



General Manager's Report

Idahoptv.org

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QUOTES

"We are so glad that you had this contest this year. The award ceremony was really fun for my daughter. She is very proud of her accomplishment."

"I had all of the children in my class write a story for your contest. Each one was excited to enter, even if they didn't win. It was a learning experience for all of them. Thank you for giving children the opportunity to enter a national contest."

"I hope that you will have this contest again next year. Our son had such a fun time writing his story this year and he hopes he can enter again."

Quotes from parents and teacher regarding the Reading Rainbow Young Writers and Illustrators contest.

the buzz

-On June 9, 2005, U.S. House appropriators proposed more than \$220 million in crippling funding cuts for public broadcasting in the new fiscal year. Proposed funding cuts as severe as these – representing 45% of federal financial support – are nothing less than a direct attack on the future of public television and radio. The proposed cuts constitute at least malicious wounding, if not the outright attempted murder of public broadcasting in America.

The Proposed Cuts

- **Proposed Rescission of FY 2006 Community Service Grant (CSG) Funds:** The most draconian cut proposed by House appropriators is the rescission of \$100 million – or 25% – of the appropriation already made in 2004 to the Corporation for Public Broadcasting for FY 2006.
- **Proposed Elimination of the Ready To Learn Program:** In perhaps its most punitive move, House appropriators proposed eliminating all funding for Ready To Learn, a successful educational program that serves tens of millions of American kids. Ready To Learn consistently receives strong bipartisan support – even the budget submitted by the Bush Administration recommended funding it at \$23 million.
- **Even Deeper Funding Cuts Proposed:** House appropriators continued their attack by proposing no new funding for mandated and associated digital infrastructure and station interconnection programs, which combined received \$79 million last year.
- **PTFP Under Attack:** House appropriators proposed eliminating the Public Telecommunications Facilities Program (PTFP) – a cut of another \$21 million. PTFP, which has supported public broadcasting for 40 years, plays an indispensable role in providing matching money for infrastructure, which in turn delivers innovative new programs and services. In the last five year PTFP has granted Idaho Public Television more than 2.1 million in our federally mandated digital conversion...thereby reducing the financial obligation for the State of Idaho.

As of this writing (Monday, June 13, 2005), the appropriations bill is expected to be voted on, on the floor of the U.S. House, as early as Wednesday, June 22. It is expected that an amendment will be proposed to restore public broadcasting funding to its current level.

-On Tuesday, May 10, several key members of my administrative staff met with representatives from Idaho State University including Dr. Richard Bowen regarding ISU's intent to move IdahoPTV's KISU studio/administrative spaces from the College of Education building to a renovated space in the Liberal Arts Building. Our Pocatello studios and administrative offices would then be located next to the ISU School of Communications. This move is in conjunction with the building of the Rendezvous Center.

The outcome of the meeting was that ISU officials were anticipating that the move would occur in the early fall of 2007. IdahoPTV will be proposing funding Phase 2 (of 3) of our studio replacement initiative to the upcoming legislature that includes new studio equipment that will be jointly used with the School of Communication, but maintained by IdahoPTV.

Half of the funds for Phase 1 (of 3) was appropriated last session for the Boise location by the Idaho Legislature. Matching funds from federal sources have been applied for and we will learn of our success in September.

-On June 2 the combined boards of the Friends and Foundation of Idaho Public Television sent the following letter to the Board of Directors of the Corporation for Public Broadcasting:

Dear Mr. Chairman, Mr. Vice Chairman, and Members of the Board:

We are writing to express our concern regarding the recent events at the Corporation that have been widely reported in the media. In our opinion, what has transpired at CPB will lessen the high regard our public has for public television, by jeopardizing the perception – and reality – that it is free from partisan political influence.

For three decades, the Friends and Foundation of Idaho Public Television have supported Idaho Public Television (IdahoPTV). It provides a unique rural public service to the people of Idaho and six surrounding states. This year, our membership of nearly 23,000 individuals, companies, and foundations have contributed in excess of \$3.8 million – more than 60% of the statewide network's operating budget.

As a result, we take our responsibility as the primary financial stakeholder of IdahoPTV very seriously. Public trust in the editorial and fiduciary integrity of our public television system is crucial.

We know you view your responsibilities the same way.

We believe these recent actions could damage the credibility we have worked hard to foster with our members, our public and private contributors, and the citizens we serve.

That credibility, we believe, is "the currency of our programming," to quote the Principles of Editorial Integrity in Public Broadcasting, which the Corporation for Public Broadcasting not only helped to develop and fund, but also adopted.

IdahoPTV actively participated in the drafting of these Principles nearly twenty years ago and was among the first licensees to adopt them. In fact, the Idaho State Board of Education, IdahoPTV's governing board, adopted them in 1987 and then re-affirmed them in 2002. IdahoPTV and the Idaho State Board of Education have put them into practice in our policies and procedures; our Boards are re-affirming our commitment to them with this letter. We do so because we believe that the public must have complete "confidence that our programming is free of undue or improper influence," a phrase from the Principles that is as important today as it was when it was written.

