VOICE OF YOUTH

HONOR SCROLL

PETER JORGENSEN

An opportunity is being afforded the youth of the metropolitan area for self-expression. The SUNDAY NEWS pays $25 for each column published. Write must be a high school student or in the tenth year at a junior high. Send manuscripts of no more than 350 words to "Voice of Youth," THE NEWS, 220 E. 42d St., New York 17, N.Y. An entry coupon is provided below.

FREEDOM OF CHOICE

By PETER JORGENSEN
(Bogota High School, Senior)

As a result of new techniques in advertising, it is doubtful whether the "best" man always gets into office. As more is learned about the methods and power of advertising, the possibility that the "best" man might seldom obtain political office is startling. Yet the majority of the people choose the candidate who reaches office. Or do they?

With more than 100 million channels of communication in this country—radios, television sets, newspapers—the figure who is influential enough and rich enough to control these media could easily win any election.

Industry already knows the unlimited possibilities of the advertising medium to cram products into the homes of a public that does not need, or even want, many of them. By constant repetition, and by playing upon human weaknesses and inadequacies through radio and television, anyone using this method could advance to the fore in the field of politics.

It is suspected that the majority of the population can be controlled more easily by appealing directly to emotions rather than to reasoning. Ever since Antony first swayed the crowd against Brutus up to the present time, when half-hour speeches have been cut to five-minute quickies to keep audiences from being bored with the facts, this realization has been known by politicians.

Many, if not most, Americans do not bother to learn about world-wide or national news, except if it is forced upon them by some blaring headline. As long as this situation exists, elections, with the aid of radio and television, could be reduced to blatant popularity contests.

Advertising has already been used in winning elections and probably will continue to be used. It would be a shame if such methods were used to bias the opinions of millions of people. This should never be done in a free-thinking, individualistic democracy.

The only way for Americans to guard against it is to keep well-informed and open-minded.

Peter Jorgensen, 17, rates as a big man on any campus. A senior at Bogota High School, he is class president, Hi-Y president, editor of the school newspaper, a two-year honor society member and on the student council. The son of Mr. and Mrs. Alvin Jorgensen of 129 Grove St., he runs the mile on the track team, and regrets that Bogota has no tennis team. He hopes to attend Princeton next year. Teacher Kenneth Hilman, his writing mentor, considers him a gifted pupil.