

FAIRNESS DOCTRINE

TUESDAY, MARCH 5, 1968

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
SPECIAL SUBCOMMITTEE ON INVESTIGATIONS,
COMMITTEE ON INTERSTATE AND FOREIGN COMMERCE,
Washington D.C.

The special subcommittee met at 9:30 a.m., pursuant to notice, in room 2123, Rayburn House Office Building, Hon. Harley O. Staggers (chairman) presiding.

The CHAIRMAN. The committee will come to order.

I would like to make a brief announcement before we get started.

Mr. Don McGannon of Westinghouse will not be with us because of a death in the family. We are very sorry for him.

Also, I will have to leave soon, as I have to go to the Rules Committee in a few moments. I will return as soon as possible, however.

We welcome each of you here this morning. It is certainly a distinguished panel.

The business of this subcommittee for the next 2 days will be a consideration of some of the most significant issues in broadcast regulation: The fairness doctrine, the equal time requirements of section 315 of the Communications Act, broadcast editorializing, and the question of personal attacks carried over the airwaves.

The House Committee on Interstate and Foreign Commerce has the duty and responsibility under section 136 of the Reorganization Act of 1946 to exercise legislative oversight or continuous watchfulness of the execution by the administrative agencies of any laws, the subject matter of which is within the jurisdiction of the committee. Communications is one of such subject matters. House Resolution 168, 90th Congress, authorizes this special subcommittee to make investigations and studies concerning communications and the Federal Communications Act of 1934, as amended.

We are well aware that some of the panelists represent parties in various matters before the courts. I want to emphasize at the outset that our purpose here is not to focus on individual court actions or FCC decisions, except insofar as they bear on the larger issues before us.

The format of our exploration of these issues will be that of a panel discussion. I would like to say more about both the issues and our format in a few minutes; but, first, it gives me great pleasure to welcome our distinguished moderator, Dean Barrow, and the panel members who are with us today. In a few minutes, I will ask Dean Barrow to introduce each of the participants to the subcommittee.

We have prepared and distributed to the subcommittee a series of biographical briefs of the participants. This will also be inserted into the record of these proceedings. (See pp. 7-14.)