Crowse eloquently described in Boys on the Bus, "pack journalism", which is tailor made for television. we missed a lot of news conferences; I can't tell you how pissed off Bob Moretti was; a couple of times, Houston Flournoy, Jerry Brown. We may have been wrong.

When we couldn't afford a crew we could occasionally hire a reporter to spend a few days with the candidate. Instructions were: get to know him, be able to describe him, in some way, not his press releases, not his media hypes, you know not pressing for flesh and an orchard outside of Fresno, have something to say on it.

In the three weeks before the election, when we had a smaller universe to deal with, we made a point of every day covering some happening. You know we couldn't cover entirely the press conferences, the speeches, you know, the manufactured news; nor did we want to.

We called in from Washington, Grant Holcum, our Congressional correspondent as a backup. We freed Warren Olney our principal political reporter to deal with only Brown and Flournoy. We asked of him only three pieces, at home kind of things. That's hard to do in television. It's hard to say you're a reporter; 'all you have to do is give us some bottom line; you don't have to do a piece every day.' Alright we have that luxury. The best stuff we did and you know, you have to make some decisions about candidates, what they are and what they represent. The best stuff we did with Jerry Brown was at home; you know, he has stark white walls; he has plastic palm trees, he keeps his tie on and when the crew arrived, the pool cleaner had arrived. He said, "Oh, Jesus don't show that. Don't show that. Don't show that I've a guy who comes to clean my pool. We said, 'Don't worry Jerry, we won't show that.' At Flournoy's house

he didn't know we were there. We got there first. And nobody told Houston that we were there; he came in and said, 'Oh, hi. Pardon me, I gotta get a beer; opened a refrigerator and popped a can of beer and then went out to clean the pool himself. Now these are artifices; people behave differently in front of cameras, of the light, and then there's a three hundred pound cameraman saying, 'Oh, shit! it's overtime'. You know, God, what's it all about? That kind of thing. Those are the factors (we contend with). I really can't evaluate them.

In Sacramento where the format is to build a solid news program and a dedicated reporter, Otis Turner, is struggling to be a political reporter in fact if not in name, they managed a considerable amount of coverage when the candidates came to town. As the state capitol, with broader community interest in politics than in most cities, Sacramento was a welcome haven for politicians, who usually could count on some television response. Besides, both candidates had their incumbent offices based there with staffs alert to summon the media for press conferences. Although the disillusionment with press conferences had been generated to a large extent at the state capitol because so many inconspicuous legislators took to summoning reporters every time they dropped a bill in, and because Governor Reagan had annoyed them with his masterful ducking of hard questions, nevertheless, KCRA continued to respond to the gubernatorial candidates more generously than other stations.

At KGO in San Francisco, news director Tom Dolan told us:

There is interest in politics especially in doing profiles. We made a big fuss about those profiles in the primary and we were the only ones who did a good job here on election night.

They don't cover every news conference...but they try to do a day in the life of the candidate...,

35.
spend time with him and show him as he goes about campaigning.

One cameraman in the primary, Steven Davidson, shot 1000 feet of film in one day. He said they are anxious to do things on the two candidates now.

I'd classify what we intend to do as 'a day in the life of.... This is the direction we've been going in and I'm trying to promote it.

One of the most respected and most envied of these interviews is a six-minute spot which Bob Abernethy manages within the 5:00 news program nightly at KNBC in Los Angeles. Abernethy has a strong personal interest in politics and in governmental problems and his producer, Helen Johnson, shares it. He is a Princeton graduate with a Masters degree out of the Woodrow Wilson School of International Affairs.

Helen Johnson emphasized the advantage to a political figure: he might hold a 15-minute press conference. If covered by television, it would be edited down to maybe 45 seconds or at best 1½ minutes.

The six minutes they get on Abernethy's show seems like a marvelous full time, in contrast.

Of course, the fact remains he gets on the TV show when invited; the press conference is at his own initiative. It is often, however, a futile bid for TV attention. And the KNBC interviews are "a two-way street". Abernethy is hospitable to the efforts politicians make to get on. Generous as this format is, however, it doesn't always satisfy politicians. FitzRandolph, campaign director for Moretti, told us that Moretti appeared on that

program and got only a one-minute interview;

...and on the same news sequence they had 8-minutes of frog-jumping contest. That's the emphasis TV wants now.

This KNBC plan for regular interview format imbedded in an evening news show began around 1969. It was "a tremendous innovation". It is not confined to politics. In fact, it aims at a broad sweep, theater, sports, the arts, education, etc. He gets objections if political figures are too frequent. Abernethy told us that he gets complaints from station management when they have had an interview that didn't go well and Irvin Safchik, who is the news producer, has given them "general encouragement to go in certain directions. He has told us to look for a wider variety of guests in show business, to mix in a few stars along with candidates."

Abernethy claims he does not really feel any competition with other local stations because no one else is doing just what he does. Quite often, however, candidates tell them that KNXT wanted them for an interview that night and they came to KNBC first or instead.

It's obvious that we feel an overall umbrella competition with KNXT primarily, but in terms of live interviews and scheduled guests, I don't feel that they do that.

His producer, Helen Johnson, told us the six-minute span proved successful in preventing interviews from being dull.

She helps with research on guests but Abernethy does most of his own work in preparation for the interview. She watches news notices about who is in town or may

be available for the program.

In addition, Abernethy does a "Viewpoint Commentary" which usually runs around 6:50 on the 6 o'clock show three times a week, a format for comment which stops short of being an editorial opinion. And he also managed the KNBC news conference on Saturday nights along with Jess Marlow. This is a 30-minute format, which was the setting in which both KNBC debates were scheduled at the conclusion of the primary and again of the general election.

She said she feels the interview format "is the most advantageous way for TV to give the public the best glimpse of the candidate, divorced from his speech writers and his strategists."

It is her view that in all interviews with candidates, or public officials, the reporter must maintain "some sense of an adversary position." She said:

Even if a reporter feeds a guy a question, it should be directed towards his most vulnerable point to spark interest and get at the most newsworthy reply.

She said they face one problem continually. Viewers interpret the reporter's questions as representing his own bias, or beliefs. If a Democrat is being interviewed and asked pointed questions, the Democrats phone to complain. Similarly, when a Republican is questioned sharply.

Over the last few years most major California stations have developed some form of interview program though KNBC's has the largest audience and the top

be available for the program.

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Over the last few years most major California stations have developed some form of interview program though KNBC's has the largest audience and the top

reputation among political figures. Interviews turned out to be important platforms for the candidates in all major cities. But Abernethy himself indicated his own confidence in his presentation when he said to us:

I resent the number of man and woman hours we have spent parrying complaints from candidates, when the real target is those many stations up and down the state that chose not to put any candidates on. I don't think there is any VHF station in Los Angeles that put more on than we did.

Talking to us in advance of his fall interviews with the two gubernatorial aspirants, when he had Brown and Flournoy scheduled individually and looked forward to the final "debate" as well, Abernethy said:

I expect to ask whatever seems the most interesting at the time. If it seems Brown is getting someplace with something, I'd ask about that-- bring up what the other guy is saying....

