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# NIEMAN REPORTS

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VOL. XLIV, NO. 4 WINTER 1990

## TV AND THE PERSIAN GULF — LESSONS LEARNED

JIM STEWART sees Operation Desert Shield solidifying television's role as the new age diplomatic cable.

## WASHINGTON

THOMAS WINSHIP offers 10 proposals, some outrageous, some impractical, most sure to stir opposition, for dealing with press malaise in the nation's capital.

## AFRICA

What can Africa do to improve media coverage in the face of competing events all around the globe?

The fifth annual conference on the media co-sponsored by the Nieman Foundation and the African-American Institute.

BILL KOVACH warns that the repression of journalists in Kenya is getting worse despite constitutional safeguards.

## FREEDOM'S CALL

CHARLES BAILEY says it's time once again to risk unpopularity by standing up and being counted on freedom of speech.

# Clampdown in Kenya

Bill Kovach

*Courageous editor of Law Journal strives to uphold Constitution in face of abrogation of rights by President Moi's one-party state.*

Muted and distorted by time and distance, the collapse of political repression and one-party rule in Europe is echoing through sub-Saharan Africa, stimulating debate and movement toward multi-party political systems and expanded individual rights, including free speech.

But in Kenya, which was once hailed as an example of progressive and enlightened government, the European experience has only encouraged new repression by President Daniel arap Moi as he seeks to smother all opposition to his increasingly autocratic rule.

A report of President Moi's assault on human rights and the press was given at the conference on Africa and The Media at Harvard last spring, co-sponsored by the Nieman Foundation and the African-American Institute, which is reported upon in this issue. It was confirmed by a delegation from The Committee to Protect Journalists, which visited Kenya in September.

At the spring conference a courageous young Kenya lawyer and publisher, Gitobu Imanyara, criticized the international press corps, largely based in Nairobi, for ignoring the loss of human rights in Kenya while reporting extensively on similar problems elsewhere.

After his return to Kenya Mr. Imanyara was arrested and held incommunicado for two weeks. He was eventually charged with sedition because his magazine *The Nairobi Law Monthly* had published articles outlining the citizen's constitutional rights against the arbitrary exercise of

government power. The September issue of the magazine was seized and in October the magazine was banned by government decree making it a crime to possess any "past, present or future," copy of the magazine. This ban led *The New York Times* to editorialize that President Moi, "has now made it a crime to advocate respect for the law."

Shortly after Mr. Gitobu's arrest, the Committee to Protect Journalists, a unique organization, based in New York, which is tireless in its efforts to protect journalists and free expression worldwide, organized a delegation that included the Nieman Foundation to go to Kenya and examine the state of press freedom.

The picture which emerged from interviews during that visit with Kenyan and international journalists, lawyers, foreign diplomats and church leaders (no Kenyan government official would meet members of the delegation) is one of a small band of dedicated journalists struggling against an increasingly rigid and threatening government. Journalists who never know when their work will land them in prison. It is a system which has been slowly strangled by President Moi in a drive to dictatorial power which began in 1982 with the imprisonment of *The Standard* newspaper's editor for four years. Since then, four publications, including *The Nairobi Law Monthly* have been closed by the government on such spurious charges as "showing disaffection to Kenya."

Conversations with Kenyan journalists are depressingly similar.

"No one knows what is allowed and what is not allowed," says one veteran of 10 years of political reporting. "Only after the police come do you know that something you wrote is forbidden. As a result there is an enormous amount of self-censorship. We know a lot we don't write."

Another, who has traveled outside Kenya and has seen a freer form of journalism adds:

"The most corrosive thing about our journalism is that it turns us into gossips. The information and stories we get that we can't get into the papers we simply take out into the streets and they circulate as rumor and gossip. Any journalist knows how dangerous that can be because you don't require the same standard of proof. But what can you do if you love your country and you learn something that the people need to know?"

Radio and television are government operations given over to monotonous reports of praise for President Moi and re-runs of mindless entertainment. The few newspapers are independently owned but completely dependent upon the good will of the government for access and advertising. Editors can be and have been summarily "detained" by police and held incommunicado. Papers can be and have been banned unilaterally by the attorney general with no cause shown. Challenges to these actions are heard in courts presided over by judges who serve at the pleasure of the executive authority.

