

On the other hand, there is no need to sit still. Traditionally, section 315 has worked least well in presidential elections where invariably there are a dozen or more candidates. The suspension of 315 in 1960 was useful in permitting the so-called great debates, and I think it is useful to treat presidential campaigns differently than others by periodic suspensions of 315, subject to close congressional review.

A possible approach to the minor candidate problem would be to devise a policy of "differential equality of access," a doctrine that would recognize our predominant two-party system while giving all contenders some chance to be heard. "Differential equality of access" need not entail a complex rating system according to the size of the vote, the size of membership or the size of petition. It could simply state that major candidates get equal time, that minor candidates get equal time, but that the two categories do not get time equal to each other.

Broadcasters are correct in saying that the industry already bears a relatively large share of political program costs, and it would not be equitable if the industry were asked to assume the entire financial burden. Therefore, I agree with a proposal of former FCC Chairman E. William Henry, who suggested that the Internal Revenue Code be amended to give incentive to broadcasters to program free political time by permitting them to deduct from their taxable income not only out-of-pocket expenses of free broadcasts as they do now, but also to deduct at least a portion of the revenue lost.⁶

In this way, responsible broadcasters would benefit by serving the public at election time, and some of the burden would be distributed to the taxpayer.

One other proposal I would make would be to broaden the definition of a news program to include any joint or simultaneous appearances of major presidential candidates. This would give broadcasters the wider scope they seek to present such figures on the same program, including program series for the duration of a campaign. Recognition would thus be given to the special news quality of such appearances.

Minor candidates would not have to get equal treatment unless broadcasters decided their appearance was equally newsworthy.

This formula would have to be watched closely and if it worked successfully at the presidential level, it could be tried for other contests, but under controlled circumstances.

Perhaps radio and television have the potential to raise the level of political education and participation, as Dr. Stanton says, but so far the evidence is conflicting. Studies of the Survey Research Center at the University of Michigan⁷ show citizen interest in political involvement fluctuating during recent decades, while there was a tremendous increase in television coverage. Turnouts in presidential elections in 1952 to 1960 were higher than in 1944 and 1948, but not proportionately higher than in 1936 and 1940.

The voter turnout in 1956, deep in the television era, was less than 1 percentage point higher than in 1940. Moreover, there has been no significant increase in off-year congressional elections during the television era.

⁶ Address of E. William Henry before the Commonwealth Club of California, San Francisco, Jan. 15, 1965. Press Release, p. 14.

⁷ Angus Campbell, "Has Television Reshaped Politics?" *Columbia Journalism Review*, I (1962), pp. 10-13.