I believe that television has a responsibility to help the viewers as citizens to get the information they need to know to make the decisions to vote. And I think we do that. I don't think by talking about the most newsworthy things that we fail to present the most important issues.

Political Theater

Another separate source of "interaction" opportunities lay in those efforts to attract television coverage which we have termed "political theater." We have decided against using the scornful designation "pseudo-event". This came often to the lips of television news editors (particularly about press conferences). It seemed remarkable that the television world, which contrives so much of its news to appear to be a genuine on-the-scene report but which is snatched in advance of the event, or framed to appear authentic after the event, should treat with such disdain the traditional effort of a candidate to endow his own speech-making or public-appearances with some air of importance. We repeatedly saw television reporters catch the candidates just before they went into an auditorium or onto a stage, for a quick question and answer about the core of his speech that day, which they could then pack off hurriedly to air, without waiting for the real event. It ill became the industry, we felt, to raise the question of who is being "pseudo".

It would be incorrect, of course, to suggest that all events staged by candidates constitute valid dramatizations. Many are mere gimmicks, some are sheer fakes. Some may justify the label "pseudo". But there is a dangerous denigration involved in classifying as inherently false all political efforts to capture media attention, or to provide an interesting or illuminating illustration for voters to understand a problem better.

Some theatricality, some staging of an event was indeed adopted and was also consciously sought by television camera crews. This has always been an element of politics as it has of courtroom lawyers and successful teachers.

Politicians were trying to fit their appearances or presentations, in many cases, to interest the news media to be informative to television audiences and to engage the camera.

Three main points about this staging which we observed:

1) the most industrious efforts were undertaken in the primary election, when the battle for attention was at its fiercest. During this time, the more interesting of these events were presented, which we shall discuss. 2) In almost no cases were they used by television. That was primarily because television had simply abdicated from coverage, worried over the FCC rules which might require coverage of all, bored by the event and distracted by other tantalizing "real" stories of crime. And (3) the most successful in this effort at "theater" and that which television crews liked best and used with interest involved the candidate in contact with everyday citizens in colorful settings. These occurred mainly in the general election.

To a large extent such appearances, especially in the general election, involved traditional political "scenes" where politicians have campaigned in the major California cities for years because of the interesting quality of the pictures that could be taken. Many of these settings date back to eras when print was the exclusive photographer: such include Los Angeles' Olvera street, with its colorful Mexican shops; and San Francisco's Chinatown or its Italian district or the fishing boat area. More recently, Watts has been added to all political tours for a mingling with blacks which could be conveniently pre-arranged. Also recently, centers for senior citizens have replaced school backgrounds as a place to muster interested people. Obviously the voting elderly have more relevance to the election than the photogenic children, but with schools a lively political issue and the election process deemed suitable educational

material, children still manage to be involved in some of the settings. For instance, at one Democratic meeting in Anaheim, one Brown enthusiast had dressed little girls in suitably "brown" skirts and jackets, and with some awkwardness the candidate managed to keep them nearby for the picture advantage. The most universally used setting, of course, was the shopping center. Los Angeles boasts a Central Market, always jammed with people, which has been a politician's favorite for years. This was a parade ground for politicians all through the primary. While it did not always draw television (Alioto was able to attract them), in the general election Brown and Flournoy both got good play on their appearances at the market.

This is the quality of "free media" which campaign managers most prize. Set speeches before formal groups, with film segments of half a minute or one minute, will interest only a small number. But television photographs of candidates milling about with real people, reaching out to touch them, smiling or hot and sweaty, or getting a jacket pulled awry or having a flower thrust into the outstretched hand -- all activities of this kind which reveal the candidate to be a responsive human being are the ultimate goal of campaign strategists.

For instance, Joe Cerrell, who claims to attract "free media" successfully, told us about getting Alioto to the Grand Central Market in Los Angeles: "He stopped, and commiserated with a grocer about the price of pinto beans and Bergholz put it on the front page. Now Alioto didn't have to go to Grand Central Market to learn about the high cost of rice and pinto beans. I could have

told him about it, but the point is that that way he got the television cameras and the exposure.

Cerrell said once when Bobby Kennedy came to town, they wanted him to appear at the Coliseum, which has 90,000 seats, but the crowd tends to sit where they can see best so all the empty seats are behind the candidate, where they show up on television. So instead, he had Kennedy go to East Los Angeles Jr. College stadium where he was mobbed and the media called it an overflow crowd. "It's a gimmick, it's a game," he says. "Joe Alioto has visual identification. Jerry Brown had no visual identification. And if you put Joe Alioto and Bob Moretti at opposite ends of the airport, I guarantee you nobody would recognize Bob Moretti."

"On the Saturday before the primary election, I had lunch at Nate 'n Al's in Beverly Hills. It looked good on television. On Sunday and Monday he toured Los Angeles on a San Francisco streetcar. It made good television coverage. We had him eat a three-foot Italian hero sandwich because it made good television."

Cerrell said: "The free media is our bag."

"Is it because you know how to get them?"

"First of all the media guys know that they are not going to run into a false alarm. They know that we are not going to give them a real bummer. We let them know directly... We give it to City News Service. We remind them that morning. We rely a great deal on the free media. Moretti and Brown walking at the Music Center...Alioto going to a Catholic Church on Cinco de Mayo..."

Flournoy's press man, Drake, discussed this encounter situation.

My feeling is they are more interested in seeing Hugh with people in groups -- out there doing his thing. And I would have to agree in my general concept of the news, if I were running a tv station I would be more interested in seeing him in action. The press conference is really a strange situation. If you think about it in the abstract -- you have a press conference; you pull reporters together for a message you want transmitted across the boards. Many campaigns I suppose in the past have been run as if the primary tool is the press conference.

The KNXT staff had one amusing incident to cite about the 1974 campaign. It concerned the controller's race. One reporter told us:

Last week Bob Simmons called William Bagley (Republican candidate for controller) and asked what he was doing. His campaign manager said he wasn't doing anything. Simmons said, well, let us know when he's doing something, because we want to do a story on him. So they called back and said he was going to be at the beach. We trooped out there, and it became quite obvious that the sole reason for the event was to get KNXT to cover. The guy set it up for us.

The same thing happened to me once when I was covering Ivy Baker Priest (former state treasurer). I said I wanted to get a typical campaign day and I asked her, campaign manager what she was doing. He asked, well, what are the other candidates doing? I said, well, you know campaigning at supermarkets. He said, supermarkets, eh? Okay, she'll be at a supermarket next Monday. I got out there, and Ivy Baker Priest arrived and got out of her car and she said, well what do I do now? I've never campaigned at a supermarket before.

We don't want to cover setups, but it is just so frustrating not to have anything to shoot...

Heidi Schulman, KNBC reporter who was out on the campaign trail through the fall, said to us at one point:

I think they gear the campaigns to television. Brown's Labor Day tour -- and that Union Square rally today. I haven't seen the film, but that sounds like the perfect television event. The Flournoy bus tour was totally a media event. In Watts, Brown didn't even shake any hands... and Dick Bergholz's piece in the Times pointing out that at one factory Brown said "Vote for me" and didn't even say what his name was, and after he passed by they asked the woman

and she didn't even know who he was.