The behavior of journalists is monitored closely from the top. Editors

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# Television and the Persian Gulf —Lessons Learned

Jim Stewart

*The CBS veteran of national security reporting sees Operation Desert Shield as a casebook study of TV's role*



The calls began early on the morning of August 7. The first came from CBS affiliate stations located near several southeastern military installations. Then came a handful from friends and relatives of U.S. servicemen. All said the same thing: something was going on at several of the nation's larger military bases.

Exactly what was unclear. The relatives said that soldiers had been summoned back to their units. Leaves were cancelled. Reporters at the affiliates reported hearing the sound of many motors within the closed-off bases. One enterprising local reporter — a former serviceman himself — drove to the end of the runway at Pope Air Force Base outside Fort Bragg, N.C. He was rewarded with the sight of a wave of C-130 cargo planes suddenly swooping in for a landing out

of the pre-dawn darkness. Like the others, he phoned this tip to the CBS Washington news desk, which passed it along to their Pentagon bureau shortly before 6 a.m.

So began network television's first glimmer of Operation Desert Shield. Within hours it would force the networks' first decision on their role in a confrontation that — at this writing — seems headed for war. The Persian Gulf showdown has thus far been a casebook study of modern television's role in an international crisis: It solidified television's role — especially that of CNN — as the new age diplomatic cable. We were treated to the sight of President George Bush on one screen saying he would soon contact Jordan's King Hussein, and another of the King viewing the same scene and rising to answer the phone. We saw hostage-taking reach a higher art form. Iraqi TV even designed a logo for the frequent messages from its "guests." And the U.S. military displayed rare skill at sword rattling via the airwaves, while at the same time effectively kissing off the crippled Pentagon pool concept. In short, if there have been no striking new lessons for television in the Persian Gulf crisis the confrontation has served to virtually institutionalize several roles for the electronic media in times of near-war.

On the morning of Aug. 7, the question was whether this military busting about was only another timely exercise, or the real thing. For days the

White House had been talking tough about Iraq's Aug. 2 invasion of Kuwait. President Bush seemed to reporters particularly stern-faced when he returned from Camp David the previous Sunday afternoon. Maybe these early stirrings meant only that Bush had decided to send the 82nd Airborne Division on a joint exercise with the Saudi Arabian forces?

But in the network newsrooms, one only had to place pins in a map from where the calls were coming and the picture started to jell — Ft. Bragg, Ft. Campbell, Ky., Ft. Stewart, Ga., Pope Air Force Base, Shaw Air Force Base, Twenty-Nine Palms, Calif. — the numbers were stunning. Shortly after 2 p.m., CBS News President David Burke — in what would turn out to be one of his last decisions before leaving the network — told the control room to interrupt the network feed and Pentagon correspondent David Martin broke the story. Within the hour the other nets followed and the race was on.

There would be criticism that the disclosure endangered the first wave of American forces when they were at their most vulnerable. In fact, this was one of Burke's chief concerns. The networks had shown forbearance before when American forces were on the move. Several correspondents knew of the 1983 Grenada invasion before it took place, and one network knew far enough in advance to be on the scene for live coverage before the

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# 10 Ways to Energize The Washington Press

Thomas Winship

*The retired Boston Globe editor also voices a plea to editorial writers as the "last best hope" to reinvigorate coverage of the nation's capital*

*These remarks were made by Thomas Winship on receiving the James Madison Award for dedication to the ideals of the First Amendment to the Constitution. The award, by the National Broadcast Editorial Association, was made at the joint convention of the NBEA and the National Conference of Editorial Writers in Orlando, Florida, September 12, 1990. Winship, president of the Center for Foreign Journalists in Reston, Virginia, retired from The Boston Globe in 1984.*

Oh! those beautiful words in our Constitution: "Congress shall make no laws respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the government for a redress of grievances."

Those words ring so sweetly in my ears because of a week I spent early this summer in Prague meeting with a group of Eastern European and Soviet editors. They were young, presiding over mostly new publications and learning to live with the responsibilities and frustrations of press freedom. They are simply euphoric about the sudden state of liberation they are enjoying.

They do not have a piece of verbiage as powerful or as eloquent as our First Amendment — and are far from achieving it. Daily they realize the

importance of our noble sentence and are struggling to win similar strong press protections.

You have to study the press in the developing world to fully appreciate the First Amendment we have at our disposal. Incidentally, that is exactly what I am doing these days through our training Center for Foreign Journalists in Reston, VA.