It is safe to say that Idaho is among our country's most conservative states, with 80% of the Idaho Legislature from the Republican Party. According to A.C. Nielsen, IdahoPTV regularly has among the highest per capita viewing in the United States. In addition, our per capita private contributions are among the highest of any public television station in the country. If the public is unhappy with the services public broadcasting and IdahoPTV provides, as Chairman Tomlinson implied, they would not be viewing so heavily or voluntarily contributing so substantially – especially in Idaho.

To more directly assess viewers' perceptions of trust in public broadcasting, open hearings were held a few years ago by the Idaho State Board of Education in seven sites around Idaho. These public hearings attracted more than 1,000 participants who testified in person, called, or submitted written comments. The overwhelming response was that IdahoPTV's programming is fair, balanced and presents a wide range of viewpoints; in short it does a great job and has a great product. Fewer than a dozen people had anything negative to say about the service.

From these hearings, as well as our ratings and voluntary donations, it is clear that people in Idaho enjoy, support, and trust their public television service and do not want it to be influenced by the politics of the day.

As one IdahoPTV Board member said in response to the recent actions of CPB, "It isn't broken, so why are they trying to fix it?"

We, the members of the Friends and Foundation Boards of Idaho Public Television, strongly encourage the Board of the Corporation for Public Broadcasting to re-affirm the Statement of Editorial Integrity.

In addition, we expect the CPB Board to engage in a transparent, fair and considered process for the selection of a new President/Chief Executive Officer. We look forward to a widely advertised position announcement that will attract a large and qualified applicant pool. That is how our organization, IdahoPTV, and our state conduct business. We fully expect the Board of CPB to do the same.

As Idaho's stewards of this important public service, we believe that anything less than complete confidence in the integrity of our programming will weaken the base on which our public support is built.

It is clear that our Boards share a commitment to the growth of our service. It is because of this commitment that we ask you to honor the values of the Corporation by reaffirming the Principles of Editorial Integrity in Public Broadcasting. In addition, we expect you to search the nation for, and appoint as your next President/Chief Executive Officer a qualified leader who will, in perception and in fact, maintain the independence and integrity of public broadcasting.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Friends of Idaho Public Television: KAID/KIPT Board of Directors

Anna Marie Boles	Jerry Evans	Barbara Roberts
John Crim	Bev Harad	Bob Stanton
Stephanie Crumrine	Garnette Monnie	Gayle Wilde
Byron Defenbach	Elisabeth Ratcliff	Cindy Williams
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Idaho Public Television Foundation Board of Directors

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June Fitzgerald	Bob Schreiber, KISU Rep.	

POV: THE FIRE NEXT TIME AND DIALOGUE FOLLOW-UP

- POV airs Thursday, July 14 at 7pm MT/PT
- Dialogue airs Thursday, July 14 at 8pm MT/PT
- Dialogue repeats Sunday, July 17 at 5pm/4pm MT/PT

POV "The Fire Next Time" - The people of the Flathead Valley in Montana were stunned when a domestic terror cell's plot to kill local leaders was uncovered.

Ex-cop Brenda Kitterman and environmentalist Mike Raiman wanted to do something to address the local tensions, but the community was torn. Many residents were losing their jobs in timber and mining, and blamed environmentalists. Adding fuel to the fire was a radio talk show host who declared environmentalists "an enemy...to be annihilated." Over a stormy two-year period, this program follows a deeply divided group of Montana citizens caught in a web of conflicts intensified by rapid growth and the power of talk radio.

Idaho Public Television has been commissioned by PBS's POV series to produce a Dialogue follow-up to this program. "Dialogue: The Fire Next Time" will pick up where the POV documentary on Montana's Flathead Valley "eco-wars" left off. Host Marcia Franklin talks with experts who have worked with communities struggling with the same issues that were portrayed in the program. They will talk about how to get past the shouting and work on conciliation and collaboration. Guests include Martin Goebel, the president of Sustainable Northwest, a group that works with communities to develop healthy economies and ecosystems.

In addition to its airing on Idaho Public Television, Dialogue: The Fire Next Time will also air regionally on PBS stations in Utah, Montana, Wyoming, Colorado and New Mexico.

OUTDOOR IDAHO JOINED BUCKSKIN BRIGADE

- Aired Thursday, May 19 at 8:00/7:00 p.m. MT/PT
- Repeated Sunday, May 22 at 7:00 p.m. MT/PT

This OUTDOOR IDAHO episode traveled with people who have immersed themselves in the life and times of Idaho's early days — the years bracketed by the Lewis and Clark Expedition and the Oregon Trail wagon trains.

Often buckskin-clad, they are enthusiasts who want to live their history. They shoot black powder rifles. They travel by canoe, on foot in wagons. They live out of tents and teepees, and practice skills of an earlier day.

"The spirit that defines the West is alive and flourishing in Idaho," Producer John Crancer says. "It's found around campfires of today's rendezvous gatherings, in a canoe on a pristine lake and among people retracing a historic journey and aboard a wagon during a commemorative crossing."