Sometimes I feel a little ripped off but it does make beautiful film. We got beautiful film of Flournoy touring a construction project in Watts. I just said straight out that it was a "media-keyed event". I appreciate it when we finally get something that makes good film, but at the same time I think we have to point out that it was an event planned for tv.

...and I was really just frankly appalled when we went to San Francisco last week to cover Flournoy and we were the only camera crew there. There wasn't even one San Francisco station there. We got a decent piece out of it. I couldn't believe we would have traveled to San Francisco to cover a major gathering at the Commonwealth Club and not a single television station from San Francisco came.

On the day after Labor Day I was with Brown at the Commonwealth Club and the only other crew there was a Sacramento crew covering for KNXT.

We have already discussed Brown's primary-time trip with reporters and print photographers via bus through the Mother Lode gold country and via raft down the Stanislaus River. It failed to bring out television coverage.

Roth also flew reporters with him on a prop-hop of Northern California's picturesque timber and fishing country. It too drew print reporters. (We shall tell about it in more detail in dealing with print.) It did not draw any television.

In the general election travel with candidates turned out to be more attractive to media. It served as an interaction situation which both sides liked. Brown and Flournoy both used buses at various stages, to make room for camera equipment and a numerous following, and would be interviewed and photographed in this setting for local stations within a close range. On Labor Day, official

fall starter, tv sent cameras to cover some of the numerous scheduled travel stops or actually flew to a colorful place. The logistics of getting film back for the night's show became traumatic, however. From Flournoy's distant mountain stop, only a breakfast shot could be taken before the struggle to get the film back to Los Angeles. From the Pleasanton Labor Day picnic where Brown appeared, it looked for awhile as though Brown's staff was going to have to hire a private plane to carry the film for KNBC, but they finally found someone headed in that direction who would hand-carry it.

After the kick-off, television gave the candidates attention in their local arrivals and departures, primarily. Photographers told us they liked these shots: they gave a strong sense of motion. "It seems exciting".

A KCRA news editor suggested the importance of this:

...and we've gone into Northern California with candidates, we've covered the mountains with them. Anywhere where they get out of the element of being in news conferences, sitting in front of the microphone-- as we call them staged events.

But we have noted that only KNBC made a consistent effort to send reporter and camera with the candidates through the two fall months. Their experience, and that of the two San Francisco KGO reporters who took a week's travel, was the most substantial television commitment.

The KNBC film (we saw very little personally) sought to capture the daily pace and news development of the campaign and report it over a period of time.

The KGO film aimed at feature treatment: profiles of the people, the excitement of a campaign flight,

the mood of the traveling candidate surrounded by press. These were capsuled into three five-minute reports, the Brown campaign carried on three successive news shows of one week; that of Flourney on three evenings the next week. The Brown pieces had the advantage of being shot while he did the Northern California prop-hop trip, with rural scenery, small propeller plane arrivals, small town turn-out with more banners and welcome hoopla than metropolitan areas witnessed. One evening's segment surprisingly dwelt on Brown's press secretary, Llew Werner, and his comic style of command over the often unwieldy brood of reporters, herding them back to bus or plane. Why that was used turned out to be a very interesting sidelight on problems television can have.

Ric Davis, the reporter on this outing, telephoned us in the midst of his preparation of the film to confess he had just experienced the ultimate in tragedy. He had spent hours the night before editing the film and had pieced together what he considered a powerful presentation of Brown's campaign style. The finished film was hung over an editing bar, to be put onto a reel in the morning. The studio had a new janitor that night. Nobody had told the new janitor how to distinguish between waste film and ready film. It was swept away. For awhile that morning KGO's confrontation with the garbage people was the biggest story in town, but there was no hope of salvage. The garbage had been chewed up. There were some scraps left. The scraps mostly showed Llew Werner. That is how he became the star of one night's report on the campaign.

The most amusing misadventure related to political theater

occurred during the general and its victim was Flournoy. We attach a complete report on this incident from our staff.

FLOURNOY TRANSIT STRIKE INCIDENT

An incident occurred in Los Angeles September 17, which is quite interesting for purposes of our study. The Flournoy campaign set up a news conference ideal for television--Flournoy was to donate one of his campaign vans to help transport persons whose means of transportation to doctors, clinics, etc., was usually the bus, and who were without means of transportation because of the transit strike. Flournoy himself was to ride in the bus along with some of the transit victims to a county health clinic, where the press conference would be held and where he would make a statement concerning the strike.

Flournoy's press people contacted all the media, several times, and pitched them on the story. It also appeared in the CNS budget. They had a rather poor turnout, with only two tv crews present, but one was KNBC, the most watched news station in the city. Everything went as planned, with Flournoy delivering a woman to the county clinic and making his speech, then leaving, ostensibly to drive to another hospital. However, Flournoy got out three blocks later and went on to another engagement. The other news media left the clinic but before KNBC's reporter, Warren Wilson left, nurses at the clinic told him that the "patient" Flournoy had dropped off had left without seeking any treatment, that people from the van had come back to fetch her a few minutes later. Wilson filmed them telling him the woman had left, then caught up with Flournoy later in the day

and filmed him saying he was mystified, that he had no idea the woman was not a legitimate patient.

The viewer's general impression was that the group Flournoy had associated himself with was a phony organization and that he had been made a fool of. However, the truth evidently was that the organization was perfectly legitimate and worthy of help, and that it had merely chosen a woman it had driven to the clinic before and dropped her off there that day for the benefit of the television cameras, even though she didn't actually have an appointment. Flournoy's people evidently were unaware that it was staged.

I talked to Warren Wilson of KNBC and to Ken Drake, as well as to several other news editors, including some who covered the story and some who did not.

Ken Drake, Flournoy campaign:

"I was thinking all day yesterday how Mary Ellen would love to hear about this! It's an example of how things get out of hand. Obviously, we saw a chance to do some good and at the same time to do something that would be worthy of attention from the press, " Drake said.

"This is how it happened. We received a call from this rather loose organization, Transit Victims, seeking help asking for vans or whatever we could give them, to help people who didn't have transportation as a result of the transit strike. This guy said he was going on television the next day, on KHJ, the Tommy Hawkins show, and to watch him. I did and sure enough, there he was. We decided to go ahead and volunteer our bus, and to have a press conference. We asked them if they could find some people that needed to go to the medical center,

because that would be a good location for a press conference, a central location and all, and we would pick them up and we'd hold a press conference. You always run a risk on a thing like that, it can look showy, and I wasn't sure I wanted to get involved in it, " Drake said.

"I called KNBC to tell them about it, I put it on the CNS budget, I called all the television stations because it was basically a tv story, so I called everybody and I asked the people traveling with us, I made an extended effort....

