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before

SENATE LEGISLATIVE OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE

on

Review of the Purposes and Organization
of the New Jersey Public Broadcasting Authority

January 29, 1986
Room 334
State House Annex
Trenton, New Jersey

New Jersey State Library

MEMBERS OF COMMITTEE PRESENT:

Senator Gerald R. Stockman, Chairman
Senator S. Thomas Gagliano
Senator Christopher J. Jackman
Senator Lee B. Laskin

ALSO PRESENT:

Steven B. Frakt
Office of Legislative Services
Aide, Senate Legislative Oversight Committee



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SENATOR GERALD R. STOCKMAN (Chairman): I wonder if we can get started. If I could have your attention, I would like to introduce myself. My name is Gerry Stockman. I am Chairman of the Senate Legislative Oversight Committee. To my right is Senator Tom Gagliano, a member of this Committee, and also Minority Leader of the Republican membership of the State Senate.

This is an opening hearing by the Legislative Oversight Committee into the New Jersey Public Broadcasting Authority. I have an opening statement that I would like to make.

Sixteen years ago the Legislature passed, and the Governor signed, the bill creating the New Jersey Public Broadcasting Authority.

The new agency resulted from the recommendations of a distinguished commission appointed by the Governor. The commission saw the need for a broadcast medium which could reach New Jerseyans with news, public affairs, cultural events, and entertainment by and about the Garden State.

New Jersey then had no commercial VHF television station, and was poorly served by the coverage from the outlets in New York and Philadelphia. Nor could New Jersey make full use of advances in educational broadcasting without a television capacity of its own.

At the time, the creation of the Authority was controversial. Some wondered if a public agency operated with funds appropriated by the Legislature, and with a board appointed by the Governor, could be nonpartisan and above politics.

New Jersey public television is still controversial. It now lacks a permanent executive director. The former Executive Director, the Authority's third, Hendrix Niemann, resigned earlier this month amid charges of gubernatorial pressure on the news, and political interference in network decisions.

Niemann's resignation was not without precedent. The Authority's second Executive Director, Gordon MacInnes, also resigned, just over two years ago, following similar reports of dissatisfaction in influential political circles with news coverages and personnel decisions.

The Authority's first Executive Director, Larry Frymire, who served for 10 years, was forced out by the board, again amid speculation that the Governor was dissatisfied with the public affairs broadcasts and election coverage.

The purpose of these hearings is not to rehash the charges and countercharges resulting from the departures of Frymire, MacInnes, and Niemann. Our interest in those events is limited to the implications they may have for the independence and objectivity of public television in New Jersey.

We will have to determine the facts surrounding those events in order to make clear what that history implies for the independence of the network's news coverage in the future. The patterns we reveal will help us determine how effective the Authority's structure has been in protecting the independence of decisions at the network.

We begin with an inquiry into the need for a New Jersey public television network. How was that need described at the founding of the public Broadcasting Authority? Does the need still exist today?

All of us in public office recognize, sometimes grudgingly, that the public needs to be informed about our actions -- and inactions -- and about the issues of the day.

Like it or not, most people get most of their news from television. TV news may only be a headline service, as Walter Cronkite -- and who would know better? -- observed. But it tells most people most of what they know about the world around them.

We will ask today how well New Jersey is served by commercial television. Do the stations in New York and Philadelphia give New Jerseyans the views and information they need to be effective citizens? Does Channel 9, newly arrived in Secaucus, reach the State with news and information proportional to its important role as the State's only commercial VHF outlet?

In subsequent hearings, we will inquire into how well New Jersey public television does its job, especially in the provision of news and public affairs. We will inquire not only into the quality and quantity of coverage, but also into its independence and objectivity.

One thing is clear even before the hearings begin. If the news programming of the State's public television network is not objective, and perceived to be objective, it is not worth having. We neither need nor want a propaganda service.

It is also clear that news staffs and the politicians and officeholders they cover will always be at odds. The real subject of these hearings, then, is the tension between the State's need for credible coverage of news, public affairs, and information, and the ultimate control and funding of that coverage by those who are covered.

In brief, there are four important questions these hearings will attempt to answer:

Is public television coverage of the news here needed?

Can public television -- as it is structured in New Jersey -- be independent and, almost as important, appear to be independent?

Are there ways to insulate public television more completely from the public officials whom it covers?

And if such insulation is necessary, how can the need to provide accountability over the expenditure of public funds be reconciled with the need to shelter public television from interference by elected officials?

Senator Gagliano, would you like to make a statement?

SENATOR GAGLIANO: I don't have a prepared statement. I'm here as a member of the Committee. I think it is interesting to note that I have been a member of this Committee for, I guess, several months -- maybe even a couple of years -- and, to the best of my knowledge, we never had a meeting before. So I think that this is the first subject that we have pursued. I know there are many subjects we should pursue from a legislative oversight perspective. I may have missed one or two, I don't remember.

I do think that public broadcasting -- the New Jersey Public Broadcasting Authority -- is important. I think it is extremely important that we have such a facility, such an Authority, that we have this type of television, especially because we are a Corridor State, and we are inundated with New York and Philadelphia type news and information. We know more about what happens in the South Bronx than

we ever do about what happens in the cities of New Jersey. I have always felt this way.

On the question of independence, that is an issue that I guess really is at the nub of this. Just how much independence can we provide for the New Jersey Public Broadcasting Authority? I think that we can provide an adequate amount of independence. I think you are always going to have people who, during the heat of a campaign, feel they are not getting enough coverage, or that the coverage they are getting is biased. And, by the way, I think a lot of the coverage on the major networks is also nonobjective on occasions. So I think that it is really in the eyes of the beholder in many instances. I think that the public broadcasting system in New Jersey has done an exceptional job over the years. I support it, and will try to make it better.

SENATOR STOCKMAN: Okay. I apologize for not keeping you busier. We'll try to remedy that, Senator.

SENATOR GAGLIANO: Well, you really don't have to.

SENATOR STOCKMAN: Our first witness is Dr. Edward J. Meade. Dr. Meade was Chairman of the Governor's Commission on Public Broadcasting for New Jersey, and Chairman of the New Jersey Public Broadcasting Authority. He probably had as much influence and importance in shaping and creating the station -- the public television station in New Jersey -- as any other individual I can think of. We are honored and very pleased that he would accept our invitation to come and express himself to the Committee today.

Dr. Meade, I would appreciate it if you would also, just very briefly perhaps, tell us of your current involvements beyond creating this New Jersey network many years ago.

DR. EDWARD J. MEADE: Well, those were avocations, Mr. Chairman. My vocation has been -- for the past 26 years -- on the program staff of the Ford Foundation in New York City, largely in the field of education and education-related activities here and abroad. It is in the context, as you said, of being the former Chair of the Governor's Commission on Public Broadcasting, which operated for about six months, from October, 1967 to May, 1968, and then subsequently as the Chair of the Authority, from '69 to roughly '79.

I think that one of the things I might be able to do in assistance to this Committee in its deliberations, is to give some context to how the Commission was created, the circumstances that then prevailed, and why the Authority came out as it did in its initial stages.

In order to do that, I think it would be useful to go back to 1967 and look at public broadcasting, nationally in particular, at that time. I think, also, it would be useful to clear up some terms that might be used. At that point, there was no public broadcasting, but there was a considerable amount of so-called educational broadcasting. The term from education to public was long overdue because initially, while the so-called noncommercial television started out largely in instruction in schools and colleges, it had, since its inception in the '50s moved more and more into public affairs. The term public broadcasting was then the right term to use. The distinction, if people wish to make it, between educational broadcasting and public broadcasting, I think is of no consequence at all.

But nationally at that point, we had somewhere in the neighborhood of 185 public television stations in all but two states. I think it was Delaware and, of course, New Jersey. In 1967, President Johnson signed into the law the Public Broadcasting Act. Clearly that act was the forerunner of considerable national attention and funding for the creation of more stations, for the supportive programming, and for the support of what inevitably came out to be the--

(Senator Jackman arrives at this point and comments about the fact that he was unable to locate the room where the hearing was being held.)

SENATOR STOCKMAN: Excuse me, Dr. Meade. Let me interrupt for a moment and apologize to my colleague, Senator Jackman, who is absolutely right. Anyone who has tried to move around this building appreciates that there is no greater challenge in government or anything else, but to find out what room number and how to get to it, because of any changes. Apparently that delayed him. I appreciate his being here, coming some distance to participate in this panel. I think everybody knows Senator Jackman. He is one of the unique figures of the Legislature, in both houses. (laughter)

SENATOR JACKMAN: Is Laskin here?

SENATOR GAGLIANO: Senator Laskin, I understand, is ill, Senator.

SENATOR JACKMAN: No, he's downstairs, looking for the same place as I did.

SENATOR GAGLIANO: I heard he was ill. Maybe that's why he's ill, he couldn't find the room.

SENATOR JACKMAN: No, he's here; he's here. He was here when I came. I've been here since 10 o'clock. I thought you were on the first floor, third floor. The rooms are changed.

SENATOR STOCKMAN: Steve (speaking to Committee Aide), maybe we could send somebody down to look for him.

SENATOR GAGLIANO: We'll try to find Senator Laskin. Talk about unique, we got a couple of uniqueies.

SENATOR JACKMAN: He's here.

SENATOR STOCKMAN: With Senator Jackman's unnoticed arrival, we'll pick up the testimony of Dr. Meade.

DR. MEADE: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. In short, at the national level in 1967, we had considerable optimism, realism, and the substantial forthcoming of funds to really undergird public broadcasting throughout the country. There had been a considerable history that had built up that led to this watershed act for public broadcasting. So if you look at the condition nationally, the time was right.

But, what happened in New Jersey? New Jersey's record in the years prior to 1967 in the field of public television and education television is one of many starts and no finishes. In 1951, six UHF channels were assigned to the State, and New Jersey was the first state to experiment with instructional television of any consequence. There were experiments at Rutgers and at Montclair State College. There was a commission established in 1951, chaired by Elmer Hainstrum of RCA, which issued a report in 1953 recommending experimentation in the field of instructional television. My organization -- the Ford Foundation -- and one of its subsidiaries, were the funders of some of those experiments at Rutgers and Montclair State. In short, in the early '50s, New Jersey was in the forefront of the experimentation in the

field of public broadcasting, or at least at that point, instructional or educational television.

From there on out it is a record of downhill, rather than uphill. While other states went forward and created authorities and commissions and developed programming, New Jersey did not. In 1954, we were warned that we might lose some channels. In 1963, a group of citizens incorporated the New Jersey Educational Television Corporation, established in Glen Ridge, presuming to use then Channel 77, largely to serve schools. The Legislature passed a bill which enabled schools to pay for such services, ironically never paid for and used by any outlet in New Jersey, but subsequently those funds could be used to buy instructional television from New York and Philadelphia stations.

In 1965, the inevitable happened. The FCC removed two of the six channels. It was clear that channels were in short supply, and if they were not going to be used, they were going to be reassigned elsewhere, and we had lost two in that interim period. It was this context, the promise at the national level, the experience of states in programming services throughout the country, except in New Jersey, and the further erosion of any capacity whatsoever that prompted Governor Hughes to create the Commission of Public Broadcasting, which he asked me to chair. As I said, we served for some six months. I must say, in full deference to my fellow members, they served many hours without compensation. We received remarkable assistance from largely private and some public agencies in the State. In short, the Commission did a job that was far in excess of any budget or resources it ever got from the State.

Let me now talk about the report of the Commission, issued in May of 1968. Behind the report was the simple thesis that New Jersey does not know itself well enough -- it is not well enough informed about itself and its parts, its people, its problems, its resources, and its opportunities. The idea here was to bring, through the use of the television media in particular, this kind of identity, this kind of tool of analysis, so that New Jersey could understand itself better and do better by itself, and to break, if you will, the dependence that we

had in New Jersey of other media sources on telling us what we were about.

We also saw that this was an opportunity to take what was happening elsewhere -- news and public affairs from elsewhere -- and select that kind of news and public affairs which was important to the State. So in short it was to go from within to see ourselves and to take from without to see ourselves better.

In specific terms, the Commission recommended three kinds of programming services for this entity. The first was programs of public affairs, culture, and news. Ironically, if one reads the report we submitted, we realized that it was not going to be possible to go off the ground running with a full-blown news service, and we recommended initially that this be started by creating a radio news service for the public radio stations of New Jersey, something that the Authority never fulfilled, largely because in the first few years of our budget, when the Authority was created, we never had funds sufficient enough even to do that. All of our funds had to be devoted largely to getting the system up and running.

But certainly that was keystone in the programming service we recommended for whatever the entity was going to be; namely that it, first and foremost, center on public affairs and cultural related events, and the news -- and the news, for a lot of reasons -- I will go into some later -- but largely because nobody else was doing it.

Secondly, we were going to draw, as I said earlier, programs of utility from the national services, that are now PBS, the Eastern Education Networks, and the like. That was the major, if you will, primary programming service we recommended. Secondly, we recommended a service -- since there were going to be four stations -- that they could independently devote part of their time to serving the regions of coverage. It was our idea that now Channel 52 or Channel 23 would have some of its programming schedule devoted to issues of moment to people in that coverage area, a recommendation that frankly, over time, was not very feasible, for a variety of reasons, sometimes budget, but perhaps more importantly, because the coverage was such that the region was not well-defined. We also found that it was possible to serve some

of those needs by special programming on the network itself. We did try, in earlier times, to break the network in pieces, and have different programs in one station or another, but that really wasn't of the usefulness that we saw in the Commission.

Another part of that, if you will, breaking out of the system, that we recommended, was that from time to time the network would either, through one of its stations, or all of its stations, serve special groups. Certainly that has been acted on by the Authority over the years -- programs of special interest to certain ethnic populations, types of workers, and the like.

Third, and finally, we proposed that the system would be one to serve schools, colleges, and education generally. Here we made it clear that that was to be done, by and large, in careful selection of existing instructional programs related to particular needs of schools and colleges in New Jersey. At that time when we made our recommendation, there was an active library of instructional programs in places such as the Agency for Instructional Television, the Grayburn Library, and the like. That was the major programming mission. I want to underscore public affairs and news, special interests, if you will, and instructional broadcasting.

When it came to organization, the Commission went through a variety of options, and discarded many and recommended two. We discarded, for example, the idea of a confederation of four independent stations, which had been the experience in other places. When in other places a station had been created in a state, and a second one got created in a state, and they were both independent, and then later on they would confederate. It was an awkward arrangement; certainly not a good arrangement from our view, that would lend itself to bringing together New Jersey, as we hoped that public television might.

SENATOR GAGLIANO: Wouldn't that be very expensive, also?

DR. MEADE: Expensive and impractical, frankly.

SENATOR GAGLIANO: You would have to run four separate studios and all the electronics that go with it.

DR. MEADE: Well, not only that, it would be in fierce competition for either public or private money in such a small context that it just wasn't-- So that was easily discarded.

Secondly, we reviewed the idea of contracting for pieces -- substantial pieces -- of time on stations that covered public television, namely Channel 12 in Philadelphia, Channel 13 in New York. That was totally inappropriate. I don't know what level of resources it would have taken to buy hours on their network, but they were not about to do it. Channel 13 then -- and still does -- saw itself as a national, rather than a local service public television station. Channel 12 was a little more sensitive to its region than Channel 13 at that point. In any event, that was an impractical option.

The third was to create a new division -- an operating division -- of an existing State department or agency. We found nothing that would commend that alternative at all. In other words, assign it to a cabinet -- to a department as an operating part. That just made no sense for a variety of reasons, not the least of which was that there was no agency that was broad enough to serve that. We thought it would limit it, and perhaps really tamper with the political process.

Fourth, the idea of assigning public broadcasting to an existing State agency, rather than a new division-- In a sense, we didn't opt for it, but we did, because as you recall from our report, we made two recommendations for organization. We said it ought to be a State charter, publicly supported, to the extent possible an autonomous instrumentality, to manage the system of public broadcasting. We offered two options for organization: A nonprofit, nongovernmental public body, or a new, specially designated, specially administered State agency, fixed in State government -- in a part of State government where the agency of which it would be a part has no reason to be interested in it. As you recall, the Legislature came out and put us in the Department of Public Utilities, which was fine and appropriate.

The reason for suggesting two -- one, if you will, was a fully independent body, and the other was somewhat related to State government -- was in part because the Commission was split on it, and in part because of realism on the part of the Commission which of these two, in the temper of the times, would be most feasible to get and most

practical to be funded -- in short, what would fly. But the concept of it being as autonomous as possible, that it not have to serve a particular department or set of interests, was dominant throughout both options. I can recall conversations, let's say, about the separate, independent body, and people said, well, you know -- again, with full understanding throughout our report that we were going to have to rely on the State for most of the funding -- that if it were, to put it in terms of the New Jersey Public Television Corporation, freestanding, that the likelihood was greater that we would, in certain times, lose State appropriation, rather than if we had some relationship to government.

So we offered both. In either of them, we suggested the make-up of the board -- that there would be appointments by the Governor with, of course, the consent of the consensus of the Senate, and that there would be ex officio membership from cabinet officers. And, I would like to say why that was thought to be useful at that point in time. First, it wasn't going to be a new agency, and if it was going to be in government, it needed help from the cabinet to understand, for example, the legal obligations. We had access to counsel from the Attorney General. We were going to have to deal with matters of budget and the like, and the Treasurer's help would be useful. The inclusion of the Commissioner of Education, the Chancellor of Higher Education, and the Commissioner of Community Affairs was to put our feet to the fire, whatever this instrumentality would be, with respect to access to issues and access to problems that are in the field of the schools and the field of the colleges, and the like.

