

NORTHWEST DIVISION

AMERICAN NATIONAL RED CROSS

11 DELL PLACE

MINNEAPOLIS, MINNESOTA 55403

(612) 333-5193

September 11, 1972

Mr. Robb DeWall
P. O. Box 1341
Rapid City, SD 57701

Dear Mr. DeWall:

This is in reference to your letter of August 26, 1972 regarding broadcasting's role in the rescue and recovery operation in a disaster. Unfortunately, I am unable to give you many direct personal observations in this area related to the Rapid City area floods. I did not arrive in Rapid City until June 13th and much of the rescue and recovery operation was well under way at that point. As a matter of fact, the town was well on its way back to having at least the rudiments of normal public service.

I do have the very definite impression that the radio broadcasting industry was of tremendous assistance to the civil authorities as well as to the residents of the area affected. From what I have heard, your station operating as the Civil Defense broadcaster, did an enormous service in reestablishing itself on the air so quickly and devoting total time to the broadcasting of bulletins and other flood related material. I am sure that this went a long way in dispelling rumors and in assisting the public in an understanding of what to do and where to receive help. Everyone I had contact with during my activities in Rapid City was highly complementary of the media and what it had done to keep the area residents well informed on disaster activity.

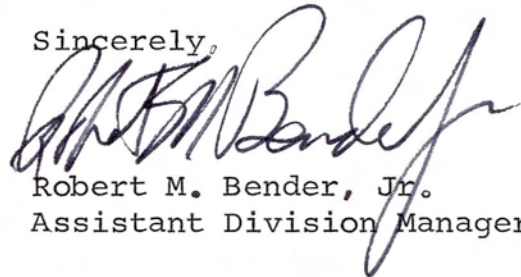
Certainly, my organization utilized the radio facilities to indicate to people what activities and programs it had available to directly assist those affected by the flood. The media was totally cooperative and supported our activities to a very high degree. This greatly assisted us in bringing direct immediate

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relief to those who suffered loss. It also assisted us in interpreting to people exactly what services were available to them.

In conclusion, I must say that the radio media and its role in the most recent flood was of enormous significance. Certainly without the availability of these facilities noone can speculate on how people would have reacted as an aftermath to the flood. I believe the media must be congratulated for its activity. If I can answer specific questions related to your subject, I will be happy to attempt to do this.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Robert M. Bender, Jr.", written in a cursive style.

Robert M. Bender, Jr.
Assistant Division Manager

RMB/js