"anyway, NBC said they would love to get some film of Hugh picking some of the people up, so I called Edwards and asked him if he could find someone who lived on the way, and he said he'd see what he could do, and he came up with someone 13 blocks from the hospital, but she wasn't going to the hospital, she was going to another doctor and to the bank. I said, well we could use her and still go to the clinic with the other people and she could just sit in the van. So we started out with Hugh and the KNBC people at the first stop, and we drive to this woman's house and pick her up and we go on to the clinic. Everything's going as planned, and we get to the clinic and hold our press conference. One of the women in the van got out and went into the clinic. Hugh got back in the bus and we drove a few blocks and then Hugh left and went off to another appearance. Well, it turned out that the girl who was left off at the clinic didn't get treated, they just picked her up again after we were long gone. Wilson was still there, and earlier he had gotten into a near shouting match with Edwards. I don't know if it was personal or not, but then we found out the woman hadn't been treated. He got in touch with us at the

Airport Hyatt House in Inglewood and said the whole thing was a phony and a plant. I tried to talk to him, assuming that he would be reasonable. I tried to explain it to him.

"It really was legitimate, the other people were really going to doctor's appointments, and Edwards wanted to set something up for us. We didn't know what their maladies were, we just said get us some people who need rides. So, wanting to set something up for us, Edwards got this girl who had ridden with them before, even though she didn't really have an appointment that day. But we didn't know. The pretense apparently was made. The bus went on to take other legitimate riders, and tomorrow they're going to take a whole busload of senior citizens who haven't been able to go to their meetings during the strike."

"I was horrified at the time, but I don't think the program turned out too badly. I felt personally responsible, because Hugh was innocent as a lamb."

"Maybe I'm losing my objectivity, but I thought that what Wilson did was unnecessary. It doesn't really matter what I say, but I think he came to it with the idea that the whole thing was a campaign hoax. Afterward, he kept saying things like, 'Are you really willing to go on involving yourself with a man like this?'"

Drake said that George Skelton of the Los Angeles Times was aware of everything that Wilson reported, overheard him questioning Flournoy about it at the luncheon, and asked Drake what it was all about. When Drake started to explain, Skelton replied, "oh forget it. I don't even want to hear about it," and did not mention it in his Times story on

Wednesday, which mentioned the minibus service and quoted from the remarks Flournoy made at the clinic press conference.

Drake said the other media covering the press conference were Radio News West, Channel 13, KFWB, the Herald Examiner, the San Diego Union, the Wall Street Journal and the Washington Star.

"What gets me," Drake says, "is that I go around talking to tv news directors and they say, we want to see him doing things, we just don't want head shots. They almost say give us a carnival, and then when we do a number for them, they come down on us for staging it."

"It was just a poor judgment thing. We said can you find us someone to go there and they had this girl who had ridden with them before and they used her even though she didn't really have an appointment."

"The industry wants a carnival, and then the first question out of the box is, isn't this just for publicity? If they think that, why cover the damn thing?"

"I mean, it wasn't real to begin with. Everybody knew Hugh wasn't going to ride that bus all week, that he just did it for the cameras. I think overall NBC has done not a good job, but a better job than some of the other stations but by and large the television stations don't show a whole lot of imagination or creativity in covering campaigns. There's never any easy answer on how to cover a campaign for electronic media, but it bothers me when the focus in covering a gubernatorial campaign was whether the guy had the poor judgment to send in a woman who didn't have an appointment. Actually, I didn't think the story they used on KNBC was all that

bad--none of us did. I'm really amazed at myself that I have spent this much time talking about it...."

Chuck Rossie's version:

I also called assignment editor Chuck Rossie, who was pitched on the story by Ken Drake on Monday night and who assigned Wilson to cover it.

Rossie said, "The story pretty well spoke for itself. The Fournoy campaign saw somebody in this Transit Victims Association and made a connection and tried to get some political mileage out of it. Before we left, we found out that the transit strike group was not all that it purported to be and that the woman was not actually going to the clinic. It wasn't Fournoy's fault. He was taken."

Rossie said KNBC had no further plans to delve into the Transit Victims Association. It's an elusive group with just a mailing address. I think we have already pretty much exposed them.

"You have to understand that it is not all that unusual for there to be a liaison between spontaneous groups and political campaigns," Rossie said. "It's really not all that different from their providing Fournoy for the speaker at a Rotary luncheon.

"Except," interjected the interviewer, "that you would rather get film of Fournoy helping out the poor transit victims, and get two stories at the same time, than of him talking to the Rotary...."

"Not necessarily," replied Rossie, "we're more interested in either of them than in news conferences."

Rossie said Wilson was assigned the story "because we're going to be using a variety of reporters. Heidi Schulman is

on vacation and we're going to be mixing it up."

Warren Wilson version:

On the six and the eleven o'clock news on KNBC, channel 4 on Tuesday, September 17, lengthy film reports were broadcast concerning a Houston Flournoy campaign stunt which backfired. Reporter Warren Wilson, who covered for KNBC tells what happened:

On Monday evening, somebody, actually it was Ken Drake called our assignment editor (Chuck Rossie) and told him that Flournoy was going to lend a campaign van to a group of people who were going to transport various victims of the transit strike to hospitals and clinics and wherever they needed to go and he said he thought it was going to make good pictures. He said Flournoy was going to go along on the van, and so we went along.

It started out at the Norm's restaurant at Sunset and Vermont and when we got there, I saw a black woman talking to Flournoy's campaign people and I thought she was with them. Then when we started filming, Bob Edwards, who was head of this transit strike group, introduced her to Flournoy. I still thought she was with the Flournoy campaign. There were two other women sitting in the van who I thought were the patients, but it turned out that this black woman was the patient. When Ken Drake had called, he had given us the name of one of the women who was in the van as the first patient, but it turned out that she was just riding downtown to go to the bank and the black woman was the patient. So I got film with this Bob Edwards, and asked him if he wasn't injecting his group into a political campaign, and he got kind of mad about that. Then I talked to the two ladies on the bus and one of them was going to the bank and the other was going to a clinic. Anyway, we got to the County Health Clinic at 5200 Melrose, and the black woman went in and the Flournoy van went on, supposedly going on to the other clinic and to the bank. But somebody told me that the van just went about three blocks and got away from the film crews and then stopped and let Flournoy out, so he could go on to a luncheon in Inglewood.

Anyway, I went inside to start checking on Bob Edwards and to check out the things he had said about Bradley's not providing any vans for the bus transit strike victims. Then I came out and was getting ready to do my stand-up, when these three girls came out and said, 'We've got something to tell you.' I asked them to wait until I finished, but they said it was pretty important. So then they told me that five minutes after Flournoy left, that

Edwards came back in and took the woman by the hand and took off. She never saw any doctor or got any treatment. So I went back inside and checked the records and the hospital administrator and there was no record that the woman had been seen at all.

So then I chased Flournoy down at the luncheon and he said he hadn't known anything about it, that this Bob Edwards of the Transit Victims Association in North Hollywood -- all they've got is a post office box-- had set the thing up. They had hoped it would be a positive thing and Flournoy wound up with egg on his face. He was set up. Ken Drake was with Flournoy when I caught up with them and he was doing everything he could to persuade me that they didn't have anything to do with it, and he was worried about the slant I was going to take.

I told him I was going to tell it like it was and that Flournoy was probably going to be embarrassed by it, but I had to do it. That was what happened and that was the way I had to tell it.

