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ARTHUR A. LORD recounts a military operation best described by an old service term — "snafu."

YOSSI MELMAN and DAN RAVIV discreetly discuss Israeli intelligence and censorship.

DOUG MARLETTE'S pen crashes into 1989 and captures its incredible turbulence.

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BILL KOVACH, and WALLACE TURNER.

A Rededication Rather Than a Celebration

Bill Kovach

Nieman Foundation Curator

As American journalists plan ways to celebrate next year's 200th anniversary of the adoption of the First Amendment as part of the Bill of Rights, it is a good time to ask if the focus of 1991 should be a rededication rather than a celebration.

Even a cursory look around the world over the last months of 1989 and the first months of this year show a breathtaking display of the power of free expression and a free press in the hands of dedicated journalists. A communications revolution driven by emerging technologies is underway and changing the face of much of the world. Consider this very small catalogue of events:

- Forbidden access to printing presses by the dictatorial government, journalists in Czechoslovakia created their own guerilla system of mass communication utilizing videotapes. According to an account by Stephen Cohen in *The New Republic*, shopowners were persuaded to mount television sets in store windows attached to speakers on outside walls. From daylight until dark these sets broadcast scenes of the brutal beatings of Czech students by security police and mobilized the action which led to the creation of a new government.
- Eugenia Apostol, Chairman of the *Philippine Daily Inquirer*, told a 10th anniversary conference of *The World Paper* in Boston that when her newspaper was banned by the Marcos government from publishing certain stories, she began to print photocopies of reports in the American press: "Thus emerged what in my country

was called Xerox journalism and Betamax news."

- In Rumania, one of Eastern Europe's most repressive governments was overthrown from the television station. The opposition government's first objective was control of the communications system and from here a new government was proclaimed. The Ceaucescu government was still in place, but the opposition created a "new reality" from the new seat of power — the television station.
- A few days of access to an international communications system gave Chinese students an opportunity to mount a demand for Democracy that could be contained only by tanks, and by closing international news outlets and purging the local press of independent journalists.
- An underground and alternative Black press in South Africa has kept alive a struggle against apartheid for more than a generation — it is now reporting the first steps toward dismantling the system.

Just as it did in this country 200 years ago, in country after country, today the new communications technology has become a primary instrument of liberalization and enlightenment.

Meanwhile in the United States the new technology is increasingly turned to the creation of an entertainment and escapist press chasing ever increasing financial profits. Newly minted words like "infotainment" and "advertorial" increasingly describe editorial content while newsroom budgets are cut to finance new design formats and projects. Form increasingly shapes substance. The market

increasingly determines content.

A newly emerging press of the world boldly challenges wielders of deadly power while most of the American press proclaims pandering to be a laudable journalistic value.

In statistic after statistic American society is described in Third World terms. American children die at an alarming rate, more Americans are in prison than any other country save the USSR and South Africa, and the educational system produces functional illiterates. Yet the least commercially vulnerable news outlet of our system — public radio — on a day like today greets its audience in the morning with brief 5 and 10 second capsules of news interspersed between detailed reports on how tough life is for a 23-year-old international tennis star; the life and times of a song writer; a report on what stories people read and don't read in their newspapers.

Maybe it is time to ask if the American press is an institution which has lost its way. The 200th anniversary of the First Amendment is a time to ask if the protection of the press it affords was meant to encourage an industry which seeks to distract and entertain its audience, and if Jefferson or Madison or Mason sought to create an institution designed to maintain profit margins as the first measure of success.

The observation of the 200th anniversary of the adoption of the First Amendment will be in the hands of the establishment press, but if the observance is to have any real meaning it cannot be based upon self con-

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A Supreme Court Decision Fosters Litigation

Eugene Roberts

A private citizen raises high the standard for justice — but pays a price.

Eugene Roberts, Nieman Fellow '62, is President and Executive Editor of The Philadelphia Inquirer. In November, he gave this talk at Colby College, Waterville, Maine, where he was presented with the Annual Elijah Parish Lovejoy Award.

It's a great honor to receive an award named for Elijah Parish Lovejoy — a man who was harassed by a mob and shot to death for exercising his Constitutional Rights of Freedom of The Press.

Lovejoy, mercifully, is on a very short list of American newspaper editors who have been silenced by murder.

Murder, of course, is now out of date. The modern way to silence criticism is to price it out of existence with protracted libel or defamation litigation. If you are a public official or corporate executive whose plans are being thwarted by robust debate, there's no need for violence. You simply sue. And sue. And sue.

It is, to be sure, a more civilized method than stoning or shooting, but just as deadly to Freedom of Speech. Faced with the prospect of tens of thousands or even hundreds of thousands of dollars — perhaps millions — in legal costs, critics become too fearful to speak out. Their anxiety is not for the loss of their lives, but for the loss of their homes or for the nest eggs they have put away for retirement or for the education of their children.

Ironically, this new era of litigation was spawned by a Supreme Court

decision — *Times vs. Sullivan* — that was meant to strengthen the rights of citizens and the press in public debate. In this case, more than 25 years ago, the Court ruled that civil rights leaders in Alabama were not guilty of libel against public officials in Montgomery even if they had made at least seven errors of fact in an advertisement published in *The New York Times*. The Court said errors were inevitable in vigorous public discussion and were to be permitted except in the presence of "Actual Malice" which the Court said had two tests: One, if the error were made with actual knowledge of its falsity, or, two, if it were made "In Reckless Disregard of the Truth."

predicated upon free and open debate. The other Justices were not persuaded, and for about a decade it appeared that Justices Black, Douglas and Goldberg had overreacted.

Then came the late 1970's and early 1980's, the worst years in the history of the American media for libel and defamation suits. Such cases as General William Westmoreland against CBS, Defense Minister Ariel Sharon of Israel vs. *TIME* magazine, and the president of Mobil Oil vs. *The Washington Post* burst upon the courts. Each case cited "Knowledge of Falsity" or "Reckless Disregard" or both; and each case inspired other public officials and other corporate executives to sue. Only in the last two

Ironically, this new era of litigation was spawned by a Supreme Court decision — *Times vs. Sullivan* — that was meant to strengthen the rights of citizens and the press in public debate.

Much of the press rejoiced, but three of the nine Justices — Douglas, Black and Goldberg — knew better. They warned their colleagues that they were committing a grave error — putting qualifications on free speech involving public issues. And this, in the end, they said, could undermine freedom of expression and threaten democracy itself, which, of course, is

or three years has the flood of cases against the media begun to recede. Much of the press and television are girded by libel insurance and the wealth of large communications companies. And large papers and networks have been able, when lower courts rule against them, to fight through the Appeals Courts to jurists who are better equipped than juries to gauge

Then came the late 1970's and early 1980's, the worst years in the history of the American media for libel and defamation suits.

the intentions of the Supreme Court in *Times vs. Sullivan*.

Noting this trend, and watching huge jury verdicts melt away in the Appeals Courts, some law firms now seem less interested in taking on libel cases against large newspapers, newspaper groups and television.

But there is never a time to breathe easy when the First Amendment, and all it protects, is at stake. Law firms have now discovered a new and fertile field: non-media defamation cases — that is, cases pitting business against private individuals, or public officials against private citizens, or private citizens against private citizens.

More private individuals are being sued for speaking their mind publicly than ever before; and they are being intimidated into silence in a way that large newspapers and broadcast companies never were. Small wonder. Private citizens generally do not have the financial underpinning or the insurance protection necessary to withstand a determined legal assault by a corporation or by a public official who is backed by a governmental or political apparatus.

The very worst fears of Justices Black, Douglas and Goldberg are being realized. They understood that most public officials themselves are immune from libel and defamation litigation from anything they do or say while engaged in the conduct of their official duties. They recognized that if public officials cannot be sued during public debate, and private citizens can be, then there will be a

dreadful imbalance in the conduct of the public's business.

How far have we as a society come along this perilous road? Far enough that two academics, without enough resources to do a complete survey of America's courts, nevertheless could find 200 recent cases in which libel or defamation law has been used as an instrument of political power.

The professors, both with the University of Denver, are George W. Pring of the College of Law, and Penelope Canan, of the Department of Sociology. They concluded that "Every year hundreds, perhaps thousands, of civil law suits are filed in the United States whose sole purpose is to prevent citizens from exercising their political rights or to punish those who have done so."

Consider the plight of Alan La Pointe, a design consultant from Richmond, California. He opposed a trash incinerator plant that was planned by the West Contra Costa Sanitary District. La Pointe's campaign against the plant uncovered some questionable expenditures that resulted in two grand jury investigations.

La Pointe filed a taxpayer lawsuit in 1987 after the California attorney general ruled that funds for construction of the plant had been improperly spent. A year later, the sanitary district countersued — not against

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the attorney general but against La Pointe himself for \$42 million, charging that he had killed the plant project by speaking out against it.

Eventually, the Sanitary District lost its \$42 million lawsuit and was ordered to pay La Pointe's legal fees. Now, La Pointe is preparing to file another suit against the Sanitary District for malicious prosecution and violating his civil rights.

Though he is winning the battle, Alan La Pointe today is a much more cautious civic activist. La Pointe told *California Magazine* recently that he was having second thoughts about being a public crusader. He says "You think, why should it be you? You wonder, is it worth the toll?"

Another example can be found in upstate New York, where yet another proposed trash-burning plant was opposed by 328 residents in Washington and Warren counties. The protesters signed petitions, wrote letters to the editor of the local newspaper, conducted public demonstrations and, when all else failed, went to court to block construction of the plant.

The boards of supervisors in both counties grew impatient with the protests and the delays. In April of this year, the governments of Washington and Warren counties sued their own citizens by filing a \$1.5 million lawsuit against the protesters.

Or consider, for a moment, two cases in Pennsylvania, the home state of my newspaper, *The Philadelphia Inquirer*. In one case, Raymond Henderson, a local leader of The NAACP, The National Association for The Advancement of Colored People, went before the Township Council in Braddock, a suburb of Pittsburgh, and complained that the firing of a black Township secretary had been "racially motivated." The council sued Mr. Henderson.

In Towamencin Township, a suburb of Philadelphia, the Township attorney sued a private citizen, Robert C. Smith, for complaining at a Township board meeting that an order by the state Environmental Protection Agency had been subverted by the Township.

Ultimately, the cases were dropped, but not before Mr. Smith had spent \$10,000 in his defense and not before Mr. Henderson decided that fighting for what he perceived to be racial injustice could carry a price beyond his means.

Both men were left pondering an interesting question: If you cannot press a grievance before your Township Board, where then might you press it?

It is disquieting, to say the least, to learn that so many American citizens who voice a grievance are getting sued

... if you cannot press a grievance before your Township Board, where then might you press it? It is disquieting ... to learn that so many American citizens who voice a grievance are getting sued for their pains.

for their pains.

In California, a Squaw Valley millionaire by the name of Rick Sylvester led a citizen fight against a proposed luxury resort and golf course planned for his mountain community. The developers responded with a \$75 million lawsuit.

Sylvester's case is about to go to court, and he estimates his legal expenses thus far have been several hundred thousand dollars. Sylvester calls the lawsuit "A monster that has moved in with the family."

The developer's lawsuit against Sylvester, and against others opposing the project, quickly stifled what had been robust public criticism of the project. The Army Corps of Engineers, seeking comment on the proposed development, couldn't get any Squaw Valley residents to come forth. The Army Engineers then issued a public notice soliciting anonymous comments from concerned and frightened citizens.

You may have heard the story of Bob Barker, the television game show host and former Beauty Pageant EMCEE who has become an animal rights activist. Barker's fierce defense of animals has made him some enemies including, oddly enough, The National Humane Association. In September, The Humane Association filed a \$10 million libel suit against Barker, charging that he has been too critical of the organization's West Coast regional director.

Bob Barker is presumably wealthier, and probably more committed to his cause, than many of his fellow citizens.

But how many of us have heard of Cathy Blight, former president of The Humane Society in rural Livingston County, Michigan?

A few years ago, she learned that 22 municipal dog pounds in the area were giving their unclaimed strays to a kennel operator, who then sold some of the animals for medical research experiments.

Cathy Blight wrote an outraged letter to the editor of the weekly *Livingston County Press*. In her letter,

The county settled its case out of court.

The newspaper ... financially backed by libel insurance — eventually settled. But Cathy Blight, private citizen, had no safety net.

she demanded that the Township and County governments cancel their contract with the animal broker.

Several Townships and Monroe County eventually did cancel their contracts. The kennel operator responded with three lawsuits — one against Monroe County, one against the newspaper, and one against Cathy Blight for writing the letter to the editor.

The County settled its case out of court. The newspaper — which was financially backed by libel insurance — eventually settled. But Cathy Blight, private citizen, had no safety net. She suffered one setback after another in the Michigan court system. Two months ago, the Michigan Supreme Court let stand a lower court verdict that awarded the Kennel operators \$125,000 from Ms. Blight.

Today, Cathy Blight is running out of options. She left her job with The Humane Society. She must cash in her retirement savings to cover the legal costs. There is a lien against her house because of the libel award. A San Francisco law firm has volunteered to argue her case before the U.S. Supreme Court free of charge. But as of today, it is not at all certain that the case will get that far. Cathy Blight is thinking about cutting her losses and settling the case.

As an editor, I care deeply about

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Operation Just Cause — The Press in The Dark Again

Arthur A. Lord

*The Pentagon ignores a policy —
a press pool to witness, record and document the action.*

Two hours after U.S. troops began their combat assault in Panama, 16 reporters and photographers lifted off from Andrews Air Force Base aboard an Air Force C-141. Their mission was to cover the fighting and to share with all media their reports, photographs and video of this historic event in the United States.

The concept of a press "pool" to cover such military operations was conceived after the 1983 invasion of Grenada, during which the press was completely and apparently deliberately frozen out. A blue ribbon commission, headed by retired Major General Winant Sidle, admitted that prohibiting press coverage in Grenada was improper and recommended that in future combat situations, military commanders should make provisions for at least a small pool of journalists to witness, record and document the action.

The Sidle commission's report was approved by then Secretary of Defense Caspar Weinberger and adopted as official Pentagon policy.

Now that the combat phase of

"Operation Just Cause" is over, it can be said with certainty the policy is being ignored and the Pentagon is not living up to its agreement with the American media, and by extension, the American people and their right to know.

"Sorry, my operational orders are that I cannot let you talk with any of my men. I can't speak with you." So much for free access.

As a result, the press pool did not produce one eyewitness account, a still picture or even ten seconds of

Now that the combat phase of "Operation Just Cause" is over, it can be said . . . the policy is being ignored and the Pentagon is not living up to its agreement with the American media . . .

According to an after action report filed by pool television correspondent Fred Francis, "The pool was repeatedly denied or ignored when it asked for access to front line troops, wounded soldiers—simple interviews." Instead of having access to the combat area, the pool was sequestered at the Quarry Heights military facility during the first 36 hours of fighting.

Less than two miles from Quarry Heights, American soldiers were in the process of securing Noriega's headquarters, which was fully ablaze. When pool members asked to go there, they were told it was "too dangerous." When Francis tried to interview an Army major general, whose paratroops had seized the international airport, he was told

television video that showed how American forces successfully completed their mission.

However, compared to what I and about 200 other journalists went through, the Pentagon pool was a rousing success. For some strange reason, on December 21, the Pentagon, apparently thinking the situation was "well in hand" as the Marines used to say, authorized the press to charter an L-1011 to fly 169 journalists and about 25,000 pounds of electronic gear into Howard Air Force Base.

Upon our arrival, we were greeted by a wide-eyed master sergeant, who was apparently astounded by the size of our contingent, and explained that

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Arthur A. Lord is a producer for NBC News in Burbank, California. Mr. Lord is a former public affairs officer in the United States Air Force.



The Israeli Censorship, The Press and The Defense Establishment: How it Really Works

Yossi Melman and Dan Raviv

This piece is an excerpt from the book, Every Spy a Prince: The Complete History of Israel's Intelligence Community by Yossi Melman and Dan Raviv, to be published in June by Houghton Mifflin Company. Mr. Melman, (NF '90), an Israeli journalist, is the diplomatic correspondent for Davar, Tel Aviv. He is the author of several books on terrorism and Middle East affairs.

Mr. Raviv is a London-based correspondent for CBS News broadcasting from Europe and the Middle East. He is the recipient of two awards from the Overseas Press Club of America. The journalists are co-authors of the book, Behind the Uprising: Israelis, Jordanians and Palestinians, published by Greenwood Press in 1989.

We were recently in Mossad headquarters, Israel's foreign espionage agency in Tel Aviv. Admittedly, our visit did not take in the part of the building which houses one of the world's most respected intelligence agencies. Let us say we were just next door.

We could give the address. We could describe the rather unremarkable premises. We could say, from experience, whether people get around by escalator, by elevator, or simply by climbing stairs. We could even report that most Mossad offices moved in 1989 to a location outside the seaside city. But giving too many details would be crossing the line into potential violations of Israeli law.

No one is entirely sure about the line, although journalists based in

Israel usually know when they are speeding right through the gray area into unlawful activities. The trick, both foreign correspondents and Israeli reporters have found, is to coast along the gray area without crossing to the other side.

In our case, we declare quite honestly that the one who lives outside Israel learned the addresses of Mossad and Shin Bet, the domestic security service headquarters, as well as the names of the current chiefs, from sources in Washington, D.C. It is generally assumed that the intelligence services of the Soviet Union and of most Arab countries possess the same information — although we certainly did not tell them.

are simply not "in" enough.

One Israeli newspaperman, out to impress the elite among his audience while signaling Shin Bet that he knows what it knows, played a game of cat-and-mouse with the name of the new agency chief in 1988 — ironically appointed the same day that Mordecai Vanunu was convicted. The inside joke was in the headline over an article purportedly about American TV detective Perry Mason: "What Will Perry Follow?" At the risk of naming Shin Bet's director, the clue is somewhat bolder in Hebrew: *Akhrei Ma Yaakov Perry?*

What did the writer achieve? He was hinting at a name which is supposed to be secret; and yet, he was fly-

We could say from experience whether people get around by escalator, by elevator, or simply by climbing stairs. We could even report that most Mossad offices moved in 1989 to a location outside the seaside city.