To put it in another way, we saw the ex officio members as providing, if you will, a variety of technical assistance services to the Commission. There is no question that in the early days of the Authority we received that kind of technical assistance from them.

As you know from our report--

SENATOR JACKMAN: They didn't tell you how to run the programs, did they?

DR. MEADE: They certainly never did, not in those days.

SENATOR JACKMAN: Okay. I just want to make sure.

DR. MEADE: No. I must say-- I'm talking now about 1969.

SENATOR JACKMAN: I was here.

DR. MEADE: I know you were, Senator.

SENATOR JACKMAN: Yes, I was here.

DR. MEADE: Indeed you were. In terms of financing, it was clear that the only option at that point was to rely on the State. It was not-- The practicality of substantial non-public funds was remote and, in large part, I think, still is. We are in a very competitive market for private funds for public television. As you know, Channel 13, I believe, gets in excess of a million dollars out of New Jersey viewers. I don't know the record in Philadelphia. But, it wasn't practical.

Furthermore, we thought it was incumbent on the State government, representing the State's people, to support the State's network, because the purpose was to create a State network to help the people of the State. So it was for those two reasons, if you will, practicality and, frankly, responsibility of the State to provide a service for its citizens.

We outlined a budget at that point in two parts of capitalization to create the four stations and build studios, transmitters, and the like. At that point, I think we recommended something in excess -- almost \$16 million; it was \$15,750,000, all spelled out in our report. And, as you know, we got roughly half of that through the bond issue that was passed in 1968.

We also put forward an operating budget for the first year of the Authority that would have a 16-hour program day. Sixty percent of the programs published -- excuse me, produced -- locally, that is, in New Jersey, and 40% drawn from other sources, that budget of \$6 million operating-- I think my recollection is correct; in my 10 years as Chairman of the Authority, we never got that budget.

Let me now speak to the early experience of the--

SENATOR GAGLIANO: What did you get, sir?

DR. MEADE: Oh, we started out with a few hundred thousand dollars, and then built up. I think when I left it was maybe at four and a half, or something like that. I would have to look at my records. There were some understandable reasons, but nonetheless the

promise was-- We said it would take \$6 million to get the network bill on an operating budget. That was off and running, and obviously in the first couple of years you couldn't do that anyway. You didn't have any system.

Let me speak briefly about the early experience of the Authority from its start. The emphasis--

SENATOR STOCKMAN: Before you do, Dr. Meade, on its creation, you've told us the recommendations. You're going to get into your experience. Senator Jackman was in the Legislature at that time. How much resistance in the Legislature, in the Administration itself, or in the public was there to this creation? Was it pretty--

DR. MEADE: We had public hearings and, by and large, they were positive.

SENATOR STOCKMAN: Was there a significant minority within either the Legislature or elsewhere, that expressed itself and tried to defeat the creation of this public broadcasting?

DR. MEADE: To my knowledge, no. There was no organized opposition of any consequence. Most often the questioning that we received in the course of our public hearings and deliberations was: Have you considered? Don't you think the better fight would be to get a VHF station in New Jersey? On that, we said the Commission was clear. New Jersey deserves any VHF stations it can get, and it certainly should get some. But even with that, we felt that a public broadcasting service was going to be necessary, and the record has certainly proven that.

No, there was no real opposition. We went in on the bond issue, as you know, which was largely for higher education facilities. There was no strong opposition to that. There was opposition from some quarters on it in general -- the Higher Education Authority, and the like -- but not really. In fact, I was worried about that. I thought that since we were part of that package in the bonding, would we drag it down? No; I mean there was no-- As I say, the public hearings were, if anything, salutatory about our recommendations.

When we opened up in the early years, you will recall, it was just as Governor Hughes was leaving office and Governor Cahill came

in. At the risk of being somewhat immodest, I would like to recall some comments I made when we opened our first studio in Trenton -- Channel 52 -- in November of 1969, at which time, in a sense, the gubernatorial responsibility was passed from Hughes to Cahill. At that occasion, I reminded ourselves of what our programing mission was going to be, namely public affairs and news, community and regional. Even then we could see that this regional idea was not going to fly, and they talked to us then about community service, special populations, and, of course, instruction.

I went on further to say that this service would never wish to compete with the commercial press, or radio, or television, and urged that there be more of it and more about it in New Jersey, but we would fill gaps where there were necessary gaps to fill, and the necessary gap at that point was certainly in the area of the news.

I'm sure Professor Johnson will give you substantial documentation about news coverage of New Jersey on other stations.

It was clear that daily news service seemed vital and necessary, and that was going to be our initial first step -- major step -- in the field of public affairs. We went on to then develop our program.

Let me speak now about the commissioners. There has been some comment about whether the route of appointment is appropriate. By and large, I would have to say, in my experience, that most of the appointees gave of themselves to the assignment in very appropriate ways. I would have to remind Governors from time to time that the assignment of somebody, or the recommendation of somebody to serve on the board was not a high prestige item. It's hard to build a constituency for public broadcasting anywhere, but more to the point, it was not high prestige because it was hard work. We were dealing with a fledgling body, feeling our way, determining our own policies, so that persons appointed by Governors really had to make a commitment to serve. We used to meet monthly for extended meetings. If you got put on committees, you had even more work.

There were, as with any public body, a few persons who left something to be desired in terms of attendance or attention to the job,

or an unwillingness to take hold of what their responsibility would be. But, by and large, it has worked out quite well.

On the ex officio side, as I said earlier, the cabinet officers were very helpful on advice and for getting things done for us in appropriate ways, within the context of State government. I must say I have worked with lots of bureaucracies, but our State bureaucracy is an example unto itself. I had a similar experience when I served as chairman of the board of one of the State colleges. But, I can recall, and have reported this to various State officials from time to time, our losing -- or having to pay more money for capital expenditures, for example, that had already been budgeted and approved, and we would lose that by virtue of paying bills too late. In short, we had some problems. Cabinet officers were particularly helpful there, and that, I think, was very important.

Also, we got -- as I said earlier -- from Education and Higher Education, useful access to schools and colleges, and built up mechanisms whereby we could get needs assessments and analyses on which we could determine our programming decisions. So, early on, that was very helpful.

As you might expect, over time the need for the initial kind of technical assistance diminished as we -- by we I mean the staff of the Authority -- became more knowledgeable and nimble about working within the context of State government. Some of that technical assistance was less necessary. Also, cabinet officers have every other thing on their mind. We found, at a point, that we were not ever seeing some cabinet officers, but rather designees. Some designees were -- to put it too bluntly -- sometimes better to come to our meetings than the cabinet officers, because they spent more time at it, and really could brief the cabinet officer more deeply. We did have some cabinet officers who took it lightly and would have designees who were of no moment. I don't mean as individuals, obviously, but persons who were simply sent to cover the meeting.

Also, there is the extent to which a cabinet officer has somewhat of a conflict of interest. They are representatives of the Governor, and when you are talking budgeting decisions, or budgeting

recommendations, and they are part of his cabinet, it is very difficult for them to be completely objective with respect to a request that we might be making, that they would know would be out of kilter in terms of the larger context of the State's budget. They are ex officio, meaning that they didn't vote. Often we would recommend a budget out that I'm sure some cabinet officers felt would not fly anyway, and they would obviously keep quiet. But that was somewhat of a problem at that point, presenting a sort of a conflict of interest by having to serve on this board. I think if I had to do it over again in later years, it might have been better that we had them as advisers on particular activities, and not as ex officio members of the board.

Let me speak now about the history of the news, which is, I think, what has precipitated, by and large, these hearings. We had to develop slowly as funds were made available to us, and from day one to today, we were always compared to longstanding, well-financed New York and Philadelphia commercial news programs, by and large because neither of our public colleagues in either state had a similar program. So the competition for us was always the commercial, well-financed, longstanding news programs.

Yes, we would receive complaints from time to time from private citizens and public officials about a particular program. It was common policy for us to check out that complaint. There were times when we may have inadvertently misrepresented a fact when those corrections were made. But by and large, most of them were not of great moment.

SENATOR GAGLIANO: Well, doesn't that happen in the private sector?

DR. MEADE: Absolutely.

SENATOR GAGLIANO: I mean especially with politicians. They don't see their name in the paper, that they were at a meeting, and they call the editor, who they happened to meet at a party or something, and say: Your reporter was terrible. He didn't, or she didn't tell the people that I was there to talk about--

DR. MEADE: Indeed. Or, worse yet, we would put a clip on -- and this didn't happen too frequently -- and an official would give a

comment, with a view about it, and we didn't pick up the other official and other view. My answer to that -- and that was very seldom--

SENATOR GAGLIANO: It happens.

DR. MEADE: It happens; very seldom, however. My comment really is a tough one, I guess, for legislative bodies to understand, but I think it's true. Don't judge by a program; judge by the record. Certainly I've heard that from politicians, and it is true. We could pick out any program and say: It would have been better if, or why didn't they balance there? But if one looks over the course of a week, or 10 days, where an issue is still alive and well, I think that the record, at least during my time, was rather good. It was always balanced.

I particularly appreciate those public officials who would call and complain and then say: But I don't want you to do anything about it. The surprising thing about that, Senator Jackman, is that by and large, most of them meant just that.

SENATOR JACKMAN: Doc, I'm a great advocate of public broadcasting, no question.

DR. MEADE: I know you are, sir.

SENATOR JACKMAN: I go back a lot of years with this particular program. In fact, I have always felt we were under-funded. I don't care who knows about it; that's my feeling. I felt that we have done a disservice, in many cases, to the public in the State of New Jersey.

I would like to see, and hopefully my colleagues are going to look toward that end-- I would like to see more activities like this, those competent people that you got behind the scenes, to work down here, and let the public back home know what's going on. Unfortunately, we don't have too much of that.

I would like to believe that the money can be better spent, more down here, and I am not saying this in a derogatory sense, than putting national news on public television. I see it on Channels 4, 5, 7, 10, and the whole bit. I don't want to see it on public television. I want to see what's happening in my State with local officials, even at town meetings of some consequence, where things of a

magnitude where people are going to be affected monetarily-wise. That, I think, is more important.

Let me compliment you, Doc. I want to say this while I have an opportunity. You've done a tremendous job. I've watched, and I've been part of this in the background, and I must say in all fairness to all the Governors, every one of them, there has been no political interference to a degree that I have seen elsewhere, and I have been elsewhere listening to objectivities that take place. But your staff -- and this is not a butter job by any stretch of the imagination -- cause if it wasn't, I'd tell you, or let the public television know about it. They have done a competent job, and I think impartially. They didn't single out Gagliano, or Jackman, and try to play up to each one of us. They gave every one of us a fair shake. And I think in the last election it proved, to me anyway, and the people I know who I have spoken to-- I thought that was the best coverage of any campaign I've ever seen, and it was impartial.

DR. MEADE: Well, Senator, I wish I could take credit for that, but I can't. I have been away from this for seven years. So, God bless those other guys.

May I make one comment about a point you made, namely the coverage of national news? That was a tough decision when we made it. When we put our news program on, at first-- If you recall, in the early days we had next to no national news on New Jersey Nightly News. From some polling we did -- I don't want to respect it with the term research -- we found that with some people that was the news they were going to watch, and they were angry that they were not getting some sense of what was happening nationally. We also thought we could draw a larger audience by putting a little dollop of national news in.

It's a hard one. I mean, it is one you gotta monitor carefully. But, you know, very frankly, if I thought that we could draw -- I don't know -- a million people a night watching New Jersey News, with national news, but we could draw 750,000 with just New Jersey news, I'd probably go for the latter, although then when whoever was chair of this Authority would go to the Appropriations Committee, they would throw the numbers at him. But, I agree with you. The coverage of New Jersey elsewhere is always going to be minimal.

Can I speak about two other points? First, there was some concern early on that the Public Broadcasting Authority was standing in the way of getting a VHF station in New Jersey. I think comments we made publicly throughout were that we were as much in favor of that, if anything-- I would go back to my comments in November of '69 when I said: We don't want to do what others can do, but we will fill the gap until others will.

If you recall, we then went into a joint agreement with Channel 13. I think it speaks to some of your concerns on the news effort when we decided to have that as a joint production of both us and Channel 13. The reasons for that were -- these are not in any ranking order -- Channel 13 was somewhat vulnerable. It is licensed in Newark. It paid little attention to its licensee area at that point, and we thought we could capitalize on that vulnerability. I think Channel 13 was, at that point, quite receptive, to sum out. Ironically, it would be nice for New Jersey News to be seen in New York, which it had never been done. We've seen enough of its news; we thought that would be useful. But most important, it was an opportunity to get a vastly increased audience.

That was a tough decision. The commissioners spent hours on that. This joint production would obviously give us the Channel 13 audience, which was, at least in the northern tier of the State, substantial. We thought, too, that this may be even one more step to insulate the news service from whatever pressures, real or imagined, there may be on its objectivity and its program independence.

I am not current on the sequence of events, but I would have to say from my experience with that dual arrangement, it was difficult in that both stations had different value schemes. We had one and 13 had another and, as I said earlier, that is a national station more than it is a local station. There was always the fear that at some point this private station would -- could, if it wished, just pull out of its financial obligation in this agreement, if it was not central to its interests, unless there was some threat for that. So, it was an okay arrangement, and still prevails to some degree. We certainly got the audience; no question about it. I think the program did improve in

quality as a result of an accumulation of more resources by the joint venture, but there always were -- and I guess will continue to be, although people who are more current will speak to that -- problems about it. But that is just another, if you will, feature of a different kind of pressure or interference. To pull that one off was very, very difficult, but, as I say, it had its values.

I would like to make sort of gratuitous comments that may be a little off your record. No, I think they are on the record. Then I will be happy to respond to any questions. It was Senator Jackman who really provoked it. One has to believe that a state will be substantially improved if its citizens are substantially well-informed and have access to participating in the affairs of the state. If that value can be shared, then it seems to me two things-- Public broadcasting in New Jersey ought not always to be subjected to competing in terms of quantity of audience with other television media.

I recall having to talk with some of your colleagues after we struggled hard to get you on television in your legislative hearings, which I still think were some of the most vital lessons for the citizens and youngsters of this State -- just to watch you guys on the floor at the tax hearings.

SENATOR STOCKMAN: That's the nicest thing I've ever heard said about it.

DR. MEADE: Well, it's better theater than some theater, I'll tell you that, but it certainly was a good civics lesson. But more importantly, when I was facing some of your colleagues, they said, you know: Who cares. Only 300,000 people watched that program. It was a soap opera well into the night, as some of you might recall. And I thought, when in the history of this State have 300,000 people had access to the Legislature to watch it operate?

So first I would say-- You know, this is a little off your record, Senator, but we ought not always be subjected to the numbers game.

SENATOR STOCKMAN: I think it is right on the record.

DR. MEADE: Well, it's important to me anyway. That's why the State has this obligation.

SENATOR GAGLIANO: Who challenged it with respect to the numbers game?

DR. MEADE: Well, we've always had that. The Appropriations Committee--

SENATOR GAGLIANO: Do they really?

DR. MEADE: The Appropriations Committee will say: Well what--

SENATOR GAGLIANO: We don't have a concern about Nielsen's ratings, do we? ,

DR. MEADE: Well, the Appropriations Committee has.

SENATOR JACKMAN: Sure they do.

SENATOR GAGLIANO: They do, huh?

SENATOR JACKMAN: Sure they do.

SENATOR STOCKMAN: I think, Tom, it's a beginning question, especially for--

DR. MEADE: It's an understandable question.

SENATOR STOCKMAN: --someone not educated in it, to say: Well, how many people are watching it as compared to other stations. When you hear that disparate number, you begin to think, well, really is it necessary? I think Dr. Meade has put his finger on the fact that the kind of people who watch it, and the intensity, I guess, with which they watch it, and the fruits of their watchfulness, make the question of numbers misleading in large measure.

SENATOR JACKMAN: Well, you know, we ourselves can do the job -- get the message back to the constituency that we are fortunate enough to represent. I know many, many times I bring to the attention-- When the Governor was on with his address, I brought it to their attention, or sent out a notice within the communities. How can you tell the numbers that were watching that program? I can tell you that we had a remarkable response back with the Governor's address.

Now, if we ourselves -- 120 people -- can get just quickly to 2,000 people, you're talking a quarter of a million people. You can do that yourself on a given program.

DR. MEADE: Thank you. Certainly on the issue of insulation, I think it is important that you do look into it. I think the

instances of that kind of pressure are few, but they have been significant. As I said earlier, I think some relooking at the participation of cabinet officers, and this has nothing to do with persons at all. It has to do with the other responsibilities they carry and bear, and, frankly, the need that public broadcasting has for them.

One of the other issues with respect to that has always been: Well, if we didn't have them, who would represent us? -- when it came to the hard bargaining in the Administration, vis-a-vis budgets, or whatever.

SENATOR STOCKMAN: Were they that helpful, incidentally, in your recollection?