I was happy with the way it turned out. They used three minutes forty-three seconds on the six o'clock news and I understand they used three minutes on the eleven o'clock and just shortened the sound a little bit.

Wilson, a black reporter who started out with UPI in Los Angeles and was UPI's star reporter during the Watts riots, has been with several radio and television stations in Los Angeles during the past ten years, and has been with KNBC for the past several years. He is a general assignment reporter and is sometimes anchorman for a brief local news spot in the morning during the Today show. He says he has not been covering politics much -- "Heidi Schulman has been doing it. I don't know why, but she has. I'd like very much to do political reporting. Maybe I'll get to do some more after this."

Wilson said KNBC was the only tv news crew that followed the story through. At the parking lot where the van started out, there were reporters from radio stations KFWB, KFI, and a cameraman from Channel 13, plus a couple of print media reporters Wilson said. Only KNBC was at the clinic and they were the only station that reported the whole incident.

Bob Long, assignment editor KNXT, version:

KNXT, the CBS affiliate, did not cover the Flournoy transit story. I called their assignment editor, Bob Long, and asked if the Flournoy people had called to pitch him on the story.

They certainly did. They called five or six times, the usual promotion, you know. I didn't talk to any of them personally....We didn't cover it because it seemed like such an obvious stunt. The transit story Tuesday was the appointment of a mediator, not whatever Flournoy or Brown had to say about it. I don't know if we had any story on the governor's campaign that day or not, but we didn't have any film on it. We did have some film on the attorney general's race.

Long said he had not seen the Channel 4 film, but would liked to have had it.

Oh, yeah, I would have liked to have had that. If I had suspected that it was a staged thing, I mean a dishonestly staged thing, I would have sent someone out. But it's an investment of time..."

Carol Sleight, KCOP, Channel 13, version:

Channel 13 sent one cameraman to cover the Flournoy free bus program. He took film just of the van taking off (It was labeled "Flournoy" along one side and "Who's Hugh?" on the back) and then used an interview with Flournoy talking about the transit strike, according to news writer Carol Sleight. KCOP just has two cameramen, an assignment editor, Dan Thompkins, and Carol Sleight.

We didn't use so much on the service, we just said that it was available to Hollywood residents and that this particular van was going to be used to transport people who needed to get somewhere, but we mostly used his statement about the strike.

She said she had seen the Channel 4 spot but had not known about it until she saw it there.

We got the story off the CNS budget, like everyone else.

She did not know of any call from the Flournoy press people to alert Channel 13 of the story.

An Assignment Editor at a Los Angeles Radio station:

He saw the item on the CNS budget on Tuesday and sent a man down to cover it. He used an audio of Flournoy talking about the transit strike and calling for a 60-day cooling off period. He did not mention the free bus service for victims provided by Flournoy "because that would be a political thing, and we wouldn't use it. We covered the hard news."

The editor had not even heard about the Channel 4 coverage of that the "patient" turned out to be apparently bogus. "But knowing Hugh as I do, he wouldn't be part of such a thing. Neither would Jerry," he said.

Saul Halpert, one of the two KNBC reporters who covered the election, told us that television "has a very parochial view of news".

He felt the cost to the candidates of planes and other travel accommodations "is definitely worth the money to them. It gets them all this natural news coverage which they'd never get otherwise."

The flights across the state the last day of the general election in which Halpert accompanied Brown while Heidi Schulman accompanied Flournoy "was the most interesting we did all through the campaign."

On Monday night's news they ran the two candidates "back to back" at both 5 and 6 o'clock. He discussed this side event:

The film showed Flournoy at his press conferences. The only people who turned out were media people and usually only two or three reporters. Jerry had big crowds, really big. The picture showed what a difference there really was between the two campaigns. It showed the style of the two candidates. Jerry had his crowds set up, sure. I don't think he'd pretend otherwise. But he was organized in such a way as to draw them, he could plan for them and get them there. They've got to be real faithful. You don't have 300 to 400 at the Lockheed airport at 7 A.M. here just casually showing up. You have to plan for this, and they've got to be eager beavers. Our film showed Brown was able to turn out a crowd. In San Francisco they had a really huge crowd. I'd say it's the biggest I've seen in the whole campaign.

Showing those two stories of the final day flight across the state back to back shows the different level of appeal each man had to his constituents. It was a report on his people. Brown had a constituency that could be drawn to see him this last day up and down the state. Flournoy didn't even try. It was clear they made no effort for a crowd, relied on the press turnout. In both cases the trips were designed, of course, to draw media coverage.

"Discussing what else they used:

We did the obligatory airplane interview. If the station sends you to fly in an airplane with a candidate you must interview him and show him inside the airplane, otherwise they wouldn't feel you'd done the job. You've got to prove to the people you were there. I saw what Heidi did and in my opinion Flournoy didn't come across.

In the interview I got with Jerry Brown he was thoughtful. He gave me what seemed an effective summary of the whole campaign. I asked what all this meant, this flying about the last day. And he said it has a value. It gives voters one last chance to have a look at the candidates, and to measure them and ask what they are and what they say.

Then Jerry said, 'I've thought it over all the anticipation of victory, and I think this will be a close election. It's up to the people. They have seen us. We've tried to present our views. They must decide.'

I saw a kind of humility in his attitude.

CONSTRAINTS ON (AND IN) THE TELEVISION INDUSTRY

The most serious problem concerning candidate and the "tube" medium clearly revolves around the dilemma television news faces as to whether its mission is primarily to entertain or to inform. It concerns the attitude within the station about their product-- the news.

The "encounters" were most seriously impeded, it seemed to us, by constraints upon the industry to keep its programming so lively and alluring that audiences would continually enlarge, so that advertising rates could be raised and income to the station increased. News programs were clearly haunted by the problem of ratings; not directly but indirectly. Everyone in television and, through the campaign, everyone in the political camps, became aware that the call for light-hearted news items, for "cheerful" news or for quick presentation of news all diminished interest in political news. The impact of rating surveys by the new breed of specialist which has taught television how to enlarge news program audiences by livening its copy has reached all

stations, even those which have not yet hired McCune Hoffman of Magid for studies.

We found news priorities were on items which make people happy, rather than unhappy; which focus on human interest, children or animals.

Moretti was outraged, for instance, when he watched a news program that gave one minute to an interview with him, and four minutes to a discussion of "togs for dogs".

Most commercial television newsmen told us they never learned ratings or were not bothered by them. But interestingly, on one occasion while observing in a television station, one of our staff members was being told this by a news director who "never bothered about" ratings when she overheard a reporter in the news room call out to a colleague asking what the ratings had been the night before.

Related to the vying for viewer interest is the whole format of news programs which aim to be "headlines" or "tabloid news", conveying action, brevity, excitement.

Many TV representatives emphasized the difference between their news aims and that of newspapers. They cannot pretend to "background" people, or do deep investigative reporting or explain things at length. They count time by seconds. Sixty seconds is a lot; 120 seconds is about maximum. They are framing programs to what they have been told is an average interest span. They want maximum audiences, not select intellectual audiences.

Some we talked with expressed the real limitations

of their medium vividly, and with great understanding. It was not that they were against coverage of politics; it was that this field, as they saw it, lay largely beyond the capability of the programming structure they must live with.