OUTDOOR IDAHO cameras trace the action-packed history-centered gatherings from the southeastern corner of the state into Idaho's Panhandle.

During rendezvous weekends, participants set up teepees, barter, trade and test their marksmanship with black powder rifles, cannon and tomahawks.

"It's a great time for people to get together and let their hair down a little bit," says Gordon Perry of the Portneuf Muzzleloaders.

Craig Kirkland, also of the Muzzleloaders, says he does not think of the modern rendezvous as a historical reenactment. "We're really continuing what the mountain men started and getting together," Kirkland says.

But others do re-enact history — for themselves and others. Mark Weadick, known as Empty Horn, and a group of history buffs travel by canoe and trap beaver in the classic manner at Priest Lake during late fall. The Bitterroot Corps members, who trace the footsteps of Meriwether Lewis and William Clark in Idaho, also perform for schools and special events. Descendants of Oregon Trail pioneers and others take part in the annual wagon crossing at Three Island State Park on the Snake River.

OUTDOOR IDAHO, an IdahoPTV weekly series, is in its 22nd year of chronicling people, places, activities and issues in the outdoors throughout the state.

IDAHOPTV STAFF UPDATES AND TRANSITIONS

Pat Hunter, who has worked part-time for over 9 years in our Pocatello office has accepted a full-time position at Idaho State University's Office of Research.

Welcome to our summer interns:

-Kori Unger is updating web content for our Development department.

-Jo Schroeder is working on a web project for our Production department.

-Seth Ogilvie is field shooting and editing various programs.

-Mason Seale is working on our live Dialogue productions.

-Erin Cady is writing, copy editing, and doing research for our Communications department.

DIALOGUE EXAMINES THE FUTURE OF THE IDAHO NATIONAL LABORATORY

-Airs Thursday, June 16, at 8:30/7:30 pm MT/PT

-Repeats Sunday, June 19, at 5:30/4:30 MT/PT

On this episode of DIALOGUE, we look at the future of The Idaho National Laboratory. Host Joan Cartan-Hansen interviews new laboratory Director and Battelle Energy Alliance President John Grossenbacher.

Grossenbacher has served as Battelle's senior vice president for Nuclear Science and Technology, (where his job focused) on delivering complex science and technology projects to build joint nuclear science and technology programs among Battelle-managed laboratories and with collaborating organizations. Prior to joining Battelle, Grossenbacher worked with the U.S. Navy, reaching the rank of Vice Admiral and Commander of Naval Submarine Forces.

DIALOGUE TALKED WITH IDAHO STATESMAN REPORTERS ABOUT VISIT TO IRAQ

-Aired Thursday, June 2, at 8:30/7:30 pm MT/PT

-Repeated Sunday, June 5, at 5:30/4:30 MT/PT

On this episode of DIALOGUE, two journalists talked with host Marcia Franklin about their month-long trip to Iraq. Roger Phillips, outdoor reporter for the Idaho Statesman, and Kim Hughes, the Statesman's photo editor, shared their experiences and photos.

Hughes and Phillips spent a month with the Alpha and Bravo Companies of the 116th Brigade Combat Team of the Army National Guard. About 1,700 Idahoans are serving in Iraq with the 116th, stationed in northern Iraq. During their visit, the two filed numerous stories and took over 7,000 photos.

During the live call-in show on Thursday, June 2, at 8:30/7:30 p.m. MT/PT, Franklin, Hughes and Phillips took calls from viewers.

DIALOGUE DISCUSSED TREATMENTS FOR CHILDHOOD TRAUMAS

-Aired Thursday, May 19, at 8:30/7:30 pm MT/PT

-Repeated Sunday, May 22, at 5:30/4:30 MT/PT

DIALOGUE host Joan Cartan-Hansen discussed new treatments for childhood traumas with Dave Ziegler, psychologist and author of "Traumatic Experience and the Brain."

Childhood traumas and abuse have been shown to actually reshape a child's brain, but new psychological treatments are leading the way to healing. Ziegler is the executive director of a unique treatment center that focuses on helping traumatized and so-called "impossible" children. In his book, Ziegler investigates the effects trauma has on developing brains and explores new treatments to help these victims heal.

UPCOMING PROGRAM, OUTDOOR IDAHO: SILVER VALLEY

It was once the richest region of Idaho, with a workforce making more money than any other part of the state. But then the mines closed in 1981, and a 21 square mile region of Silver Valley became the nation's largest Superfund site. The residents of Kellogg, the epicenter of the Superfund site, spent years coming up with workable solutions to the problems of lead and zinc contamination. Now, it seems, they are poised for an economic boom, just as the rest of the Coeur d'Alene basin is grappling with an expanded Superfund designation. We look at the history of this colorful northern Idaho valley, its present and its future.

This program is scheduled to air on October 20, 2005.