DR. MEADE: That was helpful in some instances, and harmful in others. I mean, it is-- If I were the Commissioner of Education, it would be very tempting-- Or, put it another way. I'm not so sure I would muster up a lot of fight when I am being clobbered in my real budget, and I am going to fight hard for doubling the budget of some other entity which is marginally related to my responsibilities. That is of moment how this Authority represents itself.

We played around with something. We were going to make an annual report to the Legislature and the Governor in some public fashion that was thought of. But that is an important issue, and it's hard. It is not a constituency. When I would go before the Appropriations Committee-- To put it too bluntly, if I was sitting in the chairs of some of your colleagues, I'd say: If we say no to these guys, who is going to hurt us? Not many. And it is not an organized constituency like the teachers would be, or the police officers would be. The television viewers are not organized, largely because they are so diverse. And yet there is some need here. Insulation is one thing, but access in the sense of representation is also important.

Finally, on the matter of insulation, both you and governors would be well-served in the appointment of persons to this. There may be a different way to do it, and if I could think of options-- I'm not suggesting that necessarily any other option is better, but rather to put in your minds that the selection of people for this has to be

persons who, (a) will obviously commit themselves with time and energy, but will make a different kind of commitment, a commitment, if you will, to remind all of us what the mission was to begin with -- to help New Jersey inform itself about itself, and to allow its citizens to participate more effectively in its affairs.

So, you've got to find men and women who will share that value and who will be able to stand up against the desires of people who want to entertain, the desires of people who want to influence. They just gotta continue seeing that as the mission, and that takes more than simply saying: This person is able, competent, is eager to serve the State. It has to be a person who sees this as a special kind of service. I think that is the best insulation.

SENATOR JACKMAN: Who would make the selection, Doc?

DR. MEADE: Well, there are a variety of ways. One would be to counsel. I am not certain at the State level, but I know some city affairs where mayors have to make appointments, and they appoint distinguished panels. By distinguished -- people who have no axes to grind, who review-- Something like the bar, right? The bar reviews them and sends their recommendations. That may be one useful step. More careful attention by you and your colleagues when those nominations are made, and less concern about the person-- I wouldn't say partisan; that's not anything to-- We've never had a real issue of Republicans and Democrats on the Commission. The Authority members-- I had the privilege of serving under Republican and Democratic governors, and we obviously had Republican and Democratic appointees. We had as many good in both, and as many bad in both, so that was not the issue. But I would say, just pay more attention to it, and probe those persons in ways that you can see that they have this value and, frankly, that they are willing to put you to the task.

We had a terrible fight, you know, to get access to your halls. It took us forever to get wired up at the State House. Some of that was the normal bureaucracy of the State, about which I hope somebody does something at some point. But part of it was too the reluctance of the Legislature to -- and I don't mean particular persons-- But, it was a foreign element. We're in a new age with

politics. It's a sad commentary that our national audiences can't see our Senate and -- our Congress operating on those occasions when they wish it would. That is kind of sad.

I've said too much. Thank you, Senator.

SENATOR STOCKMAN: No, I don't think you have. Before I ask you a few questions and invite other Committee members to, I would like to acknowledge the presence of Senator Laskin. Senator Laskin arrived quite a while ago when you were speaking, and I didn't interrupt. We are happy to have him here at our hearing.

Doctor, I wanted to ask you, during your tenure as Chairman, can you, just a little bit more, describe your relationship with the Executive Director and the News Director -- not in great detail, but--

DR. MEADE: All right. Well, clearly, we tried to the extent we could as an authority, as Commissioners (inaudible), as policy determiners, which would extend, for example, that we think the programs in a particular area would be useful. But we never got into the details of a program; that's their business. We were policy, they were management.

We did debate when, at the request of the management, the kinds of programing activities that, for example, a news program would have. And we did debate that issue of should it have national news on it or not? How much sports would be there? And those were informative discussions. No decisions, but informative for-- If you will, the staff was seeing us as a surrogate public. And I do remember, as I say, the decision about national programing was maybe we would pick up a larger audience because people are not going to give an hour to the news, and they're going to either pick Cronkite or us, and if we had a little Cronkite, maybe they'll just watch us.

We came with sports. This is a very sports-interested citizenry in New Jersey and we were trying to build an audience. You know, one way to play it is, you build an audience, then you wean it toward more important things. So if we could, by putting a little more sports on, pick up a few more viewers -- or considerable more viewers -- then at some point maybe we do less sports, but they're hooked, if you will.

SENATOR STOCKMAN: So it was a give and take--

DR. MEADE: Indeed.

SENATOR STOCKMAN: --and it wasn't a troublesome kind of relationship.

DR. MEADE: Right. Not really.

SENATOR STOCKMAN: How about the question of any efforts at undue political interference over that ten-year span? Were you there when that first executive director left?

DR. MEADE: I was indeed.

SENATOR STOCKMAN: Was, in your opinion, was that in part the result of political pressure or influence?

DR. MEADE: Perhaps. I would have to say that that was -- for me -- an unfortunate occasion, because I have great regard and respect for that man. That man built that public broadcasting system with great prudence, given the constraints he had to operate on. A remarkable human being. There was a concern on the part of the board, at that point, that we needed to engage more deeply into policy matters. By that I mean to really go deeper into things, and we needed to be more politically sensitive -- I don't mean that in the partisan sense -- and there were members of the board who felt that that confidence wasn't there in the executive director, at that point in time. And early on, as I say, you would have gotten a thousand percent vote from the commissioners and every occasion about his service.

SENATOR STOCKMAN: I was going-- I was going to ask you if your answer implied that it was a tolerable little mix of political pressure influence at the time. That probably is something you're never going to totally get rid of. Your initial response, quite candidly, would -- might -- engender a feeling that they're safe; it was there then; it was there with the second and third and it proves repetitive-- Was there an effort to change the design, for instance? Was there much of a hew and cry: Well maybe we better further insulate. Was there an effort at legislative action, or not? Or wasn't it that--

DR. MEADE: Well, that was in my waning days, because shortly thereafter I was no longer on the Authority. The two are not related. I served long enough. But, no that was also the context. We had just

completed the-- We were just starting in the engagement with Channel 13; that was always a controversial agreement. And to this day I'm not sure that if I were asked to say yea or nay, how I would go on it. And there was-- That wrangled the executive director. He was not enthusiastic, personally, about it. Professionally, and as executive director, he did everything necessary and important to make that a good solid agreement, but it was not something he would have chosen to do. The news director, then had an eroded role because he and the news director of 13 were advisors to the person who was producing the Nightly News. Herbert Bloom was now somewhere in Washington, as I understand it. So they had a different role-- I mean they still had public affairs on the outside.

So that context-- And the political pressure about -- around that, at that point in time -- was perhaps a bit stronger than it might have been at earlier times about other issues.

SENATOR STOCKMAN: Are you telling me-- Can I understand your testimony to be that over that ten-year span, while there were occasionally phone calls of the sort you described from legislators -- whoever -- complaining about a particular incident -- maybe saying don't do anything about it, maybe saying to -- but, with all that, it was tolerable and the Authority functioned in a way that was satisfactory and didn't need any tampering?

DR. MEADE: Perhaps. I mean, it's a very difficult one to call, because there was some concern, as I say, that for the next phase of the Authority's activities, the executive director, whoever he or she might be, would have to be a much more public policy-oriented person. And there was concern that this person was not able to make that adjustment. Whether that judgment was right, and we needed that kind of executive director -- as you know, the next director was a public policy person with no television experience -- then that was the judgment of the Authority at that point. There was also a concern about some of the executive director's appointments that he had made in recent times, which eroded the confidence of other Authority members.

SENATOR STOCKMAN: Nineteen eighty-six, obviously, is close to, I guess, 20 years from when all that began, and that early span of

yours. It's evident, I think, at least myself -- other panel members may disagree -- that you have a strong feeling for the importance of public television, I assume today too. What about today? Does New Jersey, today, in your opinion, need a network of the sort we're talking about as much or more than it did when you served on the original commission to look into that, or less?

DR. MEADE: Well, it's more or as much -- in some respects, somewhat different. I certainly think, from the standpoint of public affairs and news, it's every bit as important today, if not more so, than it was then. While I don't keep up on facts and figures, I have not seen any substantial increase, other than cosmetically, on the part of other media -- television in particular -- serving New Jersey. We now know that they have offices in New Jersey.

SENATOR JACKMAN: But they don't do nothing.

DR. MEADE: But I recall at one point being at a reception, talking to a network affiliate station in New York, and I was hitting him about New Jersey. He said: Oh, so and so, our reporter, lives in Hackensack. That's New Jersey coverage.

But in any event, I think that's every bit as important. I don't foresee any other medium--

SENATOR STOCKMAN: Because I asked about cable, and what impact--

DR. MEADE: No, cable's not-- I mean cable would have a terrific opportunity to serve that regional interest we talked about, but I don't think that will happen. I don't know the economics of the cable industry, but there's no great reason for them to do that. I am concerned that cable companies are-- I think there has been a change -- am I right? -- in the law that they no longer have to carry. (members of Committee give positive indication) That, to me, is very sad. Because when we were putting the system together, I remember saying to the colleagues of the commission at that point: You know, we're putting up four transmitters, which I hope at some point will be unnecessary for us to have. Because then we could concentrate on just putting all of our resource into programing, because the transmission of programs would be through cable or whatever it might be. But that

decision-- That's a terrible decision, I think, the fact that they don't have to carry. (Discussion among Committee about who has that authority) That's a Federal-- It's not your decision. It's a Federal decision.

SENATOR STOCKMAN: I wonder-- I always-- Maybe a panel member knows whether we'd have the authority -- the State Government -- to compel cable television stations in New Jersey to carry our public television?

DR. MEADE: That I can't comment on.

SENATOR GAGLIANO: That issue is being researched. I think there's preemption, but the issue is being researched because there are some stations in New Jersey who are concerned about that, who are-- They are VHF stations, and they want to be carried. They want to be carried on the cable networks.

DR. MEADE: Right.

SENATOR GAGLIANO: The-- If I may, I'd like to just follow up on one of the comments of the Chairman, because I had a little experience in cable, and it just seems to me that before cable, though, public broadcasting in certain parts of the State was not coming in very clearly.

DR. MEADE: Indeed.

SENATOR GAGLIANO: And that was a problem that I had, just trying to turn it on and see it. I live in Monmouth County near the Jersey shore, and we had lousy reception.

DR. MEADE: Absolutely.

SENATOR GAGLIANO: Until cable, and now, of course-- So cable, I think, has had a lot of good about it.

DR. MEADE: Oh, absolutely. Absolutely.

SENATOR GAGLIANO: In terms of people being able to see the public broadcasting.

DR. MEADE: See, again, when we capitalized the system with half as much money as we thought would be necessary, we had to be as prudent as possible. So we had to find accessible sites that were public, which we did. We could not, and the technology was not sufficient, for our transmitters to be that powerful-- I forget what

the technical terms are, but they're sort of intermediaries. We could have fixed those problems with money--

SENATOR GAGLIANO: Microwave.

DR. MEADE: Well, yeah, microwave-- In fact we have another system -- microwaving for the schools -- at that point. But in any event, cable was very important to us, and should be important to us. I think that over time we found other ways to economize on our transmitters. When I left, the maintenance of transmitters was being paid by the rental fees we had by serving other public and private needs.

SENATOR GAGLIANO: On the towers?

DR. MEADE: On the towers, yeah.

SENATOR STOCKMAN: How about the behaviour of the public in terms of how it informs itself, 20 years ago as compared to today? Do you think those changes, whatever they are -- and I may be drawing you out of an area of expertise, and if I am I'm sure you'll tell me, Doctor -- but are there changes in the profiles of New Jerseyans 20 years hence that also would have a relevance to this question of how important public television is? For instance, have they turned more to the written media, or have they turned away from it more, and do you have any thoughts on that?

DR. MEADE: No. My uninformed, non-expertise comment would be that New Jerseyans are not much different than anywhere else, and television is a great common denominator, and they will continue to draw their sense of reality -- a good bit of it -- from televised programs. I don't think we're any different. I do think the need for public broadcasting, going back to the original mission, is more important today than it was then, but for a variety of reasons: Increased diversity in population; new kinds of changes in the State -- whether that's new industrial development -- but also, what an opportunity-- As much as I would like to think public broadcasting played a dominant role -- I think it plays something of a role -- the lack of identity that was so much on our minds in 1969 is less so today. It's less so for a variety of reasons. So, to me, this may be the time for public broadcasting to drive that one home even better --

even more. I mean it's still a-- I mean, living as I do, close to New York City, I know more about that town than I need to know. I'm sure people who live in the Philadelphia/Camden area would say the same. But, you know, we are a State that is beginning to show its independence, if you will, from those dominations, and I think public broadcasting is essential to make sure that that is better understood, and that we now can deal with ourselves inside.

There are some substantial problems in this State that lend themselves well to public affairs broadcasting -- documentaries and the like.

SENATOR STUCKMAN: Senator Jackman?

SENATOR JACKMAN: I-- Doc, to your knowledge, what can we do, in order to continue what I think is a great system? I know I-- Without political interference? I'd like to believe that we can do it. This job, to me -- again, I'm going to be repetitive, but it's important -- I think that we were fortunate. We had good men leading that station, MacInnes, and Nieman, and people like that. They've done a fantastic job, in my book. And the people that you've got are professionals. Based upon salary-wise, half of them, I don't know what the hell they're doing working there, because half of them could make more money working in New York. And that's frightening, because, you know, when you talk in terms of appropriations, we spend some of this money in stamps, compared to what we're paying for a broadcasting station. And to me it's kind of ridiculous, in a sense. I'd like to get people like you -- especially you -- to inform us, legislatively, what you think we should do to continue this station, and that kind of input. Now I used my political influence, I think, on a number of occasions, with people who are now subscribing to your programs. I made some phone calls, and I like to believe that First Jersey Securities, Uncle Christy-- When I called Bob Brennan, and I got some phone calls from some of my friends, and I called them and he said: Yeah, it makes sense. And I said: You know you got a lot of customers in New Jersey. And today, I think he's one of the top sponsors. And I'd like to see more of that. In fact, I've notified some of my companies that do business in New Jersey, to think in terms of

advertising. But I would like to see more of activities like this, and some of the subject matters that are going to be coming up -- toxic waste, insurance. The average public back home don't know what we're doing down here on insurance. And just maybe if they see what's happening, maybe there'll be more of an input, and just maybe some of our -- and I'm not saying this, again, sarcastically -- but maybe some of our guys will get off their duffs and put a value on some of these important programs that are out there. And I think if public television-- That's the only one that can do it, I'm going to tell you. Channel 2, 4, and God bless them, 7 -- and they're not going to come down here and give us 25 minutes or a half hour-- No way, shape, or form. You're going to get a one-and-a-half minute bleep, and it goes so fast you won't even know it's happening. I'd like to see more of that.

And then I see-- You talk in terms of \$6 million by the State -- that could be tripled.

DR. MEADE: Well that was a projection in 1969.

SENATOR JACKMAN: For the kind of input, and people like ourselves sitting here -- and I know I'm not, again, putting anybody on the spot -- but Gagliano, and Laskin, and people like that know the importance of television and what it can do back home. And I think a well-informed public, to me, is the answer to maybe better people coming back down here, or running for office, or being part and parcel of that so-called commission you're talking about.

DR. MEADE: I think you're-- One, I just spoke because we often felt that we weren't sufficiently in touch with the legislators who were with the administration of the State, and something you might want to investigate that with, if you would be more current on what the state of affairs are about public broadcasting. I would call-- I would say, maybe we should make an annual report to the Legislature, as well as to the Governor. I don't mean just a printed brochure. That would be one. One I've spoken to a review of the ex officio status of cabinet officers on the Commission. I think that's, without prejudicing the outcome, something that certainly is well worthy of review for a variety of reasons, and not particularly from the standpoint of political pressures.

In addition, you might want to look, as I said earlier, about the process of selecting commissioners to serve on the board of commissioners. But I would say that I would-- In looking for better objectivity and enhancing the possibilities for that without constraining the Authority, I would not be seduced by if we only increase the private funding that would give it more opportunity to be flexible and free, because private funding in this particular case, in this context, is extremely difficult because of the tug of the two other dominant centers, the fact that many of our national corporations are located here, prefer to support national public broadcasting -- for good reason, I don't question that. So the opportunities for considerable amounts of private investment in the system is-- Well, they're quite limited.

SENATOR STOCKMAN: Senator Gagliano, any further questions?

SENATOR GAGLIANO: Well I did-- I wanted to ask you if you were familiar with the development of the statewide cable consortium -- I can't remember what they call it -- but did that have any connection with public broadcasting? I really don't know. I know it developed and it's supposedly in operation. I guess it was kind of pushed -- or put together -- with the Office of Cable Television, which is part of the BPU. And I just wondered if there was ever any connection -- any serious connection -- between public broadcasting and that organization?

DR. MEADE: My knowledge of that would be limited--

SENATOR GAGLIANO: And if not, I guess my question is, why not? Because--

DR. MEADE: Well, I mean I do-- The-- Certainly our staff was in touch with that. That's really got-- My notice was during Brendan Byrne's first administration, I think, when I first heard about-- Not the organization of the cable operators themselves, but the push from the State on that.

SENATOR GAGLIANO: I'd say it started six or eight years ago--

DR. MEADE: Yeah.

SENATOR GAGLIANO: --and, I'd say--

DR. MEADE: Well, that's past my time.