On the other hand a great many thoughtful reporters felt this view was nonsense; that television could, if it shifted its priorities, develop exciting news that would have serious content and an intellectual appeal.

Moretti's campaign media consultant, Bob Squier commented on this entire development:

In broadcasting you have a phenomenon underway right now that is moving very rapidly...no knowing where it will end up...what I call tinker-toy approach. This playfulness with the news. In between little items about a fender bender and the call for police, you kind of have the newscasters laugh it up.

The result of this is an enormous amount of frustration among the news people in TV. They know the serious job that ought to be done is not being done.

There is some feeling not covering because of saving expenses. That the main reasons is economic. 'We're in a business'. You hear that. I think it's nonsense. They are making money from a commodity that they don't own, the air. It is not their air. They pay nothing for their licenses and they make millions using the public air.

Moretti's campaign director, John FitzRandolph, told us that after Moretti had blasted television for ignoring the campaign:

...your guy is right, but our rating is slipping. He had been told to stay off state politics. It is bad for business, politics is a clammer. Show business is in. People are looking for something light, something to distract them.

The whole area of recent trends in news development towards entertainment, the impact of research specialists

or as some defined it, "of scientific methods of enlarging our share of the market", seemed to lie behind the factors diverting television from serious news coverage. This seemed to us one of the most significant influences we encountered.

It seemed, however, outside our study.

We hope that some future study may be directed towards the effect of ratings and advertising competition on television's priorities: its news selection and its spending for news development. Perhaps politics will never vie with sports or weather, but it might rate more attention than lost dogs or wayward cats.

There are other impediments which interfered with television's response to the campaign.

Some are technical and physical, involving the way television must operate.

Some concern personnel: where it comes from, how it is used, who commands it.

We wish to touch on these briefly, as they seem related to the problem of "interaction".

The exclusive boast of television, which no other media shares, is photography. The sound, radio shares. The news interest, print shares. But the picture is theirs, and the pride in it, interest in it, delight in what it can do permeates all in the industry. This affects priorities. The photograph which is most dramatic, exciting, compelling becomes the first objective. Stories concerning ideas, difficult to illustrate and time-demanding to do well, simply rate lower in displaying the agility

of this remarkable medium, and so fall lower on virtually everyone's scale of priorities in television.

One experienced television reporter sitting with us election night, discussed the problem of the concentration on the image. He had been talking about Proposition 17, the proposal to ban a dam on the Stanislaus River.

The picture of that beautiful bubbling water holds the eye and conveys a message but while you look at it you really miss the message being given. The video image is distracting. People who try to use images to convey messages don't realize that often the image says one thing while the message may say another...or the image may be a misrepresentation. It does not encourage any real thought on the part of the observer. Proposition 17 is a very complex issue with a lot of things to be balanced. It takes 2000 words more to give a voter a real statement on something that complex. In television they try to sum it up in a picture and slogan and you just can't do it. People look at it, and have a gut response but they don't really know the question that is posed or what they are making a choice about.

We are so scared-- so absolutely frightened-- of talking heads. All the producers say we must not have that. It's boring.

Yes, maybe it is boring. But are we in the business of entertaining or informing?

That is the dilemma of television news faces.

He looked back a few years to where he felt media did a far better job covering political events.

I wonder if we haven't saturated people with the machinery of politics....Conventions that go on and on; politicians who speak endlessly; the incessant clips from Washington. You pile Watergate on top of that, labeling the whole thing 'corruption' and of course people are saying 'enough!'.

Television did the same thing with campus rebellion and with ghetto riots. Just overdid it....

The trouble is that there is no way in which what the eye beholds captures a total picture. By its very nature this single eye is focused on a single moment, a single event, and it elevates it to an importance which it may not have at all in the total context.

I think film-- and now, videotape-- when we look ahead to the capability it is developing-- well, it suggests some awesome problems to me. I fear what is going to happen. No matter how you try, you can't cut through the emotional impact that a picture makes, and put that emotion into a proper, balanced context.

The reporter went on:

I would see it in the urban riots. You'd go on the air with the action, a lot of excited and angry people, but it would give the impression the whole city was in chaos. Producers loved it. It was exciting. It was great film. It was dramatic. But the reality was, it gave an incorrect picture. That one incident did not represent the entire ghetto.

He referred to the increasing flexibility of the camera, and the future everyone anticipates when it will be possible to cover so many things with lightweight videotape cameras.

We will be beaming direct from the scene to the livingroom. But, will we be telling the truth? After the immediate excitement, will we be able to put it into context? I don't know. I wish we could go back to John Cameron Sweeney and just read 16 minutes of basic news. Let the words tell the story.

Some day we'll find the medium has gone too far.... I don't let my kids watch TV.

But there are other technical problems. The cost of a camera unit, often including sound man, is high. A KNXT man said a film crew costs \$85,000 a year. The stations can't afford many; can't afford enough to let one crew spend two or three days on what might yield only half an hour's show. The ratio between the crew cost and the brevity of what could be shown means that maximum effort is made to get the crew to cover as many different stories as possible.

Another justification we often heard for abandoning political specialists is the station's manpower

needs. This appears to be related to the expansion in news times. One station, KGO, had shifted from a one-hour format to two hours shortly before the primary. Others still felt new to this extended time. One got the sense that quite apart from "style" in news handling there is still some sense of experimentation in the use of news staff. We encountered frequent complaints that television news rooms are vastly undermanned in relation to newspapers. "Mere bodies" is a problem, news editors said. They need reporters available for any assignment, not reporters limited to one field.

It would appear that dropping political reporters is a move designed to assure flexibility in staff, more than a direct attempt to wipe out politics; but it does occur coincidentally with station disinterest in political news. Among reporters we found a strong sense that more than "ecology" or "social problems" or "economics and business", politics as a specialty required sustained acquaintance with the field for a sound judgment about where news lies.

Virtually all station management people told us flatly they were opposed to "beats" and would not restore them. Some indicated the specialist develops too much knowledge for television: he aims to tell his subject in too much depth for their headline-style.

We constantly heard this cited as a reason why candidates couldn't be "followed". They could only be shot hurriedly-- often en route to something else. News desks are apprehensive about crews getting far out of range, lest some breaking story erupt without the means for coverage, and they would be beaten. The sense of

competition for producing exciting pictures is intense. We never heard complaints about a story being missed; only about pictures being missed.

Television lives in a rapidly changing technological field. The excitement about its potential centers largely within this technology. The most excited anticipations of a better television future which we heard from anyone came from program managers and cameramen discussing the possibilities with the mini-camera, when there will be more capability of filming and transmitting direct from the scene (or virtually direct) to the home tube. The SLA shoot-out in Los Angeles was an exemplar. We heard some reporters voice a hope for improved reporting standards, a more responsible interest in government and political stories, and a return to developing "beats" so expertise could be fostered. But this anticipation was very faint compared to the very apparent excitement over the possibilities of technological improvement in film, cameras, transmission, etc. The industry is pervaded by this sense of change, all of it related to better and livelier photographs, a much smaller faction concerned with better news coverage.