READING RAINBOW YOUNG WRITERS CONTEST WINNERS ANNOUNCED FOR IDAHO

Statewide, 557 students in grades K-3 submitted entries to IdahoPTV's Eleventh Annual Young Writers and Illustrators contest. Entries were judged on originality, creative expression, storytelling and integration of text and pictures. First, second and third place regional winners were selected in grades K-3 from each of the Idaho Public Television stations. The regional first place entries have been submitted to the national contest for judging. Winners at the national level are to be announced later this summer. Winning entries from Idaho include:

Kindergarten

First Place: Geonna Travis, Lewiston; Robin Cochrane, McCall; Daden Jorgensen, Blackfoot

Second Place: Noah Corbin, Coeur d'Alene; Tyler Colgrove, Boise; A.J. Larranaga, Hamer

Third Place: Jill Alexander, Bonners Ferry; Sara Baldazo, Eagle; Sierra Ranstrom, Pingree

First Grade

First Place: Rebecca Krause, Clarkston WA; Jacob Olson, Eagle; Amaya Fehringer, American Falls

Second Place: Tianna Leitch, Nezperce; Bryce Turner, Nampa; Rylee MacKay, Salmon

Third Place: Samantha Profitt, Nezperce; Michael Skyer, Nampa; Bradlee Rothwell, Iona

Second Grade

First Place: Madeline Baker, Post Falls; Jeremy Walker, Eagle; Sydney Yoder, Idaho Falls

Second Place: Jamie Britton, Kendrick; Elise Snyder, Meridian; Tyson Baker, Ammon

Third Place: Liam Murphy, Clark Fork; Audrey Christensen, Nampa; C.J. Butikofer, Chubbuck

Third Grade

First Place: Amanda Johnston, Post Falls; Robert Dubon, Boise; Emily Magleby, Rexburg

Second Place: Louis Pennings, Hayden Lake; Brandon Oram, Emmett; Kortney Chandler, Downey

Third Place: Lyndsie Kiebert, Hope; Ben Baldazo, Eagle; Abby McGarry, Idaho Falls

Winning entries from Idaho can be viewed online at idahoptv.org/kids/

MAY 16, 2005 CURRENT MAGAZINE ARTICLE

Stay tuned for balance debates
Tomlinson thought he'd start quietly . . .

Originally published in *Current*, May 16, 2005
By Karen Everhart and Jeremy Egner

After a week as target of dark accusations and suspicions, Ken Tomlinson was weary. "We've all said what we had to say," the CPB Board chairman told *Current*. "Let's all declare victory and move on."

That may make sense to many public broadcasters, but Tomlinson's critics aren't likely to give the issue a rest.

CPB's independent inspector general, Kenneth Konz, said he will investigate charges by two key House Democrats that Tomlinson violated the Public Broadcasting Act by commissioning a political content review of *Now with Bill Moyers* and recruiting a White House staff member to write guidelines for CPB's new ombudsmen.

In St. Louis last weekend, CPB was a major topic among media reform activists at the National Conference for Media Reform, organized by Free Press, a citizen group founded by media historian Robert McChesney. Free Press, Common Cause, Consumers Union and the Consumer Federation of America had already announced they will lead a campaign for grassroots reform of PBS to create a system "that deserves public support."

If the controversy flags, it's sure to revive next year if Tomlinson seeks reappointment to the board, which requires Senate confirmation. His term expires in fall 2006.

The danger to public broadcasting is that the partisan struggle will continue, poisoning CPB's reputation and perhaps public TV's.

CPB's drive for political balance on the air could lead to a public or private showdown with PBS over editorial standards. The corporation's annual production aid to PBS, worth \$26.5 million next year, will depend on its approval of the PBS standards on balance and other journalistic issues, now being review by a panel of outside journalists.

Further conflict could be expected if CPB hires Tomlinson's reported candidate for president, Patricia Harrison, a former co-chair of the Republican National Committee who is now an assistant secretary of state.

Republican complaints about liberal bias in public broadcasting programs extend back to the Nixon administration, and some observers saw similarities between the very first conflict over pubcasting's editorial independence and the latest one. Republicans "are now trying to use more sophisticated vehicles to make sure the CPB satisfies the agenda of the administration," said Ted Frank, a communications attorney who has worked with public TV. "It's not supposed to do that."

"It's been cyclical, this kind of criticism of public television," said David Fanning, Frontline executive producer. "It's always focused on some particular program like *Tongues Untied*. The programs become iconic and get used as political footballs."

This time around, two programs are targets for partisan slams: *Now with Bill Moyers*, which Tomlinson found to be too liberal, and *Journal Editorial Report*, a half-hour roundtable with the *Wall Street Journal's* editorial page pundits. Tomlinson reportedly pressured PBS to distribute the *Journal Editorial Report*, though multiple sources told *Current* he had no role recruiting Shell Oil as an underwriter to keep it going after CPB's initial \$4.5 million startup grant was spent.

Tomlinson can declare victory because he has consistently drawn his objectives very narrowly: adding a conservative program to "balance" Moyers.

The top Democrats on the House appropriations and commerce committees, Reps. David Obey (Wis.) and John Dingell (Mich.), say Tomlinson broke the law to do so.

"Recent news reports suggesting that the CPB is making personnel and funding decisions on the basis of political ideology are extremely troubling," the congressmen said in their May 11 letter to the CPB inspector general. Konz told *Current* his office will investigate the various charges outlined in the letter and report back to CPB and Congress.