Many well informed Israelis, notably politicians and journalists, also know the secret names. It has become something of a game, at chic parties, to leap into conversations with "The Shin Bet chief told me the other day . . ." or "I met the head of the Mossad, and he said . . ." and those who do not know the identities

ing on the same side of Israel's secrecy border without giving the censor the ammunition to shoot him down. Perhaps the Shin Bet chief was lucky that the clever headline appeared in a small-circulation newspaper, but this did not prevent his telephoning the chief editor the next day to ask: "Why did you do this to me?" The

officially anonymous intelligence chief called the editor directly, because he knew he could trust her. Newspaper editors usually know who is who, even if they cannot inform their readers.

The flurry seemed entirely absurd when, in February 1989, the unnamed Shin Bet director celebrated his forty-fifth birthday amid ridiculous publicity. Israeli newspapers told the nation and the world that the man was separated from his wife, and that his girlfriend was a popular socialite who organized a huge surprise party for him with the connivance of secretaries and others in Shin Bet.

The festivities were held in the Israel Museum cafeteria in Jerusalem, and the 150 guests included government ministers, Knesset parliamentarians, and even ladies and gentlemen of the press. The newspapers reported later that Shin Bet operatives were drunk, as their famous but anonymous chief played "Summertime" and other jazz favorites on his trumpet. His party went on until three o'clock in the morning.

Prime Minister Shamir, the austere former Mossad agent, did not attend and was livid when he heard of the exceedingly public celebration. Shamir knew that the newspaper accounts were a potential gold mine for hostile intelligence services seeking to compile a file on the Shin Bet chief. The prime minister called him onto the carpet and then permitted reports on the scolding to be leaked to the press.

The fact that journalists were invited to the fete had its own implications. Any reporter so cozy

Brigadier General Yitzhak Shani, chief censor since 1977: "It is the duty of every reporter to submit his material to the censor . . . He who fails to do this is a criminal."

with the clandestine authorities of his or her nation might some day be called upon to do a favor or two. Intelligence operatives do, on occasion, contact journalists directly to urge them not to pursue matters which could threaten Israel's security. The individual reporter must decide how to respond, but it is clear that in a small country it is far better to be on speaking terms with military and intelligence sources. If the personal pleas should fail, in any event, the officials do have enforcement power in the person of the censor.

Journalists and editors almost always play by the rules, and they receive background briefings from the prime ministers, defense ministers, and even from secret-service chiefs. The authorities want the press to understand the facts which lie behind official decisions, but they trust that specific facts relating to national security will not be published. It is a unique system established in 1949, shortly after the War of Independence, and the creation of the state.

The first prime minister, David Ben-Gurion, could have kept using the old British Mandate's emergency regulations to restrain press and other freedoms. He preferred instead to play the democrat while still employing

the powers of so-called emergencies when he felt it necessary. Ben-Gurion found the newspaper editors to be perfect partners, willing to be censored voluntarily. They signed a formal agreement, which had no legal force but great survival power.

Under the 1949 accord, the chief of staff and minister of defense appoint a military commander who has an intelligence background to the post of Chief Censor, with the rank of brigadier general. With the office, formally considered part of Aman, the Hebrew acronym of the Military Intelligence, comes a staff of seventy army officers and civilian employees to work in two "bases" in Tel Aviv and Jerusalem.

The agreement also says that Israeli newspapers, radio and television stations, and foreign correspondents based in the country are honor-bound to submit their articles and news items to the censor. It is more than honor, as far as Brigadier General Yitzhak Shani, chief censor since 1977, is concerned. "It is the duty of every reporter to submit his material to the censor," he says. "He who fails to do this is a criminal!"

The man who oversees the system recognizes that he is a unique feature among democratic nations, as Israel is the only one with continuous, institutionalized military censorship. He enjoys similar authority to that of his scissors-wielding British predecessor in the Palestine Mandate days. But there is a lot more voluntary cooperation these days.

If their publications or broadcasting stations are members of "the Committee of Editors," alleged violators of the censorship regulations are usually

The authorities want the press to understand the facts which lie behind official decisions, but they trust that specific facts relating to national security will not be published.

brought before a special tribunal with journalists and censors as the judges. The tribunal can impose fines or insist that the newspaper or magazine go out of business for a punishment period.

Even without the nicety of the tribunal, the censor and his staff can order that publications be shut down. They have done so in the case of Hebrew newspapers in 1952 and in 1984. Closure orders are far more frequent in the case of the Arab press in East Jerusalem and the occupied territories — even more so since the *intifada*, or Palestinian uprising, began in 1987.

There is an appeals tribunal, consisting of a senior army officer, a journalist, and a prominent lawyer or politician. Beyond that, appeals may be lodged with Israel's supreme court.

The courts have never questioned the censors' power to listen in on journalists' telephones, specifically overseas calls made by foreign correspondents. The censors can also read telex items as they are typed to the outside world. Direct computer links and facsimile machines caused problems for the censors for a while, but methods to intercept the more modern signals were also developed.

The purview of the censor extends beyond military secrets, which understandably include identifications of specific army units, codes, and names of intelligence officers, troop movements, and sensitive topics such as nuclear weapons. The subjects

which may also be censored include immigration to Israel, the construction of new roads, new Jewish settlements in the occupied territories, energy supplies and oil-storage facilities, and both trade and political links with countries that do not have diplomatic relations with Israel; in other words, anything which could be interpreted as the fortification of the state in its broadest sense.

The 1949 agreement has been modified on three occasions, each time narrowing the list of topics subject to censorship. But the list remains long and includes sixty-nine subjects.

What does the press receive in return? Reasonableness. Editors and reporters can even negotiate with the censor, restoring controversial paragraphs so long as they are worded slightly differently. The censor usually acts sensibly, not overstepping his authority and — when not under heavy political pressure — only sniffing around when genuine military matters are concerned. But he is sometimes pressed to stick his nose into other issues, as almost a political censor. Retired politicians have found that their memoirs have been cut, apparently to prevent embarrassment to government and military officials.

A navigable path has been found through this minefield, and the participants in the game generally know where they stand. There is a tacit agreement that articles on issues such as highway construction and economics do not have to be submitted in advance to the censor, unless they touch upon sensitive topics such as the intelligence community.

If an Israeli or foreign correspondent wishes to name the secret-service chiefs or include their addresses in a dispatch, he is supposed to know that the copy goes first to the military censor. The secret facts will then duly be excised. So why write them down in the first place? The threat of censorship often becomes self-censorship.

By the same token, when reporters and editors feel they can "get away"

What does the press receive in return? Reasonableness. Editors and reporters can even negotiate with the censor, restoring controversial paragraphs so long as they are worded slightly differently.

with a technical violation of censorship, they may well take the risk. In 1981, for instance, an Israeli journalist working for an American newspaper revealed that the head of Shin Bet was then Avraham Ahituv. The newsman's main aim was to tell the world that the secret-service chief had clashed with Prime Minister Begin over security policy regarding West Bank Jewish settlers and their alleged involvement in bombings against Palestinians. The chief censor recommended that the journalist be put on trial, but the attorney general decided not to press charges.

The censor did even less in similar circumstances in 1986, when an American television network exposed Avraham Shalom as the head of the Shin Bet being investigated in connection with the killing of the two Palestinian bus hijackers.

The Israeli system occasionally reaches the rock bottom of absurdity when it prevents local newspapers from publishing certain facts, even though the foreign press — beyond the reach of the censor — does publish the full story. The intelligence scandals of the 1980s were prime examples, when Israeli newspapers were only permitted to quote stories which had already appeared in foreign publications. The information had often come surrep-

The courts have never questioned the censor's power to listen in on journalists' telephones, specifically overseas calls made by foreign correspondents.

ticiously from Israeli sources whose lips were supposedly sealed by the censor.

The censor and other Israeli authorities seem to feel that the country's own newspapers are some sort of official mouthpieces. It is as though anything which appears in an Israeli publication will be seen abroad as more authoritative. Israeli newspapers can thus do more damage.

The censor apparently doubts that the Israeli papers are considered to be truly independent. Even if the local newspapers were to make mistakes and print inaccurate reports, the authorities fear that the errors or misquotes will be taken worldwide as facts. If it has to do with the military or intelligence, better that the Israeli media say little or nothing.

General Shani insists that he does not become involved unless secrets are revealed. "With the passage of time, faced with reality, Israel has more and more released its rigid censorship grip," he says. "Censorship has become more logical and more reasonable, dealing with issues which only affect the direct security of the State of Israel."

And, he adds, "when journalists are not accurate or when they exaggerate, or when in the course of a so-called analysis or commentary they reach conclusions which are way off-beam, I don't like it but it's not my job to interfere."

The entire system is controversial, of course, in a country which proudly boasts of being the only democracy in the Middle East. Two principal reasons are given for maintaining the sometimes petty secrecy which goes hand in hand with Israeli censorship. One reason is mystical; the other is practical.

In a habit adopted from the British, who never publish the accurate names of the secret agencies known as MI5 and MI6 or the identities of the service chiefs, the Israelis preserve a similar mystique around their intelligence community. The intelligence community believes that the people of Israel sleep better at night

knowing that they *are* protected, and not because they know precisely *who* is protecting them and *how*.

It is, at all times, an ingrained habit in the world of espionage — based on both convenience and tradition — not to tell anything, when silence can be maintained instead.

As for the practical reason, defense officials justifiably point out that many small terrorist groups — whether Palestinians, Marxists, or simply anarchists — can actually be helped by details which may seem petty. If such terrorists, so the argument goes, were easily to obtain the names and addresses of intelligence agents and agencies, these would become potential targets for attack.

. . . it is the prime minister who is accountable for his entire ministry. He or she must bear the blame if the Mossad or Shin Bet commits an unacceptable act . . . it is the prime minister who must resign.

Yes, the officials admit, the Russians, the Syrians, and probably the P.L.O. know everything there is to know about the Mossad chief and his headquarters, but there is no reason that every little troublemaker in the world should know.

The mystical argument — silence, for the sake of silence — meets with opposition, however. In the post-Watergate spirit of governmental openness which spread from the United States to other Western democracies, the blind faith that citizens had in their governments and

defense establishments has worn thin. There are growing demands that politicians, civil servants, the military, and even intelligence agencies be more accountable to the public.

Israel, however, is different from the U.S. in its form of government. All executive power in Israel lies with the cabinet formed by the prime minister, whose authority is based on the majority he or she commands in parliament — reflecting the multi-party outcome of the last election. Checks and balances operate quite differently than they do in Washington.

Envious of the regular hearings held by committees of the U.S. Congress on subjects ranging from the defense budget to C.I.A. assassination plots, vigorous democrats in the Israeli Parliament, the Knesset, would dearly love to have the power to confirm or veto candidates for the directorships of the Mossad and Shin Bet.

They are not satisfied by the fact that the Knesset's foreign affairs and defense committee has a six-member subcommittee known as the Committee of the Services, which is supposed to oversee the secret agencies. Although the agency chiefs or their deputies do appear before this tiny panel, the investigative instincts of its members usually evaporate when they hear the spicy details of covert operations. The panel is bribed, in a sense, with the excitement of hearing "inside information." The subcommittee has no real powers, aside from using its ears to listen. Some members have complained that the intelligence agencies, which are supposed to brief them, instead bypass the panel and leak stories to foreign journalists when the spymasters think it will help Israel's image.

The legislature has never improved the vague legal basis for the intelligence community. The best the security agencies can do, in private, is point to Article 29 of the Basic Law of the State of Israel, which says: "The

continued on page 26

A Big Apple Year of Cartoons Drawn by Doug Marlette, Nieman Fellow '81

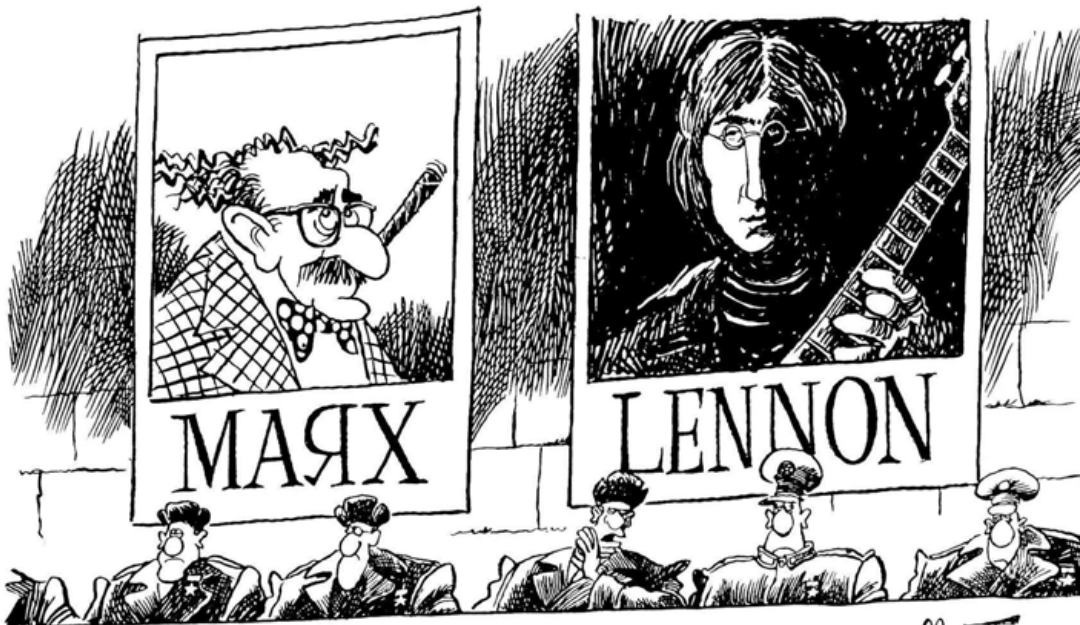


Times, places and people are all under the scrutiny of Doug Marlette's satirical eye — his beat is the world. And the writing of the New York Newsday cartoonist is as potent as his pen. See Nieman Notes (pg. 41) for Marlette's views on living in New York.

MARLETTE © 1989
NEW YORK NEWSDAY



"THE MANAGER WAS THROWN OUT FOR GAMBLING, THE SHORTSTOP WAS SUSPENDED FOR STEROIDS, THE PITCHER'S IN DRUG REHAB, THE CATCHER'S AT BETTY FORD AND THE REST OF THE TEAM'S DOING A MILLER LITE COMMERCIAL!"



MARLETTE © 1989
NEW YORK NEWSDAY

"GORBACHEV'S GOING TOO FAST!"



"...THIS LAND IS YOUR LAND!...THIS LAND IS MY LAND!... FROM CALIFORNIA...
TO THE NEW YORK ISLANDS!..."



"YOUR LIPS SAY 'NO, NO', BUT YOUR NOSE SAYS 'YES, YES'!"

* I COULD VISIT
FOREIGN
NATIONS...



... AVOID
HUMILIATIONS...



... TREAT
CRITICS WITH
DISDAIN...



... I'D BE MORE
THAN GEORGE'S
CADDY...



... MAKE
DECISIONS
WITHOUT
DADDY...



... IF I
ONLY
HAD A
BRAIN!



MARLETTE ©1989
NEW YORK NEWSDAY

* SING TO THE TUNE OF "IF I ONLY HAD A BRAIN"



MARLETTE ©1989
NEW YORK NEWSDAY

" REGULAR OR UNLEADED ? "

West German Television: From Statist Stodginess to Market Mediocrity

Sabine Rollberg

*The serious side — documentaries, experimental work, and new wave films —
is everyday fare.*

"German Humor under Stress" was the headline on the front page of *The New York Times* on May 3, 1985. Ronald Reagan was in Bonn for the economic world summit. He had arrived on May Day two days earlier. WDR, the largest West German TV station, broadcast a three-hour nationwide program on this holiday: live talks with union members, "proletarian" writers, politicians, and employers.

Reagan's arrival occurred during the three-hour program, and of course there was live coverage from the airport, where the U.S. correspondent for German television had landed along with the president's entourage. German-American relations were at a low point, the correspondent said, not only because of the visit planned to Bitburg, but also because the White House had just declared — on German soil — an embargo against Nicaragua,

thus implying that West Germany is a colony. The correspondent then announced that Reagan would be resting at a castle until his official visit started the next day.

The program switched back to the studio, where the anchorman said that he was fortunate enough to have Mr. Reagan on the telephone. The first question, after some polite phrases of welcome, was: "Are you going to go to Bitburg?" The audience now saw a picture of Reagan on the

Chancellor, who was with the Japanese Prime Minister on a boat tour of the Rhine River. The Chancellor said, after some welcoming remarks made, of course, in Palatine dialect, "The American President must be mistaken; he did not mean Spandau and Rudolph Hess, but Rudolph von Hassel and Plötzensee."

The conversation between Reagan and Kohl lasted about three minutes while the TV audience stared at their

"Are you going to go to Bitburg?" The audience now saw a picture of Reagan on the screen and heard his voice saying, in English, "Well, I won't stop in Bitburg, I will take a helicopter and hover over it. Then I will fly to Berlin, West Berlin, over Spandau, and greet Rudolf Hess."

Sabine Rollberg, Nieman Fellow '86, is based in Paris as a correspondent for West German television, ARD. This piece is a reprint from the German publication of the Center for European Studies.



screen and heard his voice saying, in English, "Well, I won't step on Bitburg, I will take a helicopter and hover over it. Then I will fly to Berlin, West Berlin, over Spandau, and greet Rudolf Hess." Silence. The anchorman swallowed. To smooth over the presidential remarks, he happened to have on the other line the German

photographs. Then the anchorman requested the attention of all news agencies: they were to stop recording the dialogue; the whole thing was a hoax. He welcomed into the studio the two actors who had imitated the voices (a minor detail: Ron Williams, who was Reagan's voice, is a former American soldier and he is black).

The program then continued, with poems and dances and discussions on May Day.

