

Five Speakers Are Now Planned For Conference

Two more speakers have been added to the agenda of the 1961 Middlebury Conference. Peter Spalding and Holly McKenzie, both '61, co-chairmen of the March 24 and 25 event announced Monday that Irving Howe, professor of English at Brandeis University, and Porter McKeever, former press secretary to the United Nations and now information officer for the Organization for Educational and Economic Cooperation, would bring the total number of Conference speakers to five.

The three other speakers scheduled to appear at the Conference are Erwin Canham, editor of the Christian Science Monitor; Robert E. Kintner, president of the National Broadcasting Company; and Edward W. Barrett, dean of the Columbia University Graduate School of Journalism. The five men represent, according to the chairmen, a wide variety of approaches to the general conference topic, "Mass Media: Role and Responsibility."

Howe is an uncompromising critic of "mass culture" and the mass media. McKeever will discuss the role of the federal government in influencing radio, television, and the press.

Barrett is a strong spokesman for the power of the printed word. "The power to mold the future of the Republic," he claims, "will be in the hands of the journalists of the future."

To back up this statement Barrett cites the fact that "the American citizen of today is rapidly becoming less the spectator and more the participant in the great

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decisions of the day." On journalism rests the obligation of informing the citizen in preparation for this more articulate role.

Barrett's background qualifies him to investigate journalism's new roles. He graduated from Princeton University in 1932 and received the LL.D. from Bard College in 1950. Barrett was assistant editor of "Today" magazine and editorial director of "Newsweek." During the war he was chief of overseas news for the Office of War Information. He later served as acting deputy chief of the Psychological Warfare Branch of General Eisenhower's headquarters. Barrett is the author of "Truth is Our Weapon."

In meeting journalism's new challenge Barrett sees many problems among them rising production costs and the "current level of mass taste," which often demands "froth" instead of substance. New and cheaper printing techniques and a new generation of journalistic leaders are two of Barrett's hopes for the future. "In radio and television," he believes,

"the outlook is more murky."

A less pessimistic view of the future of television as a service to the public is taken by another Conference speaker, Robert E. Kintner, president of the National Broadcasting Company.

The "great debates" and other televised coverage of the recent presidential campaign are, Kintner believes, proof that television can play a powerful role in shaping public opinion. "I am convinced," he states, "that one of the most important long-range effects of the expanded political coverage . . . will be a steady expansion of informational programming on television."

Kintner is a graduate of Swarthmore College. He specialized in financial writing while on the staff of the New York Herald Tribune. He then became Washington correspondent for the Tribune and later, with Joseph Alsop, wrote a nationally syndicated Washington newspaper column. With Alsop, Kintner is the author of "Men Around the President" and "Washington White Paper."

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