



PUBLIC NOTICE

83-484

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
1919 M STREET, N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20554

DA 96-2159

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UPDATED COMMENTS INVITED REGARDING THE PERSONAL ATTACK AND POLITICAL EDITORIAL RULES AND RELATED PLEADINGS

The Commission has received petitions from the Radio-Television News Directors Association ("RTNDA") and other parties urging the Commission to repeal the personal attack and political editorial rules, 47 C.F.R. §§ 73.1920, 73.1930. In addition, on September 17, 1996, RTNDA filed in the United States Court of Appeals for the D.C. Circuit a Petition for a Writ of Mandamus, asking the Court to direct the Commission to act on a 1987 RTNDA petition seeking repeal of the rules. By this Public Notice, interested parties are invited to file updated comments in the Commission's pending rulemaking proceeding concerning the above-referenced rules.

By way of background, in 1983 the Commission proposed to repeal or modify the personal attack and political editorial rules. See Notice of Proposed Rulemaking, Gen. Docket 83-484, RM-3739, 48 Fed. Reg. 28295 (June 21, 1983). The Commission also sought comment on possible repeal of the rules insofar as they apply to cable systems. Comments were filed in the proceeding in 1983, but no Report and Order has been issued. On August 25, 1987, RTNDA and others filed a "Joint Petition for Expedited Rulemaking Action and for Clarification of Memorandum Opinion and Order Ending Enforcement of the Fairness Doctrine" ("Joint Petition"), urging the Commission to: (1) issue a Report and Order in General Docket 83-484 repealing the personal attack and political editorial rules; and/or (2) clarify that in light of the decision to end enforcement of the fairness doctrine, in In re Complaint of Syracuse Peace Council Against Television Station WTVH, Syracuse, New York, 2 FCC Rcd. 5043 (1987), recon. denied, 3 FCC 2d 2035 (1988), aff'd sub nom. Syracuse Peace Council v. FCC, 867 F.2d 654 (D.C. Cir. 1989), cert. denied, 493 U.S. 1019 (1990) ("Syracuse Peace Council"), the personal attack and political editorial rules will no longer be applied to broadcast licensees. On January 22, 1990, RTNDA and four other parties filed another petition, renewing the request that the Commission repeal the personal attack and political editorial rules.

In view of the length of time that has passed since conclusion of the pleading cycle in General Docket No. 83-484, and in light of the Commission's subsequent decision to end enforcement of the fairness doctrine as described in the 1987 RTNDA petition, we believe it is appropriate to update the record in this proceeding by affording interested parties an opportunity to file additional comments in General Docket No. 83-484 concerning the Commission's proposal to repeal the rules. Comments must be filed on or before February 10, 1997, and reply comments must be filed by March 12, 1997. To file formally in this proceeding, participants must file an original and four copies of all comments, reply comments, and supporting comments. All comments should reference General Docket No. 83-484 and should be addressed to: Office of the

Secretary, Federal Communications Commission, Washington, D.C. 20554. The full text of the submissions are available for viewing and copying in the Public Reference Room, Room 239, 1919 M Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20554. Copies may also be purchased from the Commission's copy contractor, International Transcription Service ((202) 857-3800).

By the Chief, Mass Media Bureau