Meanwhile, George Bush, just arrived at his hotel in Bonn, had switched on the TV and was astonished to hear his master's voice. Not knowing a thing about the interview, he promptly called one of his good friends at the network airing the program, the chief political producer at WDR, and asked him why he had not been told that the president was going to be interviewed on German TV. The friend, Gerd Ruge, said that he had not known either. Ruge was already furious because the program had been produced in the cultural, and not the political, department. So without talking to his superiors, Ruge called the press to say that if he had been in charge of the program, this never would have occurred. Now the fur really began to fly!

It was the first time in postwar history that the Bonn government had requested a TV station to apologize formally for a program.

By the time Ruge's remarks appeared in the newspaper the next day, the CDU had filed a formal complaint against WDR. It was the first time in postwar history that the Bonn government had requested a TV station to apologize formally for a program. The government pressured WDR into expressing its regrets to the American president and demanded the dismissal of those responsible for the "Mai Revue."

On the same day the *New York Times* published its article. Moreover, the "Reagan interview" could be seen

on twenty-seven other networks all over the world, because one of the big bosses at WDR, due to retire within a month, was courageous enough to declare the satire news. A tremendous campaign and counter-campaign started. Kurt Tucholsky's question, "How Far Can Satire Go," was hotly debated. Larry Speakes, Reagan's press person, reported in an interview that the American president didn't feel insulted. Solidarity telegrams signed by Günter Grass and the late Heinrich Böll took a position of support for satire on German TV and stated that absolutely no one in this case should be fired. The CDU urged its members to write protest letters, and more than three thousand arrived at WDR, a number with antisemitic overtones and some even containing death threats aimed at the anchorman and the producer. Fortunately for them, the two top executives of WDR were about to leave their positions at the network so they backed the anchorman and producer, who are still there.

Why am I telling this story? I think it says some significant things about German television:

1. Germans have problems with humor and with satire. Irony and satire are considered attitudes typical of intellectuals, a species of human beings not terribly beloved in Germany, even before Hitler's time. Satire has very limited room in German society — East and West — but above all it must never be used vis-à-vis politicians in public.
2. As the most public medium, TV has got to be serious. The announcer of the evening news at eight o'clock is a kind of high priest.
3. In German hierarchy, politicians rank high above journalists. Television is a platform for politicians, not journalists. Reporters have supporting roles — their main job is to hold the microphones. The audience cannot tolerate its authority figures treated with irony and insubordination.

4. Politicians have a limited sense of humor when it comes to satirical treatment. They will use their influence to avoid it on TV at all costs.

5. West German politicians and parties in power exert strong influence on the networks. If politicians are asked tough questions perchance by a young, inexperienced reporter, the interview never gets aired.

When I make observations of this sort, Americans always ask me if German television is owned by the state. The answer is no, nor is it private, even if it makes that impression. We have *Dallas* and we have *Dynasty*. You can see one American feature film right after another, especially on

We have *Dallas* and we have *Dynasty*. . . . During prime time there are poor imitations of American game, music, and talk shows, though there are no commercial breaks giving you time to grab a beer out of the icebox.

weekends. During prime time there are poor imitations of American game, music, and talk shows, though there are no commercial breaks giving you time to grab a beer out of the icebox. Advertising is limited to the period between six and eight o'clock in the evening, and German television does not broadcast twenty-four hours a day. It begins in the early afternoon and usually finishes around midnight; before noon, certain pro-

grams from the night before are repeated.

What are the main differences? You will find documentaries you would never see on major American networks; for example, "Kenya Twice," a ninety-minute piece on the African nation, coproduced by a German correspondent and a Kenyan journalist. There are many more foreign correspondents than all the U.S. networks have combined. German correspondents are not parachuted into countries at times of crisis and catastrophe; they are posted in all major capitals of the world. They try to give proper background analysis and information on everyday life. There is coverage of foreign policy and reports on other countries on a regular basis on German television. A weekly series called *Das kleine Fernsehspiel* showcases directors interested in experimental work and gives them a chance to prove themselves. Their projects are financed by the station and thus guarantee an audience.

Without TV, the wave of so-called New German Film would never have happened; Volker Schlöndorff, Wim Wenders, Werner Herzog and others made their films in the sixties and seventies with backing from German television. Their films were screened for two years in moviehouses, and after being given this chance on the free market, they were aired on TV. German TV has had a major influence on the existence of movie theaters and the development of film directors. German TV can afford to produce art and avant garde programming even for small audiences, because it can ignore the ratings. It is not dependent on sponsorship by a brand of lemonade that might withdraw its support if the films it sponsors do not receive high enough ratings.

But who is paying for all this, if not the state? The audience does. This may sound like pay TV, but it is not. Germans do not have the choice of paying for a certain channel or program; they must pay for the whole system. Everyone who owns a TV set has to pay about ten dollars a month

German TV can afford to produce art and avant garde programming even for small audiences, because it can ignore the ratings. It is not dependent on sponsorship by a brand of lemonade that might withdraw its support if the films it sponsors do not receive high enough ratings.

for radio and television together, which revenue is distributed among twelve stations. To speak of a German television as I do here helps to make a rather complicated system easier to understand initially.

German television is a federal system. After the experience of centralized Nazi radio, with Goebbels's voice agitating German households all over from Berlin, the U.S. thought it best for the Germans to have a decentralized system run not by the state but by public committee. So every federal state of the Federal Republic has its own station, for example, the *Bayerische Rundfunk*, the station in Munich, along with the tiny city-state station *Radio Bremen*.

Since every TV viewer pays a fee to the federal station in his or her state, the station located in the most heavily populated states is the richest. Thus, WDR, *Westdeutscher Rundfunk*, located in the Federal Republic's largest state of North Rhine-Westphalia, is not only West Germany's but also continental Europe's largest television station. In addition there is a ratio for distributing funds among the richer and poorer stations. All eleven stations together comprise the first channel, the nationwide program. The richest network produces the most programming and has the most input in programming. Since the stations are supposed to work together, the first channel is called *ARD, Arbeitsgemeinschaft der Rundfunkanstalten Deutschlands* (Team of West German Networks). This team is coordinated by a suprafederal admini-

stration, which counts the minutes every station has been on the air, because each one wants to have the best and most extensive air time. ARD is an itinerant circus, since the chief editors and directors have to meet frequently at good hotels to hold conferences and fight over programming.

Every day at two o'clock there is a conference during which all stations are connected by wire. In this ritual hour the programming of the previous day is criticized. Stories for the daily news programs are proposed. The news, the *Tagesschau*, and the news show, the *Tagesthemen*, are produced in Hamburg. The daily topic for the editorial within the *Tagesthemen* is discussed in this conference and, most importantly, a decision is made as to which station's commentator will deliver it. This is a question of paramount political consequence because every station has a different political orientation, depending on which party is running the state government. Every state network is controlled by a council. Its members are representatives of so-called relevant groups of society: for example, churches send their deputies, the unions theirs, as do small farmers.

This council is very important because it elects the director of the station and makes top-level decisions on such things as discussion programs it liked or disliked. The council's most important task is to decide whether or not the TV fees should be raised, so its influence on the station is rather high and the councils have

the power to let stations starve.

Once upon a time when this system was invented, there were people who tried, for example, to assure that minorities were represented in programming and that religious beliefs were not offended. The Christian religion remains sacrosanct. The deputies are elected to represent certain groups, but in between they stand only for the three major parties. The party that enjoys a majority on the council is the party that is running the federal state, so the influence of political parties on German television has grown dramatically. In the sixties, positions of power were given to party members; today this can be said even of middle management.

To counteract the degeneration of television journalism, a group of reporters nine years ago founded a circle called Open Radio in order to try to diminish party influence. The group became defunct about two years ago but not because its work was done — it simply capitulated. The full-blown influence of parties is greatest in Bonn, the capital city. The Bonn Studio of ARD has fifteen correspondents, twelve of whose party affiliations are known. If the Bonn office dares to send out a reporter not linked to the Christian Democrats to cover a governmental occasion, the CDU headquarters files a complaint. The next time the head of the studio makes sure that the right journalist is sent to the right event. The TV audience does not expect reporters to ask politicians uncomfortable questions; the community is satisfied when the reporters just supply politicians with cues that are little more than campaign catchwords.

Adenauer at the peak of his power in the fifties thought that this system was strong enough to withstand government influence. There was still a large number of tough, independent journalists, and some state governments were run by the opposition party, the Social Democrats. He wished to prevent growing Social Democratic influence on the federal stations, and so a second nationwide

channel was born. Adenauer's plan did not completely succeed, because the German Supreme Court decided after a long trial that the second channel, the ZDF—*das Zweite Deutsche Fernsehen* in Mainz — should also be controlled by a council composed of "relevant" segments in society. Same game. There is no reason for competition between ARD and ZDF since they both get a fixed percentage of the fees and so are theoretically independent of ratings. They are not supposed to compete — and in the interest of the audience they try to coordinate their programs. *Dallas* on the first channel is not supposed to be aired at the same time as *Dynasty* on the second. The coordinators try to work out a little variety so that for every constituency for culture, entertainment, sport, or politics, there is a program offered during the evening. But, in spite of all that, they do compete, and each channel prides itself on having higher ratings the next morning.

The court decision on the second channel also ruled that German television must give a certain priority to educational and cultural topics in programming. That was one reason why ARD developed a third channel. The Third Program is limited to individual states, with each state providing its own programs. New shows are developed, and after they are put to the test, they are often offered to the First Channel. Originally the Third Channel was mainly for educational and cultural programming, and it still produces a large number of programs for use, for example, in schools. But meanwhile the team spirit at

ARD has flagged, and every station more or less prepares its own full program, an increasing fragmentation due to political interests. Bavarian Rundfunk, dominated by the CSU, is of course in total opposition to WDR, as the government in North Rhine Westphalia is Social Democratic.

The prospect of cable and satellite programs also meant the inauguration of private television for Germans. When the Allies set up the legal framework for German television, they prohibited any private or state-run broadcasting, a law easy to outmaneuver via satellite, for example from Luxembourg.

But as a prerequisite, the government had to agree that West Germany get cable. The SPD was always very much against the idea; former Chancellor Helmut Schmidt was not very fond of television at all. (He once proposed during a campaign that one day a week be television-free, an idea that didn't enhance his popularity.) His successor's administration established the cable system.

Pressure from the publishing industry, interested in making money off the TV business, made it imperative for judges to find a way to allow private broadcasting in Germany. The CDU had always campaigned against the ARD, saying that it leaned too far to the left. Right-wing papers indulged in negative gossip about ARD, its expensive production budget, and its highly developed bureaucracy. The CDU instructed its party members to send preprinted postcards and letters to protest programs they thought went against Christian Democratic values. The industry anticipated big

... former Chancellor Helmut Schmidt was not very fond of television at all. (He once proposed during a campaign that one day a week be television free, an idea that didn't enhance his popularity.)

money; the CDU directed political influence; and the papers writing about TV were all in the hands of big publishers.

ARD and ZDF did not prepare themselves very well for this challenge; they practically ignored it. There are two strategies for coping with the competition from cable TV. One is that publicly controlled stations emphasize their special fields: they have to excel at political information, live programs, reports from all over the world, documentaries on politics and culture, and educational programs. Unfortunately, this means leaving to the private channels sports, entertainment, and the movies, as a result of which ARD and ZDF would have only minority programming. They would miss out on holding on to an audience after a movie — people indifferent, otherwise, to a report on the consequences of Chernobyl, but who might simply hang in there because the program came on between a talk show and a crime story.

The other strategy is that the two original German channels be the best in every category — which is precisely what they are trying to do. There means problems, of course, and one has to do with movies.

Almost all of the good old movies are in the hands of one enterprising gentleman, a Mr. Kirch, who purchased all the rights at a time when no one foresaw the amount of air time to fill in the future. Mr. Kirch is connected with some of the new private channels, which now enjoy the obvious advantage of showing all the old features.

The private channels of course have commercials between programs. Because commercial time on the non-private networks is available only during a limited time frame and is therefore quite costly, industry is starting to go over to the private channels. Their rates per minute for advertising are cheaper and more available than ARD's or ZDF's. And the private channels are beginning to make special appeals to industry. At the moment, half of the population has cable and there will soon be more.

The other problem area concerns sports. The transmission rights for the last Wimbledon tennis tournament were bought as an exclusive by Radio-Television Luxembourg, RTL. This station offered more than sixty million Deutschmarks for five years of Wimbledon. ARD and ZDF considered these sums outrageous and said they could not be responsible for spending so much of their subscribers' money.

RTL was lucky because two Germans made the finals. One can imagine the campaign certain newspapers waged against ARD and ZDF because they had withheld the giant German triumph from the fans. After this event, many people decided to get cable. RTL had spent its money wisely.

Something similar happened with soccer. The local teams, which are generously supported by public

tion. In all households with cable, the ratings for ARD and ZDF have declined by almost half. You only have to look at their programming to understand why: cable tries to imitate the American news, which means that they try to be very informal and colloquial. But as there aren't many good television journalists in Germany, where are the private channels going to find them when publicly controlled ones cannot?

The private channels got started just a little more than three years ago, so they have a great many opportunities, and they do try very interesting things. Alexander Kluge — one of the pioneers of New German film, whose features are shown regularly at MOMA in New York and who is a rather elitist filmmaker with a specialized following — was hired by one of the private channels to develop a cultural program sponsored by a

... cable tries to imitate the American news, which means that they try to be very informal and colloquial. But as there aren't many good television journalists in Germany, where are the private channels going to find them when publicly controlled ones cannot?

money, took a gamble with the networks. They increased the price for covering games on Saturdays to such levels that ARD and ZDF refused to pay. The sports show on Saturday is a holy hour for most German men. But could there be a sports show without coverage of the *Bundesliga*? When this controversy arose a little more than a year ago, there was such pressure on the soccer clubs they had to lower their prices from the level of fantasy and sell the rights to the publicly controlled channels. I doubt that this will happen again at the next round of bargaining. The private channels already provide serious competi-

tion. The director of the channel was asked what he was going to do if Kluge's program did not get good ratings, to which his response was 'just wait and see.'

Kluge and other German filmmakers who are often put off by the bureaucracy of ARD and ZDF are now attracted by offers coming from private channels. These artists don't mind working for the private channels so long as they can maintain their independence. They know that their earlier freedom to do experimental work was never connected to market success.

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That Earthquake — Looking Back

Marsha Vande Berg

*Were stretch limos essential for TV crews? Were anchors too pushy?
Were facts and photos distorted to make news?*

A month and a half after San Francisco's earthquake forty of those "who were there" — reporters, editors, news managers, broadcasters, camera people, and journalism professors — met at a seminar to discuss what was right and what was wrong with the coverage of the quake — to evaluate that coverage.

The conferees gathered in a study on the Berkeley campus of the University of California. Based on comments during the seminar and subsequent interviews, the following questions, answers, and opinions were offered.

One lead question was whether the story was blown out of proportion to the event.

If the earthquake had happened in Iowa City — or Armenia, it's reasonable to ask whether it might have played as well, said UC Berkeley journalism professor David Littlejohn.

Whose story was it — newspaper, television or radio — or all three, seminar participants asked? Did

television overstep the bounds of sound journalism? Who takes responsibility for errors in a time of crisis? Why the narrow focus on San Francisco during the first few hours after the quake hit?

said Tom Goldstein, UC Berkeley journalism dean. No blame is suggested. In fact the cause could be an extraordinary confluence of circumstances, he said.

"Our concern was with the five

If the earthquake had happened in Iowa City — or Armenia, it's reasonable to ask whether it might have played as well, said UC Berkeley journalism professor David Littlejohn.

Did the historic quality of the moment for some newspapers limit their reporting and make them "johnnies come lately" in reporting the impact on the areas that surround them? Did the networks step in with a "big foot," dispatching anchors and ordering limousines for their staff in a callow gesture that ignored most people's sensibilities at a time of tragedy?

The participants seemed to fall roughly into two categories: those who experienced the quake and those who came to the Bay Area after the fact. Some came to the seminar offering absolutes. Many it seemed, left with an imponderable or two. Few said they would do much differently except to try to be better prepared when the next "big one" hits.

"There was the notion that something very serious had happened here. There also was a distorted notion of the seriousness that happened,"

million people we live with. Here's what's broken. If you need help, here's where to call. It's a real sort of direct message," said Harry Fuller, news director of ABC affiliate, KGO-TV.

With power from emergency generators, KGO was back on the air nine minutes after the quake. So was CBS affiliate, KPIX. NBC affiliate KRON was off for 31 minutes. ABC was first with pictures. CNN was first to report that an earthquake had occurred.

"I'm on record saying it's criminal for any television station or newspaper for that matter, to be without a back-up generator. Especially a TV station because that is a publicly-licensed facility," Fuller said.

Of the stations, KGO was best positioned to dispatch crews to pockets of disaster — the Bay Bridge, the Cypress structure, the Marina, South of Market, and south to Watsonville and Santa Cruz. Virtually all the station's

Marsha Vande Berg covers foreign affairs for the San Francisco Chronicle. Last summer she visited West Germany and parts of East Germany as a Bosch Fellow — she has a Ph.D in German from Vanderbilt University. Ms. Vande Berg is an occasional lecturer in the journalism department at the University of California Berkeley.



trucks and equipment were poised for operation at Candlestick Park, off Highway 101 just south of the city. As a result, KGO, during the first hour of coverage, enjoyed a 60 percent share or better. "That's a Super Bowl audience share," explained Fuller.

KGO had been lucky to have a crew already so far south when the quake hit. For other branches of the media, the difficulties getting to Watsonville and Santa Cruz were temporarily insurmountable. It affected their initial coverage.

In the hours after the quake, "two things were going on," Eric Newton, an assistant managing editor on *The Tribune* said. "The quake split everything into segments and threw us in the press back a number of years.

"But in the electronic media, one of the problems was by the time you got to the end of the communications chain, there was television and the tremendous power of that message — and I'm talking about a message that was exponentially wrong."