SENATOR GAGLIANO: --that it actually, you know, it actually came into effect two or three years ago. I'm really trying to figure out--

DR. MEADE: Well, I can't comment--

SENATOR GAGLIANO: --what that connection is?

DR. MEADE: I mean, what you're talking about is not what I'm talking about, now that I hear what you're saying. I wouldn't know about that. I have a terrible thing to say, but when I left public broadcasting, I left public broadcasting.

SENATOR GAGLIANO: Okay. Well, maybe we could learn more about that--

SENATOR JACKMAN: Will you come back again?

SENATOR GAGLIANO: --because that's a-- That's a--

SENATOR JACKMAN: Can we draft you? (laughter)

DR. MEADE: Let's not talk about that now.

SENATOR STOCKMAN: Senator Laskin?

SENATOR LASKIN: Doctor, I-- Whatever comments I have now are questions. I really don't want you to take them in the wrong way. I have a philosophical difference of opinion with all the members of this Commission on the right of a state government to engage in the news business. The law that created the Public Broadcasting Authority was passed back in 1968, and I think it became effective January '69. Of the members of this Commission there were two of us in the Legislature at that time. Cris Jackman and I were in the Assembly. I don't have the voting record here, but I assume that Chis Jackman voted in favor of the creation of the Public Broadcasting Authority, and knowing me, I would have voted against it.

SENATOR JACKMAN: Yeah.

SENATOR LASKIN: Because I think that it's something that's wrong. I don't think that government belongs in the news business, and I still don't. But today-- And I'd like to get some comments from you on that, because I have heard from you and the questions about ways to improve the system, but I would like to address the issue of whether or not we ought to have such a system?

Each year the budget goes up in our State. We're over nine billion, presumably, in a few months, and in the order of priorities, and in the order of what I think government should be doing, I don't think public broadcasting is anywhere on that list, whether we would call it a priority list or not. I think it's wrong. And I'm very curious as to your reaction as to -- from a philosophical viewpoint -- as to whether or not you think government really belongs in this business. Not, can we do it better? Will it help the image of New Jersey? Because helping the image of New Jersey, for the poor woman on welfare or the very poor elderly citizen, is really not very important. They're more concerned about what they can buy at the store, and they're not too concerned over what the image of New Jersey ought to be.

As a practical matter, the State is divided in half. You've got Philadelphia, and you've got New York. And in my opinion, never the twain is going to meet. I think it's going to stay that way. Whether we like it or not, I think it's going to stay that way. I'm from South Jersey. If you ask me about a football team, I'll say the Eagles. I don't even know who plays out of New York or North Jersey, and don't care. My team--

SENATOR JACKMAN: The New Jersey Giants-- You don't care?

SENATOR LASKIN: My team, if I were asked, would be the Philadelphia Eagles. If I lived up in the northern section of the State, it would be the Giants or somebody up there.

SENATOR JACKMAN: The Gents.

SENATOR LASKIN: Whatever-- I don't even know who they are. That's how important it is.

SENATOR JACKMAN: Holy Jesus! You live in New Jersey? Holy Christ.

SENATOR LASKIN: And I tell you this as a-- Very honestly, as a very practical matter, I'm not concerned about making points and saying the right thing to you -- and let's do more for the image of New Jersey. I'm concerned about practical considerations. I don't think the money we spend on public broadcasting is a necessity, or even part of what government ought to be. Could you comment about my comments?

DR. MEADE: Sure.

SENATOR JACKMAN: Doc, before you do it, please-- I just--
You know, I'm amazed sometimes--

SENATOR LASKIN: Not at me?

SENATOR JACKMAN: No not-- You know, Laskin, I-- You know, are you against the arts and theater, too, because we spend money there? You know, the thing that amazes me, when you talk in terms-- And the Governor just made a statement the other day -- and you're part of the Republican Party -- he said there is no South and no North Jersey; there's one New Jersey. And you better start to learn what the hell we got up here, because I know about what you-- You don't got no Eagles down in New Jersey. You got to go into Philadelphia, and that's Pennsylvania. Boy, oh boy, oh boy, oh boy, Laskin, I think you're against motherhood.

DR. MEADE: I don't believe he spoke about mothers, but--

SENATOR LASKIN: I want you to know we're very dear friends.

SENATOR JACKMAN: We are.

SENATOR LASKIN: I want you to know, and we have a high deal of respect for each other.

DR. MEADE: I'm sure you do.

SENATOR JACKMAN: I love him.

DR. MEADE: Well I, out of respect--

SENATOR GAGLIANO: Philosophically, they don't always agree.

DR. MEADE: I mean, just to speak to your two philosophical points. One, about New Jersey, if I believed that, which I do not, then I would devote myself to seeing to it that we forget New Jersey, and it has been proposed, I guess, by some people -- maybe you proposed it -- and ally ourselves with somewhere else. It's like -- it's just like in New York City they say there's no reason why we should be a part of New York State. There are people who believe that. Well, they ought to go to work on that. I mean, if you truly believe it, you work on that.

With respect to your point--

SENATOR LASKIN: Of course, I don't think I said that. I think I said it as it relates to public broadcasting.

DR. MEADE: Well, you may have.

SENATOR LASKIN: There's a big, big difference.

DR. MEADE: I don't recall you saying it quite that way, but nonetheless-- And it really speaks to your first question; I'm glad you asked it. You and I do have different philosophical values. I believe it is incumbent on government, and those who serve in government, at whatever level, to do two things: To serve the people, and to inform the people.

SENATOR JACKMAN: That's right.

DR. MEADE: And without informing the people, you can't serve the people. And if we have to take steps, as I think we do, to inform to whatever access we have, we can't-- I mean, I think that I cannot believe that, particularly in our context-- I mean, we are so unusual in this regard, but not unique in the sense that there isn't other circumstances somewhat like it. Ours are more dramatic. If left to whatever resources are available commercially to us, our voters will not be informed.

SENATOR LASKIN: And do you think that the voters are now being informed by the two or three hundred thousand, or however many there are, who happen to watch the public television?

DR. MEADE: Well, the audience is, I guess, substantially larger these days. I don't have--

SENATOR LASKIN: Pick a figure--

DR. MEADE: Well, it doesn't matter to me.

SENATOR LASKIN: Pick a million, two million, I don't care what you say.

DR. MEADE: I'll stay with the numbers.

SENATOR LASKIN: Okay.

DR. MEADE: I think it's still important. My view of this kind of society -- the kind of government you have -- is, I ought to have every opportunity -- public opportunity -- to know how my governments -- my nation, my city, my state -- operate, and this investment, to me, is important from my philosophical view, because that's how I believe this society functions. It's an extension, if you will, of town meeting. That's another way of going backwards, but--

And particularly important -- I mean given some of the problems which are so interrelated in the State, and they're no longer

of-- They can't be singularly identified, say, on a scope about toxic waste, which is not a-- It's a complex problem. It relates to a lot of factories; it relates to commercial interests; it relates to environment; it relates to education; and I think we need -- no, we're obligated, as public servants -- to see to it that our citizens are educated about issues.

SENATOR LASKIN: I agree with that.

DR. MEADE: All right. And here we have in front of us--

SENATOR LASKIN: What's that got to do with the public broadcasting?

DR. MEADE: --a vehicle that educates. And it is the vehicle, sir -- it is the vehicle, sir, that most people use as their educating device.

SENATOR STOCKMAN: Senator Gagliano?

SENATOR GAGLIANO: Well, I guess if I was going to follow up on what Senator Laskin was talking about-- We don't have a State newspaper--

DR. MEADE: We got a couple that think they are.

SENATOR GAGLIANO: I know. They get the news earlier than anybody else, I guess. But -- no, but we don't have a State newspaper; we don't have a State magazine, but still I agree with you. I think that public broadcasting is important, and I know we're not here in the Appropriations Committee--

SENATOR JACKMAN: I'll appear before them.

SENATOR GAGLIANO: That's certainly not our role. But, one thing that's always crossed my mind was whether or not the State Public Broadcasting Authority could have done it better by just buying time on other stations? I mean, straight buying time.

DR. MEADE: That's just it. We looked at that option when the Commission was reviewing what it would recommend, and it was clear that the interest at that point -- and I won't -- this was never put in any form -- was greater in the Philadelphia station and the New York station. New York station, as I say, is a nationally oriented station. Philadelphia station had some interest. But we could never buy enough time that would warrant that kind of an agreement. And, if

I were in Philadelphia, I would have said: Wait a minute, while I'm selling this time to somebody else, I'm serving my region less. It was a tough issue--

SENATOR GAGLIANO: Was that ever litigated, by you -- the issue -- with respect to forcing, for example, Channel 13 doing more for New Jersey, since it carried a Newark masthead?

DR. MEADE: Well that was-- Somebody from the Coalition of Fair Broadcasting, they can speak to that. They've worked hard on that. As I said, our position was always we believed that New Jersey ought to be better covered by everybody.

SENATOR GAGLIANO: Okay, thank you.

SENATOR STOCKMAN: Doctor, I have one final question for you.

DR. MEADE: Sure.

SENATOR STOCKMAN: You touched on it, and the difficulty of developing a constituency. Someone suggested to me a couple of days ago, in anticipation of this hearing, that the problem with the public television station in New Jersey is it really has no constituency, or maybe its only constituency is the Governor's office and the Legislature. And that's not enough. Do you tend to agree with that? What could we do to help develop a genuine constituency for the public television network in New Jersey?

DR. MEADE: I will comment, very briefly. I think in this respect you would be well advised to seek the comment of persons who have worked hard to develop the constituency. I mean the Friends of Public Broadcasting. I would talk with persons--

SENATOR STOCKMAN: They are going to speak to us.

DR. MEADE: --who are involved now and have gotten involved earlier. Not so much to get sense of numbers and like, but to get a sense of what comments they got from New Jersey's public about its own system. I mean, some of the correspondence and calls we would get of a different nature, you know, how grateful New Jersey citizens were that we would show this program at a different hour than somebody else, or how grateful they were that we highlighted high school football teams. They were more important to them than, if not the Jets, the Giants, and the Eagles, at least the Bengals and the 49ers. So there is that.

But I think those persons who worked on that side of it would be very helpful for you and illuminating for you.

SENATOR STOCKMAN: On behalf of the Committee, thank you very much, Doctor. I think your testimony was very helpful, very valuable, and very well said, and we appreciate it.

DR. MEADE: Thank you all for the opportunity.

SENATOR JACKMAN: Thank you.

SENATOR GAGLIANO: Thank you, Doctor.

DR. MEADE: Thank you.

SENATOR STOCKMAN: Our next witness is Dr. Roger N. Johnson, a Professor of Psychology at Ramapo College. And Dr. Johnson will explain to us, perhaps by introducing himself a little further, his area of interest and expertise. Doctor--

DR. ROGER N. JOHNSON: Thank you, gentlemen. I'm happy to be here.

I think the need for New Jersey public television is probably determined by the performance of the other mass media in the State, and I think, perhaps in answer to Senator Laskin's question, New Jersey is a special problem. It's a special case. I might agree with you in some other states, but the fact is we live in sort of a media vacuum, in spite of the fact that we are a multi-medial society, and are surrounded by 12 VHF stations; we're wired to our eyeballs with cable TV; we still have a very special problem. It's not just an image problem that we have, we have a real problem of news and information about the State. I think we'd like to believe that commercial television, or commercial networks, are the solution to our problem, but the fact is they're part of the problem. They're not the solution to the problem. And I think we all had high hopes for WOR when they moved here in 1983. I guess my position is that I felt that we should watch what they do and not what they say. And so for the last decade or so, on and off, I've been monitoring, very carefully, the performance of the stations, and I have a summary of my remarks and the comments that I found here, that I could pass around. But, perhaps, the high points I could touch on quickly in the beginning, and I'll go back over them later.

For the purposes of this hearing, I did some monitoring again this month -- the first three weeks in January -- and I compared it to a very extensive study I did in 1984 and 1983. And I was rather shocked to find that WOR's performance has actually decreased in New Jersey. Their news broadcasts about New Jersey-- Their coverage has actually decreased by 25%. In the same last two years, they've increased their coverage of New York by 20%, and we now have New Jersey's only VHF commercial station, which is broadcasting more news about New York than it is about New Jersey. And I think that's a rather eye-opening state of affairs.

The second major finding I found was on the question of duplication. Some people would say we don't need New Jersey public television because we already have other stations covering it. I found that only about one story out of five was duplicated. About 78% of the stories on New Jersey public television on the New Jersey Nightly News are not covered by WOR.

Let me just give a little more background. I think the mass media can, and should, be not just reporting the news, but it should be sort of a galvanizing force in--

SENATOR GAGLIANO: By the way, is WOR here today?

SENATOR STOCKMAN: No representative from WOR. Interesting question.

SENATOR GAGLIANO: I think that the record should indicate that. I am listening to you; I think the record should indicate that WOR doesn't care even to cover this one.

DR. JOHNSON: I'll send them a copy.

SENATOR GAGLIANO: Thank you.

DR. JOHNSON: As I was saying, the mass media should be a galvanizing force, I think, and with the electronic age we live in, we have now the possibility of unifying the State. I'd like to see the State unified, and I think it could be unified, electronically. It couldn't be unified 100 years ago, or 50 years ago, or even a decade ago, but it can today.

And part of the problem is our newspapers, as you pointed out. We have a number of good newspapers; we have, I believe, 27 daily

newspapers. I couldn't begin to name them, but they're regional newspapers; they're not read throughout the State. It would be nice if we had a real statewide newspaper that everyone read, but we don't. Twenty percent of the people of New Jersey read out-of-state papers. Now if you look at the out-of-state papers-- And an analysis of this, by the way, was recently done by a student at Rutgers, by the name of Carol Demyenovitch. She did a senior thesis on the media and New Jersey and provided a content analysis of the newspapers. And she discovered that the best coverage of New Jersey comes from The Philadelphia Inquirer, which provides about 12% of its news about New Jersey; then we have The New York Daily News provides about 7% of its news as New Jersey news; and the worst of all is -- you guessed it -- The New York Times, in terms of coverage of New Jersey news.

We also know that -- this was another question -- that--

SENATOR STOCKMAN: Doctor, let me stop you. You said 20% of New Jersey residents read out-of-state newspapers. You mean, exclusively do not read any paper within the State?

DR. JOHNSON: No, I think that's not exclusively. I think they do read those newspapers, but they read others as well.

SENATOR JACKMAN: The Daily News, and The Post, The Times--

SENATOR GAGLIANO: What was the breakdown again, sir? What was the breakdown? The breakdown of the percentages of people who buy out-of-state newspapers? Is that what you were saying?

DR. JOHNSON: Okay. Yes. I believe this is Carol's study, and I believe she said that it was about 20% of the residents of New Jersey read out-of-state newspapers. Is that what you wanted?

SENATOR GAGLIANO: Yes, sir.

DR. JOHNSON: Now another interesting finding, and this comes from the--

SENATOR GAGLIANO: And then you said something about--

DR. JOHNSON: The newspapers, and how much coverage is--

SENATOR GAGLIANO: Yes. Which ones?

DR. JOHNSON: She did a content analysis, and eliminated certain features like obituaries--

SENATOR GAGLIANO: Yes.

DR. JOHNSON: --and things like that, but she found that The Philadelphia Inquirer devoted about 12% of its news coverage to New Jersey news; New York Daily News about 7%; and The Times about 3%. So this raised the question, where are we going to get the news from?

Now in terms of newspaper coverage, another problem is the decline in how people get their information from newspapers. You asked Dr. Meade this question, and information I have from the Eagleton Institute: As recently as 1980, 62% of the people said they got their news about New Jersey from newspapers. In 1984, it went down 15 percentage points to 47%. Now less than half of the people get their news from newspapers.

SENATOR STOCKMAN: Your point would be that if that's accurate, public television, or its need, is arguably greater in '86 than at an earlier time?

DR. JOHNSON: Right. They also asked about television. In 1980, 19% said they got their information on New Jersey from television; now, in 1984, it was 34%. And this is a national trend as well. People are getting more of their news from television, and in New Jersey, the number of people who claim they are getting it from television has doubled between 1980 and 1984. Now I shudder to think what it will be like by 1990 or 1995.

So we do depend more on television, whether we like it or not. And Tom Dunkel, I think, once made the remark that it's hard to prove the connections, but television news really is responsible for our uninformed citizenry, our poor self-image, and things like this. And I think to a certain extent, that's true.

All of our commercial channels, I think, are lacking both in quality and quantity, and I think their main interest is, perhaps, elsewhere. I don't know if you noticed in today's New York Times, a full-page ad on one of the sections, by WOR, and it's clearly geared toward New York commuters. And it says that, you know, all these suburbanites going into New York -- and I think the message was also that it was a national and international news broadcast. And it made no reference at all to New Jersey, and no suggestion that their major news program was a New Jersey program.

Well, how do I document this? What I've done is to analyze them--

SENATOR LASKIN: But isn't that a fact? Are you going to be able to take those same people in this ad, and the ad should write -- or should read: All you people going into Newark, we want you to do thus and so. The fact is, they're going to New York. They're not going to Newark or some North Jersey municipality.

DR. JOHNSON: I don't go to New York. I came to Trenton today.

SENATOR LASKIN: That's you. We're talking about generalities, I presume.

DR. JOHNSON: Well, I'm sure there's an awful lot of commuters, but after all, they are a New Jersey station, and I'm not sure their primary interest should be addressing people going to New York or people who live in New York.