The Democrats cited a May 2 *New York Times* report revealing Tomlinson's efforts to document liberal bias in *Now with Bill Moyers* and add conservative programming to balance the show. The story also said he had a White House staffer, Mary Catherine Andrews, draft guidelines for CPB's new ombudsmen before she had officially left the White House payroll and joined CPB's.

Conflict within the law

Two charges in the letter point to potential violations of the Public Broadcasting Act, according to Gary Poon, a communications attorney and former in-house counsel for PBS who reviewed points in the letter on strictly legal terms for *Current*.

Ordering up a content review of *Now* and using it to justify adding programs to provide political balance, as Tomlinson says he did, would be defensible. But using the study to exclude or disadvantage *Now* may violate the act. Tomlinson's critics have not claimed he did the latter.

Enlisting a White House staffer to do work for CPB has at least the appearance of a conflict of interest. Section 398 of the act explicitly prohibits federal employees from exercising "direction, supervision or control over public telecommunications" or its program content.

"If Andrews had a direct line to President Bush and she starts writing standards for CPB, the White House could be doing indirectly what they couldn't be doing directly through CPB," Poon says. "Congress has every right to look into that

It's unclear, Poon said, whether the act would also apply to actions of Tomlinson, who could be found to be a federal official in his separate appointment as chairman of the U.S. Broadcasting Board of Governors, the panel that governs Voice of America and other overseas broadcast agencies.

The congressional inquiry itself carries political risks, Poon says. "Congress has to be careful so that they don't get accused of meddling in content."

"It may not be politically correct to anger Congressman Dingell," he says, "but that's a big difference from violating the Public Broadcasting Act."

Obey, a frequent critic of pubcasting, denied conservative assumptions that he was simply defending Democrats. "What I want is to see that the law is adhered to," he told Amy Goodman on *Democracy Now!* May 12, "and the law says the Corporation for Public Broadcasting is supposed to keep its cotton-picking nose out of programming and out of politics."

Although, the law does that, it also thrusts politics deep into CPB—a lingering contradiction in the Public Broadcasting Act—in that the White House appoints the CPB Board which is authorized to facilitate a system with "strict adherence to objectivity and balance in all programs or series of programs of a controversial nature".

Several fights at once

Dire announcements of a "right-wing coup" taking over public TV have exaggerated the real threat to its independence, some insiders say.

"The daily press has portrayed stations as helpless victims of a right-wing conspiracy," said pubTV's top lobbyist, APTS President John Lawson. "We're not helpless and we're not victims."

CPB contributes just 15 percent of public broadcasting's revenue, and the corporation has little control over most of those funds, which are dispensed as automatic grants go to stations meeting certain criteria. Furthermore, local stations, not CPB or PBS, make the broadcast decisions.

But the unseemly fuss has shaken some longtime supporters of pubcasting. *The Christian Science Monitor* echoed other activists and scribes when it suggested in its May 12 editorial that public TV would be better off without federal aid. "Wouldn't it be better if government simply weren't involved? ... Surely, those journalists and producers who work for PBS would appreciate having the independence to criticize the government when needed, without fear of political retribution," the newspaper said.

Throwing up your hands in this way is "sort of a pathetic response" to the controversy, Lawson said. "It's way too early to conclude that we can't receive funding and maintain editorial independence at the same time."

Even without new doubts about federal money, pubcasting was already slated to share the federal government's budget pains this year. The House subcommittee that handles appropriations for CPB and related items, as well as massive education and welfare agencies, will have \$2 billion to \$4 billion less to work with this year than last, according to APTS.

With liberals now suspicious of right-wing meddling in PTV operations, system lobbyists are currently "catching it from both sides" on the Hill, Lawson says. "This is a battle that we did not need."

The partisan struggle may also obscure and taint advocacy for new public TV services and funding mechanisms. PBS President Pat Mitchell has scheduled a talk on public TV's future for May 24 at the National Press Club, and her blue-ribbon Digital Futures Initiative aims to have its report ready then.

Some in the system worry that damage to public TV's editorial integrity or reputation could severely undercut the case for those broad, long-term goals.

At the very least, it's a huge distraction from important issues, says James Morgese, president of Rocky Mountain PBS in Denver.

"We have to reinvent how to deliver TV, we have problems with turnover of presidents at PBS and CPB, we have potential threats to funding," he says. "We're battling a lot of monsters all at once."

CPB's controversy quotient began to rise last month with the surprise announcement April 5 that it would hire two ombudsmen to monitor public affairs programming on public TV and radio. Three days later, CPB announced it was not renewing a one-year contract for its president, Kathleen Cox. But a team of three *New York Times* reporters put Tomlinson and the agency on the front page with the May 2 report that the chairman was pressuring PBS.

With an op-ed in the *Washington Times* May 10, Tomlinson tried to ease up on the reigns. His campaign to bring more conservatives into public broadcasting was intended to strengthen the case for increased funding to the field, he said. He didn't want to create a public stir about the content analysis of *Now*. "In our effort to achieve political balance, I did not want to damage public broadcasting's image with controversy," Tomlinson wrote.

