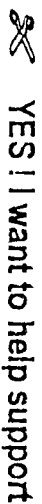


DON'T LET PUBLIC BROADCASTING BE NEWT-ERED!

Contact your Representatives and Senators in Washington DC immediately and let them know you support the mission of public broadcasting. Reach them through the capitol switchboard at **(202) 224-3121**.

Tell them you want public broadcasting to be permanently funded !!

Contact public broadcasting management and government representatives and advocate greater democratic structure and program diversity. Contact WTTW at **(312) 583-5000**.



YES !! I want to help support

Democracy in Public Broadcasting

in its efforts to make public broadcasting open, accountable and representative.

- I would like to attend DPB meetings
- I would like to help plan DPB events

Enclosed is my donation of \$ _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

PLEASE MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO :

Democracy in Public Broadcasting

4957 Hull St #1E Skokie, IL 60077

Phone/Fax: ~~(773) 679-8332~~ (573) 679-8332 Email: astiege@artic.edu

MISSION STATEMENT

Democracy in Public Broadcasting

We believe that our American democracy depends on the free expression of the ideas and values of the diverse communities that make up our society.

We believe that, while the commercial media serves a valuable function, its need to make a profit narrows and restricts the form and content of the material it presents.

We believe there is a vital need for local public broadcast media and, because television is our most pervasive and influential communications medium, we are particularly concerned about public television.

We believe that public television should see its mission as providing what commercial television fails to provide: a voice for the diversity of viewpoints in our community and a forum for debate and discussion untainted by commercial interests. As the 1967 Carnegie Commission report - which led to the formation of the Corporation for Public Broadcasting and PBS - stated, "public television should be a voice for groups that may otherwise be unheard," and a place for "debate and controversy."

We believe that WTTW - Chicago's public television station - has failed in this mission. This is reflected in the lack of diversity in both its programming and its self-perpetuating board of directors.

It is for these reasons the Coalition for Democracy in Public Broadcasting has been formed. We represent a broad range of citizen and community activists, media critics, independent producers and writers, and public television viewers.

Our goals are to be a permanent, local independent body able to respond quickly, in a collective manner, to WTTW's lack of public openness and narrow programming spectrum that shuts out and censors diverse voices.

We will challenge the current programming spectrum and management goals of WTTW and their failure to live up to the mandate of public television. To meet these goals we will educate the viewing public, apply pressure to the station's management and advocate for greater diversity.

WHY IS THERE PUBLIC BROADCASTING?

The broadcast spectrum is a national resource. Public broadcasting is like a public park - where ideas can truly flow freely. And like a forest preserve where minds can run wild. Land set aside where the public can participate in open discussions without fear that their ideas may be censored into extinction.

In a country as culturally rich and diverse as the US, there needs to be a place where a wide range of ideas and opinions can be shared - without market restraints. A public sphere where divergent and diverse views can be heard and seen - without profit concerns.

Commercial TV and radio stations provide us with news and entertainment - but their main job is to turn a profit. Corporate advertisers will always be more concerned with how much bang they can get from their buck than with quality viewing. In fact, programs are developed, shown and canceled solely according to their ability to attract advertisers. This overlapping of purpose between program developers and advertisers restricts the free flow of ideas and, in practice, censors and narrows the spectrum of debate.

**Without an unfettered
exchange of ideas,
democracy will cease to
exist, replaced by the rule
of a few.**

In the Beginning...

The corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB) was envisioned as a way to expand and stimulate communication within the public sphere, financially independent and free from market constraints. Its mission was defined in the 1967 report to Congress by the Carnegie commission, which called for a public broadcasting system that would :

- ✧ "help us to see America in all its diversity",
- ✧ serve as a "forum for controversy and debate" and
- ✧ "provide a voice for groups that may otherwise be unheard" -

**A PLACE WHERE COMMUNITIES
COULD GET INVOLVED AND HELP
PLAN PROGRAMMING THAT
WOULD REPRESENT AND SERVE
THEIR RESIDENTS.**

But since its inception, the perpetual politicization and manipulation of the CPB funding process has shackled the content of public broadcasting and moved the system further away from its original goals.

What We Can Do

Now is the time to renew our commitment to the original mission of public broadcasting. Together, we can :

- ✧ Create an independent public broadcasting trust funded by a portion of the FCC licensing fees, to make a system free from partisan attacks, capricious legislation, and corporate influence.
- ✧ Demand a mission statement written into law which ensures an accountable system with democratic structures that truly belongs to the people.
- ✧ Demand a representative Board of Directors, with a democratic nomination and election process.
- ✧ Encourage public attendance and comment at Board of Directors and community advisory council meetings.
- ✧ Demand public access to financial data and letters from the public.

At stake in the current debate is not merely the "value and cost" of public broadcasting, but also the substance and caliber of our democratic institutions; our commitment to an open, unfettered exchange of ideas, and an expansive cultural arena. The goal of the attack on public broadcasting is to narrow the public sphere to a limited range of accepted ideas.

Democracy in Public Broadcasting Coalition History

March 1993 - The first mass meeting is held at the Center for New Information in Chicago

June 1993 - Coalition representatives speak at the quarterly meeting of the WTTW Board Programming Committee. The Board's representational deficiencies are discussed, and soon afterward, the only Latino and another African-American are added to the 45-person Board.

July 1993 - Coalition organizes a meeting between 14 community representatives and WTTW's Sr. VPs for programming and public relations.

September 1993 - WTTW schedules two of the programming requests made by the Coalition : the weekly prime time news *America's American Monitor* and the monthly series *We Do the Work*, television for and about working people.

October 1993 - WTTW interrupts its schedule with over 40 hours of home shopping broadcasts.

February, 1994 - WTTW's *Evening* magazine begins printing letters to the editor for the first time in over 15 years.

April 1994 - WTTW schedules another program requested by the Coalition, the weekly human rights series *Rights and Wrongs*, hosted by Chantyne Hunter-Gault

May 1994 - The Coalition, in conjunction with the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, holds a presentation and panel discussion. This meeting is the first in which the public could ask questions of WTTW in public since the 1970's.

July 1994 - The Coalition files a complaint with the FCC in response to WTTW's home shopping broadcasts. Legal representation is provided pro-bono by the Media Access Project and the Communication University Institute for Public Representation Citizen's Communication Center.

Coalition Organizational Endorsers (May '95)

Coalition for New Priorities (umbrella endorsement w/ 100 organizations)
Operation PUSH Labor Beat Greater Chicago Citizens for the Arts
UE Dist. #11 Americans for Democratic Action Coalition Latino
Hollywood Coalition Ve. PUS Campaigning Troutman Press Farmers:
and Accuracy in Reporting (FAIR) Illinois Peace Action US-Japan
Committee on Racial Justice Green Network National Assembly of
Religious Women Africa Network Chicago Newspaper Guild
CACOSH North Shore Peace Initiative N/PO Women's Action
Organization (WAO) Shalom Project (15 area temples and 5 Jewish
organizations) Interfaith Prisoners of Conscience Project Religious
Taskforce to Oppose Increased Legalized Gambling (14 groups including
several major area-wide religious jurisdictions) South Austin Coalition
Community Council (umbrella endorsement with 15 organizations)