SENATOR LASKIN: I would think their primary interest should be, in addition to the theory of promoting good news coverage for everybody, to make a certain profit for the shareholders of the company. There's no profit to be made, I presume, there's no shareholders to be paid with public television or broadcasting.

SENATOR GAGLIANO: Well it's not public. He's not saying that. It's New Jersey coverage.

SENATOR LASKIN: I understand that.

SENATOR GAGLIANO: Covering New Jersey events.

SENATOR LASKIN: I'm trying to relate it to public broadcasting. They don't have to worry about making profits, and putting ads in the newspaper, and appealing to certain groups of--

DR. JOHNSON: Well, my remarks were just geared at the kind of advertising they do. And I don't think it's that bad an ad, but it does make it clear, first of all that it's not a New Jersey news program, it's a national and international news program, and it's a regional news program, and there's a heavy New York interest involved. And we all know that.

I could show you another ad-- This is not by WOR, but this is an ad which appears in Cable Marketing, which promotes WOR all over

the country. And it's a great big ad, and it says WOR with a great big apple in the middle. It's pretty clear what they're intending by the big red apple, and down below it says: WOR New York.

SENATOR JACKMAN: And they're in New Jersey.

DR. JOHNSON: If you'd like to see it. (speaker walks up to Committee table and shows them the advertisement) This is advertised by -- not by WOR -- but by--

SENATOR GAGLIANO: Is that since they re-stationed themselves in New Jersey?

DR. JOHNSON: Yes. I haven't seen the latest issue; that issue is of a few months-- I think last year.

SENATOR GAGLIANO: January '85, this says.

DR. JOHNSON: And also in The New York Times, a few weeks ago, there was a front-page story about the media and the satellite communication, and The New York Times referred to WOR as a New York City station. I don't know if any of you noticed that. I nearly fell off my chair when The Times still thinks that WOR is located in New York City.

Let me proceed. I'll just give you a little bit of background. I first became interested in this -- it's not my primary interest -- but I first became interested about a decade ago with students. And we noticed just the terrible coverage that we have of New Jersey, and coming to Ramapo College -- which opened in 1971 -- after five years, I would wander around the State and find that people still knew nothing about it. They didn't even know what the State colleges were or where they were located. They knew nothing about them. And they said: Well, how do you expect anybody to know anything other than their own town, or else something in New York or Philadelphia?

So gradually I became more interested, and I found that other people were interested, and the legislators were interested, private corporations were interested, and so being interested in methodology and research methodology, it was a very simple matter to just simply monitor what they did. And so I started to do this, and paid attention to most of the stations -- WOR in particular -- when they began to look

like they were going to move to New Jersey in 1982. So I did an analysis of their program in 1982, and 1983, and 1984, and then again this month. And in 1982 they were performing -- about 8% of their coverage was devoted to New Jersey. In 1983, when they moved to New Jersey, it went up to 14%, and then it went up to 17%. That was two years ago. I think we thought they were on a roll, and maybe they would increase their coverage and become the voice of New Jersey, as some people refer to them. But this month they dropped down to pre-1983 levels. 'So they peaked out. They've also increased their coverage of New York.

The most extensive monitoring I did was in 1984, and we did two entire months of watching Philadelphia television, because they were concerned about the quality that they were getting, not just the quantity. They were getting plenty of quantity, but they were worried about the quality, and the image that it was doing to the City of Philadelphia. And I did a month on New Jersey Network, and WOR, and also several weeks on the New York stations.

You generally have about four levels of performance. The rock-bottom worst performances by all the New York stations -- 2, 4, 5, 7, 11 -- they average around 2% of their news is devoted to New Jersey. If you're talking about half an hour program -- 1800 seconds -- 1% would be 18 seconds. And that's frequently what--

SENATOR GAGLIANO: What percentage is--

DR. JOHNSON: --you get for-- Senator Jackman, you don't get a minute and a half coverage hardly at all. If you're lucky, you get 15 or 20 seconds.

SENATOR JACKMAN: Well, I was being kind.

SENATOR GAGLIANO: What percentage do you get of New York at the same -- in the same program? In other words Channel 2, 4, 5, 7, and 11-- whatever?

DR. JOHNSON: I would-- I don't have the figures in front of me--

SENATOR GAGLIANO: What percentage would be New York, Long Island, Westchester, that kind of thing?

DR. JOHNSON: I'd have to look it up in my documents here.

SENATOR GAGLIANO: Is it substantially higher, or are they doing national stuff?

DR. JOHNSON: Oh, no, no, it's way higher. I would guess it's five or ten times higher than that.

SENATOR LASKIN: New York is. Channel 11-- I've watched the news, and Channel 11, New York, I'd say at least of the 30-minute program -- news program -- I would say four to five minutes is allocated -- you know, excluding commercials -- about five minutes -- four to five minutes -- to New York City. Just New York City. Koch is on, for God's sake, for a minute and a half just with the Manners Case. Okay?

DR. JOHNSON: Well, okay, let me just go on a little bit. I think what we found out this time is that there is about four times as much coverage of New Jersey news on New Jersey public television, than there is on WOR. So in spite of the fact that WOR has much better than the New York channels, it still pales by comparison to New Jersey Nightly News. So, in general you get the New York channels that are 1 or 2% coverage; then you have the Philadelphia channels, which run around 6 to 7% coverage of New Jersey; then WOR, which used to be 17 and is now around 13 %, and then New Jersey Nightly News is about over 50%. Now when I say over 50%, that may seem to you, you wonder what happened to the other 50%? What I'm talking about is just straight news. I'm not talking about entertainment, or sports, or weather, commercial messages, and things like that. That's the other-- Just straight news broadcast. So, in 1984, New Jersey Network had about three times as much New Jersey news; now it has about four times as much. So the difference is increasing.

SENATOR STOCKMAN: Dr. Johnson, let me ask you, these statistics and this study and information, you've given it elsewhere, I guess? Has it been part of any record in any formal proceedings, and things of that sort? And what I'm leading to is, is it challenged, or would these stations acknowledge what you're suggesting to us? I think Senator Gagliano asked a very good point, is WOR here? They're not. Obviously, they're not that concerned about what we're doing and whether or not public television is necessary in New Jersey, or not.

Have they acknowledged your studies, or do they say you're way off the mark?

DR. JOHNSON: Well we send it to them, and they generally ignore them. I don't think they ever respond or do much of anything. As far as being part of the public record, of course, they've been in the newspaper, and I've sent them to the Governor, and people in the Legislature, and I don't know what they do with them.

SENATOR STOCKMAN: You haven't, for instance, been involved in any FCC hearings, or any court litigation, or anything else where these statistics might be challenged or not?

DR. JOHNSON: No.

SENATOR STOCKMAN: So--

DR. JOHNSON: Nobody's ever attempted to challenge them, and they're broken down to the second. So, I mean, I'd say they're accurate to within five seconds, so I don't think the accuracy has ever been an issue.

SENATOR STOCKMAN: Maybe that's why they-- I'm sorry, go ahead.

DR. JOHNSON: I-- There are some other features. It's not just the amount of time. I think it's the -- things like the geographic coverage. New Jersey public television covers the entire State, and WOR makes no attempt to cover the entire State. There's better -- more depth -- of coverage. The stories are longer. New Jersey Network tends to cover slightly different kinds of stories. There's more about education, environment, civic news, more about business. WOR is more -- does have a little more on health and entertainment, but they also have more in the way of fire, crimes, tragedy, things like that. The New York channels, in particular, do a lot of fire chasing, and any fire will be covered, guaranteed. But sometimes it's hard to find anything other than fire and crime which is covered.

I think if you look at the programs themselves, New Jersey Nightly News identifies with the State. It has it in the title; it shows a map of the State of New Jersey; its weather broadcast gives you north, central, and south. WOR doesn't make any mention about New

Jersey, either in the title or anywhere. You could be watching this program in Arizona, and you might not even notice that it's coming from New Jersey. It seems like a regional and a national program.

Now, anyhow, many people thought it was too early to judge WOR in 1984, and I sort of tended to agree. They said give them time. Well they've been in New Jersey for-- They asked to be in New Jersey in 1982; they actually got licensed in 1983, and it's now 1986.

If I could, I'd like to just briefly run over some of the points that I've covered in this prepared document. I know Senator Stockman has it, I don't know if the rest of you--

SENATOR GAGLIANO: Is this it? (showing a similar document)

DR. JOHNSON: No, it's-- (Committee discusses which document is which) If you wish, I can hand out a couple copies, and I'll skim over this myself. I think one thing you can conclude from this is that New Jersey Nightly News really is the only major TV nightly news program which focuses on New Jersey. It has many more details, and covers the entire State.

The New York stations have decreased their coverage. It's so little that you can hardly even talk about a decrease. It's what I guess I would call a basement effect. When you're down to one or two percent, and if they go from two percent to one percent, it's sort of an academic question. You can watch, in a single day, about three hours of metropolitan local news in the New York area and not find a single mention of New Jersey in any one of those programs. Usually one or two of the stations will have some stories, and sometimes they surprise you with a good story, but by and large, they will have short segments, usually about fires or crime.

I think another thing that WOR could do, but has chosen not to do, is to locate its antenna somewhere in New Jersey, perhaps, I think, Freehold was once considered a place that could reach the entire State. But instead, they've decided to trade-off the southern New Jersey market and go for the Long Island and Connecticut market. And it's pretty clear that they want to keep those markets. They have a regular segment called The Tri-State Report, which contains news of the Legislature in Hartford, and what's going on in Rhode Island.

SENATOR GAGLIANO: Well, isn't there somebody monitoring this? I mean, we were all led to believe that after a great deal of effort by Senator Bradley and others, either WOR moved to New Jersey or could lose its broadcasting license. Now isn't there anybody monitoring this and saying: Well they moved, physically, a couple of offices, but they're not really in New Jersey? And the statistics--

SENATOR JACKMAN: They moved-- They're building in Secaucus.

SENATOR GAGLIANO: Yeah, but the statistics that are given to us indicate that the move is not necessarily a real move. That the move is more for show than it is for go.

PROFESSOR MARSHA STERN: (speaking from audience) If it helps you any, just so you know, the station is also up for sale. So to some extent, this is moot.

SENATOR JACKMAN: What was that?

DR. JOHNSON: The station is for sale-- WOR.

MS. STERN: If you want, when I testify, I'll be happy to go into this.

SENATOR JACKMAN: Oh, they're up for sale?

MS. STERN: Yes.

SENATOR JACKMAN: Well that's because they didn't cover New Jersey. There's your answer.

DR. JOHNSON: I think there's three things. They're in a state of flux. Number one, they're for sale. Number two, they're about to move to Secaucus. They've been saying they're going to do that for quite a few years now, but I think they really are going to open Secaucus. And number three, if they do keep the license, it's up for renewal in 1988, and maybe there will be some fireworks then.

My monitoring is only on the news programs. I'm not talking about the other programs, so in terms of total public affairs, they do have other programs. Meet the Mayors and so on. Generally have fairly low ratings, but-- I think most people--

SENATOR JACKMAN: They've got the Dave Toma show.

DR. JOHNSON: I'm concerned with how the average person finds out about the world, and they do that through news programs.

SENATOR JACKMAN: Can I go back in retrospect? You mentioned some -- a statement before -- the coverage in New Jersey is small. Is that news-wise your talking about, right -- from WOR?

DR. JOHNSON: Their coverage of New Jersey news compared to the total program, yes, is--

SENATOR JACKMAN: The reason I mention that-- They do have New Jersey programs. For example, I remember the Dave Toma show. That's on a half hour, I think, once or twice a week, and that goes in to the public schools and etc.

DR. JOHNSON: No, I'm only talking about News 9 Prime Time, the evening program.

SENATOR JACKMAN: Strictly news-- Prime time news, okay.

DR. JOHNSON: That's all I'm talking about.

SENATOR JACKMAN: All right.

DR. JOHNSON: If you look at the total of the news -- there's a pie chart on Page four here, and you can see about two thirds of what they present is out-of-state news. And that includes 37% New York news, which is larger than the 33% New Jersey news; 23% national; 7% international. They've somewhat increased their international coverage in recent months. And I think-- Who is it that asked the question about national news? I think, Senator Jackman, I think you asked about the national news on New Jersey public television. They present very little national news. It's about one or two percent at most, and usually it's related to something in New Jersey. For example, in the Voyager Space Craft going to-- That was about a company in Wayne that produces servo mechanisms. So you could count that as international, I guess. I don't know how you count space, but -- that was really a story about a New Jersey company.

SENATOR JACKMAN: I know that.

SENATOR LASKIN: Doctor, can I ask you a question? I don't think that anyone, including me, disagrees that coverage of New Jersey is horrible by the New York/North Jersey stations, and by the Philadelphia stations. Let's assume that's a given fact. We'll use your figures; 15 or 16% is really high. I don't even think you got to that. But I'll assume that your figures are accurate, and I'll agree

with everybody on this panel, that New Jersey coverage by the commercial stations in both ends of the State, is really bad. But here's where I go off: What you are saying, and what apparently every witness is going to say, is that since that coverage is so horrible, therefore, the next logical step is that the taxpayers should pay for a station, calling it the Public Broadcasting Station of New Jersey, in order to make sure that we have coverage. That's where I, sort of, jump off the ship. I really don't think that that's going to solve the problem, number one, and number two, I really don't think that that's a legitimate expense of the taxpayers. That because we're not getting enough coverage from the commercial stations, therefore, we New Jersey taxpayers ought to build our own station and say: Go jump in a lake; we'll do it ourselves. And I say that not in a joking manner, I really have a problem with the therefore part of the equation. And you, apparently--

DR. JOHNSON: I'm not committed to that being the only solution, but it's the only solution we have now. We do have an existing news program which is very good, and I think very necessary. I suppose another solution would be for the Legislature -- for you people -- to stand up to our New Jersey's commercial stations, and say to them: We want a fair shake, and if this is what you're going to perform--

SENATOR LASKIN: That's right. And I would love to see that happen, because I think that's the right way to do it.

DR. JOHNSON: Now you're fighting the FCC, and FCC is a pretty tough nut to crack. And they generally renew anybody's license, except for irregularity. And the fact that this legislation as an amendment to the Communication Act by Congress was very highly unusual, and essentially said that -- well it didn't say this, but people concluded -- that a station judged unfit to operate in New York would then be our flagship station. I think there was a possibility at one time of having New Jersey business interests running a real New Jersey station. And it might have been a real New Jersey station. Now that's, I think, what we'd all like to see. But, first you have the problem of getting a VHF license here at all, and now we have the

problem of getting that VHF station to perform, and what I've shown is they're not only increasing, they're decreasing.

SENATOR STOCKMAN: Do you think there's a role for the government to play in the question of the resale or new ownership of WOR?

DR. JOHNSON: Well, behind the scenes, of course, whether WOR is serious about selling and who they wish to sell to, I think, is a very significant question, and I don't know exactly how you go about doing that. I think New Jersey business interests should come forward, and if they want to buy up that station, then let's put the money together and do it.

SENATOR STOCKMAN: Incidentally, the FCC is withdrawing from regulation at this point. Isn't it the trend -- and I'm far from an expert in this area -- but isn't it my understanding the FCC is less and less inclined to get involved and to hear arguments of the sort that Senator Laskin suggests, or you do, about our trying to put pressure on Channel 9 to do more in the way of New Jersey news?

DR. JOHNSON: They've always been against it.

SENATOR JACKMAN: I've always found out it's better to put the pressure on the people who advertise on these stations and let them know that we're not going to look at your programs on WOR-- For example, General Motors cars or something. Just a few letters -- a few thousand letters -- into General Motors to let them know that you're dissatisfied, or any advertisers, sometimes, is more pressure brought to bear; then he will then look for the kind of coverage that's important.

SENATOR STOCKMAN: We may be getting to Ms. Stern's testimony. I think that's an area that she may have some--

DR. JOHNSON: But I think one of the assumptions you have to be careful of is that we think of -- some people think of -- WOR as a New Jersey station, but they think of themselves as a superstation; and as a regional station, a national station. Their signal is carried by satellite, by microwave all over the country. I think I pointed out there's over 70 stations in Florida alone that carry WOR. There's probably many more viewers outside of the State. So you can complain all you want, there's millions and millions of people that love it.

SENATOR JACKMAN: I get you. Okay, you mean--

SENATOR STOCKMAN: Doctor--

DR. JOHNSON: And they don't want to hear about Newark, and they don't want to hear about--

SENATOR JACKMAN: Okay.

SENATOR STOCKMAN: I appreciate your testimony, and I think the Committee members do. We have one more witness. Unless there are some other questions from panel members, I think we understand the thrust, and the findings that you have shared with us, which we appreciate.

SENATOR JACKMAN: Yeah. I just want to ask him one question.

SENATOR STOCKMAN: Yes.

SENATOR JACKMAN: You agree that public television is a very necessary thing in the State of New Jersey?