Balance a concern since 2000

Tomlinson joined the CPB Board in 2000—the law required President Clinton to appoint some non-Democrats. With his arrival, the board became more partisan and concerned with program balance, said Christy Carpenter, a Democrat who served on the board from 1998 to 2002.

Moyers' program, launched in January 2002, "was a favorite target and example used in the discussion," Carpenter said. "The overarching idea was that there should be more conservative voices included in the programming."

Rita Jean Butterworth, a Republican board member from 1992 to 2004, said *Now* was a polarizing concern for the board but an appropriate one. Tomlinson and others talked about how to deal with problems in assuring objectivity and balance in programs, which is part of CPB's charge, she said.

"I don't believe in interference and I don't think that's what Ken Tomlinson is trying to do, either," Butterworth said. "He was trying to do his duty and he has his own personal feelings and of course those are going to come to the surface."

For conservatives, plenty of feelings came to the surface after Moyers' November 2002 commentary skewering Republicans for seizing control of the lives of pregnant women and favoring the rich over the poor.

By spring 2003, PBS was quietly letting major producers know that it wanted proposals for programs that would add conservative balance to the schedule.

In November, PBS announced a new Friday-night series with Tucker Carlson, a moderate Republican combatant from CNN's *Crossfire*.

The same month, CPB Board member Cheryl Halpern took a hard line on the balance issue at her Senate confirmation hearing, telling Sen. Trent Lott (R-Miss.) and the rest of Commerce Committee that there should be penalties when producers create imbalanced programs.

"There has to be recognition that an objective, balanced code of journalistic ethics has got to prevail across the board, and there needs to be accountability," she said.

Tomlinson, who stepped up to board chairman in September 2003, soon initiated an outside investigation of *Now* without telling the rest of the board, according to the *New York Times*. Moyers' lack of objectivity was a "widely accepted fact of life," he commented in the *Washington Times* op-ed piece. He kept his investigation of *Now* private to avoid public controversy that would hurt pubcasting, he wrote.

John Siceloff, executive producer of *Now*, disputes Tomlinson's view of the program as liberal advocacy. "What we do is nonpartisan, investigative journalism," he said. "We start with a set of what we call kitchen-table issues—things that folks sit around the kitchen table and try to figure out: job security, health care, retirement, education ... These are issues that conservatives and liberals alike understand."

According to Tomlinson's op-ed, a friend's phone call persuaded him to deal with the Moyers issue. The friend, head of a foundation that gave a major grant for his local public TV station's digital conversion, said he'd stop contributing "until something was done about the network's bias," he wrote.

After PBS chief Pat Mitchell responded to complaints by insisting that *Now* was politically balanced, Tomlinson said, he hired the consultant to analyze the program.

"If I didn't tell [the board about the investigation] it was strictly an oversight," Tomlinson told *Current*. Other CPB Board members declined to comment or did not return calls.

"By the time I had irrefutable documentation of the program's bias," Tomlinson wrote, "cooler heads among PBS leaders prevailed, Miss Mitchell herself had been forced to add political balance to the PBS lineup, and I was satisfied the system was moving (if ever so slowly) toward recognizing its political image problem."

Exit Coonrod, enter Cox

By 2003, the CPB Board recognized that it would lose President Bob Coonrod, who had been trying to leave the frustrating job for several years.

Harrison, the former G.O.P. chairwoman, was offered the job, according to sources, but opted to remain at the State Department out of loyalty to then-Secretary of State Colin Powell. Harrison did not respond to requests for comment.

The CPB presidency went to Kathleen Cox instead in January 2004. Coonrod's No. 2 was a Republican, judging from her family's political donations, but she was also a career attorney with seven years' experience at CPB and had backing from Coonrod.

Harrison has a different background. Co-founder of the E. Bruce Harrison Co., an environmental communications firm, she held several Commerce Department posts under the first President Bush before chairing the RNC from 1997 to 2001. She later became acting undersecretary of state for public diplomacy under the second President Bush and then head of the State Department's bureau of educational and cultural affairs.

Would it be a good idea to appoint a party operative as head of CPB? Tomlinson replies that Harrison's "reputation at State was not one of a partisan." But he declines to comment about Harrison as CPB's next president.

CPB has hired executive firm Spencer Stuart to conduct the search and the board expects to reach a decision during its June meeting, according to Tomlinson.

"The question will be," NPR Executive Vice President Ken Stern said May 6 on KCRW's *To the Point*, "will they replace a respected nonpartisan broadcaster with someone with similar credentials?"

"The most important thing is that we conduct an open search," said board member Beth Courtney, president of Louisiana Public Broadcasting. "It doesn't behoove us to be perceived as political."

Cox officially took over for Coonrod in July 2004, shortly before Senate hearings on the reauthorization of CPB. The panel largely glossed over the programming balance issue, but there were fireworks behind the scenes.

