

INDEX-JOURNAL

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WHAT OTHERS SAY

The following is the opinion of the newspaper represented and does not necessarily reflect the opinion of the Index-Journal.

The CNN question looms over challenge

The Trump administration doesn't seem to have major problems when a hardline conservative media company, Sinclair Broadcast Group, seeks a merger that allows it to dominate the airwaves in St. Louis and other cities. The skewed news coverage that Sinclair stations broadcast to their local markets leans heavily toward President Donald Trump's way of thinking.

But during last year's presidential campaign, Trump made clear where he stands on big media mergers when the coverage isn't to his liking, such as the merger of Comcast and NBCUniversal. Trump declared he might try to break it up because the company was "trying to poison the mind of the American voter."

Now that communications giant AT&T is seeking an \$85.4 billion merger with Time Warner, Trump's Justice Department is worried about the risks to competition. The Justice Department filed a federal lawsuit Monday to block the proposed merger, arguing that it "would result in fewer innovative offerings and higher bills for American families."

The true motive, we suspect, is about making life difficult for CNN, the cable news network that Trump has targeted for attack more than any other news outlet. Not even Randall Stephenson, the normally reserved chief executive of AT&T, could hide his suspicions that CNN was at the root of the administration's challenge.

"There's been a lot of reporting and speculation whether this is all about CNN, and frankly I don't know. But nobody should be surprised that the question keeps coming up because we've been witnessing such an abrupt change in the application of antitrust law here," Stephenson told reporters Monday. The Trump administration's challenge "defies logic, and it is unprecedented," he added.

Senior administration officials this month warned that the merger would not be approved unless Time Warner agreed to spin off the broadcasting subsidiary that owns CNN. Another option was for AT&T to spin off its DirecTV subsidiary.

Stephenson made his suspicions clear that the court challenge is an attempt to stifle negative news media coverage: "The bottom line is that we cannot and we will not be party to any agreement that would even give the perception of compromising the First Amendment protections of the press. So any agreement that results in us forfeiting control of CNN, whether directly or indirectly, is a nonstarter."

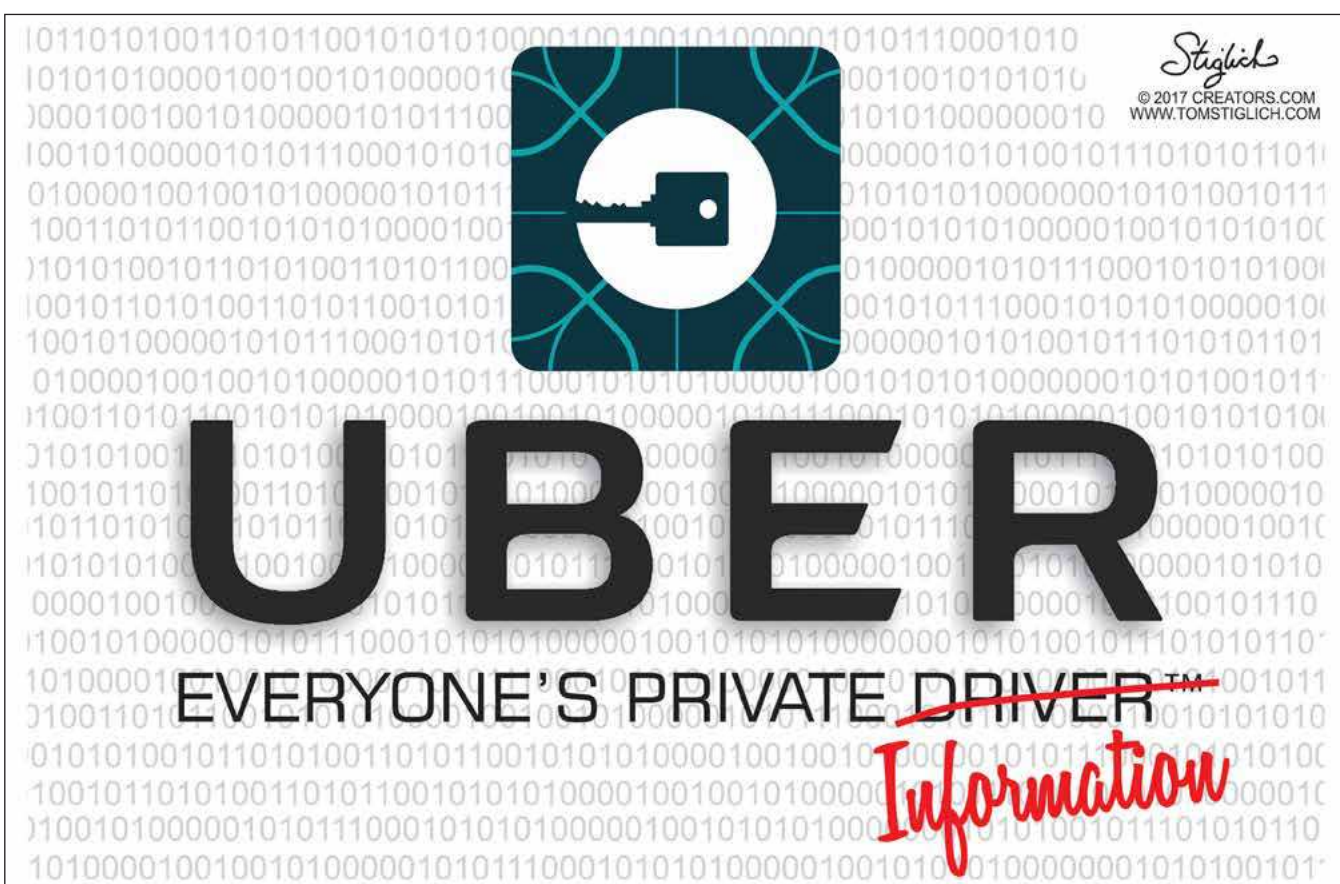
There's good reason to fear the monopoly power that the merged company could hold. Consumers would have fewer cable-provider options, and prices are likely to rise. But that danger would exist regardless of whether CNN was spun off.

