

## Free Press, not enough

Listen to the ROOM 2B podcast **Free Press, not enough** at mrreview.org and complete the following exercise. Be prepared to discuss with your classmates.

1. Jefferson wrote, "The only security of all is in a free press." Explain. Do you agree?
2. Investigate the Hutchins Commission (1947). Apply their findings to today's media. What are the strengths and weaknesses of our modern media? How can our media be improved?
3. Would you favor a restoration of the Fairness Doctrine and the Equal Time Rule? Should our contemporary media be seen as a private business or a civic responsibility? Explain.
4. Complete the **CONCEPT APPLICATION QUESTION** below:

Equal opportunities requirement; censorship prohibition; allowance of station use; news appearances exception; public interest; public issues discussion opportunities.

If any licensee shall permit any person who is a legally qualified candidate for any public office to use a broadcasting station, he shall afford equal opportunities to all other such candidates for that office in the use of such broadcasting station: Provided, That such licensee shall have no power of censorship over the material broadcast under the provisions of this section. No obligation is imposed under this subsection upon any licensee to allow the use of its station by any such candidate. Appearance by a legally qualified candidate on any—

1. bona fide newscast,
2. bona fide news interview,
3. bona fide news documentary (if the appearance of the candidate is incidental to the presentation of the subject or subjects covered by the news documentary), or
4. on-the-spot coverage of bona fide news events (including but not limited to political conventions and activities incidental thereto),
5. shall not be deemed to be use of a broadcasting station within the meaning of this subsection. Nothing in the foregoing sentence shall be construed as relieving broadcasters, in connection with the presentation of newscasts, news interviews, news documentaries, and on-the-spot coverage of news events, from the obligation imposed upon them under this chapter to operate in the public interest and to afford reasonable opportunity for the discussion of conflicting views on issues of public importance.

Source: The Communications Act, Section 315 (1934)

- A. Referencing the scenario, describe the constitutional provision which is at the center of the Communications Act, Section 31.
- B. In the context of this scenario, how is the provision described in part A impacted by modern technology?
- C. Explain how a divided government could affect a policy of restoring Section 315 of the Communications Act.