

SIGHT AND SOUND by Ernest Kreiling

Jack Paar Finds Defender in Battle Against Press Giants

Jack Parr, knight-errant of the night air waves, is deserving of a little more serious attention as a television personality than he usually gets.

His recent foray into the sanctified bastions of the big city press in the United States shouldn't be passed off, as it has been, as the erratic rantings of a publicity seeking mediocrity and self-styled oracle.

The fact that he talks to about 8 million people in itself makes him a force to be reckoned with, whether we agree with him or not.

PAAR'S ASSAULTS on the metropolitan press contain two contributions of some value. In the first place he's bringing a spirit of inquiry and controversy to television that's been sorely lacking. Secondly he's trying to de-canonicalize one of our society's most sacred cows.

Radio and television have been so concerned with pleasing everyone and offending no one that they have contributed little to serious evaluations of some of the institutions of our free society. Television can take proud credit for excellent documentary presentations, but even these fact-ridden pieces are so carefully measured and so finely sifted that they usually lack stimulating flavor.

OF ALL important institutions today none has been so free to criticize the others and none has been so insulated from criticism itself as has the metropolitan press of the country.

Where stations, networks and sponsors have feared to tread, Jack Paar, often naively to be sure, has rushed in.

BY MOST ANY standard

television is recognized as a social force second only to the traditional trinity of home, school, and church. But few large daily papers pay any attention to it beyond the level of program listings and chit-chat.

If these papers were truly to serve their traditional function as a watchdog of society they would pay more serious attention to the vast broadcasting industry. As natural commercial competitors you would think they would rejoice in such a role as well as on it.

IT'S INTERESTING to note that community newspaper such as the Torrance Herald, where responsibility rests closer to the readers, has been willing to run these columns which attempt to cast some light on television as a force in our lives. Very few of the metropolitan papers concern

themselves with this aspect of television or radio.

Newspapers, like television networks, respond to the public will, but it's hard for our will to penetrate the lofty towers of the large and influential papers.

Jack Parr hasn't been afraid to try, and to the degree that he's stirred up a little thinking about the free press in the United States, he's doing a job television should be doing more of in many areas.

RETIRED TEACHERS TO MEET

Retired teachers of the area will meet Tuesday for luncheon at the Elks Club in Redondo Beach.

Donations of unwrapped Christmas gifts for children are being asked of the teachers, it was reported.

A program of special music by members of the Redondo High School music department has been arranged by Wallace Roblee, music chairman of the teachers' group. Tom Wilson will be in charge of the musicians.

Reservations for the luncheon may be made by calling Maud Smith at FR 2-2357 or Marie Gustafson, EA 2-0419.

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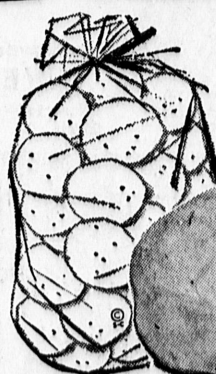
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