We have mentioned the peculiarly regional limitations upon television which made it difficult to project the state race with a statewide sense. They captured it when it came to town, not from other California regions. The telephone line rentals for the network feed is reportedly very costly. This was given as one reason for rarely moving pictures from outside communities. We felt the advertising emphasis on the community being

served reinforces the localism in news. It becomes difficult to project the sense of statewide issues and statewide problems when each station tries to key the candidate to local interest, and limits its reports exclusively to his local appearances.

Another technological problem is the logistics of film transmission and film preparation for the evening newscast. Just the problem of getting it flown to Los Angeles or Sacramento in time for developing and editing before five or six PM often becomes the major challenge to the reporter. Numerous times we asked station personnel what they had carried about some event: a debate or a major speech. Almost never did they remember what the film showed, but they did remember when it arrived, or what maneuvers they had to undertake to get it on time; often it could not be readied for the 5:00 show and had to be used on the 6 PM or 11 PM. An immense effort was required in many cases to get 1½ minutes shown-- which then vanished forever.

If time is a limiting factor in that respect, it is also difficult for the reporter. Helen Johnson, producer of Abernethy's show, gave us a moving description of the graver disadvantages upon television reporters than on newspaper reporters: most of them, she pointed out, arose from the need to think fast, move fast, speak fast on camera and get out of there fast to return the film.

Also related to the personnel question: anchorman-status with high salaries and sensitive relationship to a program's attractiveness to viewers reduces reporters

to lesser significance. We did not encounter news directors or assignment men denigrating the quality of their reporters; they showed pride in them. But we did hear reporters say such things as "Oh, we're just reporters. The talent goes on the air". In this world the term "talent" is not applicable to reporters. The goal is to become an anchorman. Some political reporters have moved up to that status.

Another personnel point: we heard from many that management has risen for the most part from advertising and sales departments and is new to the sense of respect for news which would be natural to a news-oriented management. Several interesting interviews focused upon the changes at work within television emphasized how often personnel shifts occur (often the result of "rating" surveys), and how volatile the whole TV world is. It makes a stable news product difficult to achieve. "Television is still pioneering", one said. "It is where radio was 30 years ago."

Another handicap is the concern of news desks upon the quality of picture and the delivery style of the reporter out at the scene more than on the significance of the event being reported. What will lose a TV reporter his job is interrupting the flow of his question with an "uhh..." or losing camera contact with his eyes, not asking an uninformed or irrelevant question.

Time is the ingredient with which TV deals: We heard often that it is far less flexible than newspaper's space (or radio's more continuous time).

The candidates grew astonished, shocked and then bewildered to find that the average reporting on their debates, for instance, was 2½ minutes; that a news clip of one minute was considered acceptable, and two minutes from some speech downright generous. Comment from Brown's staff suggests they did not expect their "agreement" limiting reproduction of the debates to "normal news coverage" would be that brief.

But apart from the air-time limitations which work to the disadvantage of regular news coverage of politics, there are other aspects of time which affected coverage, and which are closely tied to TV's sensitivity about shaping their news presentation to public interest.

They clearly chose to put their emphasis upon politics, not in advance of public interest, but coincident with it. They provided coverage in the last week or ten days of the campaign. Some of the best and most sensitive reporters justified this: it was when the public would want it.

News director Fyffe of KTLA said that politics does get special weighting as a campaign nears its climax.

We have a special feeling of responsibility to inform the public on candidates and specific issues-- though not on the day-to-day meanderings of political news.

He claimed the station investigates candidates' positions as election day nears.

Roy Wilson, news director at KFMB, emphasized:

The primary restriction is time on the air, you just don't have time enough within the framework of our programs to devote as much to politics as we would like. As far as staffing is concerned, we don't have too much difficulty that way. There have been occasions during this campaign, where

two statewide politicians would be in town and hold a news conference at the same time. Generally, unless they have to catch a plane right away, they'll wait so that our reporter can get there. If they're away, they always try to reach them.

Following is an assortment of comments about television political coverage-- views on the present, and views looking to a different future. They come from reporters who were closer to political reporting this year than others in television. We present them anonymously. They represent the overwhelmingly prevailing viewpoint of all television reporters we encountered. One or two reporters-- who were involved in this year's coverage-- spoke with pride of the commitment their own stations had made. But for the most part, what we present here is representative of the group.

I can't think of any region where there is a more profound need than political reporting. And it is not being answered. It's because TV is so action oriented. Its job is to fill space between commercials. something as interesting as possible, to keep people around until they get the next commercial.

"What have been your impressions of political coverage at your station?"

Generally I think it has been pretty poor. Mainly because media starts political coverage after Labor Day. And even the candidates notice that. All campaign-

ing prior to that time...before the 1st of September is pretty much lost. Because the consumer in television news isn't interested in hearing about it prior to Labor Day. I think it's a law that has been set by the media. Then we all try to play catch-up. That's my main complaint.

Being on the campaign trail was very difficult for me because I felt like I had to be on my toes at all times. Whereas a person who knew the political workings better than I would be able to key to certain things that were said and would know that there was some significance in what was said. They'd know that a meeting between this person or that one would have some innuendoes or meaning, whereas for me I would not know until I actually heard something and then I'd have to do some recovery on my feet.

We just made commitment that we were going to cover these campaigns. We haven't been there every day, but we have been every day that looked promising and some that didn't.

We've just had a feeling that we ought to be there and get them to say something. Find out why it isn't interesting.

Now tomorrow we are going out to Hughes Aircraft and let's be honest. On film, that's just going to be some people standing around and Hugh Flournoy at the podium again.

But I think we have a responsibility, since it is the last week of the campaign, to be around. It is the responsibility of the reporter to challenge him on something; to get him to say something. I guess other stations just say, 'it's worthless, forget it'.

"Do you think your channel needs a political reporter....
a reporter who specializes in the coverage of politics?"

Yes, I really do.

"Do you think you might have done a different kind of job had you had a political science background? Or a political coverage background?"

I think so, because a political reporter would know a candidate before he became a candidate for that specific office. A political reporter would know the historical significance of the propositions, for instance. I'm handling some things live on election night, and I'm reading everything I can get my hands on.

But nothing replaces background that you can recall. And this comes easy if it has been your job all along. Yes, I think political reporters are very valuable.

"Do you think that management is doing all it could do to inform the public politically?"

No. I don't think management is, and I don't think it's an indictment against our management. I think that management in television particularly always does what's convenient. It's not a year-round concern. If management were truly concerned with making everyone understand all the political things that are going on, they would have political reporters. Politics does not begin and end with a primary and a general election. And I think for the most part that's the way management has looked at it. A political reporter should be able to provide in-depth stories at least several times a week to the general viewing audience to make politics an everyday affair for the American family rather than just something that happens with the primary and ends with the general election.

"Do you think that your management...I mean the people responsible for getting the news on the air...concern themselves as much as they should with the content of the story rather than the show-business aspect of it?"

I don't think anybody in television is as concerned with content as they used to be. I don't think my station is the total sinner in the area. I've worked for some other stations who got that way in the last few years too. The content doesn't have to say anything as long as it gives the illusion of saying something. When it comes to matters that are really of vital importance to society, I don't think we want to shake anybody up anymore.

