Dear [Name]:

It is our opinion that the social revolution now in progress in the southern states of America is receiving insufficient news coverage in our major media of communication. We regard this editorial oversight as a serious disservice to our nation and ask that you consider the matter carefully, and take appropriate steps to secure adequate and informed coverage, lest the American public remain in ignorance of the true nature of this most important development.

At a recent hearing in Washington before a citizens' committee, of which we who sign this letter are members, we were shocked to hear vivid testimony from civil rights leaders indicating that in many southern cities significant events have gone all but unnoticed in the national press, and in major radio and television newscasts, and that not infrequently too-brief coverage has distorted facts.

Testimony indicated that the integration movement is marked currently by largely unreported lack of police protection for peaceful demonstrators, by police acquiescence in violence, and police brutality. Arrests have totalled over 5,000 since February, 1960. Courts are bringing absurd charges. Sentences following legal civil rights activities are often, we feel, grossly excessive. High bond and bail, very likely in the total amount of millions of dollars since the Greensboro sit-ins, have resulted in long imprisonments in jails while civil rights leaders await bonding money, which often cannot be raised through surety companies and must be secured privately.

We were told of police brutality in jails. We heard as well that police in many states now use police dogs to attack civil rights demonstrators and intimidate Negro neighborhoods. This resort to dogs, we were informed, coincides with the new momentum in the civil rights struggle. Negro communities believe that the dogs have been trained to attack Negroes.
We learned as well of the murder of a Negro active in voter registration in Mississippi last September and regard this unnoticed killing as being as significant as a killing on the Berlin Wall. It is our conclusion that the American press, and our radio and television media, are underplaying a vital, dramatic story, its importance not open to question.

The voter registration campaign now going forward in the South deserves, we feel, your best attention. Much depends on its outcome. Registration workers may find themselves in very dangerous situations.

We are aware that coverage of scattered events, which taken together spell social revolution, is difficult. Ultimate dependence on local white reporters, many of whom may be sympathetic to the White Citizens Councils, is to us dubious, and we ask that you find ways to strengthen the impartiality of your news-gathering operation. May we suggest that in gathering information concerning civil rights, Negro reporters may often be better equipped, informed and oriented than white reporters?

In addition to yourself, we address this letter to Mr. William McAndrews, President of the National Broadcasting Company; etc.

We are confident that you, the leaders of the great American communications media, will realize the importance of the southern story and your obligation to bring it properly to public attention, and that your ingenuity, and power will surmount difficulties of coverage.

Sincerely,