Problems can occur because of television's dependency on pictures, said Sig Mickelson, former president of CBS News and now journalism professor at San Diego State University.

"A newspaper is the product of syn-

"A newspaper is the product of synthesis. A reporter creates a story. . . . It goes through . . . editing. What you get is a highly rational, fairly well thought-out piece. Television, on the other hand, depends largely on the picture . . ."

thesis. A reporter creates a story. It goes through several levels of editing. What you get is a highly rational, fairly well thought-out piece.

"Television, on the other hand, depends largely on the picture . . . Any time you deal with anything in television, you have to be enormously careful so the pictures are in proper juxtaposition to ease starkness and to create an honest impression."

Did television, particularly with repetitive use of pictures, make the story seem worse, asked Andrew Stern, head of the Berkeley journalism school's television department.

Yes, said Littlejohn. "Television coverage did suggest that things were worse by a factor of 100."

No, said Jeff Gralnick, ABC executive producer of special programming and vice president for news. "You are constantly meeting a new audience. Yes, it's repetitive . . . but we become, like it or not, the national town crier."

The amount of special programming also decreased throughout the week as the story became clearer and its "edge became finite," Gralnick said.

"Some of this is about the loss of virginity. The audience sees a lot of rough edges when television is breaking live and it's around the clock," said Jennifer Siebens, CBS News Bureau manager in Los Angeles. "If it was difficult at the local level, you can imagine what it was like at the national level."

The challenge for CBS was getting on the air, staying on the air and turning a one-hour special, she said.

Dan Rather was flown in, as were Peter Jennings for ABC and Tom Brokaw for NBC.

When asked about the observation that CBS' coverage and specifically Rather's performance, had been the most controversial of the networks, Siebens defended the overall effort. For Rather's part, she blamed weariness and the chaotic circumstances under which everyone was working.

At issue was the fact that Rather misidentified a person as a Bay Bridge survivor and conducted what became

"Rather is a pitbull," Siebens said. "He got extremely focused in the interview and pushed a little hard. . . . I do know he is terribly aggressive."

known as the "quivering brain" interview.

During his coverage, Rather frequently positioned himself on top of a truck with the collapsed Cypress structure as a backdrop. It was from here he interviewed one eyewitness and for some, pushed too hard and too far.

After the witness described the scene as horrible, Rather prodded for details. The man said he saw carnage. When Rather pushed again, the man, clearly reluctant, said he saw a quivering brain.

"Rather is a pitbull," Siebens said.

"He got extremely focused in the interview and pushed a little hard. Was it a calculated step over the line? No, I don't think so. But I do know he is terribly aggressive."

With a pointed question from the audience, the conversation shifted to what many said was a clearcut sign of network arrogance in the face of disaster.

"What's wrong with regular cars," asked *Washington Post* correspondent Cynthia Gorney. The reference was to the use of limousines by network personnel after they arrived in San Francisco.

Gralnick stepped up to the line. "I didn't care what they rented. Limousines were the first thing they came up with that had telephones."

As the conversation bounced back and forth between the use of limousines and the role of anchors, Siebens interjected: "I'm slightly upset. We were not here to take off on

San Francisco. We were not here to ignore Watsonville. We were here to cover a story for the rest of the nation."

Gralnick added: "One of the ways we do business is that the principal broadcaster gets to the city . . . I am not going to apologize for that . . . Peter (Jennings) is sent out of New York because the broadcast wants to make a statement . . . While he's there, he can talk to correspondents.

"It's a convenience and it's good reporting. So if the two central questions are why did we use limousines and how dare we send anchors, then we didn't do a bad job."

But the discussion about limousines and anchors was for some a red herring. What really was at issue was whether all the media, but especially network television, grabbed the story and distorted it, either with flagrantly wrong headlines or with repetitive visuals and stand-up shots in front of the worse scenes of destruction, thereby creating the impression that the devastation was worse than it was and that all of San Francisco — and only San Francisco — was about to or was already sliding into the Pacific Ocean.

The unleashed criticism of the networks was curtailed late in the seminar when Goldstein signaled Associate Dean Bill Drummond, who was moderating, to call a timeout. Drummond nudged the conversation toward what had been learned but not before a couple of more jabs were thrown.

Anchors who are sent to the scene frequently add little depth, Mickelson pointed out. "It's more promotional than making a contribution."

"At AP, a lot of people came in from New York, Fresno . . . The more resources we had the better," said Peggy Walsh, San Francisco's AP bureau chief. "The question was how those resources were integrated . . . The idea was not whose name was on it."

"I don't care if you (the audience) are angry Peter Jennings was here," Gralnick replied. "I think you're wrong . . . Leave us alone. This is the

way we do our jobs."

"Radio came out pretty good," said Goldstein.

"KCBS was cool and professional," said Littlejohn. "There was no show biz, no extravagant scare-mongering.

"Listening to KCBS was a little like hearing one of Roosevelt's fireside chats. You felt like somebody was in control."

"I didn't care what they rented. Limousines were the first thing they came up with that had telephones."

KCBS served as a news source for both print and broadcast, especially during those long hours when electricity outages had shut down normal operations elsewhere. The staff followed the news — minute-by-minute — and also provided around-the-clock public service that included counseling referrals, where to buy gas, how to shut off gas at home, where groceries were available, school closings, safety inspection plans, road closings and the status of public transportation.

They worked with a couple of advantages. They were able to get on the air almost immediately and broadcast with a strong signal — unlike competitors who temporarily lost part of their power. And they combined familiar formats, relying on reporters in the field and callers from the listening audience. Their telephone system — from the "Stone Age" — also worked.

Call-in programs tend to invite people who are lonely or in despair, Peter Laufer, KCBS radio reporter, said. But this time the opposite was true. "People were responding because

they knew something and wanted to pass it on or they needed some information and they were looking to get it quickly.

"They also helped guide our coverage. They told us where there was no gas and where the roads were out. They were able to help pinpoint problems that had been missed by emergency crews," Laufer said.

Was the earthquake story in its initial stage a public service story and therefore radio's? Or did television, with its powerful pictorial message, have the upperhand? Or was it the Bay Area's newspapers that provided a sense of purpose and focus in the face of chaos?

It was everyone's story — each medium performing to the best of its ability within the boundaries of their equipment and technology, said Goldstein. Radio was on early, newspapers were reassuring when they arrived on the doorstep next morning and television had extraordinary pictures.

"Everyone seemed to come out and say congratulations to KCBS and other news radio stations," said Littlejohn.

Because of its 24-hour format, radio also seemed more immediate when it came to dealing with what many regarded as a gross but perhaps understandable error by the media virtually worldwide — an initially inaccurate casualty count.

The figures were later corrected, but not before they had already been printed and aired.

The foreign press also made mistakes on their own, Littlejohn said. The Marina District became Marine County. The quake occurred Monday not Tuesday and the World Series game was at the Oakland Coliseum. The Bay Bridge collapsed, crushing 150 people. President Bush instead of Deukmejian was on his way back from Europe. Santa Cruz was northeast of San Francisco.

"At their most careless, they became foolishly apocalyptic," said Littlejohn.

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Chiba-Nieman Fellowship Memorializes Atsuko Chiba, NF '68

Atsuko Chiba, late columnist for *The Yomiuri Shimbun* in Tokyo, has been honored by creation of a fellowship in her memory at Harvard University's Nieman Foundation.

Ms. Chiba, who was a Nieman Fellow in the Class of 1968, died of cancer in New York in 1987. For four years before her death, Ms. Chiba gained a national following in Japan for a column entitled "Living With Cancer," which she wrote weekly until the last week of her life.

Norman Pearlstine, Managing Editor of *The Wall Street Journal* and a friend of the Chiba family, was named President of the Atsuko Chiba Foundation, Inc., which will administer the fellowship fund.

"To Atsuko Chiba her year as a Nieman Fellow was the key factor in developing her career as an international journalist, so her friends

and family are especially delighted we are able to create a fellowship at the Nieman Foundation in her memory," Mr. Pearlstine said.

The first Chiba-Nieman Fellowship will be awarded for the 1990-1991 academic year and carries a stipend for living expenses, payment of fees for study at Harvard University, and round-trip travel support from the place of employment to Cambridge. Under the terms of the grant the fellowship is to be awarded annually to a non-Japanese Asian journalist.

The final five years of Ms. Chiba's life gained her a national reputation in Japan. Breaking with the tradition of a society which avoided discussion of subjects such as cancer, Ms. Chiba wrote in great detail of her experience with the disease and the difference between American and Japanese attitudes toward cancer. She also wrote 13 books, including

A New Woman and *Living With Cancer in New York*. She founded a monthly newsletter for Japanese career women as well.

In 1981, according to her obituary which was published in *The New York Times*, Ms. Chiba told an interviewer: "Now I know how I will die, writing something until the end."

To be eligible to enter competition for the Chiba-Nieman Fellowship, journalists must be currently employed full-time in any Asian country outside Japan by a newspaper, magazine, radio or television station, or work freelance full-time or under contract with such organization. The candidates must have at least three years' experience in the media. Applications will be reviewed by the Nieman Curator.

Formal appointment will be made by the Harvard Corporation and will be announced in June of 1990. □

Rededication

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gratulation or self aggrandizement which Americans are prone to do with such celebrations. If it is to have any meaning to this and future generations, it will have to celebrate the values of the journalists of Czechoslovakia, and Poland, and the Black alternative press of South Africa.

To have meaning worthy of the event it celebrates, it should be dedicated to — not celebration — but rededication of the American press to the values which informed its creation. □

Supreme Court Decision

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Freedom of the Press, just as I know you at Colby College must to honor an Elijah Lovejoy year after year who died in the pursuit of it. As an editor, I wonder how secure Freedom of the Press ultimately will be if private citizens don't feel free to speak out.

Freedom of the Press has not survived and thrived this long in America because it is a right reserved exclusively for the powerful press. It has survived, and thrived, because citizens rightly see press freedom as merely an extension of their own freedom. They are free to question, challenge and accuse the lawmakers

they elect, so they are comfortable when the press is extended that same freedom.

But if they lose that freedom — and in place after place, and case after case, they are — then they will, rightly, be less interested in seeing it extended to the press. Then, the silence will extend from the public meeting, to the editorial offices of my newspaper and others, to the giant presses themselves.

It is a silence Elijah Lovejoy refused to permit — and he died for that. Now, more than 150 years later, the silence approaches again. □

West German Television

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Another illustration can be seen in the case of Stefan Aust, a highly political writer who often had trouble with the management at *Norddeutsche Rundfunk*, *NDR*, in Hamburg and who was enticed away from *ARD*. Aust did some very fine reporting on the Red Army Faction. Private channels will try to get qualified people even if they have radical politics, whereas *ARD* and *ZDF* neutralize reporters whose work they think might have results uncomfortable for politicians. A case in point: there has never been a movie made about the Flick Affair or any other political scandal in the Federal Republic. Stefan Aust anchors a political magazine which covers to a large measure issues like the problems of immigrant Turkish workers. His reporters also use satire more or less successfully. The magazine is well done but is not very different from Aust's monologues on *ARD*.

It would be dishonest, however, to suggest that publicly controlled channels have been asleep. They have also developed interesting new shows in order to compete with the private channels. One called "ZAK," for example, is a weekly magazine running forty-five minutes with a cool woman host appearing on a well-designed set to discuss films on politics, culture, and the like. "ZAK" airs the kind of topics that *Life* or *Stern* magazine would cover. The TV magazine show received this year's "Grimme" prize, an award given to the best program on public television.

On the private channels, the other eyecatcher, besides films and sports, is erotica: younger, paler imitations of Dr. Ruth Westheimer and soft and sometimes hardcore pornography. *ZDF* and *ARD* are forbidden by law from moving into these areas because they are prohibited from offending religious morality. Recently the direc-

tor of *WDR* said in an interview that this station was considering running an erotic magazine, and the idea was considered scandalous. No matter what the private channels air even during the day, *ARD* and *ZDF* have to stay "clean."

The TV scene in West Germany has dramatically changed within the last few years and will continue changing. So long as they had a monopoly, the public channels had only one crew covering political events; today in Bonn there are at least five, not including foreign teams. The challenge is great; it might even wake up some of the bureaucratic functionaries in the TV stations who still think they are running some kind of ministry. It would be terrific if it would tempt *ARD* and *ZDF* to be more courageous in covering delicate political issues; if they would start to ask politicians tough questions; if *ARD* and *ZDF* finally realized that they have to serve the public and not the party.

Maybe one day publicly controlled TV will be just like the private stations: one feature film after another, erotic shows, almost no political coverage. But there's also a chance that *ARD* and *ZDF* will accept the challenge and use their advantages to produce excellent programming according to the high ideals they represent. □

"ZAK," a TV magazine show with a cool woman host, received the "Grimme" prize for the best program on public television.

Earthquake

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Le Point, a Paris weekly, reported, for example: "In a few minutes, the state of California could be swallowed up in the Pacific Ocean like a new Atlantis, predict the experts."

During the seminar, the distinction between reporters who experienced the earthquake and those who arrived after was made very clear. How? Those who experienced the quake repeatedly talked in terms of going through the experience and their coverage of it. It was as if the experience of the quake itself would not be dismissed.

Gorney summed it up perhaps best. "We are in a line of work where the famous line of defense is if you are put in a war zone, the bullet won't hit you.

"But here we were. It was our ground that was shaking and that made us confront stuff in a way that most journalistic experiences don't."

For *Tribune* assistant managing editor Belinda Taylor, the experience had an Alice in Wonderland quality. "You're an earthquake victim first. It's like the floor falls through and you fall through after it.

"Then you realize you have to put that aside and do a job. Then it dawns on you that this is probably the biggest story you have ever worked on."

For Nancy Maynard, *The Tribune's* senior vice president of sales and marketing, the experience touched everyone she knew who went through it.

It provided a story that the media will follow closely as California deals with the weaknesses in its transportation network highlighted by the deadly quake and the limitations of its own no-tax revolution started in 1978 by Proposition 13.

It also "fundamentally changed us . . ." said Maynard. "This story made the newspaper more reflective." □

Israeli Censorship is Censured

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Government is authorized to carry out on behalf of the State, in accordance with any law, any act whose implementation is not lawfully entrusted to any other authority." In other words, the government can have its own agencies do anything that no specific agency is constitutionally required to do, so long as it is legal. But anything that is not specifically banned is considered legal, and so the intelligence community may function.

Domestic security, as protected by Shin Bet, does have the extra backing of various laws which ban both subversion and espionage conducted against Israel. These include measures known as the Penal Revision (State Security) Law of July 1957 and the Military Law of June 1955, but especially the Defense (Emergency) Regulations of 1945 which were brought in by the British to crack down on both Arabs and Jews in Palestine. These allowed the British army, and later the Israel Defense Forces, to arrest and deport alleged subversives and to designate "closed areas" which may not be entered by journalists or other visitors for hours, days, or years. The authority to wield such powers was transferred from the military to the police in 1966, but in truth it is Shin Bet which makes the relevant decisions.

What harm could there be in making the intelligence officials accountable to parliament? Supporters of the present arrangement respond by pointing out that members of the Knesset leak information day and night — almost as the second oldest profession in the land of the Bible. No secrets could be shared with any sizeable Knesset panel. The *status quo*'s backers also point out that in a parliamentary system, it is the prime minister who is accountable for his entire ministry. He or she must bear

the blame if the Mossad or Shin Bet commits an unacceptable act, and if necessary, it is the prime minister who must resign.

In Israel, however, a noteworthy habit has developed among cabinet ministers: not to accept responsibility.

But not just that. To put it bluntly, Israeli officials are often also lying. It is difficult to believe anything in the Middle East, a world without trust. When it comes to matters of life and death and high politics, the officials defend vehemently their right to lie. Journalists similarly point out their obligation to keep asking questions.

Problems arise when officials abuse their power and sidestep the censor, to leak a favorable interpretation of potentially embarrassing events. When Israeli leaders wished to give their own version of the Jonathan Pollard espionage affair to pacify an angry and hurt American public, they privately unveiled the whole story — or one side of it — to a major U.S. newspaper in November 1985. They even told the correspondent, through their assistants, that he would not have to submit his article to the censor: everything would pass.

After nuclear traitor Mordecai Vanunu was spirited away from England, officials in October 1986 leaked various versions intended, above all, to emphasize that he was not kidnapped from British jurisdiction. The true details of the Mossad operation which brought Vanunu home for trial were still blurred, however. It was a case of revealing an inch, while covering up a yard. The censor, knowing his political masters' wishes, took no action despite these obvious violations of the regulations.

It took sheer gall, then, for the censor to punish foreign correspondents who in April 1988 received a leaked account of the killing of the P.L.O.'s Abu Jihad in Tunis. Officials such as

Prime Minister Shamir, who claimed to colleagues that he simply heard about it on the radio, feigned ignorance. But others in authority, knowing that one of the purposes of the slaying was to intimidate the Palestinian enemy, chose their conduits: correspondents for an American TV network and a leading U.S. newspaper. They duly published the story, and then they were stunned when the Government Press Office stripped them of their accreditations as foreign correspondents.

Israel tries to stem the flow of news items in the media, while turning a blind eye to the flood of revelations coming from former operatives. If Israel is so concerned to stop the leak of classified information, why have a censor concerned only with publications? What about the activities of mercenaries, expert privateers, and other people holding secrets?

Perhaps it is a matter of convenience. It is far easier to keep track of the public media than it is to spy on what ex-spies are doing. Consider also that the people involved are former members of the defense and security "family," precisely the same sort of "old boys" still to be found in Jerusalem making the decisions. In fact, the team that is currently in government might expect in the future to be out there as consultants, too.

The worst damage has often been done by officials still serving in the government. Foreign Minister Moshe Dayan's statement in 1978, which confirmed the secret relationship with Ethiopia, did more harm than the mountain of ink and tiny bits of newsprint deleted by the small army of worker ants employed by the military censor. And when a Jewish Agency official revealed the clandestine exodus of the Ethiopian Jews in 1985, he ruined more lives

than any journalist in the history of Israel.