By the *Times*' account, Tomlinson worked with Bush strategist Karl Rove to kill an APTS proposal to add more station reps on the CPB Board. The statute now calls for one member representing public TV stations and one representing public radio.

Tomlinson did lobby against the proposal but neither he nor APTS agrees with the *Times* report.

Tomlinson says two pubcasting leaders had claimed erroneously that Rove was supporting the proposal, not opposing it.

"I asked Karl Rove, 'Are you all going to be supporting this?' And he said no. End of involvement," Tomlinson told *On the Media*.

Lawson remembers it differently. It was Tomlinson who'd hoped to enlist high-level backing, Lawson told *Current*. "Ken said he was going to get the White House involved to stop the amendment, but we were told by White House officials that the issue didn't rise to the level of presidential attention." Lawson said the reauthorization bill would have contained a compromise amendment.

In any case, the bill itself died in the Senate.

Early this year, negotiations between PBS and CPB over a contract that provides \$22.5 million annually for PBS's National Program Service were a source of worry about political meddling by CPB.

An internal PBS memo, leaked to reporters, indicated that PBS officials resisted CPB's demands to accept new editorial standards language.

The memo was written in January by PBS Deputy General Counsel Paul Greco, who briefed chief executives of public TV's top three producing stations about negotiations over PBS editorial standards in the National Program Service contract.

The contract supplements PBS investments in signature programs such as *American Experience*, the *NewsHour* and *Zoom*.

In revisiting the contract for a new two-year term, CPB's negotiators wanted PBS to agree that its programs would adhere to language on balance and objectivity drawn from the Public Broadcasting Act, according to the memo. Greco described CPB's stance as a threat to PBS's editorial independence that would open the door for "government encroachment on and supervision of program content potentially in violation of the First Amendment."

"We have done everything that I can think of to reassure those across the river that that's not what's going on here," said Steven Altman, v.p. of business affairs at CPB, referring to colleagues who work at PBS's headquarters in Northern Virginia.

With the contract now renegotiated and signed, both PBS and CPB officials say the terms of the new agreement are workable, and they downplay the possibility for future conflicts.

The contract does include provisions that give CPB new leverage. It sets next month as a deadline for PBS to revise and update its editorial standards, and it makes CPB's 2006 funding for the NPS contingent on the corporation's acceptance of the standards.

PBS convened an Editorial Standards Review Committee in February to review the guidelines. The panel, composed primarily of veteran journalists who have graduated to academia and think tanks, agreed early on that guidelines

approved in 1987 were generally sound but needed updating to deal with issues related to web publishing and the multiplatform nature of PBS content. The committee appears to be on track to finish the rewrite on time.

The NPS contract specifies that the revised guidelines will ensure that PBS programs deemed controversial will meet “appropriate standards of objectivity and balance and . . . contain adequate provisions for oversight and enforcement by PBS.”

Despite CPB’s push for stronger balance requirements, the language is still not very specific, said PBS spokeswoman Lea Sloan. The contract doesn’t define “controversial” or “appropriate standards.”

“The way PBS looks at it is that we are determining our editorial standards and we expect that CPB will acknowledge the expertise that’s gone into them and be fine with that,” she said.

“We have had such productive conversations with PBS, I would be astonished if this doesn’t fly on first draft,” Altman said.

Another new provision in which PBS agrees that “the investment of CPB funds in programs of a controversial nature pursuant to this agreement will meet the statutory objectivity and balance goal,” also allows some wiggle room in its use of the word “goal,” according to Sloan. “It still is not a fixed point,” she said.

In other provisions, the contract includes a supplemental \$4 million grant for needs identified in CPB’s 2003-04 primetime research project, and a requirement that PBS convene a working group to deal with rights issues related to video-on-demand.

White House staffer role murky

Early this year Cox hired Mary Catherine Andrews, a former White House staffer who features in a “gotcha” moment of uncertain significance in the *Times*’ story.

“While she was still on the White House staff,” the newspaper reported, “she helped draft guidelines governing the work of two ombudsmen whom the corporation recently appointed to review the content of public radio and television broadcasts.”

Andrews told the *Times* that she worked on the CPB project in her free time as she finished her White House job.

A former foreign policy aide and consultant, Andrews joined the Bush administration in 2001 as an official in the National Security Council. In 2004, she was named director of the Office of Global Communications. Her White House bio also listed her as a special assistant to the President.

The OGC was essentially dissolved in March, not long before the April release of a Government Accountability Office report that found that it had been largely ineffective.

Andrews knew Tomlinson and he thought highly enough of Andrews to praise her in a June 2003 House subcommittee hearing, where he spoke in his role as chair of the Broadcasting Board of Governors.

Though she spoke with Tomlinson about coming to CPB, Andrews emphasized that it was Cox who hired her. She said she reviewed some of CPB’s ombudsman materials—a press release, a charter and a Code of Ethics—“at home” while she was finishing her stint at the White House.

Asked if anyone at the White House helped her shape the new ombudsman offices, Andrews replied, “Good God, no. Absolutely not.”

In March, Cox was also hiring Ken Ferree, departing chief of the FCC’s Media Bureau, to take her old job as chief operating officer.

