

**MEDIA ADVISORY**

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*Television Without Borders*

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**WALTER CRONKITE DISCUSSES MEDIA AND DEMOCRACY  
ON NATIONAL TELEVISION**

*WorldLink TV's "Your New\$ and the Bottom Line"*  
*hosted by Peter Coyote, airs May 7*

**(San Francisco, April 30)** – Walter Cronkite, the dean of American broadcasting, is weighing in strongly against corporate media mergers and ownership.

This summer, the Federal Communications Commission will undertake the most massive reexamination of media ownership rules in the agency's history. Their decisions will have profound implications on how Americans get their news and information, and from which sources.

In an exclusive interview for WorldLink TV's upcoming program, "Your New\$ and the Bottom Line", Cronkite said:

I've been increasingly and publicly critical of the direction that journalism has taken of late, and of the impact on democratic discourse and principles. I am deeply concerned about the merger mania that has swept our industry, diluting standards, dumbing down the news, and making the bottom line sometimes seem like the only line.

WorldLink TV will explore the impact of media consolidation in its May 7 national call-in program, "Your New\$ and the Bottom Line", hosted by actor Peter Coyote and

featuring Walter Cronkite and a panel of media experts. The live show is part of WorldLink TV's continuing *The Active Opposition* series featuring public figures who are actively involved in national policy debate. The program will be accessible to the nation's 20 million satellite TV households, and can be viewed later in streaming video on [www.worldlinktv.org](http://www.worldlinktv.org).

WorldLink TV is a nationwide public satellite television network offering a global perspective on world events, issues and culture. Its programs air on DirecTV channel 375 and Dish Network channel 9410 and are selectively streamed on the Internet. "Your New\$ and the Bottom Line" will be broadcast Wednesday, May 7 at 7:00 pm PDT, 10:00 pm EDT.

Other expert guests on the program from WorldLink TV's San Francisco and Washington DC studios are: Jeff Chester, author and director of the Teledemocracy Project, a D.C. media watchdog group; Michael Parenti, author and media critic, and former FCC commissioner Dennis Patrick, who served under the first President Bush. In addition, Stanley Hubbard, president and CEO of Hubbard Broadcasting, Inc., will appear live from Minneapolis. The 90-minute forum will take live questions and comments from viewers across the nation.

The program explores why, since the 1996 Telecommunications Act, the number of major U.S. news organizations has shrunk to six. FCC chairman Michael Powell, a vigorous opponent of regulation, has dismissed the concept of public interest as "an empty vessel" and adds "the market is my religion." Powell who is ultimately in charge of revising the FCC rules, has stated publicly that today's complex broadcast environment may need looser rules, and that he doesn't believe larger companies are necessarily worse than smaller ones. In the words of Michael Copps, one of two Democratic members of the five-person FCC, "It's high noon at the FCC."

*The Active Opposition* host Peter Coyote has been a popular film and television actor for many years and has been speaking out on social and public policy issues for three

decades. “ The growing sameness of America’s media is a largely unrecognized danger to our democracy,” said Coyote. “When a trusted icon of broadcasting like Walter Cronkite speaks against the trend, we know there’s a problem. We believe our program will shine a light on that problem for viewers, and help preserve the American public’s right to know the truth.”

To learn more about WorldLink TV, visit our website, [www.worldlinktv.org](http://www.worldlinktv.org), or tune in to DIRECTV channel 375 or Dish Network channel 9410.

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