News reporters are usually less dangerous, yet they are in many ways more accountable. The men and women of the media may be punished by a variety of sanctions including prison terms, while politicians and other officials blithely survive their verbal misdemeanors.

How can a democracy, with a free press and full civil rights, conduct itself in such silence and secrecy? The intelligence agencies, the military censor, the government, and the judicial system walk a thin tightrope between protecting national security and preserving the primacy of law.

The answer is that a democracy cannot rely on voluntary censorship which is conducted on the basis of old accords from the days before computers, facsimile machines, and satellite communications. In a democracy at war, censorship may have its place but only if it is coherent and consistent.

Finally, the accountability of the intelligence community to the public — as represented by parliament — must be increased. The scandals of the 1980s showed that while individual missions can be accomplished with great success and aplomb, the agencies fail when they display misjudgments and dangerous abuses of power.

There need not be a contradiction, despite appearances, between the openness of democratic society and its defense by covert means. The light of life in a free country need not be blotted out by the sometimes dark security apparatus at its heart, so long as it is clear who is in charge: the public, through the government elected in the light of day.

The business of intelligence censorship and national defense is too serious to be left to the intelligence agencies, generals, and a handful of politicians alone. □

Operation Just Cause

continued from page 7

we would not be allowed into Panama City because roving gangs of Noriega's "Dignity Battalions" were still at large. Fair enough. After all, the U.S. forces had been sent there to protect American lives and a mob of journalists running around in search of a story might cause additional problems, and the press pool, we thought, was on top of the action, so we all agreed to cool our heels until things calmed down. Little did we know what was in store.

photography is "for internal use." He suggested news organizations file a lawsuit against the Department of Defense to get the material released.

What kind of a public information policy is this? "Operation Just Cause" was the biggest military operation since Vietnam, conducted in a country where the United States government has had a considerable presence since the digging of the Panama Canal. Some within the press ranks believe that all this is deliberate — a

Some . . . believe that all this is deliberate — a conspiracy between the Bush administration . . . and military commanders who view the press as hostile and still blame the loss of the Vietnam War on the news media.

For two days we were locked up in a recreation center on the air base. For hours at a time there was no food, no place to bathe and only two telephones. It took three hours of waiting in line to phone our editors to inform them that we couldn't do anything. If we wanted to go outside, even to get some sun, guards politely but firmly prevented us from leaving. We slept on the floor. Finally, the military admitted the influx of journalists was too much to handle and most of us were airlifted back to the U.S. with nothing to show for it.

There is official documentation of "Operation Just Cause," but even that is currently being withheld. Defense Department combat photographers were allowed to go along with the invasion force, but according to Robert Hall, an aide to Secretary of Defense Dick Cheney, the combat

conspiracy between the Bush administration in pursuit of managing the news, and military commanders who view the press as hostile and still blame the loss of the Vietnam War on the news media.

I'm not sure. But either through design or incredible ineptitude, the American press was not allowed to do its job. The traditional eyewitnesses to history were blindfolded and a free society was not well served. □



THE BOOKSHELF

Deep in the Heart of a National Muddle

Other People's Money: The Inside Story of the S&L Mess

Paul Zane Pilzer with Robert Deitz. Simon and Schuster, 1989. \$18.95

by Dave Denison

On a recent edition of PBS's *MacNeil/Lehrer* show, Representative Charles Schumer (D-N.Y.) described the nation's savings and loan crisis as "the most major financial disaster probably in American history — except for the Great Depression." Rep. Jim Leach (R-Iowa) concurred, saying "it's going to be the major issue in 1992."

On the other hand, when the major networks aired their end-of-the-decade retrospectives they barely took notice of the S&L meltdown. In the pantheon of 1980's scandals it had none of the television appeal as the one that starred Oliver North, Bud McFarlane, and Fawn Hall.

But that's the way it is with the S&L story: it is staggering in its real proportions, mind-boggling if you think about it — but why think about it? It is such an amorphous and intangible scandal that one can rather easily forget it. It may not break into public consciousness in the 1992 elections, but certainly in 1988 neither party wanted to make an issue of the S&L crisis. Kathleen Day contended last spring in *The New Republic* that Ronald Reagan "went eight years without ever mentioning the problem publicly."

By now, George Bush and Congress have committed \$166 billion in public

funds to pay for S&L insolvencies. Perhaps Reagan could come back for a guest appearance to explain, in the terms he once used in discussing the national debt he inherited from Jimmy Carter, that a stack of \$1,000 bills four inches high would make you a millionaire . . . and \$166 billion would amount to a stack of \$1,000 bills eleven miles high!

For those who prefer not to wait around for Ronald Reagan's accounting, there are several good books out now about the S&L crisis, and more are on the way. Paul Pilzer's offering, *Other People's Money*, serves as a good primer on the issues. Pilzer is a Dallas real estate developer and an adjunct professor of finance at New York University. He credits his co-author, Robert Deitz (NF '72, and now executive business editor at the *Dallas Times Herald*) with giving the book "a broader dimension than I had originally envisioned," but one wonders if Deitz had a hand in the writing, as well, for (happily enough) the book doesn't read like the work of a businessman/finance professor.

Other People's Money is clearly written and, while breaking little new ground, it provides a good overview for those who are wondering just how we got into a mess as stupefying as a \$166 billion bailout suggests. "The history of savings banks in the United States is, more than anything else, a story of ordinary people," Pilzer writes, and it is to his credit that ordinary people are the audience he addresses himself to.

The book benefits from a fine account of the early history of mutual savings banks and savings and loan

associations. Much of the money that went into such institutions in the 1980's came from thrifty immigrants. The institutions, in turn, put the money into government bonds. Thus, most of the public works projects of the 19th Century were financed by small-time depositors in small savings associations. Prudence in money management was the overriding concern back in the days when thrifts were thrifts.

But the Great Depression forced permanent changes on the financial industry. As more and more banks failed, public pressure grew for the government to protect citizens' savings deposits. We learn here that Franklin Roosevelt was, at first, dead-set against deposit insurance. He campaigned against it in 1932, believing that federal insurance for deposits would only encourage greed, speculation, and irresponsibility on the part of bankers. Big banks opposed it, too, but due to the efforts of Rep. Henry Steagall of Alabama and Senator Huey Long of Louisiana, Congress passed a deposit insurance law. FDR threatened to veto it when it passed in 1933, but he didn't.

The author notes a crucial distinction between the law affecting banks and the one covering savings and loans: bank deposits were backed by the "full faith and credit" of the United States government, but S&Ls were not. Thus, if S&Ls were to run into trouble, money to cover the deposits would exist only if Congress could be persuaded to appropriate the funds. It turned out, Pilzer notes, to be an important difference.

Free market banking ceased to exist under the Glass-Steagall Act of 1933. Interest rates were set by law, as was the kind of services banks and S&Ls were allowed to provide. And the law worked. It brought stability and

growth to financial institutions. In 1935 the nation had 1,117 savings and loan associations; by 1964 there were 4,463. What this amounted to was that millions of Americans were able to get loans to build and buy houses. This may not have been exactly "a proletarian socioeconomic movement," as Pilzer puts it, but it was no small thing.

The undoing of the regulatory framework for banks and S&Ls began in the early 1970's, when the institutions began offering NOW accounts — interest-bearing savings accounts that could be used as checking accounts. Then came the creation of money market accounts — a way for institutions to pool deposits and pay higher rates of interest. Congress specifically allowed such innovations in 1978, as government deregulation became a popular theme.

S&Ls were hard-hit by the changes, as it turned out. The combination of high interest rates and high inflation was a recipe for losing money. By the time Reagan took office in 1980, almost half of the nation's S&Ls were in the red. And the "Reagan revolution" intensified the deregulatory fervor.

In the Deregulation and Monetary Control Act of 1980, Congress took the lid off interest rates. And a little-noticed provision of the law raised the government's coverage of deposits from \$40,000 to \$100,000. With these changes, huge amounts of money began to flow into S&Ls. Brokers of money would take, for example, a million dollars and divide it into ten chunks of \$100,000 and put it in ten S&Ls with attractive interest rates, knowing that all of it would be protected by government deposit insurance. The effect of this "hot money" — which could be here today and gone tomorrow — was to bring a new flushness to S&Ls, but also to bring a new instability.

In 1982, Congress "tried to come up with a cure for its 1980 cure," as Pilzer puts it. This was the now infamous Garn-St. Germain Act. Under the theory that the best cure for business

ills was simply to do more business, S&Ls were now allowed to put their money into whatever schemes seemed to promise high returns, whether it was real estate development or investing in junk bonds. And most incredible, all of this would be allowed without an increase in government supervision!

In a trip to Texas in June of 1983, Ed Gray, the chairman of the Federal Home Loan Bank Board, gave "something of a pep talk" to S&L operators, advising them of their new opportunities. "As it turned out," notes Pilzer, "the loan participations Gray urged on the S&L owners would eventually prove to be the vehicle by which the cancer of mismanagement and fraud that plagued Texas thrifts was spread throughout the nation."

The 1982 changes in banking law happened to coincide with a boomtown mentality in Texas. What Gray, of course, didn't realize then was that when Texans start booming it usually means trouble. The years 1983 and 1984 saw a celebration of the particularly Texan style of greed — fun-loving, incautious, aggressive, and unabashed. Sometimes laws would be broken or bent, but it was all in the right spirit — the spirit of doing business without a lot of uptight, East-Coast hang-ups.

And what a mess it made when the price of oil bottomed out in 1986 and most of the Texas deals began going sour! Pilzer lays out the story of the most notorious of Texas operators, of the cowboy mentality brought to real estate development, of the high-living self-made executives with their yachts and call-girls and trips to Europe. From there he details the differences in style of the deal-makers in California, who became heavily involved in junk bond investments. He depicts Ed Gray's gradual realization of how deep the trouble was, and his push for "re-regulation" — which only resulted in his getting on the bad side of Treasury Secretary Donald Regan and being told by a loyal Reaganite that he was "no longer on the Reagan team" — that he had betrayed the

Reagan revolution by losing faith in deregulation. Very much to the point, Gray commented, in an interview with the authors, "Thrift institutions, you see, aren't free-market players. They had always been regulated."

Though Gray lost out in the Reagan administration, he knew how to take his story to the press (he is a former journalist and public relations man). Many of the accounts of the S&L mess, including this one, are heavily colored by his perspectives. This may not be exactly a weakness of the book, but still it suggests a relevant point about the tenor of Pilzer's account. That is, it is written as a good guy/bad guy tale. And almost all of the information on the misdeeds of the "bad guys" is taken from secondary sources. Consequently, in those portions of the book one gets the feeling that a pretty broad brush is being used. At one point, the author reports that a Justice Department task force's subpoena "amounted to a who's who in Texas politics, real estate, and banking in the early 1980's." This is clearly an overstatement, for, in fact, most of the major figures in Texas politics have *not* been implicated in S&L corruption — which is not to say that any of them moved to do anything about it, either.

Former House Speaker Jim Wright gets the broad brush treatment, too. With the casual statement, "Wright's ties to the thrift industry have long been public knowledge," Wright is lumped in with the most corrupt of the S&L wheeler-dealers. While it is undeniable that Wright's instincts were wrong on this issue, and that by delaying funds to clean up insolvencies in 1987 he made the matter worse, don't look for this book to explain Wright's role with any subtlety. Did he act out of true venality? Was he bought and paid for in the same way that Rhode Island Rep. Fernand St. Germain was? Or did he simply act, as most government officials did throughout the S&L meltdown, stupidly? No matter. From what the author read about Wright, apparently, he was assumed to be corrupt.

The irony of the author's heavy use of secondary sources is that the book is billed at "The Inside Story" of the S&L mess. Yet the only time the author uses the personal voice is in a brief preface in which he flashes back to innocent childhood homilies about how America is built on a system of faith and good trust. The "headline-making revelations" that the book jacket promises turn out to be revelations that have already made the headlines.

Nevertheless, the book closes with a strong chapter that goes beyond the easy Manicheism and addresses the S&L problem in its systemic dimensions. Pilzer identifies the root cause of the S&L crisis to be the system of deposit insurance established during the New Deal. "The fact is, Franklin Roosevelt was absolutely right in his objections to broad deposit guarantees. Just as he predicted, they wound up encouraging speculation, greed, fraud, and mismanagement on the part of thrift owners."

There is nothing wrong, it is granted, with government protection of the accounts of everyday savers, "but over the years the system was twisted to become a haven for wealthy investors. . . . This isn't what Roosevelt intended. Nor was it what Huey Long and his fellow populists had in mind. . . ."

Among a number of constructive solutions, the author proposes to decrease the amount of coverage of depositors and to limit federal protection to one insured account per person. In the long run, Pilzer expects most S&Ls to die out; he contends that even George Bush's plan as proposed to Congress contained the tacit acknowledgement that the thrift industry has outlived its usefulness.

You can't help but close Pilzer's book feeling that it contains real lessons about the Reagan era. The S&L disaster is the story of one of the most outrageous displays of incompetence in public policy by the United States government this century. In a narrow sense, it is true that blame should be shared by Democrats and

Republicans alike. The system was set up by Democrats, problems developed under Carter, and ill-considered laws were passed by a Democratic Congress.

But the reasons for the breakdown have much to do with the ideological climate established by Reaganism. One simple Reagan idea — that "government is not the solution; government is the problem" — did an astounding amount of damage. The corollary to this maxim was that businessmen left to their own devices would bring socially beneficial results. When problems developed, the Reaganites' solution was to push shaky financial institutions to grow their way out of instability — and that just made the problems grow out of

control. It's a case of business ideology run amok. And all the while, as Reaganism pretended to be about limited government, government involvement in the financial industry took on new absurd dimensions — to the point where government was simply pumping public money into private business.

The President who said he would get government off our backs ended up saddling us with staggering bills that will be coming due for a long, long time. □

Dave Denison, Nieman Fellow '90, was editor of The Texas Observer in Austin. The publication is a biweekly journal stressing politics and government.

A Washington a.m. Newspaper — More Important Than That First Cup of Coffee

In The Shadow of Power: The Story of *The Washington Post*

Chalmers M. Roberts, Seven Locks Press, 1989. Soft Cover, \$16.95

by Julius Duscha

On June 1, 1933, as the first Hundred Days of Franklin D. Roosevelt's initial presidential term were running out, a crowd gathered in front of The Washington Post building on E Street just down from the White House. The crowd, which included socialite Alice Roosevelt Longworth and U.S. News owner and editor David Lawrence, was watching an unusual event — the auction of a newspaper.

Early bids were made by Bascom Timmons, a well-known Washington correspondent for Texas and other Western papers; by a representative of the blue-blooded Harrimans and Astors; and by the Hearst organization. The winning bid, for \$825,000, came, however, from an attorney

named George E. Hamilton Jr., representing a client whose name he refused to disclose.

For two weeks Washington was full of rumors over who had bought the paper. Someone who wanted a vehicle to attack Roosevelt? Or perhaps a person who wanted to use the paper to build up the President? Finally, on June 13, The Post carried a story headlined: Eugene Meyer Announced as Washington Post Buyer. The Post was 56 years old; Meyer was three years older. The paper was a shambles. Its building was ramshackle; its presses and other equipment truly in need of baling wire and much more; a poor fourth or fifth in a newspaper field that was led by the proud Evening Star and included the feisty tabloid Daily News and Hearst's morning Herald and evening Times. Meyer, however, had known nothing but success in his career as a banker, and then a public official beginning in World War II, and by 1933, as both

Chairman of the Federal Reserve Board and as an ex-officio member of the board of the Reconstruction Finance Corporation.

Thus began the turnaround of *The Washington Post* from a struggling, straggling paper to the world-respected voice it is today. The paper is without question one of the best and most respected in the world. Yet it remains focused on Washington — not easy to find even in New York — unlike *The New York Times* which is a national paper and now available throughout the country on the day of publication, or like the big London papers which circulate everywhere in Great Britain as well as on much of the Continent.

In his book Chalmers Roberts, a retired Post reporter, tells the story of the Post from its beginning as a four-page broadsheet in 1877 through its glory days since uncovering the Watergate scandal in 1972. Roberts explains that the book, first published in 1977 on the occasion of the Post's centennial and now revised and updated in this new edition, is not an official history, but the idea for the book came from both Roberts and Katherine Graham, the daughter of Eugene Meyer and the chairman of the Post Company, and she provided Roberts with much material. The book is, however, a fair account of the paper, including a lot of its warts. And I must note here that I too am a former Post reporter, and not only a former colleague of Roberts but a friend.

The book is a chronology of the time since 1877 as well as a history of the ups and downs of the paper over more than a century. But what interested me most when I read the original edition and now the current one was what produces a great newspaper. After all, Eugene Meyer was an unlikely candidate for journalistic greatness. He was a conservative Republican who, nearing 60, was restless and looking for new challenges. He opposed most of the New Deal but vigorously supported Roosevelt's backing of Great Britain against

Hitler and the eventual U.S. entry into World War II. Following the war he also supported the Marshall Plan and an international role for the United States. But for 20 years into the 1950's the Post struggled and never made any real money for this man who had once been considered a financial wizard.

Meyer deserves a great deal of credit for sticking with the paper over those long and lean years. But for all the money, time, and effort he poured into the paper it was fate that brought greatness to the Post. By 1954 the morning rival Times Herald had fallen into the hands of an aging Col. Robert McCormick who wanted rid of it so he could concentrate on his Chicago Tribune. So McCormick sold the Times Herald to Meyer after, according to stories I have heard, the Kauffmanns and Noyeses who owned the Star turned down the Times Herald because, it was said, they already had a newspaper. The Post now had the morning field all to its self; circulation grew, advertising followed and soon the Post was ahead of the Star in all advertising categories.

From the 1940's until his suicide in 1963 Philip Graham, Meyer's son-in-law, ran the paper, improving it considerably but still struggling to make profits large enough to expand staffs and the size of the paper. Two great editors — J. Russel Wiggins and Alfred Friendly — molded the paper into an outstanding publication. Civil liberties, civil rights, civilized writing and a civil tone were the hallmarks they were so rightly concerned about.