Since you, as editorial writers are the anointed consciences of the print and broadcast press, I want to seize this opportunity today to concentrate on just the last nine words of the First Amendment, which are the protection of our people's right "to petition the government for a redress of grievances." No place is that right to petition more needed than in the nation's capital.

That's what I want to talk about — how the press does and does not cover Washington, and what we all can do about it.

For years in Washington and from Boston, I have watched the press fail miserably to protect the American people's right "to petition the government for a redress of grievance."

I think of the press's long winter's nap during the Reagan years when all those giant stories were missed or botched, such as the Savings and Loan heist, the Housing and Urban Development scandals, Iran-Contra and the pollution by radiation of 100 nuclear plants — a \$1-2 billion clean-up bill we all must pay — and the biggest one of all — the monitoring of

what Reagan's sweeping deregulation policy was doing to our distribution of wealth and to our fiscal solvency. The press missed completely the full impact and significance of Reagan's overarching crusade to deregulate the federal government. And we all forget that Vice President Bush was assigned to develop and to carry out that policy by President Reagan. The book on the total cost of deregulation in lives and dollars has yet to be written.

Former Senator Gene McCarthy's great line keeps coming back to me — he said: "President Reagan remembers the future and imagines the past." That was the presidency the Washington press failed to cover until it was too late.



It's been fashionable for years to talk about the dismal state of our profession in Washington. Listen to what some distinguished colleagues have said recently.

Listen to James Fallows of *The Atlantic Monthly* — "The distinction between politician, movie star and media celebrity becomes blurred as all compete for media attention, and two basic facts dominate the new Washington journalism. Lectures are how Washington journalists make big money, and TV is how journalists get lecture dates. The result is more public adulation and less time to report, less inclination to spend your leisure time among the unwashed."

Says Bob Kuttner of *The New Republic* — "The TV culture rewards people who are willing to make TV more important than anything else. It becomes a self-selecting circle of superficiality."

And Sy Hersh: "The issue is — are reporters hungry? It's not linked to economic strata, but to the desire to do the best job possible. The press is largely lazy, uninterested in facts and always looking for a way out."

Says Hodding Carter: "The top journalists move in packs with the affluent and powerful to Washington, then swarm with them in summer to every agreeable spot on the Eastern seaboard between Canada and New Jersey. The truth is that there is not a hell of a lot of tolerance or empathy among the leading figures of national journalism for outsiders, losers, nonconformists or seriously provocative political

figures or causes."

Enough of the handwringing. I shall go a step beyond just hammering away at past inadequacies of the Washington press corps. What can be done to improve the overall quality of Washington reporting?

There are more than 2000 reporters, representing some 700 newspapers and news agencies registered at the U.S. Senate press gallery. And the Senate Radio and TV gallery has 2600 credentialed individuals from 170 organizations.

This army of journalists produce oceans of news daily. But what is it? It's predominantly "event," single-source reporting, routine announcements mostly spoon fed from White House and Cabinet press conferences. Hundreds of reporters file exactly the same story on these staged events.

One of the few scientific measurements of Washington output was done by Leon V. Sigal in his book *Channels and Sources of News*. His figures show that anywhere from 80 to 90 percent of the Washington news output comes routinely from government officials; the remaining 10-20 percent is "enterprise" or digging reporting. My hunch is the "enterprise" story figure is on the high side.

Veteran Washington reporter Tom Oliphant of *The Boston Globe* summarizes it this way: "Covering politics in Washington has been reduced to a kind of cud chewing of the obvious, with a never-changing cast of consultants dishing out canned quotes about some obvious point . . . so you have in this city the best and the brightest, most experienced reporters doing journalism a 20-year old could do."

I've been talking like a sourpuss critic, a stance particularly easy for any off-the-firing-line editor to take. No more.

So, now I'd like to suggest ten proposals for dealing with the Washington press malaise. Some are outrageous; others perhaps impractical or too heavily opposed. I wish editors and broadcast news directors would at least consider or reconsider them.

In no particular order of importance, they are:

## 1. Put Investigation Teams in Big Bureaus

Every major Washington bureau should designate one or more reporters to full-time investigative work. An independent team reporting directly to the top editor is even better. Unless this commitment to do serious investigative reporting is formalized, the effort will never happen or will fizzle out in a few weeks.

