The following are quotes from Thomas Jefferson:

- Every government degenerates when trusted to the rulers of the people alone. The people themselves, therefore, are its only safe depositories. And to render even them safe, their minds must be improved to a certain degree." Notes on Virginia 1782

- "Educate and inform the whole mass of the people. Enable them to see that it is their interest to preserve peace and order, and they will preserve them. And it requires no very high degree of education to convince them of this. They are the only sure reliance for the preservation of our liberty." --Thomas Jefferson to James Madison, 1787.

- "If a nation expects to be ignorant and free, in a state of civilization, it expects what never was and never will be." -Thomas Jefferson to Charles Yancey, 1816.

- "If the condition of man is to be progressively ameliorated, as we fondly hope and believe, education is to be the chief instrument in effecting it." --Thomas Jefferson to M. A. Jullien, 1818.

- "I know no safe depository of the ultimate powers of the society but the people themselves; and if we think them not enlightened enough to exercise their control with a wholesome discretion, the remedy is not to take it from them, but to inform their discretion by education." to William Jarvis, 1820.
Thomas Carlyle gave the term “the fourth estate” to the media. The following is excerpted from On Heroes and Hero Worship (1841):

“. . . [T]urning now to the Government of men. Witenagemote, old Parliament, was a great thing. The affairs of the nation were there deliberated and decided; what we were to do as a nation. But does not, though the name Parliament subsists, the parliamentary debate go on now, everywhere and at all times, in a far more comprehensive way, out of Parliament altogether? Burke said there were Three Estates in Parliament; but, in the Reporters’ Gallery yonder, there sat a Fourth Estate more important far than they all. It is not a figure of speech, or a witty saying; it is a literal fact,—very momentous to us in these times. Literature is our Parliament too. Printing, which comes necessarily out of Writing, I say often, is equivalent to Democracy: invent Writing, Democracy is inevitable. Writing brings Printing; brings universal everyday extempore Printing, as we see at present. Whoever can speak, speaking now to the whole nation, becomes a power, a branch of government, with inalienable weight in law-making, in all acts of authority. It matters not what rank he has, what revenues or garnitures. the requisite thing is, that he have a tongue which others will listen to; this and nothing more is requisite. The nation is governed by all that has tongue in the nation: Democracy is virtually there. Add only, that whatsoever power exists will have itself, by and by, organized; working secretly under bandages, obscurations, obstructions, it will never rest till it get to work free, unencumbered, visible to all. Democracy virtually extant will insist on becoming palpably extant. . . . (Italics added.)[1]

Answer the following questions:

1. What importance does Jefferson ascribe to education (and the role of the media) in a democracy?

2. What is the “fourth estate”?

3. What is the cartoonist saying about the media?

4. Do you expect media sources to be experts on the issues that they write about? How would you know if they were experts, or not?