But it was not until the 1960's after Graham's death and Mrs. Graham's courageous decision to step in and run the paper herself — despite having no business or managerial experience — that the Post was able to do the things its editors had always wanted to do but were unable to because there was no money. Sure, Mrs. Graham had vision and foresight and a sense of the public good. Yes, she built on what her father, her husband and their editors and staffs

had done over 30 pretty lean years. But, most important of all, the paper now had the money to do a superior job. And it also has had a tough and imaginative editor in Benjamin C. Bradlee who was not afraid to pursue Watergate and was willing to try new newspaper concepts such as the Post's pioneering Style section.

And now Bradlee is nearing retirement and Donald Graham, Eugene Meyer's grandson, is publisher of the Post and, I would guess, a new era will soon be upon the paper. As good and sometimes as great as the Post is in uncovering skullduggery, covering politics, commenting on events at home as well as around the world, and pouncing on social and other trends, the paper has gotten so big that it often loses focus and seems frequently to be searching for a personality. Moreover, it seems to me, the problems facing the Post also confront the big metropolitan newspapers throughout the country, whether they be The New York Times or the Los Angeles Times, the Chicago Tribune, the Dallas Times Herald, the San Francisco Chronicle or the San Jose Mercury. The metropolitan papers are big and profitable and powerful, yet they often are no longer a community force or, more dangerously, are deemed irrelevant by younger people. I can't start my day without *The Washington Post* — it is probably more important to me than even the first cup of coffee — but my children's generation does not have that same possessive feeling toward newspapers.

In a television world filled with pictures and in a work-a-day world where every man and woman is working and pressed for time, even hyper-successful newspapers like *The Post* may soon be in trouble. The paper is too big, unwieldy, the stories are too long, too indulgent, often too arcane, and, perhaps most important of all, there is no sense of community in a big metropolitan newspaper such as *The Post*. I know that Post people like to say that only their paper and the Washington Redskins pull together the Washington community, now

nearing four million population and spread over several counties in two states as well as the District of Columbia. The Redskins yes, but the Post? I don't think so.

Somewhere along the line *The Post* has lost whatever personality it once had, and I would describe that long-ago personality as lively, pungent, full of surprises, and with a genuine concern for the afflicted and the community. Today the paper has several personalities: ponderous and often boring in its serious news coverage; smart-ass in its Style pages; muddled in its local coverage. Yes, the paper still produces a lot of good stuff and remains out in front in many areas, but. . .

Is the problem that metropolitan papers like *The Post* are simply trying to do too much? Is it simply asking too much for one publication to cover Washington, the nation and the world, to tell us the meaning of everything that is happening — and of course what we should think about it — as well as cover its own diverse and ever-growing community? I hate to think so, but perhaps our big newspapers are trying to reach out too far and in the process losing focus, relevancy — and the readers.

I wish that Roberts had done more with the personalities and motives of the people who have made *The Post* the institution it is today — from Eugene Meyer to Donald Graham, from Russ Wiggins and Al Friendly to Ben Bradlee, from editorial page gurus Felix Morley and Herb Elliston to Bob Estabrook, Phil Geyelin and Meg Greenfield. I would also like to have read more about the struggles on the business side of the paper. Nevertheless, the book is a good account of the development of a major newspaper, and I came away from the book thinking not only about the many ingredients that go into the making of a good newspaper, but also about the role of chance and fate in developing a good newspaper as well as in maintaining it for generations to come.

I can still remember how dominant the *Evening Star* once was in

Washington; and now not quite ten years since its demise it is but a faded memory. I am not suggesting that *The Washington Post* and other surviving big metropolitan papers face similar fates, but if I were Donald Graham I would keep reminding myself that the world today is changing much faster

than newspapers and that publishers must keep up with that world if their papers are to survive. □

Julius Dusha, Nieman Fellow '56, was the Director of The Washington Journalism Center. Please see Nieman Notes under 1956.

The Town of Broken Dreams

The Night Hank Williams Died: A play in two acts with incidental music

Larry L. King. Southern Methodist University Press, 1989.

\$14.95 cloth, \$7.95 paper

by Mary Jordan

It's been said that the difference between a country-western song and a country-western hit is a few good lines. Larry L. King's play "The Night Hank Williams Died" has so many good lines its almost a pity it wasn't a ballad; for then it might still be at the top of the charts.

As it is, the play, just published in a book, is good, even brilliantly entertaining at moments.

But a great play has compelling characters and Hank is hurt largely because of the main character, Thurmond Strottle, a 27-year-old Texan who dreams of being the next Hank Williams, who sang "Cold, Cold Heart" into the Country Music Hall of Fame.

Thurmond is a cussing, stupid, petty thief who is difficult to sympathize with despite his dreams, the tragedy that befalls him, and the fact that he can write and sing songs with lyrics like these:

Yesterday seemed too early
But now tomorrow's too late
Ain't no doubt
My bad timin'
Decided by fate

It was a summer like others
A slow waltz in time

And given his druthers
He might move on down the line.
But cuttin' loose ain't easy
When you hide in your mind . . .
Dreamin' deuces are aces
When your poetry won't rhyme. . . .

Thurmond is afraid to leave what he knows, the tiny West Texas town of Stanley that bathed him in glory in his high school football days, for the uncertainty of what he does not. So he stays, pumping gas and thinking about what could be in Nashville.

While no one could accuse King of idealizing Thurmond, he might have been a stronger vehicle for the theme of unfulfilled dreams had he never been allowed to open his mouth. Strottle's quandary is more compelling than he is. "Just as sorry as puke," he answers when asked how Stanley High Jackrabbits did last football season. "A high-hat little bitch," he calls the love of his life, Nellie Bess. And this is a tender recollection for the lout: "Me and her set in the back of the ol' school bus and swapped spit from the city limits on!"

After high school, Nellie Bess left Strottle and Stanley in the hopes of marrying her troubles away. She didn't want to be *Somebody*, she wanted to marry *Somebody*. Most of all, she needed to get away from her mother, a crazed fundamentalist who doesn't believe in air-conditioning because it's not mentioned in the Bible.

The action in the play is driven by Nellie Bess' return to Snoozeville after her marriage to a chiropractor sours. Even dreams that are reached for, King seems to be saying, don't

always come out in technicolor. While Nellie Bess' character succeeds, a reader wishes King's friends insisted that he strike the one horribly melodramatic line she utters at the play's close.

King, best known for his successful musical, "The Best Little Whorehouse in Texas," does hit the mark with the character of Mrs. Vida Powers, the religious nut, who warns Nellie Bess, "You're jumping into Hellfire eternal" and with a white handkerchief feverishly tries to wipe away all the smudges (and presumably sins) in sight. Turns out of course, that this Bible-thumper may have not always have lived according to the gospel; the father of Nellie Bess apparently is Gus Gilbert, the play's best creation.

Gus, a philosopher by nature and bartender by trade, knows what to say and how to say it. He feels he wasted his life in Stanley and doesn't want others to do the same. He's the guy to talk to if you're out of luck or running from the town's bully sheriff.

"Beer and ketchup was meant to be bottle up," Gus tells Nellie Bess. "But I don't think things that bothers people was."

"What happens to people when they marry, Gus?" Nellie Bess wants to know. "Why does it go . . . flat?"

Gus, about 60 and apparently never married, even has the answer to this one: "I always thought marriage tries to make one person outta two. And sometimes it's hard to git the graft to take."

Gus may be explaining why King left newspaper work with his comments from behind his bar: "You ever git the feelin' the same damn news is printed in the paper ever' day? This-many people killed in that-many car wrecks. This-many oil wells spudded in and that-many plugged. So-many killed in Korea and so-many wounded. I read the paper for nearly a hour the other day before noticin' the goddamn thing was four months old."

King, (NF '70), began his professional writing career in 1949 as a journalist in Hobbs, New Mexico, and has since

written television documentaries, novels, screenplays, nonfiction books, children's books and songs. Laudably versatile, King, himself, played Gus in Hank's opening at the New Playwrights' Theater in Washington, DC, in 1988. (When staged, Hank has won good to very good reviews along with regional awards for new plays). It has also run in Austin, Texas and off-Broadway in New York City.

It's clear that King knows the area he writes about well. In the preface, he describes Stanley as a "a wind-blasted, sand-blown, baking-hot, high-skied and bone-lonesome endless reach of West Texas." Stanley doesn't have an exit off the highway, a drop of oil or an intentional visitor. As you

read the script you believe it is 1952, that Ike is president and that you are lost in a "Slow Waltz in Time," the show's opening song.

King says the play sprung from a voice that came into his head while he was walking down Connecticut Avenue in Washington, DC. A young man's voice suddenly said: "I ain't got a dime, Gus. If they was givin' away free tumbleweeds, I couldn't afford the wind to get mine home." King thought this was the makings of a play, but can't you just hear a song called Tumbleweed at the top of the charts? □

Mary Jordan, Nieman Fellow '90, is a staff writer for The Washington Post.

Portrait of a LIFE Photographer

W. Eugene Smith Shadow & Substance: The Life and Work of an American Photographer

Jim Hughes. McGraw-Hill Publishing Company, 1989. \$29.95

by Steve Kagan

The most accomplished photographic essayist of the great picture magazine *LIFE* was W. Eugene Smith. His picture stories were brilliant and pioneering efforts at linking photos to create a multifaceted look at a single subject or issue. Using photographs as building blocks, Smith created emotional impressions beyond the capability of individual images. His most effective picture stories depicted human toil and strife.

Indeed, his own life was not a pretty picture, nor are some of his most lasting images the sacred icons of photojournalism we had once believed.

The Gene Smith discovered through Jim Hughes' exhaustive biography of the late photographer was someone unwittingly qualified to

document pain and suffering since, like many of his subjects, he was dealt more than his share. Within the opening ten pages, we witness a crippling bicycle accident, the development of painful migraine headaches, myopia, and his troubles with an embarrassing speech defect.

The onset of the Depression sets into motion the financial downfall of Smith's father and his shotgun suicide. Recollecting his father's final hours as he lingered in a hospital bed accepting transfusions from his son, Smith wrote: "My last memory of my father is this shattered character heaving over there in the next bed while they were pumping blood into him."

A suicide note implores the son to go to college (he dropped out of Notre Dame); save money (on the verge of bankruptcy, he sometimes pawned his cameras); and to be careful (Smith was anything but careful, exposing himself to enemy fire in World War II and years of amphetamine and alcohol abuse).

The tale of Smith's obsessive, self-centered personality is a painful revelation based on 300 interviews and the photographer's own writings.

Despite his seemingly inexhaustible supply of creative energy and his talent for transcendent photography, Smith was a man plagued by debt, addiction, and sad romantic attachments.

So it was with more than a touch of black humor that W. Eugene Smith, asked what his first initial stood for, quipped, "Wonderful."

Wonderful Eugene provided *LIFE* magazine with some of the finest and most memorable war photography from the Pacific Theater, where he took great risks and was felled in 1945 with shrapnel wounds to the face and hand. But the Smith who returned to *LIFE* after the war and a year-long convalescence was a fastidious and demanding photographer who became insistent on processing and printing all of his own film, sometimes delaying publication by weeks, a sacrifice he contended the magazine should make in acknowledging a photographer's superior knowledge of his subject.

"Ordinarily I leave on assignment, and after a period of semi-silence I return to the office with a set of prints," he wrote an editor. "Little is known by you of what has transpired, other than what the prints have to say."

Smith's attitude did not go over well with the editors of *LIFE*, no matter how good his photographs were. More friction resulted as he began to demand even greater control in the way of layout and editing. At one critical juncture with *LIFE*, Smith balked at what he regarded as a "superficial" 12-page treatment of his essay on Albert Schweitzer, whom he struggled to depict in a way that would also show a great man's abusive side — a portrait that would "de-god" Schweitzer, Smith said. Upon viewing the completed issue, which only began to demystify Schweitzer, the photographer concluded, "I would have preferred silence."

Composing one of his many resignations from the magazine he wrote: "I believe I have outgrown *LIFE*'s present concept of the

photographic essay . . . The medium must continue to grow and I, talent and health willing, intend to help break track to take it there."

But the direction that Smith sought for his work was one crowded with problematic ethical choices and a questionable reading of journalistic tenets that Hughes' book now forces into the public arena. In doing so, photojournalists are obliged to reassess one of the medium's most imposing figures and some of its most cherished images.

Although Smith resented being sent out on stories with an editor's preconceived notion of what the photographs should be, and fought admirably to resist the business considerations that might abbreviate his shooting time, his own quest for the

perfect shot or essay was troublesome. During a brief stint for *Parade* magazine, Smith, shooting a story on a drill sergeant, asked the military to stage a mock battle scene with the officer leading his men through explosions. When the army declined to risk the safety of its men for the shot, Smith and a writer donned uniforms with gas masks and staged the picture, which was captured with a remotely triggered camera.

Nowhere in *Parade* was it revealed that the photo was staged. "Veracity was not the photographic imperative at *Parade*," Hughes writes. "Almost all of the magazine's 'war' stories were simulations whose sole purpose seemed to be the propagandization of America's growing military establishment."



W. Eugene Smith's photograph, "The Walk to Paradise Garden," was selected by Edward Steichen as the closing image in the 1955 Family of Man exhibit which toured the world for a decade. The children are Smith's son, Patrick, and daughter, Juanita.

Copyright © Heirs of W.E. Smith.

If *Parade's* policies encourage such trumping up, *LIFE's* standards, in more subtle ways, did not always respect reality. During Smith's heyday with the magazine, in the 40's and 50's, *LIFE* often sent out its reporting teams with detailed Hollywood-like scripts specifying exactly what types of pictures were needed, their mood and purpose. As deviation from the assignment was strongly discouraged, it was perhaps predictable that photos might be orchestrated or manipulated to meet editors' demands.

Despite Smith's chafing at *LIFE's* choreography, Hughes tells us that the photographer himself would sometimes arrange photographs so meticulously that the found or captured nature of photojournalism was all but lost.

Smith lobbied *LIFE* to shoot a story showing the effects of Franco's oppression on the people of Spain. In 1950, after logging thousands of road miles, he chose the little town of Deleitosa. Smith's assistant on the month-long project recalled the photographer's quest for a dramatic lead image: "The picture was not found and taken, but visualized and created as if Gene were directing a movie. We spent damn near a whole day getting that action right and the shot took almost three hours.

"Gene got up on a ladder. I had to drag people around, motioning to them, 'You walk here.' 'You walk there.' 'I want you to walk with your mule.' 'I want you to stand.' He'd finally say, 'Okay,' and I'd dash into a doorway and he'd click. Then he'd say, 'Let's do it over again.' "

In the most memorable image from this "Spanish Village" essay, a family is gathered in mourning at the wake of its patriarch — a wife, daughter and others shrouded in black and huddled around the corpse of an old man. In the original photo, the widow is looking into Smith's camera, but the photographer altered this in his darkroom. He printed the photo very dark, making the eyesockets almost black, then with bleach and a fine brush he redefined the whites of the

woman's eyes to redirect her gaze into the body.

Smith believed that a photograph was what one achieved in the final print, not the negative, so manipulation of the image during print making was for him a vital part of the photographic process. This is not a radical notion. Burning and dodging have been a part of photography almost since its invention and photographers are always selective in their scope, choosing to emphasize one component of a scene and deemphasize another.

But the extremes to which Smith took the process demand debate in light of his stature and Hughes' revealing research. Unfortunately, the author side-steps the ethical issues raised by some of Smith's practices and those of his clients, preferring to simply present anecdotes without comment or context.

The distinction between taking a picture and making one is not fully explored, outside Smith's egocentric and perfectionist defense of his desire for complete control of a subject in an effort to get at what he believed to be the truth. While documentation of Smith's practices may be sufficient for a reader versed in the special ethical questions faced by photojournalists, it is lacking for the casual reader and, maybe most importantly, the young photographer whose potential for rearranging "reality" in the modern photo lab far outstrips that known to Smith.

Hughes, who has been editing photography journals for more than 20 years and once worked with Smith on the publication of his acclaimed essay on mercury poisoning in a Japanese fishing village, has the awkward task of describing photos where a better illustrated book would be more satisfying. A Smith biography presents the perfect opportunity for reproducing old, not otherwise accessible *LIFE* layouts.

While reading, I found myself consulting other photo books for many of Smith's images not pictured in this volume. In addition, Smith's work

deserves better reproduction quality than the muddy plates offered by the publisher; the photos don't have near the depth or sparkle of the original prints or of reproductions in some other texts.

It would be easy but wrong to discount much of Smith's work as a result of Hughes' documentation. It is more gratifying to try and understand Smith as someone dissatisfied and frustrated by the confines of photojournalism, however problematic his search for improvement.

The subjects Smith chose were important, and he viewed them as an egalitarian: his camera found more nobility in a black nurse-midwife in 1951 than in Noble Laureate Schweitzer. His commitment was unceasing; he toiled in the darkroom, where he worked long hours, sometimes up to a week on a single print. He refused to be compromised by competition, taking almost two months to produce his Schweitzer prints, which he delivered to the *LIFE* offices on the same day *Look* came out with its own extensive essay on the doctor. He turned down lucrative assignments in order to work months on projects with little monetary reward.

His basic approach to his craft was best captured by the title of a course he taught at New York's New School in 1958: "Photography Made Difficult." (During this same period, fellow *LIFE* photographer Alfred Eisenstaedt



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bragged about a group of his own portraits, "The longest time I spent with each was 28 minutes").

Upon viewing Smith's "Spanish Village" essay, the great photographer Edward Steichen declared it "a new landmark in photojournalism . . . that can stand as a lighthouse to the photographers who follow him."

Perhaps "warning beacon" would have been a better description. □

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Speaker of the House Silenced

The Ambition and the Power: The Fall of Jim Wright, A True Story of Washington

John M. Barry. Viking, 1989. \$22.95

by Bill Kovach

SINCE BARRY Goldwater harnessed the energy of the conservative right to the Republican party's political wagon in 1964 a sustained struggle for power has brought the GOP within striking distance of political dominance to rival that exercised by the Democrats after the Great Depression.

