pr reporter

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GMA & AMI INVOKE FAIRNESS DOCTRINE AGAINST NBC IN CONTROVERSY OVER "WHAT IS THIS THING CALLED FOOD?" GMA SPONSORS NATIONWIDE MEDIA BRIEFINGS

Grocery Manufacturers of America (GMA) and American Meat Institute (AMI) have submitted a complaint under the FCC Fairness Doctrine against NBC for the airing on Sept. 8 of the program "What Is This Thing Called Food?." George W. Koch, CEO of GMA said legal action was taken "because of what we believe to be the network's palpable failure to provide a reasonable and fair balance in the presentation of the complex issues involved in this documentary."

GMA claims the issue NBC unfairly presented is that our national food supply during the last thirty years has become seriously or potentially hazardous to human health because of the use of chemical additives in the processing phase. NBC's Benjamin D. Raub, law dep't vp, told GMA the questions the program addressed were posed at the outset. "What is the (food) technology doing to our bodies? Are there hidden dangers in our food?" NBC argues no issue is posed as to whether technology is good or bad -- only questions are raised to be investigated.

Milwaukee and Pittsburgh were sites in Oct. and Nov. of GMA-sponsored media briefings on the health, quality and safety of the food supply. Scientists and nutritionists presented views on such issues as why the food industry continues to use food additives; why process meats require nitrites for product safety; whether the dietary intake of fiber should be increased; the rationale behind vitamin and mineral additives to processed foods. GMA plans to expand the seminars to 24 cities nationwide.

Koch told pr reporter, "Our purpose is not to obtain a news article or publicity while we are in the town hosting a briefing. Rather, it is to introduce the media in that city to a competent organization and credible industry and academic scientists they can talk to, as health, safety and quality issues arise." GMA is the major trade ass'n representing manufacturers and processors of food and non-food products sold in retail grocery outlets throughout the U.S. (See prr 8/23/76)

PUBLIC OPINION OF CARTER AS PERSON, AS PRESIDENT: SURVEY RESULTS CONTRAST WITH 51% POPULAR VOTE

Carter was elected by the slight majority of 51% of the popular vote. Opinion Research Corp. (ORC) survey results show from a nationwide sample of 1,011 adults polled Nov. 5-7 that Carter will take office with more public support than the 51% figure indicates. When asked, "How much trust and confidence do you have in Jimmy Carter as a person?" 64% expressed a "great deal" or "fair amount" of trust. On Carter's ability to handle the job of President, 73% of the public believe he has "a lot" or a "fair amount" of ability for the job. But with respect to their personal situation, people are less optimistic. Only a third expect any improvement under a Carter administration, while 59% think their personal situation will stay "pretty much the same as it is."

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