News persons, especially editors, are notoriously susceptible to forgetting good intentions unless they're locked into a formula. Excluding the three or four big national newspapers and the networks, there are only a handful of full-time investigative reporters in the huge Washington press corps. Yet the investigative team technique is almost universally used on our good regional newspapers and television stations. They develop big stories, they keep politicians' feet to the fire and, incidentally, they win the lion's share of the big journalism awards. Why not use the same technique and show the same zeal in Washington?

We know the Washington stories we've missed over recent years, and we all have our own list of important issues and situations that the public should better understand. I think of the vaunted Star Wars program. Is it alive or dead? I think of the impasse on meeting the budget deficit, or what President Bush, who calls himself the Education President, is doing about the education crisis, or the terrible in-fighting in the large environmental bureaucracy which is ill serving the President.

The list of unreported Washington stories is endless. It's endless because most days most reporters cover the same press conference story out of Washington. This automatically puts them on their front page with no heavy lifting. What is worse, their editors back home let them get away with this routine.

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"I think of the press's long winter's nap during the Reagan years when all those giant stories were missed or botched . . ."

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Too many editors have the ridiculous idea that their own staff bylines should be on those page one stories. It makes editors and news directors think they are running a big-time operation. Actually, ninety-nine point nine percent of all readers and listeners couldn't care less, or notice, who wrote a story.

While the national newspapers and the networks often break major exclusives, the large regional newspapers and TV stations, most with 6-to-12-person bureaus, come up with precious few big time investigative exclusives out of Washington. Instead, these regional reporters are too busy covering press conferences, peddling cabinet spokesmen's yarns, writing thumbsuckers or telling sea stories to each other at a pricey Washington restaurant.

For me, a devout, ink-stained print editor, it hurts to see network television showing signs of taking investigative reporting much more seriously than their print brethren.

The most notable effort comes from Ted Turner of Cable News Network, yet again. He has given Pamela Hill, the veteran network documentary producer, a \$3 million start-up budget to establish a 100-person investigative unit. Think of it, and in these days of pinched budgets. Pam is raiding *The Washington Post*, *The Wall Street Journal* and commercial TV of impressive young and old investigative reporters.

More important, the goal of the CNN's I-unit — that's what they call it — is to run its investigative pieces at least once a week, and for as long as 16 minutes, "or for whatever they take," according to CNN news chief Ed Turner.

In recruiting her investigative unit, Hill said, "I particularly didn't go for well-known people. I looked for terrific people who have the kind of clarity of vision about the press and the intellectual confidence to break with pack journalism." CNN-I units today are operating out of Atlanta, the District of Columbia, and New York City.

I say cheers to commercial television for invading the turf once exclusively held by the print press. With varying success, 20-20, Expose, Prime Time and Real Life at least are into investigative journalism in a thoughtful way.

## 2. Depend More On Wire Services

Suggestion No. 2 — Print editors, ratchet up your courage. Show some respect for your publisher's wallet and start printing more wire service stories instead of staff-written pieces on massively covered press conferences. Take your prestigious staffers off this stenographic work. Save them for uncovered local stories and investigative reporting. Your Washington bureau will howl. So what else is new?

## 3. Curb Appearances On TV News Shows

No. 3. As a general rule, ban your Washington reporters from appearing regularly on TV news shows. At times of crisis, let reporters appear when they have useful expertise to contribute, yes. Let columnists be talking heads on TV, yes, but not regular newspaper beat reporters. They are paid by their bosses to be note-taking reporters, not on-camera personalities. Leave the on-camera work to the broadcast press. That's what they're paid to do.

This intermingling of reporting, commentary and posturing before cameras has come to the point where drastic steps should be taken. Think of the ethical implications of the McLaughlin Group spectacle. Here television viewers get to watch mainstream journalists play acting in a shouting match gong show. Each is paid an estimated \$1,000 for their 30-minute, on-camera act. If you think that's a bit much, consider the spectacle of the McLaughlin Group's road performances. For \$35,000 or thereabouts, the National Association of Tire Dealers, or the like, can close out their convention banquet

with those same journalists screaming at each other.

Or think about syndicated columnists Rowland Evans and Bob Novak signing up senators and government bureaucrats to spin inside Washington stories and gossip to groups of paying businessmen. The two journalists charge their clients \$350 to attend these Washington peep shows. The Senators get nothing except the prospect of a good press in the Evans and Novak column.

I say it is time for drastic action on the double dipping, in the name of decent journalism.