The landscape of Washington is littered with Democratic casualties of that battle and the flag of the GOP looks at home at 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue. The agenda of debate within the beltway is shaped by conservative think tanks. The influence network that converts money and sentiment into legislation and policy has an increasingly conservative cast.

Huddled behind the protective walls of Congress, Democrats have been fighting a rearguard action through the decade of the 1980s. But when Jim Wright resigned as Speaker of the House last year the Democrats lost a crucial battle. Now control of that institution, too, is in jeopardy because the Democrats may not have learned the lesson of Jim Wright's demise: that holding sway over Congress is not enough; it is essential to speak more effectively to the broader power that resides with the people and that is influenced by the media.

The study of the long campaign by the Republican party for control of all three branches of the federal government has yet to be written. But in this revealing book — whose detail may at times overwhelm the average reader — John M. Barry has given us a close-up look at the most recent engagement in the battle for the Hill. It may presage the final push for political dominance in Washington.

Barry describes the breathtaking swift fall of House Speaker Jim Wright, a man who came close to making the House Speaker's chair a seat of power equal to that of the Oval Office. For in his short tenure as Speaker of the 100th Congress, Jim Wright would wrest control of policy initiative in Central America away from the Administration, pass a highway bill and a clean-water act over the President's veto and pass the first low-income-housing act since Ronald Reagan took office.

A good portion of the 700 pages of Barry's book describes Jim Wright's climb to the top of the Hill, and it is a careful if tedious study of the institutional power of Congress. Wright's was an ascent so slow and quiet that, as Barry reports, "even as Wright assumed the speakership, he remained a puzzle to Washington, an unknown quantity."

Across the aisle, the spearhead of the Republican assault troops, Republican Congressman Newt Gingrich of Georgia, watched the ascent of the new Speaker and saw in this anonymous quality in Wright a fatal

flaw. In a society that is increasingly distracted and impatient with the complexity of life, instant image substitutes for character, slogans for substance. To Gingrich the unknown Speaker was like the outlines of a figure in a coloring book. His public image had yet to be fixed. While the new Speaker was busy consolidating his power and organizing his influence inside Congress, Gingrich began his campaign of definition.

As Barry reports, Congressman Gingrich was not interested in passing legislation; his goal was achieving power by defeating Democrats. Others may debate issues, seek votes and draft amendments; Gingrich would travel the country attacking Jim Wright as the corrupt head of a corrupt party.

"We are fighting a war," he told colleagues. "It is a war for power. We are engaged in reshaping a whole nation through the news media."

With the tenacity of a Georgia pit bull, Gingrich made the rounds of newspaper offices and television studios, pressing on editors and reporters a file of newspaper stories about Wright that had appeared over 30 years. Stories of influence to help friends, partisan political attacks about abuses of power, questionable business deals. In local and regional papers, radio and television, Gingrich slowly began to fill in the public's image of Wright, and it was not a flattering picture.

So thoroughly was Wright discredited by what was essentially a public relations campaign against him — a point that is convincingly made by Barry's examination of the charges — that he was forced from office. The manipulation of public impressions had proven to be more powerful than the control of the House of Representatives of the United States. Wright understood legislative power sufficiently to influence world policy, but he did not understand that the system of mass communications was busy, under the direction of Gingrich, defining him and his character.

And in his ignorance of this world

of perception Wright hastened his own demise by behavior that appeared arrogant, power hungry and venal. In the end, Barry writes, even his Democratic allies would not rally to his support: "They did not kill him so much as let him die, let events take their course."

It is in the treatment of this element of the story — the enormous relocation of sources of power that the mass media is creating around the world today as image and form increasingly control substance — that Barry's book falls short. The book is almost laborious in its detail of congressional maneuvering, but despite unparalleled access (the author was allowed into virtually every meeting

in which Wright was involved during his tenure in office) Barry does not come to grips with the question of how this could happen. What he fails to look into with sufficient thought and detail is an observation made by one of Wright's aides, Craig Raupe: "I don't understand how Jim Wright can be so politically in tune and be so blind to appearances." And we are left to wonder in great uneasiness how a briefcase full of old newspaper clippings could bring down the Speaker of the House of Representatives. □

Bill Kovach, Nieman Fellow '89, is Curator of the Nieman Foundation. This book review is a reprint from New York Newsday.

A Million Circulation Newspaper Covers Two Fronts — Fighting and Home

The Stars and Stripes: World War II & the Early Years

Ken Zumwalt. Eakin Press, 1989.
\$16.95

by Wallace Turner

In October 1944, Ken Zumwalt, a Corporal without a pass that allowed him to be in Paris, walked into the Herald-Tribune building on Rue de Berri. Mission: Get hired onto the Paris edition of *Stars and Stripes*, published from the Herald-Tribune building in those early days after the Nazis were driven out of Paris. Almost 11 years later, Zumwalt sailed for the United States accompanied by a French wife he had met, courted and married between editions, and their two sons, born while he was managing editor of the European edition of *Stars and Stripes*.

This is his story of those eventful, trying years when *Stars and Stripes* was a link to back home for hundreds of thousands of American soldiers.

Zumwalt was a copy editor, news editor, assistant managing editor, and managing editor in various editions of the paper, first as an Army enlisted man and then for nine years as a civilian employee. His pride in the paper, and his deep affection for those who produced it shine through his story.

While his own experience was with the *Stars and Stripes* editions published in Paris, Liege, Nice, Pfungstadt, and Altdorf, Zumwalt has mined army orders, letters, books, memories of his friends and his own extensive files to produce a list of about 3,000 newspaper people who worked on *Stars and Stripes* in its various editions between 1942 and 1945. This monumental job is a major contribution to the history of that paper and illustrates, between the lines, that *Stars and Stripes* influenced American media immensely over the past half century.

In that list are many who became well-known editors and writers after

their service for the GI's paper. Zumwalt flashes forward in his narrative to tell of the later lives of his colleagues of that earlier time — this one became a successful editor, that one a successful public relations company owner, the other won a Pulitzer Prize, and so forth.

Among them are two who would become Nieman Fellows: Carl Larsen, NF '48, who worked in the *Stars and Stripes* New York bureau at the time of the Battle of the Bulge, and later was managing editor of the Liege edition; and Jack Foisie, NF '47, who worked on the Mediterranean edition. There were two others who were Nieman Fellows before their service on *Stars and Stripes*. George Chaplin, NF '41, was officer in charge of the mid-Pacific edition published in Honolulu; Irving Dilliard, NF '39, covered the hangings of the Nazi high command for *Stars and Stripes*.

Zumwalt writes that he actually was headed for a medical examination when he caught the bus that took him to Paris on that October night in 1944. He hoped to be able to transfer to the paratroops from his desk job at SHEAF; instead of stopping at the infirmary, the bus went straight into Paris, where he found his way to the *Stars and Stripes* office. Pushing through a door and past a sign that said "Abandon Your Stripes All Who Enter Here," he grasped the opportunity to apply for a job. Because he had worked five years for the Sacramento Union, because he showed he could read copy, and because the newly-established Paris edition was short of copy readers, he was hired, his reassignment arranged, and his life changed.

As the front line moved forward into Belgium and then into Germany, *Stars and Stripes* moved forward, too. Zumwalt came to have more and more important jobs. There was a fateful temporary assignment to the south of France to work on the Nice edition. He met Paulette Albin, to whom he dedicated his book. They were married in January 1946, he still in uniform. After a time he was able

to smuggle his bride into Germany, before the Army had relaxed regulations to permit soldiers to have their dependents with them.

One of the dark clouds that hung over *Stars and Stripes* was the threat that the military would try to manage the news to meet the prejudices and career aims of officers assigned to supervise the several editions. The threat was always there even though when General Eisenhower directed that the paper be created in 1942, he had specifically ordered that it be allowed to report the news. Zumwalt does not state this point, but it appears to me that his struggles with military overseers were minimal so long as the fighting was going on, but increased year by year after the war.

Each edition of *Stars and Stripes* was supervised by a military officer identified on the masthead as "officer in charge." Eventually, the colonel in charge of the edition Zumwalt was editing changed his masthead title to "editor in chief." But, says Zumwalt, this was only because the colonel found that he had not been invited to a party for news people because the title "officer in charge" did not make him an editorial employee. He didn't want to miss any more parties.

Zumwalt says the staff, almost entirely enlisted men, had no serious problem with the censorship under which the paper operated in wartime. Silly attempts of military officers to control what was printed were simply ignored. One such "suggestion" that was laughed at and forgotten was when a colonel came in with the idea that it would be a great thing for morale to publish a line on page one every day: "Have you killed your German today?"

After peace broke out, things began to be different. More and more pressure was felt from the military. It even came from the business side, as when unmistakable signs of Pentagon influence could be seen in orders that weakened *Stars and Stripes* in its competition with the *Overseas Weekly*, a commercially operated paper aimed at U.S. troops in Europe.

In addition to the continuing pressures to protect the public image of the Army and its top commanders, there was pressure about spot news stories such as when the Air Force objected to big coverage of a crash that occurred about a mile from the *Stars and Stripes* offices. When demobilization resulted in conversion of the news room executive staff to civilians on contract, some of the officers in charge became jealous of the substantial salaries that were paid to the editors.

"Despite our relative low rank, the managing editors got along well with the top brass," Zumwalt writes, "it was the colonels and majors who gave us problems."

He said "*Stars and Stripes* owed much to Gen. George Catlett Marshall, the army chief of staff, who put it into business with orders that it "always was entirely for and by the soldier" as General Pershing had directed the original *Stars and Stripes* of World War I to be. Zumwalt said Eisenhower carried out this policy, even to protecting Bill Mauldin's "Up Front" cartoons, featuring Joe and Willie whose comments and dress grated on many a brass hat's nerves, and the printing of "gripe" letters from GI's, which sometimes drove a general wild.

The paper had its problems with Congress, too, as when Congressman George Dondero (R-MI) in 1948, well ahead of Senator McCarthy's similar attacks on the State Department, said that he was positive Communists worked for and influenced *Stars and Stripes*. But the paper also found its Capitol Hill defenders in Rep. John Moss of Sacramento and Senator William Proxmire of Wisconsin.

When Zumwalt begins to tell of his experiences with Lt. Col. Lothar B. Sibert, a Cedar Bluff, Ala., school teacher, the reader can begin to see the end coming. Sibert had succeeded a particularly good editor-in-chief in 1953. He had been making inquiries around the office before he was named editor-in-chief; later it was learned that he was looking for, but not finding, homosexuals on the staff.

One of the first things Sibert did after he became editor-in-chief was order that only he would sign outgoing correspondence. The sender of the message would prepare the letter; then Sibert would sign it.

"When I closed a letter to a business contact I knew well, I often asked to be remembered to his wife," Zumwalt wrote, wondering what his friends thought when "that went out over the colonel's signature."

The colonel also put all letters into a reader file that other executives could read.

"The result was that we wrote less and used the telephone more," Zumwalt says. Top staff people began to quit. Sibert made some moves that resulted in the loss of the best circulation man the paper had ever had.

By this time, Zumwalt was beginning to feel his age — 40. He worried that there was no retirement pension plan at *Stars and Stripes*. He resigned.

"I was tired of the tug of war," he said, "tired of the constant bickering over things not connected with getting the news to the readers. I had been with *Stars and Stripes* eleven years, nine as a civilian, and I had worked for a platoon of officers in the past 13 months."

So on Sept. 21, 1955, he, his war bride and their two sons sailed from Cannes on the *Andrea Doria*.

"The ship sank to the bottom of the Atlantic the following year, but by then we were in San Diego, California, where I was working on the copy desk of *The San Diego Union* and living with my family in a beautiful home on Point Loma overlooking the Pacific Ocean."

He retired in 1979 and still lives on Point Loma. □

Wallace Turner, Nieman Fellow '59, A Pulitzer Prize-winning newspaperman, recently retired from The New York Times. He lives in Seattle, Washington.



NIEMAN NOTES

It is unfair to use the editorial "we" in a piece such as this. "We" do not feel this way — I feel this way.

If there were headings for the beginning of Nieman Notes these few paragraphs would be labelled *Confessions — First Person Singular*.

I start with — I was once a girl reporter and I gloried in the title. The nomenclature "sob-sister" was no longer used. I interviewed those who were said to be celebrities. But, to me, the real celebrities were the reporters covering the same story that I was covering. I was and am "journalist-struck." Print, television, radio — it matters not — I see stars.

On the other hand, the three times I fell flat on my face covering stories were because of reporters. Three assignments involved famous journalists. Three times when I sat down at the typewriter, I more than faltered, I failed. Thus:

- 1) *I was sent to interview a famous publisher (used to be a newspaperman himself). A dinghy was in harbor waiting to ferry me to his yacht.*
- 2) *An assignment called for covering the wife of the President of the United States. Her entourage included newspaperwomen whose bylines were (to me) as famous as the name of the President's wife.*
- 3) *I was sent to cover two famous newspapermen — later turned columnists — foreign correspondents then. Both were on lecture tours; same time, same town, same hotel. The hotel press agent arranged the interview and alerted editors.*

The memories of those three assignments, of those unwritten stories, burn, sear, and hurt. Each time I returned to the office, I was unable, I was incapable of writing the story. Each time, I knew that I could not match the writings of those I covered or of the journalists covering the story.

No, I was not fired because the stories I wrote on assignments I could handle — with not a reporter in sight — were tolerable. A sample:

- 1) *I was a pretend dance hall hostess and got a job in a seedy hotel so that I could cover and uncover the life of a dollar a dance girl (by that time the ante had risen). The hotel owner saw my story in the paper; he threatened to beat the publisher.*
- 2) *I was sent to pick-up the fleet — British sailors — in port for two days. So a pretend American tart made appointments with British tars that were never kept.*
- 3) *My suggestion for this story was turned down by a cowardly managing editor; it involved collusion with cops. I would pretend to be a pick-up and jailed for that offense. I would spend the night with other offenders of the ilk. The city editor agreed, "a great idea, just be careful when you're in the cell." The managing editor turned down my suggestion with what I considered a non sequitor — "wait until she's older, she's only seventeen."*

My range of stories may not have been great, but they were covered adequately and I did not flinch. I just could not cover stories where there were other journalists. They — to me — were the protagonists.

Now, because of my work, I am surrounded by print and broadcast writers. This is what happens:

- A pat on the back from a journalist is, for me, a raise.*
- An affirmative nod or a word of praise from a reporter is, for me, a Pulitzer wrapped in a Nobel.*

I confessed all this to a friend. He said he felt some sort of the same when he interviewed stage and screen stars. And I know a doctoral candidate from a prestigious Western university who trembles when speaking with a Harvard professor. I am not alone.

However, I think by now, it might be a good idea to try and stifle that inclination to stand up and curtsy when a journalist walks by — even if it means holding fast to the sides of my chair.

—1950—

Two Nieman Fellows are recipients of the 1989 Missouri Honor Medal for Distinguished Service to Journalism given by the University of Missouri, Columbia. They are CLARK MOLLENHOFF, NF '50, professor of journalism at Washington & Lee University, and EDUARDO ULIBARRI, NF'88, editor in chief of *La Nacion* in Costa Rica.

Helen Thomas, UPI White House correspondent, whose statement, "Thank you, Mr. President," closes the presidential press conference, was among others awarded the 1989 Missouri Honor Medal.

—1953—

ROBERT NIELSEN has sent to Nieman Notes an updated synopsis and letter of his activities since his Nieman Fellowship. The account includes the stories he has covered, the places he has been, and what he is now doing. We start with the latest and travel backwards in time:

In 1978, the retired journalist turned toward a different career, "gentleman forester operating a woodlot," when he and his wife, Betty, moved to her family's 200-acre farm with a "six-bedroom Victorian house on the Saint John River in New Brunswick."

In 1984, Mr. Nielsen was awarded a yellow birch shield with plaque and \$1,000 for "excellence in the field of hardwood forest management." The previous year he had been president of the N.B. Federation of Woodlot Owners.

Another update flash is that Bob Nielsen has returned to school on the not too distant Presque Isle campus of the University of Maine. There, he is studying Shakespeare, political science, and international affairs stressing United States and Soviet relations. During his salad days at the University of New Brunswick, the lure of a newspaper position enticed him away from finishing his education. Now, he finds essay and term paper preparation less arduous than writing for publication. But the past few years have not been all work and study — he and his wife "took a three-month cruise

on a Polish freighter, Hamburg to Yokohama."

And now to retrace the path leading to retirement:

In the mid 50's Mr. Nielsen was chief editorial writer of *The Toronto Star*, later becoming editorial page editor, and still later, after covering a plethora of stories, he was named *The Toronto Star's* acting editor-in-chief.

The stories he covered as foreign correspondent for his newspaper emanated from London, Hong Kong, Sweden, Israel, and the Soviet Union. The wars he reported on included the Algerian war and the India-China border war. In 1974, his series of stories on the plight of an unemployed laborer — he, dressed in shabby clothes as the lead actor — won a National Newspaper Award for enterprise reporting.

One of Mr. Nielsen's several published stories written after retirement, included an amusing account of a luncheon meeting with Lord Beaverbrook when the journalist was the London correspondent of *The Toronto Star*. It was fitting that he cover this meeting — Bob Nielsen in his undergraduate days at UNB, was a Beaverbrook Scholar.

A more recent story published this past October in the *Ottawa Sun*, recounted his adventures on ruble-exchanging in Moscow when on a tour with university students and faculty. In this story he also described a wild taxi ride through the streets of Moscow when he and a friend went in search of local color.

Mr. Nielsen ended with the interesting news that his grandchildren living as near as Ontario and as far as Colorado and Virginia, frequently visit their grandparents in New Brunswick.

—1956—

JULIUS DUSCHA has recently retired from the position of director of The Washington Journalism Center. He had been director since 1968. Mr. Duscha was a national political correspondent for *The Washington Post*; and associate director of the Professional Journalism Fellowship program at Stanford University.