The concern is primarily about ratings and money. And maybe it has to be that way. But I feel particularly when a station is successful...when it's achieving the ratings and making money, it has an obligation to begin to move into areas, maybe slowly, and begin to do a couple of good investigative pieces, to start looking inside of something. They've got that obligation.

Our ability to cover politics is probably no worse or better than any other station's ability...in this market. The FCC makes it tough for us to cover politics. The newspapers can go off and do just about anything they want...but we're saddled with this equal-time thing...and time, for us, is a premium.

One reporter said that the political coverage-- the lack of coverage on state politics is a decision that originates in New York from men who have "worked their ways up the ladders" from sales into top management. "Their vision is set on the dollar." They cannot understand why, in California, the State Capitol needs a bureau and he said that he wouldn't be surprised that within a short while it will be phased out completely-- he said that he had no hard facts to back up the statement-- it is just a feeling that he has.

I don't believe that television has to pattern itself after newspapers. Television as a medium is very different. We do some things better, but newspaper people tend to have more political background. A beginning reporter usually at least covers city hall, but in television there is really no minor-league training system, because we haven't even been hiring from smaller stations. We have just been breaking them in in Los Angeles. We could use better reporters....

I don't think we have intelligent recruiting. We have a shortage of reporters, for one thing. They are always saying they can't afford to do this and that, and we have the highest profits this quarter than any-time in history.

A TV executive said:

Television news is...is new...and it is in a state of evolution...as opposed to the print medium where there are ethics and standards...and expertise...and certain amounts of budget set aside in the newspaper industry for certain undertakings, investigative reporting and so on. This has not yet developed in the ordinary television news. The station's objective now is provide more and more time.... Now there are two hours of local news in one evening. It has to be a visual concern...they have to be planning what they will have on the screen visually as well as substantively.

They have a different kind of responsibility. A visual as well as a substantive task before them which makes it expensive and more difficult than preparing newspaper stories whose sole concern is to put the story into print, maybe with a few pictures...and so...

"You are suggesting then, that TV is just evolving how to go about...that it is still formative in how to present news...?"

I think their investigative reporting is more and more done by networks. They have the funds.

"If you're saying there is expansion of news...then it will involve them in political coverage more..."

I started out saying they are in an evolution...I think their standards will improve and change. News producers...well, they come from various areas. And often they have been involved in production, in making things interesting and lively...it's hard for them... they've been without any journalistic morality involved...now they're pushing...they're coming to the point where they have to be aware of journalistic morality...to have it...

"How do you get evidences of this?"

Of the new morality? The industry itself is concerned about what is news...and whether, if you provide people with murders and rape...is that news? The station that provides you with the murders and the rapes, and the humor, and the state budget...the station that provides you with the state budget... where does their responsibility begin and end...? I don't know. I don't think even the newspapers have quite got that solved.

The newspapers have the advantage of course of being able to put the budget on the sixth page, and those that are interested can read it, and the murders on page one. But the television industry can't bury that for the interested viewer, it can't put it back on another page...the television station can't bury it's stories...can't provide you with a page six. You can't put two different stories on the screen. You can pick up a newspaper and determine what stories you want to read.

"Which really means we're dealing with a medium which has its own peculiar kind of format-- with limitation, but with advantages. To the politicians, to be seen on it, is the primary aim. It is worth anything. The 30 seconds he buys is worth more to him than anything in a newspaper."

That's right. A politician has to be what he's always been. He has to be someone who attracts the interest of the voters. He has to have a program,

something to say. I think maybe it's a good thing that television isn't, well, that it isn't that easy for him to get on television. I don't think every politician has a right to go on television.

I think people are seeing and hearing things they never knew before. In the past only the articulate minority was aware of what was occurring. The television industry has made it possible for the country as a whole to grasp the significance of Watergate. People have a clear understanding of what the process of government is about. They see the top people weasling about what they've been doing.

ELECTION NIGHT

We must note the elaborate attention television gives to election-night coverage, in contrast to its pre-election attention to political events. This is consistent, of course, with its selection of news which coincides with audience interest. Its surveys indicate people are interested at this point. Political news with returns awaited has moved into the designation "real" news. But its elaborate planning for election night, a task one station told us had occupied one man for the better part of two months, and which yielded a 74-page assignment book for another station, the manpower deployment, the high costs for telephone lines, the computer installations, and special installments, all the effort and expense are so disproportionate to campaign-time attention for most of the stations, it seemed to us to emphasize the "showmanship" aspect of television, rather than news interest.

There seems to be an expectation that the candidates will produce some excitement, beyond that of producing victor and vanquished. Brown, by his choice of a large auditorium

and provision of band music and dancers, certainly tried to meet this expectation. But there was a general sense among TV crews that night that the spectacle did not justify the enormous outlay of people and money. Some reporters were openly bitter at the commitment of so much on television's part to that aspect of political interest, election night, after virtually ignoring the campaign. The ratings on viewer attention on Los Angeles area were reported to us as relatively low. One station showing a movie drew a larger audience.

It was emphasized to us that election night is an extremely competitive time for television stations. It is the one time when they are all covering the same event and can be measured against each other. They were very sensitive about this. One station was apprehensive about discussing its plans with us in advance lest some other station learn what it planned. They insisted upon an absolute promise of secrecy. The plans did not seem that remarkable: most consisted of very elaborate and exact schedules for each participant's role.

On the other hand, when election night came, we found that a number of networks had invited other stations to share their camera time-- and cost. For instance, CBS invited Westinghouse to join them in a pool operation. Each station had its own sound equipment to go with the pool picture. That was because "audio lines are cheap, not much more than an ordinary telephone line. Transmitting the picture is what costs".

An NBC reporter rather enthusiastically indicated to us that only its network or CBS could manage a real bang-up

job on election night; that ABC was too "cops and robbers" oriented. But the surprise coup in the Brown headquarters was pulled by ABC. The two other networks had each set up with two cameras, one on a platform in the center of the auditorium, facing the stage, and the other at a distant end of the room, where they could do interviews and show the spectacle. But ABC had brought three cameras. In addition to establishing them on the two platforms, it had rented a projection room in the auditorium's facilities ringing the great hall at the second-floor level and giving a panoramic view of the bustle on the auditorium floor. That was one advantage which Dick Shoemaker, ABC West Coast correspondent, had achieved. But the more important was an arrangement for that room to be a private interview set-up with Brown just before he would enter the auditorium. This came off. The only hitch was that Brown did not come at 8 o'clock as planned. That turned out to be lucky. ABC had not completed computer projections by that time, either, and so had not yet "projected the winner". Brown arrived about 9:00 and that is when they got him on camera, before he first entered the hallway to greet supporters, and get televised by the other two networks.

The technical rivalries of the networks and the timing problems made election night interesting to us, often because of the slips that occurred. For instance, in Flournoy headquarters our observer, Kathy Neumeyer, reported that Flournoy's press people kept coming to KNBC wondering when they would "predict". At that point, KNBC was the only station which had not predicted Brown the winner and it appeared Flournoy took some consolation from that and was going to delay his