Normally in such court challenges, it's the merger applicants who must defend themselves. This time, though, the Justice Department will have to prove that Trump's animosity toward CNN isn't what's prompting the lawsuit. He's made the department's job far more difficult than it should be.

— *The St. Louis Post Dispatch*

SHARE YOUR VIEWS

Readers are encouraged to share their opinions. Letters to the Editor must not exceed 250 words. Guest columns must not exceed 625 words. Include your full name, street address, and day and evening phone numbers, for verification purposes. Columnists should include one sentence about themselves and be prepared to submit a photograph if the column is accepted for publication. All are subject to editing for length, clarity and libel. Publication is not guaranteed. Contributors are limited to one letter/column submission every 30 days. Letters and guest columns can be emailed to: letters@indexjournal.com. Copy and paste into your e-mail. Photos should be attached as separate jpeg files in large format and high resolution of 300 dpi. While email is the preferred method for receipt of submissions, they can be mailed to: Executive Editor, P.O. Box 1018, Greenwood, SC 29648.



Mays events help us study our history and heroes

The life and legacy of Dr. Benjamin Mays received attention through recent events at Lander University, the Mays Historical Preservation Site and Old Mt. Zion Baptist Church. These events remind us of the importance of studying our history, our heroes and our hopes. The statue of Mays helps us convey to ourselves (and particularly our students) the importance of educators, mentors and those that seek equality.



LUCAS McMILLIAN

GUEST VIEW

At the panel discussion on Nov. 3, Lander historian Kevin Witherspoon quoted Dr. Mays' speech when he received an honorary doctorate from Lander. This can help us understand how Mays might react to the unveiling of a statue of him. On that occasion in 1974, Mays said:

"No man in my early years in the County could have dreamed it, that I, a black man, or any black man would ever receive your most prestigious degree: Doctor of Humane Letters. You honor me today with my 34th honorary degree....More than 125 awards hang on

the walls of my family room. But believe me when I tell you that no honor, no award, no degree means quite as much to me as the honor you have conferred upon me today. To be recognized by my home county — a few miles from Phoenix where I had my most terrifying early experience; to be recognized for what I have tried to be and what I have tried to do; and to be recognized for the bridges of understanding that I have tried to build to cement closer ties between Blacks and Whites in this Country and in the World is a good feeling."

Many of my students and several community members were delighted to see that two of the five distinguished panelists were sons of Greenwood County: Ninety Six native Dr. Vernon Burton of Clemson University and Greenwood native Dr. Zachery Williams of the University of Akron.

Burton reflected on the fact that he didn't learn about Mays until his junior year at Furman, and Williams noted that he thinks about his own young children when he considers the importance of the Phoenix riot in shaping Mays' worldview. Williams helped us realize how influential Mays was in working with scholars at Morehouse College and Howard Univer-

sity to push for equality and in mentoring those that would shape the civil rights movement, including Martin Luther King Jr. and Thurgood Marshall.

Other panelists — Lawrence Carter, John Roper and Otis Moss — explained how Mays challenged his own parents' expectations of what he could achieve, served as a role model for generations of Morehouse students, and never strayed from his commitment to equality, such as his opposition to allowing segregated churches from South Africa to join the World Council of Churches.

In this season of many public discussions, let us join to honor a man who pursued educational attainment no matter the obstacle, practiced his faith to treat all persons with dignity, challenged laws and norms that limited equality and carefully mentored so many.

Mays is a hero that all in Greenwood County can, and should, claim. A statue of an educator — not a soldier or statesman in the traditional definition — says much about our community.

Lucas McMillian is Dean of the College of Behavioral & Social Sciences at Lander University.

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LAKELANDS VOICES

When's the appropriate time to start decorating for the holidays?



ANTHONY ANDREWS
Greenwood
"In my opinion, it's after Thanksgiving. It's the perfect time. It's not too early, it's not too late. It's right there in the middle. You eat and the next day you wake up and put your Christmas stuff up."



LANDON HORNACECK
Greenwood
"Somewhere between Halloween and Thanksgiving is a good time. It's the holiday SEASON for me."



KEVIN PEDERSON
Greenwood
"As soon as Thanksgiving comes I think it's a great time to go and do your Christmas decorations. With one condition: You have to have colorful lights. My wife won't even let me put colorful lights up in my own house. I'm going to catch her sleeping one year, and you're going to see colorful lights in my house."



TREY CHILDRESS
Greenwood
"Before Thanksgiving is unacceptable. You have to take the holidays one at a time. Thanksgiving matters. You can't have Christmas before Thanksgiving."



ADAIR PEDERSON
Greenwood
"I think the day after Thanksgiving is the appropriate time. But they need to be down by New Year's. Bad luck if you leave them up after New Year's."