DR. JOHNSON: I think it is right now in this State. Yes, I don't know whether that will be a permanent state of affairs. The other things that I've written on this document I could maybe enter into testimony, and I don't need to go over them. But I guess one last thing that occurred to me, as I was listening to Dr. Meade talk, is that perhaps what you need is something like a tenure system that we have in the academic world. I think if each of us thought that our job was on the line every time we flunked somebody or every time we gave a controversial lecture, you wouldn't have higher education that was worth anything. And I think you need some kind of stability in funding in public television, and some kind of freedom from political control and manipulation. And you've got to assume that the television cameras are going to come and sometimes make you look bad, maybe expose what you're doing, and sometimes will make you look good, but you can't retaliate every time something appears that you don't like. And I think you better set up a system that assures that, and without that, then you really don't have a public television system worth having.

SENATOR JACKMAN: That's good. Thank you.

SENATOR STOCKMAN: Thank you very much.

Ms. Marsha Stern? Ms. Stern, you are a consultant, Coalition for Fair Broadcasting. Perhaps you could just take a minute to educate all of us a little bit further on your expertise.

MS. STERN: I will. I'll tell you a little bit about my credentials, and then I will speak briefly, and then I will let you question me because I know it is getting late.

I am in kind of a unique position coming here. I am a consultant to the New Jersey Coalition for Fair Broadcasting. I also was their executive director for many years, and also am a professor at Rutgers, Newark, in the Department of Theater, Arts, and Speech, where my specialty is public policy and communication. So, I bring together some experience in New Jersey as well as a theoretical background in this area.

The Coalition, as you may know -- and I will be giving you copies of my testimony; there is a list of our membership -- is a statewide organization which for the last 10 years has been devoting itself to improving coverage and to securing a VHF station for the State of New Jersey. We have worked very hard to do this. As you know, it has taken a long time, and we have met with a good deal of success.

In my years in New Jersey, regardless of some of the other testimony, I think we have seen an increased presence in the State. It has very serious limitations. I'd be the first one to acknowledge that. But, we have gone from being a State where there were no news people even aware of New Jersey, no news people here on a daily basis, no offices, with each of the television stations having, at the very least, a news installation with one or two personnel. We have seen, I think, coverage going from nothing to a little bit. I am not satisfied with that. I don't think any of us should be. On the other hand, I think that is somewhat of a change from at least when I first came to the State.

WOR, as you know, is licensed to the State and is planning the move to Secaucus. As I indicated to you before -- and I would be happy to fill you in on this if you have more questions -- WOR has gone up for sale. GemCorp has recently sold their Los Angeles Station, KHJ -- or at least has agreed to sell it to Westinghouse Broadcasting. They, at the same time, put the WOR station up on the block.

The time schedule for that was that on January 24 there was supposed to be a release of who they had picked to buy the station. Kidder Peabody has been managing the sale. There are three leading contenders. The three leading contenders are Chris*Craft, Westinghouse -- which is interested in buying the stations as a package -- and also Larimer Telepictures, which is a new conglomerate which has just been put together. The date for announcing the sale has just been put back and it is assumed that probably some announcement will come in February -- probably the first week or so, maybe even the second week. I think it's been pushed back a couple of times.

It is clear to me and to those who are involved in this that there will be a sale, that this is not just, you know, floating a straw man.

SENATOR GAGLIANO: Is this a one-station outfit, or do they have a chain?

MS. STERN: No, it is a chain, and the history is a long one. They lost their license in Boston as a result of a very long period of litigation, where they were alleged to have engaged in some not very fine practices, and also they had a consent decree to which they agreed to some years ago. So, there is a long history here.

SENATOR STOCKMAN: It sounds like the time has passed for the State in any way, shape, or form, to influence who the new owners will be anyway.

MS. STERN: Well, we've been working on that, and I have been working with the congressional delegation, and we have been working privately to monitor this activity, and to see whether we could deal with the sale. As we understand it, the sale is being very privately controlled by GemCorp and Kidder Peabody.

SENATOR JACKMAN: Any money mentioned?

MS. STERN: Yes. The figure is anywhere from \$350 million to \$450 million.

SENATOR JACKMAN: That's all?

MS. STERN: Actually, the chances are that, you know, there will be a sale in that magnitude.

The question for us in the future, which doesn't really involve New Jersey Public Television but I certainly think concerns the State, is how we are going to be able to deal with the new owners; how we are going to be able to influence them to try to perform at least as well, or certainly a lot better, than WOR. And, certainly, that's what I'm spending a lot of my time on now, and hope to be spending my time on once the new owner is announced.

SENATOR STOCKMAN: In your opinion, one of those three purchasers would bode better for the kinds of issues that we are concerned about and talking about here; that is, one probably would be more sensitive and more committed to New Jersey news than others?

MS. STERN: Only one of that operation has experience in this market, and that is Westinghouse. Westinghouse is the licensee of KYW-Channel 3.

SENATOR STOCKMAN: But, what I am trying to get at is, even in trying to influence the outcome of that sale, which, if it is of that magnitude and it is a private commercial sale that it sounds like it could be minimal or no influence, might be hard even in discerning which way to influence it. In other words, sitting here, if you had your choice as to which of those three wound up the owner, without even telling us which it is, do you have a clear feeling as to one, and a sense that if that were the one that we would do better in terms of this issue?

MS. STERN: I have a pretty clear sense of how I would proceed, depending upon who the owner was.

SENATOR STOCKMAN: Has State government-- You mentioned the congressional delegation. Has the State, in any way, shape, or form, been involved in trying to influence the outcome of this decision?

MS. STERN: It is hard for me to speak at this public hearing, really, in a great deal of detail. It would take a long time for me to explain to you what I think we mean by influence.

SENATOR STOCKMAN: I would think the answer to that is sort of yes or no, but--

MS. STERN: Well, the answer-- I don't know. I don't know whether the Governor has dealt with that or not.

SENATOR STOCKMAN: All right. I'm sorry. Yes, no, or I don't know?

MS. STERN: I don't know. And, when you mention the word influence, I think it is important to limit what that means because I don't think there is any way to decide who's going to be the licensee. I think that's going to be a straight cash operation. The person who is going to bid the most and who they feel is more secure in getting that bid through the FCC, because it does have to be-- There has to be some--

SENATOR JACKMAN: Would you-- Wouldn't you say that because of the nature of the situation, WOR would have to be identified with New York when you start talking \$340 million?

MS. STERN: Well, let me go back a minute -- okay? -- now that I filled you in on it, because I think one of the problems that at least I discerned here is that the discussion gets confused. I don't think it really matters what WOR is doing. And, I don't think it really matters what Channels 2, 4, 7, 9, 5, 11, 3, 6, and 1U are doing. I think that isn't the issue before us with regard to New Jersey Public Television.

I don't think New Jersey Public Television can compete in any shape, way, or form with any of those licensees. Furthermore, I don't think they can compete successfully against Channel 13. I think that's an impossibility. And, I think if you try to continue to do that, you will find yourself having hearings like this, and continuous reflections and problems about what the licensee ought to be. Now, that's not to say that I don't think it's an important and valuable resource. I do. I think it is one of the most valuable resources that anybody can have. Access to information -- I would agree with many of the other speakers -- is a very important thing. The question is how it ought to be operated, who ought to operate it, and for what purpose it ought to be operated?

In my comments-- In my written comments, which I will distribute to you later, you will see that what I really indicate is that I think that New Jersey Public Television should no longer be under the aegis of the State. That is not to say that they should not

derive funding from the State. I believe that they should. But, I believe that they ought to operate as an autonomous body.

SENATOR LASKIN: Similar to Channel 12?

MS. STERN: I would really say similar to Channel--

SENATOR LASKIN: For those who are--

MS. STERN: Or, similar to Channel 13.

SENATOR LASKIN: --not from our area, they wouldn't know.

MS. STERN: Yes. I would use the public television station model, and I would put together an independent board without, forgive me, any legislators on it, without any cabinet members on it. I would have the--

SENATOR GAGLIANO: We weren't on this one, you know that.

MS. STERN: I know. I know. But, I think, you know, if you want to run a public television station in the State to provide certain services, you have to run it like a television station, not like an arm of the government. I don't think it ought to be that. I think that, you know, if that body wants to come to you for funding, that's fine. I think if that body wants to go elsewhere for funding, that's fine. And, I think before I would consider such a plan, or, obviously, develop it any further, I would sit down with numbers of people in the State and see whether in fact this kind of thing could make it, whether there were people who are willing to fund it, whether there was a way of putting together a package so that this kind of a body could exist in New Jersey.

But, I really think that, you know, the time has come for some change, real change, not just a Band-Aid approach. You know, we will change things a little bit here, we'll do a little thing here. I think we need to have public television in New Jersey catch up with the times. I think we need to have it serve the public.

Now, what do I mean by serve the public? I don't mean do what it's doing now. I think in freeing up the operation from the control of government, you would also free it up to provide other kinds of services.

Now, there are a number of ideas that I would have about how that kind of service could be provided. You might want to run a kind

of C-span operation, where you just covered the Legislature and various governmental and public functions in New Jersey. That's one kind of function.

Another function might be solely an arts and entertainment station.

SENATOR GAGLIANO: But, if you don't hold control, how can you tell them what to do?

MS. STERN: No. I am not suggesting what to tell them; I am suggesting you set up an independent body.

SENATOR GAGLIANO: Okay, and you had that as one of the charges, that they are going to cover--

MS. STERN: No. No. You don't have that as a--

SENATOR GAGLIANO: --God forbid, the Legislature.

MS. STERN: You are not in charge anymore. You don't have that as a charge at all. You set up this body, and the body decides what it is they ought to be doing in the State. You're out of it. You're gone.

SENATOR GAGLIANO: Oh, then we don't know whether or not they will cover any--

MS. STERN: You don't know.

SENATOR GAGLIANO: --anything in New Jersey.

MS. STERN: You don't know. It might be this-- No. No. I think the mandate has to be that whatever is, is New Jersey oriented.

SENATOR GAGLIANO: How can you force that?

MS. STERN: You can't force it. You could force it if they come to you for funding. Okay?

SENATOR LASKIN: Well, you can. Now, now, let's not go crazy, you can, because this would be similar to the licensing of a public utility, and in the statutory authority to set this up you could mandate certain general concepts. You can't specifically say: Okay, we now want three and a half minutes a day of this particular kind of coverage, but you certainly can give general charges -- general mandates -- in the establishment of this new licensee, which would be licensed in accordance with our law. And, if they did not comply with the license requirements, they would lose their license.

SENATOR GAGLIANO: Then the Governor's office would put pressure on them, and the executive director would now resign.

MS. STERN: No, no, no. What I hope I'm-- I don't mean to-- Let me let you go ahead, sir.

SENATOR STOCKMAN: Ms. Stern, we run a very relaxed Committee. It is an ebb and flow, and I think it is wonderful the way it is worked, but let's bring it back through the Chairman to the witness, and recognize that we have limited power, and this is not critical of you. 'Could you finish your basic statement? And I know some of your suggestions, I think, are going to engender a lot of questions, but why don't you finish your presentation and then we will open it up to some give and take.

MS. STERN: Okay. What I am really trying to say to you, I think, is that, first of all, you shouldn't sell the stations. I don't think they can be sold. That would entail a great deal of change at the FCC level.

I think you should give up trying to compete with other television stations. I think you should stop trying to be like other television stations.

I don't believe that in the face of a changing technological era, with the kind of improved informational services that cable is also offering, that you can compete against the regular over-the-air stations.

I think, rather, you have to find a way of providing a special service like many of the cable stations. You are not under the economic gun, and I think that this is the kind of thing that you must fulfill.

Any service, I think, has to be set up, obviously, with an eye toward what resources can realistically be garnered within the State.

I would suggest also, perhaps before we get into a more heated discussion about some of the suggestions I've made, perhaps setting up a statewide council with people from all walks of life, to discuss these kinds of proposals, or to take a look at exactly what the overview is of television service within the State, to perhaps examine

some of the ideas that we have here more carefully, on a more regular basis.

Those are a few of the ideas. I would be happy to help you and to answer any questions that I can.

SENATOR STOCKMAN: Ms. Stern, before Senator Gagliano, I'll give you chance. I would like to clarify something in my own mind because you made some controversial and interesting proposals that I think have to be evaluated, and they are not going to be evaluated much before lunch. But I would like to get a clear picture of who you are, in the sense of your experience. It may be you are a much closer watcher of, and participant in the design and development of very high frequency stations like Channel 9, and so on, and, incidentally, are interested in a public television station in New Jersey.

It may be the converse, or something in-between. Can you just flush out a little more for us your experience in--

MS. STERN: Sure. Well, as the executive director of the New Jersey Coalition for Fair Broadcasting, I have been in charge--

SENATOR STOCKMAN: That's a nonprofit group of volunteers?

MS. STERN: Yes. I didn't want to take you through all that because I thought you understood that. Yes. It is a nonprofit group made up of statewide organizations like the NJEA, the AFL-CIO, the New Jersey Bar Association, the New Jersey Council of Churches, the League of Women Voters.

SENATOR LASKIN: The AFL-CIO is part of this group?

MS. STERN: They're in the membership. We have all large statewide organizations.

SENATOR JACKMAN: Hey, take it easy; don't push your luck.

MS. STERN: But, you know, the Diocese of Trenton, and all of us--

SENATOR JACKMAN: Wasn't that a-- Can I ask you, wasn't that a commission that was set up by the Governor?

MS. STERN: No, this was really set up independently, and it was funded by a private foundation. And, the goal, originally, was to get more coverage for New Jersey and to bring a VHF station to the State. So, really, when you talk about those news bureaus and things,

I'm afraid that you are talking about me. I am the one who's responsible for that. I-- Well, I didn't initiate it; somebody else initiated a lot of the litigation at the Federal Communications Commission with regard to service in New Jersey, and I continued that litigation under the firm of Hellring, Lindemann, Goldstein, and Siegal, who handled that for us.

We eventually got the Commission to say that, in fact, New Jersey was under-served, and that there had to be news bureaus in the State and regular coverage of the State of New Jersey.

We also had a proceeding against Channel 13, and one of the reasons that that building is in Newark is because we successfully litigated that proceeding.

So, my experience really is with both over-the-air television as well as with public television.

SENATOR JACKMAN: Does Charlie Marciante sit on that group with you?

MS. STERN: No.

SENATOR JACKMAN: No?

MS. STERN: Well, I mean he had a representative.

SENATOR JACKMAN: He's got a representative. (affirmative nod from witness)

MS. STERN: But you understand that what I've really done is-- My expertise is on a national basis as well as on a state basis.

SENATOR STOCKMAN: All right. Senator?

SENATOR GAGLIANO: I asked this before of, I think, the first speaker, and I am really not familiar with it. Wasn't there a coalition of cable--

MS. STERN: Yes.

SENATOR GAGLIANO: --stations put together at the behest of State government somewhere?

MS. STERN: Yes.

SENATOR GAGLIANO: Okay. And, we--

MS. STERN: Yes, I am familiar with it, and no, as far as I know, there is no interaction between--

SENATOR GAGLIANO: My question is, why not? Because it seems to me that they have, through microwave, a direct connection to every major cable station, or channel, or system, in the State of New Jersey, and it had to do it as I recall. The State leaned on them through the Office of Cable Television.

MS. STERN: Yes, but, first of all, I'm not--

SENATOR GAGLIANO: I'm asking you if you know; I'm not asking you to justify it.

MS. STERN: Yes, I know. Okay. I don't know a lot about either of those two things. I think that-- I forget who the head of that is, but--

SENATOR GAGLIANO: I don't know the head of it. I don't know what they do. I was wondering why--

MS. STERN: But, I guess what I am really going back to, again, is to say that I am not sure that's the issue either. The question is, if you want to take the system you have now and you want to run it better the way you have it now, you can try and do that. And, you know, I probably could make some suggestions to you as to how you might do that a little better.

I guarantee you that if you do that, you'll find yourself right back here again in three years, because in my view you cannot run the system in this configuration -- with cable, over-the-air television, Channel 13 -- in this State, successfully, on a long-term basis.

SENATOR GAGLIANO: Against-- You mean when it is opposed to New York and Philadelphia?

MS. STERN: No, it is not New York and Philadelphia. You've got an entirely new environment here. You've got cable stations all over New Jersey. You've got HBO. You've got an Arts and Entertainment channel. You've got Disney. You've got national stations. You've also got highly competitive commercial outlets -- it is true -- from New York and Philadelphia.

First of all, you can't compete. You can't take a noncommercial station and compete with a commercial station anyway. Your goals are different. Your operating aegis is different. So, right away you are in a whole new ball park.

You can't compete with Channel 13 because Channel 13 is running a national operation. They're the flagship of the Public Broadcasting Service. You're not, and you are never going to be. So, you have to accept those limitations, I think, and then start to decide what it is you can be, and what you can be successful at being. And, I don't think you can be a miniature replica of any of those operations and be successful.

SENATOR STOCKMAN: And, you think that's what this form and design is at the moment?

MS. STERN: Yes, I do.

SENATOR STOCKMAN: A sort of miniature replica with the odd relationship with State government?

MS. STERN: Yes. And, let me also say that I think, you know, that people have tried to break out of that a little bit. I don't think it's possible to break out of that if you continue to be part of State government.

SENATOR STOCKMAN: Senator Jackman?

SENATOR JACKMAN: In essence, are you telling-- I just want to get an evaluation from you. We spent six and a half million dollars from the State for public television. Do you think that money was well spent?

MS. STERN: I don't want to answer you yes or no. I think under the circumstances under which you were operating, yes, you should have appropriated the money. If I had to say to you, should you keep appropriating the money or get rid of the station -- those are my choices -- I would say to you, yes, keep appropriating the money, rather than get rid of the stations and just have no stations in New Jersey.