## 4. Rotate Staffers Out Of Washington

Suggestion No. 4 — Rotate bureau staffers more frequently in and out of Washington than is the norm today. Don't let your bureau staffers become comfortable props in the Washington power scene. Isn't a maximum of five years quite enough? Perhaps the increase in chain ownership of newspapers will enhance rotation, because it creates more job opportunities to which a Washington star can advance in his organization. At the same time, the Washington experience will develop more sophisticated local editors in the future.

## 5. Cut D.C. Bureaus, Add to State House

Suggestion No. 5 — The fact is, many national and regional bureaus are over staffed. Cut your highly expensive Washington bureau and transfer that fat to your state house staff. Action is shifting to Sacramento and Albany and in developing world capitals, not Washington. Runaway deficits and budget squeezes are forcing the shift, and as a result, the states are in turmoil as the flow of Federal largesse declines.

And, somehow fat Washington bureaus encourage their chiefs to devote more of their resources to



national and international stories and less to regional news. They produce more duplicative news. They become more specialized and too absorbed with "inside the Beltway" stories. And reporters in inflated bureaus, scampering around with his or her little morsel of news, often produce more Washington copy than their readers and viewers need. Also, affluent bureau chiefs seem to hire Washington staffers increasingly from outside the home office, and consequently more reporters are less familiar with the cities in which their papers and television stations are based.

We simply are getting too much homogenized news out of Washington.

Finally, chiefs of large bureaus have no time to report and to write. As former bureau chief Martin Nolan once said, "I do more stroking than is done at the Westminster Kennel Show."

I say lots of Washington bureau chiefs are taking their publishers and station managers to the cleaners, but good.

## 6. Move Hot Shots From White House

Suggestion No. 6 — Don't put your top, high-energy reporter on the regular White House beat. It's a waste of his or her talents, and he or she will fall into every bad habit in the book. "There is no place where a correspondent can be more easily led than at the White House," says James Naughton of *The Philadelphia Inquirer*.

Instead I'd suggest you send your hot-shot reporters to the House of Representatives. Congressmen and their staffs like to talk to reporters. They are full of untapped information.

## 7. Cover Stories, Not Buildings

Suggestion No. 7 — Reconsider the way reporting manpower is deployed in Washington. The typical Washington bureau has most of the

major buildings covered. As a result, these buildings feel they must speak every day. So the buildings make certain that there is enough garbage to keep reporters from the real news. Let's cover stories and situations; not buildings.

## 8. More Emphasis On Regional News

Suggestion No. 8 — Washington bureaus, for all the obvious reasons, should place far more emphasis on news of their own region. Tip O'Neill is right. "All politics is local." Covering local news in Washington is hard work, because it usually does not come from a single source.

The average Washington newsman hates regional reporting, because many of these stories do not land on the front page. Too bad. The networks, national magazines, *The Times*, *Post Wall Street Journal* and *Los Angeles Times* do have a primary national mission. The rest do not. Our mission is local, and too many of us have forgotten it.

## 9. Report Honoraria To Employers

Suggestion No. 9 — All reporters and columnists should disclose to the bosses the source and amount of honoraria received for speech and TV appearances. This, in the interest of good ethics, the right to know and lowering ego levels.

## 10. Reduce Use of Anonymous Quotes

And finally, Suggestion No. 10 — Let us in Washington and in all the home offices of news organizations make another serious effort to reduce use of anonymous quotes. They often are mischievous, a crutch for lazy reporting and almost always malicious. The exception is the sensitive, major investigative story, which could be printed only with some degree of

anonymity. These exceptions should be cleared only by the ranking editor on duty.

So far this heavy dose of journalistic purity leaves the impression that reporters are the chief culprits. Not so, the buck always stops with the editors and the news directors.

Editors, of late, have been notably weak and self-satisfied about the Washington press performance. The primary blame for the weaknesses in Washington journalism must lie with the senior editors and broadcast news directors. They are the ones who are letting their reporters get away with their ego trips in Washington. I might say bosses are not exactly immune to ego trips either.

In the recent unrelenting public attacks upon the press, too many editors have chosen to be ombudsman between their reporters and the people they cover. They have not stood up to criticism by aggrieved government officials. Too often, editors permit officials to balloon a possible factual error on a minor point in major stories. Reporters cannot always be right on every minute detail.

Editors should be the first to realize that reporters are often working in a fog as government figures obfuscate and White House spokesmen cover their backsides. And that's scary because reporters are working on the first draft of history. And too many editors back home simply do not recognize, or appreciate this level of manipulation being thrown at their reporters by the Washington bureaucracy. Reporters get lied to all the time.