Within two weeks, Cox was out of a job herself and Ferree was acting president.

Ombudsmen will get once-over

CPB's dual ombudsmen, also introduced in April, will get an outside review of their positions next week. One of them, Ken Bode, put the issue before the international Organization of News Ombudsmen when he applied for membership recently, said Jeffrey Dvorkin, chairman of the group and ombudsman at NPR. The organization meets May 22-25 in London.

"Everyone has a pretty open mind on this," said Dvorkin. "The issue for us is whether CPB is an appropriate organization to belong to an organization of news ombudsmen, since they are usually newsgathering organizations who are responsible to listeners, viewers and readers." ONO has asked CPB to describe the roles of its ombudsmen, he said.

Bode and fellow ombudsman William Schulz are supposed to craft their own guidelines regarding how they will review news stories, decide which to review and split their responsibilities, CPB officials said. Their sole reports, April 26 missives on NPR Iraq stories, offered little insight into their motivation or investigative process.

Many in the system are reluctant to vent publicly their concerns about CPB from political pressure, but Tomlinson and company have their share of detractors.

One of the most vocal is retiring Kansas City PTV President Bill Reed, who e-mailed the chairman a criticism of his "sad, ridiculous witch hunt at a time when we should be standing together to make sure public broadcasting is funded adequately."

"You and those board members who support you should be sacked," he wrote.

CPB concerns about liberal bias are of a piece with past right-wing attacks from Nixon onward, he told *Current*. "If we don't call these people out when they pull this stuff, it will continue to happen."

Fanning of *Frontline* said the flap is "doing damage to public broadcasting as a whole because it's creating a divisiveness about who we are."

Public TV can't be seen to bend to political whims, he says. "We need to be very clear around this—that public television has always had an independent voice. We have enormous trust from the audience."

"Our job as journalists is to ask tough questions of people in power and to be fair in those questions and fair in our reporting," Fanning said. "We will continue to do that."

'Tempest in a teacup'

However, some see the ongoing controversy as more of a Beltway bitchfest than a crisis with real-world consequences. Wrangling over CPB is a cyclical part of the "overheated political process of Washington and the politics of screaming and labeling everything," said David Brugger, former APTS president. "It uses a lot of energy that in the long run could be put to ways to make public broadcasting better."

Local stations—not the CPB Board—decide what programs to air or not air, Brugger said. "The great celebration of the system is that everything is a check and balance, and the American public ends up deciding what public broadcasting is going to do."

Even Siceloff of *Now*, the PBS program that riled Tomlinson, isn't calling his fans to the battlements. "This tempest in a teacup about what's going on at CPB and PBS is a signal first of all that people care about this, which means a lot to me," he said. What's important is to make sure public television is funded to ensure that we get quality programming."

"The problems with public television go far beyond whatever political threats exist," says former Lawrence Grossman, a former PBS president now advocating a federal endowment for public-interest media. PBS's difficulties in creating unique programs that distinguish it in today's media environment suggest "far deeper and broader problems."

In public radio, meanwhile, a resolution presented at NPR's annual membership meeting May 3 in Washington urged CPB to "do nothing to diminish the firewall" protecting its program independence and to defer to broadcast professionals' decisions about pubradio priorities.

Presented by Tim Emmons, g.m. of Northern Public Radio in DeKalb, Ill., the resolution directed CPB to stay out of programming decisions and questioned the role of the agency's new ombudsmen.

"There is a fundamental disconnect between the traditional role of ombudsmen and a funding agency," Emmons told Current, adding, "The strong implication is that funding priorities can change if [CPB doesn't] agree with the point of view of the piece of work, and that makes me uncomfortable."

The week before the membership meeting, NPR staffers asked Emmons to present the resolution. Mike Riksen, v.p. of government relations, provided a draft that asked why CPB needed ombudsmen if the network already employs one. Emmons struck that from the resolution and instead played up potential harm to stations' independence, which he called his main concern.

Lacking a quorum, Tim Eby, chairman of the NPR Board, held a straw vote on the resolution, which received many "ayes" and no objections. Eby read the resolution again at a meeting of the NPR Board May 6.

Pack assures producers

Across the continent during the same week, CPB avoided potential bitter conflict with independent producers and foreign broadcasters at the Input 2005 international public TV screening in San Francisco.

Michael Pack, a low-key former indie who specialized in conservative themes before joining CPB as senior v.p. for television programming two years ago, reassured a luncheon crowd: "I personally have felt no pressure from the board or from senior management on the content of television programming, and I give my assurance that it will not happen in the future."

Pack said he's not trying to suppress controversy. "I personally, as a filmmaker, feel public television has lost its controversial edge," he said.

CPB's biggest program initiative—the America at a Crossroads package of 20 hours of programming planned to air next year on the fifth anniversary of 9/11—will highlight conflicting views on civil liberties, perceptions of Islam and America and other issues, he said. While CPB will expect producers to be fair in their journalism he said, it will be vitally important to present a wide range of views.

Reported with assistance from Mike Janssen and Steve Behrens

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