He is succeeded by Don Campbell who was elected director of the Center. Mr. Campbell has written for the Gannett News Service, and later, was a Washington editor for *USA Today*.

—1959—

JOHN SEIGENTHALER, chairman and publisher of the Gannett newspaper, *The Tennessean*, has an additional title — chief executive officer — as CEO, he now has the responsibility for the business affairs of the newspaper. Formerly, he was also editor of the paper. This office has been taken over by FRANK SUTHERLAND, Jr., NF '78, who had been editor of *The Times* in Shreveport, Louisiana.

Mr. Seigenthaler, editorial director of *USA Today*, has been appointed to the Board of Visitors of the College of Journalism at the University of Maryland. The board meets twice yearly. Other Nieman Fellows who are on the board are HODDING CARTER III, NF '66, president of MainStreet TV Productions, Washington, D.C., JACK NELSON, NF '62, Washington bureau chief of the *Los Angeles Times*, and EUGENE ROBERTS, NF '62, president and executive editor of *The Philadelphia Inquirer*.

—1960—

PETER BRAESTRUP is now senior editor and director of communications for the Library of Congress. Mr. Braestrup is working directly with the Librarian of Congress — James H. Billington — who had appointed him to this position.

Peter Braestrup oversees the work of the Library's Public Affairs Office and the Publishing Office. He also advises the Librarian on all communications, including new magazine and television projects. Mr. Braestrup formerly was editor of the *Wilson Quarterly*. At the Wilson Center he had established an adjunct Media Studies Project that offered fellowships to journalists and academicians for research on the media.

Joseph A. Loftus, for 25 years a reporter for The New York Times and then a special assistant for communications to Secretary of Labor George P. Shultz, died of heart disease yesterday at his home in Sarasota, Fla. He was 82 years old and had suffered a series of strokes.

Mr. Loftus went to Washington in 1936 as a reporter for The Associated Press. In 1944 he joined the Washington bureau of The New York Times, where he covered labor, economics and politics. He resigned from The Times in 1969 to take the post with Secretary Shultz in the Nixon

Administration. Later he also served with Mr. Shultz at the Treasury Department.

Mr. Loftus, who was born in Scranton, Pa., received a bachelor's degree from the University of Scranton in 1928. While there he worked for the Scranton Tribune. He also worked for the International News Service. He graduated from the School of Journalism at Columbia University in 1931.

In 1960 he received the first Louis Stark scholarship to Harvard as a Nieman Fellow. He moved to Sarasota in 1983.

Mr. Loftus is survived by his wife, Mary; two daughters, Joanne Young of Vicksburg, Miss., and Mrs. Marianne Whitlock of Bethesda, Md.; three sisters, Dorothy Kairis and Margaret Loftus, both of Scranton, and Rita Travis of Lewisburg, Pa., and four grandchildren.

The New York Times
January 4, 1990

In 1977, JOSEPH LOFTUS was appointed to the Nieman Foundation Selection Committee to assist in choosing Fellows for the Class of '78.

On Saturday, March 3, a memorial service was held for Mr. Loftus at the Unitarian Church on Cedar Lane in Bethesda, Maryland. This service was attended by friends, colleagues, and co-workers, from Mr. Loftus' days in Washington, D.C. as a *New York Times* journalist, and as a cabinet aide.

A previous memorial service on January 13 had been held at the Unitarian-Universalist church in Sarasota, Florida.

—1966—

ROBERT C. MAYNARD, editor and president of *The Tribune* in Oakland, California, has been the recipient of the John Peter Zenger Award, presented by the University of Arizona. Mr. Maynard was the 36th person to receive the Zenger prize; it honors those who distinguish themselves for their actions on behalf of Freedom of the Press and the People's Right to Know. The award was given to Mr. Maynard this past November, at the annual convention of the Arizona Newspaper Association held in Tuscon.

—1967—

DANA R. BULLEN, executive director of the World Press Freedom Committee recently wrote about "the struggle for a free press" and what it entails in the coming years. The article, titled "Maintaining

Vigilance," appeared in *presstime*, The Journal of the American Newspaper Publishers Association.

Mr. Bullen considers that the role of journalists will become increasingly more important as the years unfold into and during the 21st Century. They will be called upon to shape "an explosion of information into concise, useful, accurate news . . ."

He also discussed UNESCO in relation to print and broadcast media and noted that that 161-nation organization "... recently approved program for the next six years incorporates some welcome new approaches . . ."

Mr. Bullen pointed out that "... many of the stiffest fights over press freedom are in individual countries where heroic commitment to a free press can be a matter of life or death. There is no sign of improvement. Each year, organizations like Freedom House total up the number of journalists and news organizations that have encountered violence or censorship. Each year, the numbers are depressing" . . .

"The continuing debate over the role of newspapers, other news media, and about press freedom will have impact far beyond 2000."

The World Press Freedom Committee is located at the Newspaper Center in Reston, Virginia.

RICHARD H. STEWART who has been with *The Boston Globe* for more than 40 years and has held a series of interesting positions there, has been named public relations coordinator of that newspaper. He has been *The Globe's* city editor, served in the Washington bureau, was national foreign editor, covered New England as the paper's correspondent, unveiled the intricacies of the computer system for the writing staff, and for a time, did special features for *The Globe's* "Living Department." He even took time off — resigned from *The Globe*, but later, returned — to act as press secretary to Senator Edmund S. Muskie during his presidential campaign.

Along with his new title, this intrepid reporter has another — he heads *The Globe's* Division of Retired Volunteers program. He speaks to retirees about volunteer openings in the area. He also talks before schools and clubs about opportunities in the field of journalism.

Each position is given its due. "I like to try different things," Mr. Stewart explained.

—1971—

In the *INQUIRER*, the Sunday magazine section of *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, DICK POTHIER, a staff writer for that newspaper, writes a moving account of his heart transplant operation — before, during, and after. He starts with his struggle to find a cab — while he struggled for breath — to whisk him to the emergency room of a hospital. A police car comes to the rescue.

He tells of his wait in that first hospital where doctors and nurses attempt to stabilize his condition before removing him to another hospital where the transplant operation may take place — if a donor heart of the right blood type could be found.

He describes that treatment, his thirst, and his wait for the news that finally comes through — a donor heart is on its way. His surgeon says: "Everything looks good," . . . "We're prepping you for a transplant in the early morning hours."

The anesthesiologist informs the patient that he might be aware of part of the proceedings; he is too weak for complete anesthesiology. In another hospital the donor's heart is removed — a team — a doctor and his aides — rushes that heart to the operating room where the patient waits. Mr. Pothier, a former medical reporter, describes the heart transplant procedures and the aftermath — he awakens with a beating heart.

In two weeks he is out of the hospital — in six weeks he returns to work full time.

For the rest of his life, the journalist explains, he will be taking expensive drugs everyday. Toward the end of his story, he writes this:

"... I really believe I wouldn't have missed it for the world. Crazy as it sounds, this has been the most illuminating and powerful experience of my life. It gives me something to marvel at every moment I'm alive."

—1977—

ALFRED S. LARKIN Jr. is now managing editor/administration at *The Boston Globe*. His duties entail administrative work in the news department including overseeing personnel matters, training and budgets. His appointment to this position was announced by John S. Driscoll, editor of *The Globe*.

Mr. Larkin, who started on the newspaper as a general assignment

reporter in 1972, has also covered politics and education. Before assuming his present position, which became effective on March 1, he was Sunday managing editor for news and features of *The Boston Sunday Globe*. His other positions on *The Globe* included editor of the *Sunday Globe Magazine*, and assistant managing editor for local news. He had also been a deputy managing editor of the newspaper for three years.

—1981—

In an issue of *Editor & Publisher*, DOUG MARLETTE, long based as a cartoonist on Southern newspapers, describes his feeling about his move to New York where he is the editorial cartoonist for *New York Newsday*.

He said living in New York . . . with all of the problems of modern life . . . "makes cartooning a blast, it makes cartooning easy." He pointed out that "everyone is accomplished . . . my next door neighbor is a world-renowned novelist, the woman down the street is a nationally known broadcaster . . ."

Since living in this northeastern metropolis, the cartoonist has become vastly interested in writing, "there's been a real galvanizing of my inclination to write." A new book about his syndicated comic strip "Kudzu" was published by Longview Press.

Doug Marlette's wife, Melinda, and their two-year-old son, Jackson, find little fault with the big city. Jackson especially loves the Museum of Natural History, and the incessant noise of New York also finds favor. Mr. Marlette explained that "for a two-year-old that's heaven."

—1983—

CALLIE CROSSLEY is one of a number of Wellesley College graduates in various professions who participates in the College's Shadow Program, an annual January event which enables Wellesley students to discover what their chosen field may be like "out there" before they graduate.

Each student spends a full working day following and observing an alumna at work. Ms. Crossley, who is with the ABC News program "20/20," — she produces the Dr. Timothy Johnson medical segments of the program — shows the student what a TV production entails. Editing, research, and meeting with a

director are some activities of the day's work.

Ms. Crossley, an enthusiastic proponent of the program, is a 1973 graduate of Wellesley College.

—1984—

CONROY CHINO (alphabetically) heads the list — hence the year of those who attended The Poynter Institute's first session of the broadcast advisory committee held this past autumn. Mr. Chino is with KOATV News, Albuquerque, New Mexico. Other NF members attending this session were:

CALLIE CROSSLEY, NF '83, ABC News, Needham, Massachusetts; DEBORAH JOHNSON, NF '85, CBS News, Washington, D.C.; and IRA ROSEN, NF '87, ABC Prime-Time Live, New York.

WILLIAM WHEATLEY, NF '77, of NBC Nightly News, New York, a member of the advisory committee, missed this session because of the San Francisco earthquake, as did several other members on the committee.

VALERIE HYMAN, NF '87, heads The Poynter Institute Program for Broadcast Journalists.

—1986—

In January, I. ROBERTO EISENMANN, Jr. returned home to Panama after four years of exile in the United States. Mr. Eisenmann, publisher and editor in-chief of *La Prensa*, continued to edit and write for that newspaper from his home in Miami.

Under Panamanian dictatorship *La Prensa* had an on-again off-again life until it was finally banned by General Noriega on February 25, 1988.

Mr. Eisenmann came back to a news-

paper office that resembled not at all the office he had left — computer terminals were battered, electric wires cut, and much of the press equipment damaged. The upheaval was caused by soldiers — under Gen. Noriega's orders — who raided the office. *La Prensa* was first published on August 4, 1980; it was a Spanish-language crusading newspaper that was continually harassed by the Panamanian government until its final banishment.

After Gen. Noriega's arrest, *La Prensa* was once again publishing and back on the streets; the papers sold quickly at twenty five cents a copy.

A *New York Times* story published this past January quoted Mr. Eisenmann as saying:

"It's almost like starting from scratch" . . . "We used to be organized for dictatorship. But now we'll be restructuring that. Our role is to continue to be the conscience of democratic reform."

—1987—

SUSAN DENTZER, *U.S. News & World Report*, has been promoted to the position of senior writer. Ms. Dentzer is the chief economic correspondent of the magazine responsible for national and international economics and economic policy. She is looking forward to the domestic and foreign travel her position will entail.

She and her husband — CHARLES ALSTON — live in Washington, D.C. Both were Nieman Fellows '87. Charles Alston is on the staff of the *Congressional Quarterly*.

Poland's Minister of Information is a Nieman Fellow — MALGORZATA NIEZABITOWSKI was selected by Poland's Prime Minister, Tadeusz

Mazowiecki, to head the information office. The Prime Minister had been Ms. Niezabitowski's editor when they both worked on a banned SOLIDARITY newspaper. One of the first enactments of the information minister was to introduce measures to reduce press censorship that would eventually lead to its elimination.

Ms. Niezabitowski is the author of the text for the book, *The Last Jews of Poland*; her husband, Tomasz Tomaszewski, took the photographs. The book has been published in a number of countries.

—1988—

ANTHONY HAZLITT HEARD has been spending the autumn semester as a visiting international fellow at the Fulbright Institute of International Relations, University of Arkansas, in Fayetteville. He also served as a visiting associate professor in the university's journalism department.

Mr. Heard, former editor of the *Cape Times*, is writing a book about his experiences in South Africa. After spending some time in Toronto, Canada, he will return home to his country in May, and resume work as a freelance columnist for various international newspapers.

—1989—

CONSTANCE CASEY has written for Nieman Notes this account of a momentous event. Ms. Casey is the book critic and roaming cultural reporter for the *San Jose Mercury News* in California.

I'd be embarrassed about showing off in Nieman Notes if these things weren't so deserved. For two men in my life, 1989 was a year of coming into their own. My husband, Harold Varmus, with his University of California SF research partner, Mike Bishop, won the Nobel Prize for Medicine. (The prize was announced the morning of the day the Giants beat the Cubs to clinch the pennant. We took Jacob and Christopher out of school and went to the game. It was a good day). Really, it's about time. For the Giants, too. Harold's prize came for a good idea he and Mike had some 16 years ago.

My brother, John Casey, won the National Book Award for his novel *Spartina* which took him eight years to write. The book has also been nominated for the National Book Critics Circle Award. (I'm on the NBCC board, but sat out that discussion).

We heard from Kovach, still a news

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hound, about four minutes after we heard from the guy in Stockholm. Mike and Barbara Connor sent a congratulatory fruit basket with a note saying, "Dynamite!"; a reference Harold didn't get at first, causing Mike to say he wasn't smart enough to get the prize. Cynthia Tucker wired congrats from Atlanta, with the important addendum, "Connie, this calls for some SERIOUS shopping."

I have been asked to say something about the trip to Stockholm to pick up Harold's medal. (We've got it. It's real gold. But, as of Jan. 18, the check is still in the mail). For the Dec. 10 ceremony, we got into formal attire at 3 p.m. (it was already pitch dark in Stockholm); Jacob and Christopher, as well as Harold, wore white tie and tails. I wore the result of serious shopping — a blue silk number by Mary McFadden. It was a lighter blue than our blue Volvo limousine.

The ceremony, with the Stockholm Symphony, the Swedish Academy, and four members of the Swedish royal family onstage with the winners, was formal and impressive and in Swedish. Christopher appeared at the end of the CNN-TV documentary about the ceremony, his face beaming out of the second row behind Marina Castano, the object of the camera. Castano is the 30-something radio reporter for whom literature winner Camilo Cela left his wife of 44 years. Christopher, interviewed twice for Swedish TV, was a distant second for media attention that week, way behind Cela, 74-year old ex-toreador, TV talk show host, compiler of a dictionary of whorehouse terms, and one-time fighter on the Franco side in the Spanish Civil War.

At dinner for 1,308 in the Town Hall (A lot like the banquet for the Nieman 50th, except that the Nieman affair lacked reindeer, lingonberries and a frozen dessert topped with a big "N." The Nobelers had a king, too, but we had Howard). Harold sat next to Princess Christina, the king's sister, who went to Radcliffe for a year. (A deal arranged by James Watson, of "Double Helix" fame, who sat next to her the year he won the prize).

Harold's three-minute acceptance speech that night contained some lines from *Beowulf* about hospitality in a warm hall in northern countries in the dead of winter. He first heard *Beowulf* read by William Alfred, in a Harvard class.

After dancing at Town Hall ("Hello, Mary Lou" was the first song played. Ricky Nelson lives on in Sweden), we

went to an after-party (which began at 3 a.m.) given by medical students for Harold and Mike. Best moments there: a tame reindeer walking out of the snow to be petted, Jacob (ex-soloist with the Cambridge Rindge and Latin H.S. jazz band) picking up a trumpet and joining the med students band for "Sweet Georgia Brown."

The next night I sat next to Cela, who was a bit on the abrupt side and also didn't speak English (we communicated badly in bad French), at the palatial home of King Carl XVI Gustav and Queen Sylvia. I realize (a) that I should learn Spanish (b) these things aren't arranged for my convenience, but Graham Greene or Doris Lessing or Mario Vargas Llosa or Nadine Gordimer or Eudora Welty really would have been easier to talk to.

Crucial: that night I wore a beautiful gold dress made by Cecilia Alvear's sister in Managua. Cecilia, with characteristic generosity, also offered to loan me the gorgeous mink coat Niemans of '89 will remember she acquired on her trip to Denmark with Martha and Irene, to see another one of her sisters. Reluctantly, as the wife of someone who gives breast tumors to chickens and hepatitis to squirrels, I turned down the mink.

John came to Stockholm with us and was interviewed by *Newsweek*. Nice woman named Jones, based in London. She'd heard of Rod N., but hadn't met him yet. Re: interviews: on the CBS-TV morning show Jan. 17, someone at work just told me, John said that 1989 was the "N" year for his over-achieving family — Nieman, Nobel and National Book Award.

This was, of course, a subconscious response to Cynthia who had previously wondered to Harold and me why John kept talking (in the LA Times, the N.Y. Times, the Boston Globe) only about the Nobel and The National Book Award.

As Cynthia put it in her New Year's note, "The Nieman ain't chopped liver." (Someone give that woman a job writing editorials.)

Random Note

Seven Nieman Fellows were among the 65 chosen as Pulitzer Prize nominating jurors in journalism for 1990. They will judge work published in 1989. The jurors screen and nominate entries for the Pulitzer Prize Board, that board is responsible for the final decision on award-winning entries. The winners will be announced in April.

Nieman Fellows selected as jurors are: FRANK DEL OLMO, NF '88, deputy editor of the editorial pages, *Los Angeles Times*; WILLIAM GERMAN, NF '50, executive editor, *San Francisco Chronicle*; DAVID HAWPE, NF '75, editor, *The Courier-Journal*, Louisville; JOHN SEIGENTHALER, NF '59, chairman, publisher and CEO, *The Tennessean*, Nashville, and editorial director of *USA Today*; FRANK SUTHERLAND, Jr., NF '78, editor, *The Tennessean*; JIM THARPE, NF '89, managing editor, *The Alabama Journal* in Montgomery; and WILLIAM F. WOO, NF '67, editor, *St. Louis Post Dispatch*.



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