But those aren't the only choices before you. You really have a chance to be the architects of a new system. You have the chance to be the architects of, you know, one of the leading state systems in the country.

SENATOR JACKMAN: Public television?

MS. STERN: Yes. You have four stations that are yours to do with what you want. Why not come up with something innovative, something creative?

SENATOR JACKMAN: Well, you'll agree with me that everything-- When you want to be innovative, it costs money.

MS. STERN: It maybe costs you less money. Let me tell you what I would suggest, and I don't know if this is--

SENATOR JACKMAN: Oh, I never saw anything be innovative and cost less money -- never in my life.

MS. STERN: Well, let me give you an idea.

SENATOR JACKMAN: Go ahead.

MS. STERN: One of the ideas, if you were to float such a proposal around--

SENATOR STOCKMAN: Is this in your statement, or the gist of it?

MS. STERN: No, it isn't.

SENATOR STOCKMAN: You're going beyond the statement?

MS. STERN: Yes. If you were to float this, you know, around the State, to see whether it would be possible to do it, it would be to see whether you couldn't look for a five-year plan or a ten-year plan, with a decreasing amount of resources coming from the State Legislature, and an increasing amount of resources coming from elsewhere.

SENATOR JACKMAN: Private--

MS. STERN: So that, you know, at least you would be looking somewhere, rather than keeping looking at an increasing amount of money for, you know, day-to-day costs. Now, it's true you would be giving up some control -- all the control, really -- but I think what you would be getting-- You'd be getting a first-rate operation with a new identity, sure.

SENATOR GAGLIANO: I still have this question. I've never asked it yet. I do have a background in cable as a part owner of a company. Do you see any possibility of a real partnership between the cable systems that have been set up and public broadcasting in New Jersey? Could there be a realistic marriage of the two, so that we would not only have the over-the-air from the four stations, but, at the same time, possibly broadcast through the cable systems?

MS. STERN: I think it depends on what you are offering. One of the problems with this new must-carry rule that you were talking about -- touching on -- with Dr. Meade, is that I don't think there is any way, under the present circumstances, for you to force the stations to carry New Jersey public television. Their choice really is: Do I carry New York or do I carry New Jersey public television? And the overlap is so great, and the New York station is so--

SENATOR GAGLIANO: Well, they don't have to carry everything. What I'm saying is--

MS. STERN: I know, but what I'm saying is, if you were to give them something that they couldn't get elsewhere, they would carry you by choice. Okay? And that's the aim. So, yes, there would be a marriage if they had something that they wanted to carry that they could deliver to their constituency. You know, their constituency is used to seeing MTV and good movies from Philadelphia.

SENATOR GAGLIANO: Well, isn't there still an issue there that we do have governance, even today, over cable television? I agree the Federal rules have changed.

MS. STERN: You have much less than you did. You have almost nothing.

SENATOR GAGLIANO: I understand that, but we do have some. Do you mean it's all gone? Why do we have the bureaucracy known as the Office of Cable Television?

MS. STERN: Well, you have it because before last year there was a great deal more that you could do. As of last year, there is not a whole lot you can do.

SENATOR LASKIN: Well, that's not really the answer.

SENATOR STOCKMAN: Senator Laskin, do you want to be a witness or a questioner?

SENATOR LASKIN: The answer to the question of why we have anything in government is because we do. That is really the answer.
(laughter)

MS. STERN: I agree with you. I am not suggesting there aren't things you can do with that office, but certainly there is a different need for that office now than there was then.

SENATOR STOCKMAN: Ms. Stern, you basically disagree, I gather, with our first witness, Dr. Meade, who, at least from my understanding -- and the members of this Committee will certainly evaluate-- He seemed to be suggesting that what was created was created wisely and functioned reasonably well, and that today there probably is some need for some modest changes and probably some more aggressive funding, and, in that context, the citizens of New Jersey would be very well served.

You're suggesting, if I understand it, something different. You are not suggesting that the needs and the interests of the citizens of the State of New Jersey, in this area of news particularly, are being well-served, but that to effectively do it with our public money, we really have to become architects of a new system, as you used that phrase. There is nothing more exciting to politicians than to suggest that they can become architects of a new system. But I'm wondering. For one thing, I think you also said something else, and that is, that New Jersey is unique; that the configuration of New York to our north and Philadelphia to our south, changing technologies, particularly in the area of cable, and, I guess, HBO and these other mechanisms that are so much more becoming a part of the insides of our homes and our families, would call for something new and unique. Even if we designed that, incidentally, I would gather we couldn't package it and sell it elsewhere. It wouldn't be much help to Colorado, or North Dakota, or Texas, if I understand you.

MS. STERN: Hard to know.

SENATOR STOCKMAN: The reverse of that is what I was going to ask you. Is there a model, is there an approach of the sort you are trying to nudge us in the direction of, or push us, or you know, strike very clearly, in other states?

MS. STERN: Do you mean, does this exist in another state?

SENATOR STOCKMAN: In other states.

MS. STERN: I haven't really looked, I must confess to you. I don't know of any, offhand. I took a look at this configuration particularly because of the fact that there are four stations, and it really does make for a statewide operation. The transmission is there.

SENATOR GAGLIANO: They rejected that.

MS. STERN: What? Well, no, it still--

SENATOR GAGLIANO: Testimony earlier today was that they considered that and rejected it.

MS. STERN: No, but there is still a statewide coverage of sorts. Let me say to you: One of the limitations I have with sitting here and talking about the news on public television is, I think public television is more than a half hour of news. And I think, you know, really the question is, how do you use all those other hours?

SENATOR STOCKMAN: We have focused heavily on that because I think it precipitated some concern about the autonomy of the agency.

SENATOR JACKMAN: Yeah, but they got some very interesting theater programs and everything else on public television, that you wouldn't get on the other stations.

SENATOR STOCKMAN: Well, perhaps the news should be handled separately, or there ought to be--

MS. STERN: I mean, I'm not objecting to the news program, you understand. I just don't think that that-- If I were focusing on the issue of New Jersey public television, that is not where I would focus. I think that is a distinct set of problems under this system, but I don't think it is a system-wide--

SENATOR STOCKMAN: With no reflection on you and your efforts, in terms of trying to put pressure legitimately through, more the legal system and the FCC than anything else, the tide has really turned further against you in terms of any success in that direction. Isn't that so, because of the changes in the Federal law and the withdrawal of regulatory authority and responsibility?

MS. STERN: At the very moment, I suggest strongly not using the Federal Communications Commission and legal methods, because I don't think that under our present system it is very effective.

SENATOR STOCKMAN: And, if you had limitations -- and, of course, other speakers talk about what poor coverage we've been getting, and there seems to be a consensus on the panel that it is not very good -- again, not that it wouldn't be even worse, perhaps, but for your organization's efforts-- In that sense, the need for something, on an ongoing basis, is probably greater today than ever before for the citizens of New Jersey.

MS. STERN: Yes, but I am not suggesting that the new system would not be for the citizens of New Jersey. I am suggesting it would be designed with them in mind, to fill the need particularly that they have as a result of the place in which they are and the times in which they live.

SENATOR STOCKMAN: Can you give us anything further in terms of how that would be accomplished, or could be accomplished?

MS. STERN: Well, the first step I would take if I were going to do this is, I would set up the kind of a commission that I suggested, to take a good, hard look at whether or not this kind of a system could be designed and could float economically. Certainly, you know, that is one of the most important questions, how it would be funded, and what it might look like, and what needs it--

SENATOR STOCKMAN: A task force, sort of? Are you talking about that?

MS. STERN: Yes, a task force? I had suggested this some years ago, and I must say it didn't go anywhere.

SENATOR STOCKMAN: To take a longer range look, rather than a committee with obvious limitations in terms of time and focus, and so on.

MS. STERN: Forgive me, I'm not suggesting that it be made up of legislators. I would suggest it be made up of leading individuals from all walks of life within the State.

SENATOR STOCKMAN: And if coincidentally there were a rare one who was a legislator, you might put up with him, or--

MS. STERN: Well, that's okay.

SENATOR GAGLIANO: No, demand the resignation.

MS. STERN: What I'm really seeking to do is to isolate this from the political arena. I think that is one of the problems. I think you don't want this system, whether new or old, in the political arena. I don't think it belongs there.

SENATOR GAGLIANO: Are you talking about, for example, a mini Channel 13?

MS. STERN: No.

SENATOR GAGLIANO: Are you suggesting that is sort of an autonomous board or group, that they collect money from whatever source they can get it from, and they advertise for it?

MS. STERN: In a system-- Systemization-wise, I would suggest it be a mini Channel 13. For instance, I would set up a board of citizens. I would hire an executive director or vice president.

SENATOR GAGLIANO: That's what I mean. From an administrative standpoint, a mini 13?

MS. STERN: Yes, I would. I think it is a fairly well-insulated system. It has its problems, but it derives funding from the State of New York and it derives funding from elsewhere.

SENATOR STOCKMAN: I misunderstood you. I thought you were suggesting that perhaps the answer is to create a task force or a commission of prestigious people to take a look. To continue with what we are doing, tinker with it, arguably a bit, set up a commission to look at this broad question of whether, in 1986 in New Jersey, with the realities of what very high frequency stations are doing north and south of us, with the realization of the coming of the age of other technologies -- cable TV, etc. -- to have them look at how we can better spend our money to accomplish something that is a very real need.

MS. STERN: I was just speaking to both of you about two different things. Yes, I am suggesting that.

SENATOR STOCKMAN: All right.

MS. STERN: And two, down the road, the kind of thing that I would be interested in seeing them--

SENATOR GAGLIANO: See, I drew from her the answer that you are going to deal with for six months.

MS. STERN: Well, but sometimes it is necessary to go through all that. But what I would be looking toward -- when you say mini Channel 13, maybe that limits it too much -- but what I would be looking toward is some kind of autonomous corporation, which could go to a variety of sources for funding, and would operate in this isolated fashion.

SENATOR JACKMAN: Whoa, whoa, whoa, just wait for a moment. And you want it to be public-- Let's for example go to Exxon and say: Okay, we want, like, a half a million dollars for your program, and then we are going to investigate toxic waste. And, oh jeez, we got to go to Exxon. We blow 500,000. To me, that is a lot of baloney. I'm still uptight when I worry about them kind of things coming in publicly, and then you can't be objective. You're not, not being disrespectful now.

MS. STERN: Well, sure.

SENATOR JACKMAN: See, you don't have the legislators involved anymore. You are going to do it as the executive director, and that so-called autonomous committee, and then if you get a half a million dollars from Exxon, or half a million dollars from some company -- chemical company--

SENATOR STOCKMAN: They become less autonomous.

SENATOR JACKMAN: Then, all of a sudden, these, you know, legislators say: You know, we ought to have an investigation. Uh, we can't do that.

MS. STERN: I agree with you, but what I am suggesting you do is that you have a wide enough variety of funders that you are not--

SENATOR JACKMAN: I still like--

MS. STERN: --as vulnerable as--

SENATOR JACKMAN: --the government to put some cash up where their mouth is.

SENATOR STOCKMAN: Are you aware of any support for this proposal elsewhere, either among legislators or among -- in the Executive Branch of New Jersey government?

MS. STERN: I really haven't floated this anywhere, other than among some of my own--

SENATOR STOCKMAN: You saved it for us today.

MS. STERN: --board members, who I think are enthusiastic about this proposal. You know, that's really the way I would proceed because I think that, you know, in the next 10 years, you really need to fulfill certain other kinds of functions.

SENATOR STOCKMAN: Any other questions?

SENATOR GAGLIANO: Senator Laskin is right again.

MS. STERN: I've never met Senator Laskin before, so I--

SENATOR JACKMAN: Don't say that too loud.

SENATOR LASKIN: But I'm sure if you're not in politics you would agree with most of what I have to say. It is only those in politics who disagree with me.

SENATOR GAGLIANO: No, that's not true. A lot of people disagree with you, in and out of politics.

SENATOR STOCKMAN: Thirty-nine out of 40, more often than not downstairs.

SENATOR JACKMAN: No, I agree with him sometimes.

SENATOR STOCKMAN: Thirty-eight; I stand corrected. Any other questions for Ms. Stern? (negative response)

We are going to be interested in your statement, which you are going to submit to us.

MS. STERN: Yes.

SENATOR STOCKMAN: Thank you very much.

MS. STERN: Thank you.

SENATOR STOCKMAN: I thank everyone else for their attention. The hearing is adjourned.

Our next hearing date is February 18.

(HEARING CONCLUDED)

APPENDIX



Center for Public Policy Research

Roger N. Johnson, Ph.D.
Professor of Psychology

Joseph LeMay, Ph.D.
Professor of Political Science

Sebastian Raciti, Ph.D.
Professor of Economics



505 Ramapo Valley Road, Mahwah, New Jersey 07430 • 201-825-2800

SUMMARY OF POINTS MADE ABOUT NEW JERSEY TELEVISION NEWS COVERAGE

Senate Legislative Oversight Committee Hearings, Jan. 29, 1986

1. New Jersey Nightly News continues to be the only major TV news program which focuses on New Jersey. Its coverage reaches all corners of the state and presents more news in more detail about New Jersey affairs.

2. New York stations WCBS-2, WNBC-4, WNEW-5, WABC-7, and WPIX-11 continue to have little or no coverage of New Jersey news. When they were monitored in 1984, these stations collectively devoted about two per cent of their half-hour evening news broadcasts (one hour in the case of WNEW-TV) to New Jersey news. In 1986, the figure has dropped to about one per cent. These stations still present about one New Jersey story every other day as they did in 1984, but the stories now tend to be shorter. Most of the N.J. stories observed in 1986 dealt with fire and crime. On one day (a total of three hours of metropolitan area "local" news), there was not a single news story about New Jersey on any station.

3. The antenna for WOR-TV Channel 9 (New Jersey's only VHF commercial station) is still located in New York City. This allows the station to reach portions of Long Island, Connecticut, and New York State at the expense of southern New Jersey which does not get the signal. WOR's coverage of N.J. news is far more extensive than any New York station, but it lags well behind New Jersey Nightly News. While NJNN concentrates almost exclusively on New Jersey, WOR-TV is more regional, national, and international in emphasis. WOR news tends to focus on the metropolitan New York region. The coverage on NJNN is more state-wide although there is somewhat more emphasis on central New Jersey.

4. About two thirds of the news (not counting sports, weather, entertainment, promotions, previews, etc.) on WOR News 9 Primetime comes from out of state. WOR presents 37% New York news, 33% New Jersey news, 23% national news, and 7% international news.

5. WOR frequently airs general interest segments such as movie reviews or health features. Stories which are not about New Jersey (AIDS, V.D., teen pregnancy, depression, etc.) often use film clips from N.J. for illustration. Stories about New York are sometimes filmed from N.J. For example, on Jan. 17 WOR ran a story about the lighting on the Empire State Building, but noted that the footage was taken in Englewood.

6. New Jersey Nightly News carries a fairly extensive business report of 2 - 3 minutes every evening. WOR does so only in its noon news broadcast. The nightly business roundup is not very dramatic compared to breaking news, but the information is vital to those interested in commerce, banking, industry, real estate, etc. around the state.

7. To millions of viewers outside of New Jersey, WOR-TV is considered a Superstation. Its signal is transmitted by Galaxy 1 satellite to hundreds of stations all over the country (Florida alone has over 70 cable systems which carry WOR-TV). This service is sold by Eastern Microwave of Syracuse, N.Y. which advertises WOR as a New York City station. WOR-TV is also carried to several million more households as far west as Akron, Ohio by microwave transmission. The fact that WOR-TV is a New Jersey station is not widely known, and even the New York Times referred to WOR-TV as a New York station in a recent front page article. In its news broadcasts, WOR makes little effort to identify itself with the state.

8. There is about four times as much New Jersey news on NJNN compared to WOR News 9 Primetime. The average NJNN program has 937 seconds (15.6 minutes) of New Jersey news while WOR averages only 244 seconds (4.1 minutes).

9. There are about 2.5 times as many New Jersey stories on NJNN compared to WOR. NJNN stories are about a third longer and contain more depth and detail of reporting. NJNN averages 11 New Jersey stories per program compared to 4.4 for WOR. Mean duration of N.J. stories is 85 seconds for NJNN and 56 seconds for WOR.

10. New Jersey Nightly News tends to do more in-depth investigative reporting. For example, on Jan. 23 it carried a segment almost 6 minutes long on funding cuts for the mentally retarded and the problems faced by mental health institutions.

11. Since 1984, WOR has increased its New York news coverage by 20% and decreased its New Jersey coverage by 25%. It now has more New York news than New Jersey news (37% compared to 33%).

12. About 78% of the news stories carried on NJNN are not covered by News 9 Primetime. On the average, only 2 items per program are duplicated by WOR.7.

13. Although there is 22% duplication, the duplicated stories are often treated very differently. For example, both stations covered a fire in East Orange on Jan. 9. WOR's story focused on the flames and lasted only 20 sec. NJNN's story lasted 2.5 minutes and went into detail about efforts to relocate families and the process by which destroyed businesses could get economic assistance to resume operations. As another example, both stations covered the inauguration of Governor Kean, but NJNN devoted over 11.5 minutes to the events compared to only 2.8 for WOR. On the same day, WOR devoted almost as much time to a story about a grocery cart falling on a pedestrian at New York's Port Authority. It devoted more time to the Queens Boro President than to the Governor of N.J.

