

I oppose loosening the rules designed to promote and protect diversity of media ownership. These rules were adopted to ensure that the public would receive a diverse range of viewpoints from the media, and not simply the opinions of a handful of media conglomerates.

We seem to be tending, in many, many of our social and economic institutions, toward "big and powerful." Always, in history, this has also meant "insulated from public opinion, and unaccountable". A recent sorry example is the Catholic Church, where clerical isolation and an attitude of closed procedures have led to a tragic upheaval over priest's sexual abuse of children. You have already limited the possibilities open to very small local stations, which could generate diversity of viewpoints on the local level. The Public TV newshour is partially sponsored by Archer Daniels Midland, an privately held and extremely powerful company recently accused of international price fixing in the vegetable oils market. I cannot trust PBS, therefore, to give me impartial reporting on agricultural issues.

A genuine democracy will not do well with ANY type of increasing concentrations of power and ownership--in wealth, in land, in commerce, in social groups, in a military-industrial complex. If anything, the rules should bust up ownership concentrations in the media, and encourage more locally owned newspapers, TV, radio, and Internet-based information sources. The public consists of the common people, and in this case their thoughts and opinions. This public is supposed to (in the traditional values of our country), exert a collective wisdom, distilled from a maximally diverse input of information and ideas. If you do not believe in that fundamental point, you do not believe in Democracy, and in the hereafter you will have to account for your fall from faith to Franklin, Jefferson, Madison, Washington, Jackson, Abraham Lincoln, and all those others who tower so far above you in vision and courage that, apparently, you can hardly remember them and how they began our enterprise.

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