

elling and overriding interest in the information."

And the compelling need test, Professor Bickel said, could only be met in connection with a major crime. Victimless crimes, such as drunkenness, narcotics, drug abuse and gambling, would not justify the issuance of a subpoena to a newsmen.

Professor Bickel said that none of the subpoenas against the three newsmen involved in the cases pending before the court was justified on the basis of the test he proposed. The government, he said, did not demonstrate in any of the cases that a crime had been committed about which the reporters had evidence available nowhere else.

The Radio Television News Directors Association, the Authors League of America and the American Newspaper Guild, also argued, in separate briefs, for something less than an absolute bar

between newsmen and a subpoena.

The absolutist line was taken by several news media sources including the Washington Post Co. and Newsweek Inc., which in joint brief stated: "The fundamental question . . . is whether the production of compulsory testimony from newsmen is so important in our governmental scheme as to justify impairment of First Amendment Freedoms. We respectfully submit that it is not . . ."

"We believe that nothing less than an unqualified, absolute First Amendment newsmen's privilege is sufficient to preserve the First Amendment right of newsmen to gather and report the news without fear or favor."

The position of law-enforcement officials on the issue was expressed in briefs filed by the National District Attorneys Association, in the Caldwell case, and by the Commonwealth of Massachu-

setts, in the Pappas case. The district attorneys association cited approvingly decisions of state courts that held that there is a "superior interest of the public in due administration of law over any private consideration that may exist as between journalist and informants."

Massachusetts said the Supreme Court should not use the "compelling need" test devised by the appeals court in the Caldwell case but a compelling interest test. It said Mr. Pappas's testimony before a grand jury investigating riots might "remove a spark" that might cause a recurrence of the disturbances.

U.S. Solicitor General Erwin N. Griswold, in a friend-of-the-court brief in the Pappas and Branzburg cases two weeks ago, argued that the First Amendment does not afford newsmen protection against being required to testify before governmental agencies (BROADCASTING, Sept. 20).

NPACT hires former NBC newsmen

Sander Vanocur and Robert MacNeil
join public TV news center in Washington

Public television's embryonic Washington news center has a new name and two major new correspondents.

The National Public Affairs Center for Television, as it is now called, announced last week at same-day news conferences in New York and Washington the hiring of former NBC newsmen Sander Vanocur and Robert MacNeil as "senior correspondents."

Their first priority will be coverage of the political year ahead, in a still-untitled series of half-hour news programs. Working with them in Washington will be a staff of 55 to 60 people.

Both the two newsmen and their boss—NPACT Vice President and General Manager Jim Karayn—expressed the conviction that public television's treatment of major political issues will be noticeably different in style and emphasis from that of the commercial networks. All three have worked with the networks, and all have felt some dissatisfaction with the handling of news there.

It was not clear in detail what the differences would be, but all three suggested that NPACT will probably eschew any attempt to provide blanket coverage of "hard" news: will try, in Mr. Karayn's words, to provide "continuing" coverage of political issues "as opposed to occasional climaxes at obvious moments" and will attempt to go beyond the emphasis on institutions and personalities.

"The public is dissatisfied with political reporting," Mr. Karayn said at the Washington conference. "We hope to



Mr. MacNeil

Mr. Karayn

Mr. Vanocur

reverse the focus on political reporting. . . . We hope to look from the electorate back to the politician."

Mr. MacNeil, who has been with the British Broadcasting Corp. since 1968, said: "We won't be as episodic and sporadic in our approach, and we hope to stay free of some of the cliches and formulas the networks have developed and stuck with over the years. But we don't have any preconceived ideas. We're very informal; we're flying by the seats of our pants."

Mr. Vanocur resigned from NBC last month after 14 years with the network. "I didn't want to continue in television news—or in television," he said. However, he added, he was lured by the opportunity to work in a different kind of environment, and with Mr. Karayn, who has been chief of National Educational

Television's Washington bureau since 1965. Recalling the work done there by Mr. Karayn and the late Paul Niven, another former network newsmen, Mr. Vanocur said: "They had done things I envied—and I envied them because they seemed to be having fun."

NPACT was officially launched last month as the National Public Affairs Broadcast Center (BROADCASTING, Aug. 23), and is the first real attempt at centralization of public television's news operations. It will offer programs of national news and public affairs to the Public Broadcasting Service for scheduling and distribution to noncommercial stations throughout the country.

In addition to its new weekly series, the center will provide special-events coverage in the nation's capital. It will also assume responsibility for two pro-