14. There is much better coverage of New Jersey sports news on NJNN compared to WOR, particularly non-professional sports. In its professional sports telecasts, WOR carries only New York teams (Knicks, Islanders, and Rangers) and excludes New Jersey teams (Nets and Devils).

15. WOR-TV has longer weather segments than NJNN (a mean of 131 seconds per program for WOR compared to 103 for NJNN). But WOR has more national weather than "local" weather (36% compared to 34%). The other 29% of WOR weather reports involves fluff and clowning around. The weather report on NJNN is clearly meant for New Jersey residents. It breaks down the state into northern, central, and southern sections, and provides residents with the only accurate N.J. weather forecasts available on television. WOR does not distinguish different regions of New Jersey and presents weather information which applies only to the New York area.

16. New Jersey Nightly News continues to be the best television news program about New Jersey affairs available to New Jersey residents. Its choice of stories, its in-depth reporting, and its state-wide coverage offer a valuable service not available on commercial television. NJNN helps provide a state identity and also helps improve the state's image. As long as it remains independent, free of bias, and free of political influence, it will be a valuable asset to the state.

17. Although New Jersey is one of the most heavily wired cable TV states in the country, there is nothing on cable TV which provides regular and comprehensive state-wide coverage of New Jersey affairs. Perhaps the main benefit from cable TV is that New Jersey Network programs receive more exposure and better reception, particularly for those who live in weak UHF signal areas. Some cable companies (such as U.A. Columbia in Oakland) carry considerable local programming on their public access channel. Others (such as Group W in Mahwah) seldom or never present any local programming.

Roger N. Johnson
Center for Public Policy Research
Ramapo College
Mahwah, New Jersey

January 29, 1986

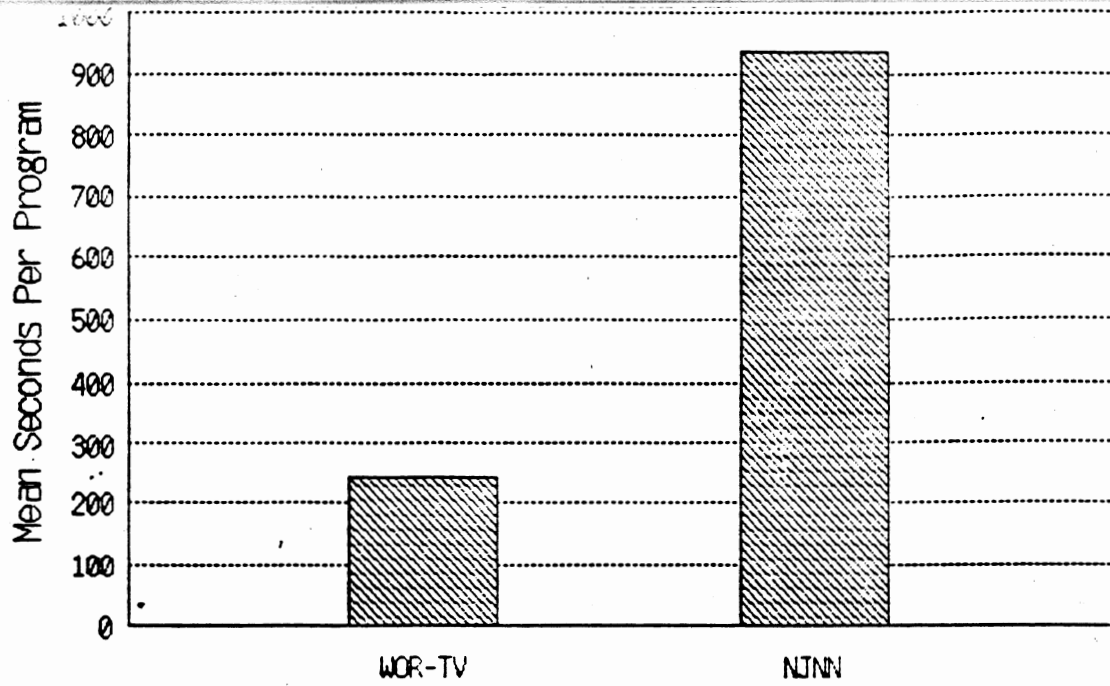


Figure 1: A comparison of coverage of New Jersey news by WOR-TV News 9 Primetime vs. New Jersey Nightly News. NJNN has about four times as much New Jersey news as WOR-TV (about 15.6 minutes per program for NJNN compared to only 4.1 minutes for WOR-TV). This analysis excludes sports, weather, entertainment, previews, updates, station breaks, promotions, and commercials.

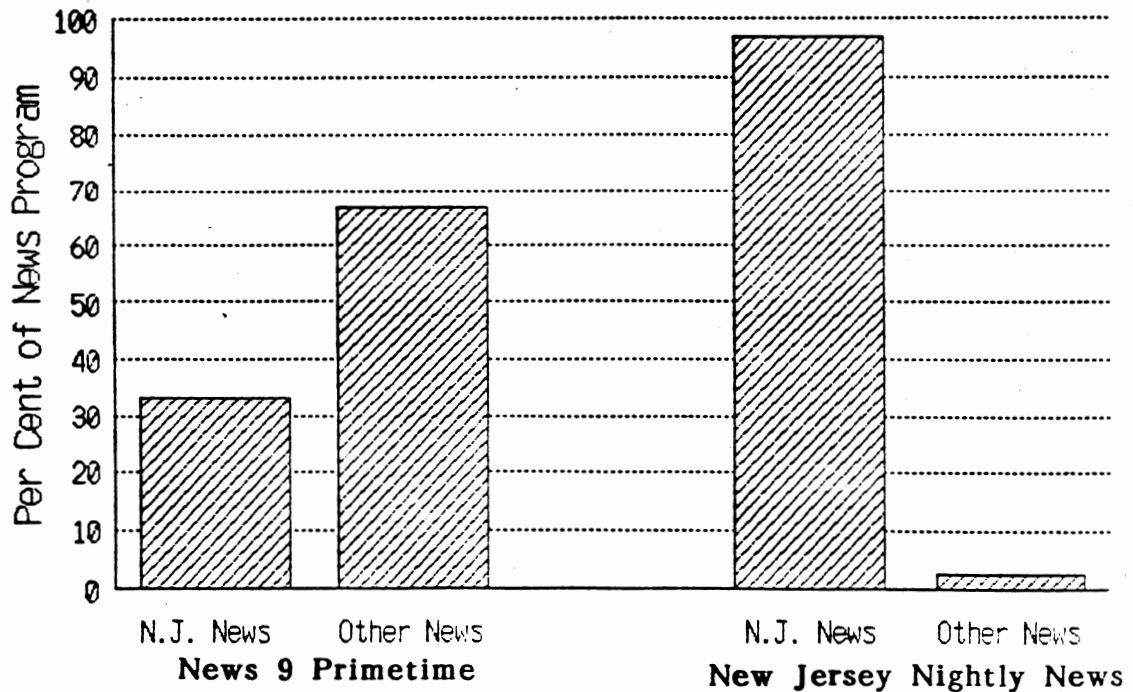


FIGURE 2: A comparison of New Jersey news vs. "other" news on WOR-TV News 9 Primetime vs. New Jersey Nightly News. Almost all of the news on NJNN deals with the state, but only one-third of the news on WOR-TV concerns New Jersey (the other two-thirds is national, international, and New York news). This analysis excludes sports, weather, entertainment, previews, updates, station breaks, promotions, and commercials.

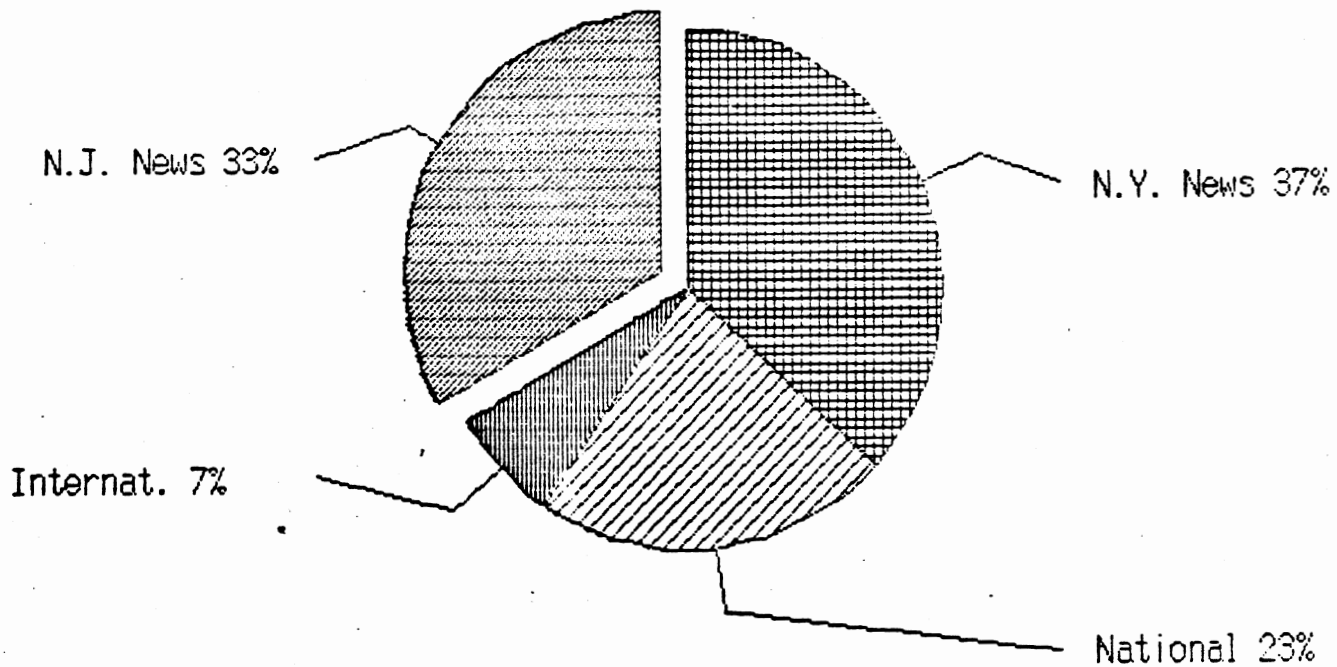


FIGURE 3: A profile of news on WOR-TV News 9 Primetime. WOR-TV news is roughly one-third New Jersey news, one-third New York news, and one-third national and international news.

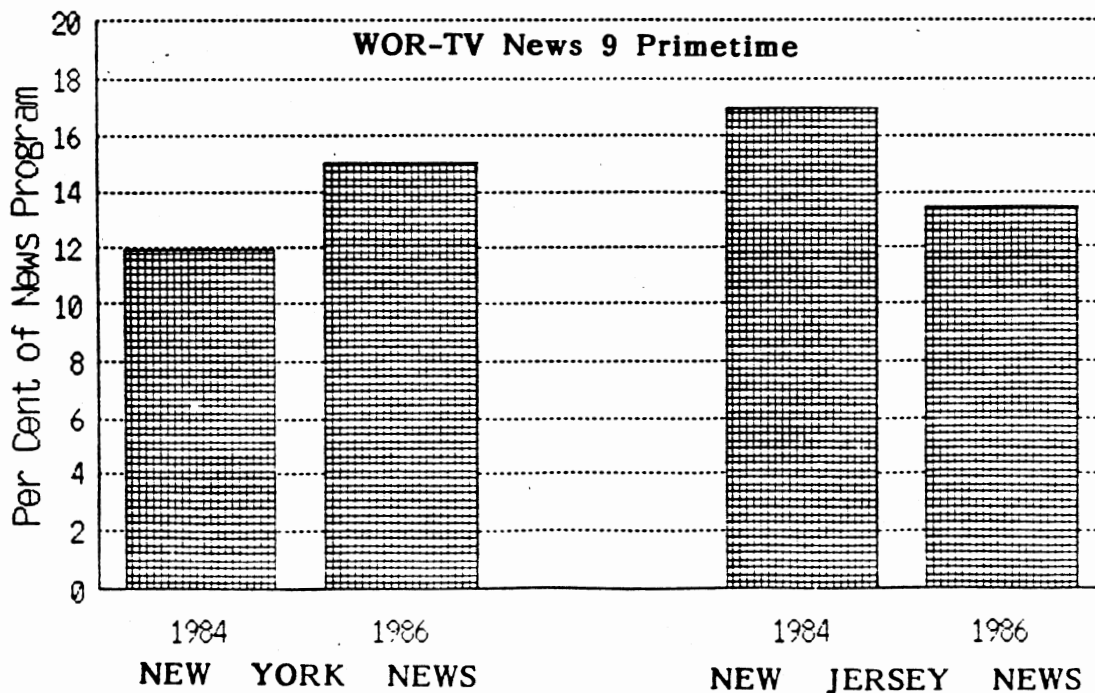


FIGURE 4: Changes in news coverage by WOR-TV over the last two years. Since 1984, WOR-TV has increased its New York coverage by 20% while decreasing its New Jersey coverage by 25%. New Jersey's only commercial VHF station now presents more New York news than New Jersey news.

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TESTIMONY OF PROFESSOR MARSHA STERN
Wednesday January 29, 1986 before the
Senate Legislative Oversight Committee

Thank you for inviting me to speak with you today. In my position as Assistant Professor in the Department of Theatre Arts and Speech at Rutgers University Newark and as consultant to the N.J. Coalition for Fair Broadcasting, I am in a unique position to try to help you to understand the structure and problems in operating a State wide UHF television Network. I will try to make my remarks brief and to permit you to question me as you wish.

The New Jersey Coalition for Fair Broadcasting has been monitoring the activities of television stations serving New Jersey residents for over ten years. The Coalition's membership consists of statewide organizations including the New Jersey Education Association, the League of Women Voters, the New Jersey Bar Association, the New Jersey Council of Churches among others. A complete list of membership organizations has been provided.

Our goal has been to provide better television service to the residents of New Jersey who for

many years were one of two states without VHF commercial service. We have worked hard to achieve coverage of New Jersey by out of state commercial VHF stations and to bring a full service commercial VHF licensee to the State. We have met with a good deal of success in this area -- there is now regular news coverage of the state by all commercial VHF stations in New York City and Philadelphia -- with each of these licensees maintaining news bureaus and news personnel in New Jersey daily. WOR-TV Channel 9, as you are also aware, is now fully licensed to the State and operates as New Jersey's only full service commercial VHF station. We are currently working to ensure that such service remains and continues to expand in the State.

As a result of these efforts, considerable change has taken place in the total configuration of New Jersey state wide service. New Jersey Public Television has certainly been affected by this change. Cable Television service has also grown and this, too, has had an enormous effect on the programming needs of an increasingly sophisticated audience.

New Jersey Public Television began service to the State with a unique goal -- the goal of providing local coverage to a state not otherwise served. This was also in an era in which television was in its

infancy -- both as a technology and as a business. With that goal in mind, our legislature believed that it would be best for all if the stations functioned as part of the state -- deriving funding and day to day guidance from the state. And perhaps in those days, that was the best alternative for a network in its infancy.

As change came about in the television industry, New Jersey public television tried to be more competitive with other stations beginning to serve the residents of the state. However, unlike its competitors who were operating under a commercial system, the Network's day to day operations were guided by State regulations. The bureaucracy of state control added to the problems of adapting to a competitive system of rapid technological advancement and complex programming strategies.

But to discuss all of that would be to try to account for history. Rather, I would like to spend what time I can by looking to the future. What more can this important resource become? How can it continue to serve the citizens of New Jersey, to make them proud and to grow with changing times?

New Jersey Public Television is too valuable a resource to sell. Once gone, it can never be

recovered. In a State with still little indigenous television service, there is no price tag great enough for this potential treasure. But I do not believe that it should be permitted to continue to try to be something it cannot be. It must find its own niche in the changing technological and informational environment.

How can this be done? First, the stations must achieve as much independence from the State as possible. It must be an independent corporation with funding from as wide a variety of sources as possible. Second, it must decide what informational and entertainment goals it can fulfill. It cannot be Channel 2,4,7,5,9,11, 3 6 or 10. It cannot compete with the economic and structural resources of the network owned and operated stations or group-owned independents emanating from New York City or Philadelphia. It cannot even compete with Channel 13 -- the flagship station of the Public Broadcasting Service. It must find another identity which will make it special for its constituents. Like the cable stations with which I think it can be competitive, New Jersey Public Television must find a particular set of interest groups and serve them.

New Jersey State Library

Any such service must be set up with an eye toward what available resources there might be to sustain this service. Why not for instance convene

a Statewide Council to discuss New Jersey's Special Communications Needs and to see what vacuum exists that New Jersey Network might fill? Why not test out the idea of running an arts and entertainment channel devoted totally to good movies, concerts and the like which might be unavailable on a regular basis elsewhere? Or, a business channel which would provide up to the minute information on N.J.'s business climate?

These are but a few ideas that come to mind. I have thought about this and would be pleased to assist you in any future plans. New Jersey Network must change and grow with the times. It can be a showcase for New Jersey only if it is permitted to grow and change.

For further information, please contact Professor Marsha Stern (201) 648- 5119, Bradley Hall, Department of Theatre Arts and Speech, Rutgers University, Newark, N.J. 07102.