I cannot sit down without delivering a charge to all of you in this room, the editorial writers of America.

It is short, sweet and quite obvious.

Please, please stay brave. Stay angry. Stay dogged. Stay outspoken. Fear not the word "crusade" and stay compassionate.

For my money Geneva Overholser, that feisty editor of *The Des Moines Register*, said it all: "I think zeal is an

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# Africa and the World — Competing for Attention

*Media conference focuses on ways to generate more news coverage of the continent in the face of political ferment around the globe*

## Overview — The Challenge Facing Journalists

*At the opening session, Bill Kovach, NF '89, curator of the Nieman Foundation, and Frank Ferrari, senior vice president of the African-American Institute, welcomed participants. The speakers at the first session were Anthony Lewis, NF '57 and columnist of The New York Times, and Babacar Touré, editor and publisher of Sud magazine in Senegal and founder of the Association of West African Journalists.*

Mr. Kovach noted that everyone is aware of the current trends in the world today, many of them brought on by the extraordinary explosion of communications technology and the international currency in information. Conferences which focus on particular and special places are vitally important now. If the one thing that comes from this conference is the beginning of an understanding of why things happen in Africa, what generates coverage, what makes areas and subjects of interest to the media of the world, then we will have taken a long step forward. We have to worry about a lot of things now as journalists, and understanding the changing nature of news may be the most important. It is clear that the dollars that were available to Africa in 1989 will not be available in 1991. As we all know, interest in news follows the dollar. If we begin to focus on subjects like that

and understand how you compete for information, we will have made a fine start at this conference.

Mr. Ferrari said the absence of African media coverage is a recurrent theme at AAI meetings. Whenever a conference is held, the questions of U.S. coverage of Africa and the perception of Africa are a critical part of the agenda. But the curious thing is that no matter how often discussed, whatever the participants, the item appears unchanged. The coverage doesn't increase, little or less attention is given. Why is that? It is almost as if one could sit back and ask if there is an element of resistance, or indifference.

But it is an issue that one has to examine frankly and say, Why is it that apart from a number of significant developments, the issue of Africa media coverage is not an item of apparent concern?

This meeting on African issues takes place in a context more active and challenging to Africans as well as to Americans concerned with African developments, — media coverage, economic development responses to Africa, investment flows, and U.S. responses to changing African political situations, including South Africa. It also takes place during enormous global developments in the evolution of democracy.

Namibia is the most dramatic

African example of an active democracy with a democratic constitution. Why is it that when independent Namibia enters the United Nations as the 160th member, not one word appears in any of our newspapers? It is the question that underlies the discussion of coverage. One has to look at it in a way that permits an openness to come to grips with the issue and then deal with the consequences. In addressing coverage of news, Nelson Mandela said, "We have been criticized by some of the alternative press, and that is very healthy, because a vigorous political movement amongst blacks will arise and be maintained if the press looks at problems objectively." And that can be said of coverage of Africa generally.

*The fifth annual conference on the media in Africa co-sponsored by the Nieman Foundation at Harvard University and the African-American Institute was held May 1-2, 1990, at the Harvard Faculty Club in Cambridge, Massachusetts. This report was prepared by the African-American Institute and edited slightly to take into account such factors as outdated time elements.*



## A Journalism Of Personalities

Anthony Lewis, columnist for *The New York Times*, twice winner of the Pulitzer Prize, and a lecturer on the U.S. Constitution and the press at Harvard University Law School, said that at this conference we are going to ask ourselves how African stories can make headlines in American newspapers or get time on television, given the level of political ferment everywhere else in the world. Not only in South Africa, but in many parts of the continent, there are social and psychological struggles that echo in us, if we understand. There are the clashes of culture and religion in Nigeria, for example, or the conflicts of power and freedom in Kenya. Many American reporters are romantic about Africa. There is no one Africa, there are swamps and deserts, bush and mountains. There are the most diverse people, languages, and cultures. But there is a pervasive magic, the fascination lying in the human beings, the societies.

It is necessary to be realistic about Africa's likely place in American news priorities, and the reality is that Africa will have a hard time getting attention. We live in a time when seven impossible things seem to happen before breakfast every day. The leader of the Soviet Union is jeered in Moscow on May Day, the basic assumptions of our national security come under question. Under those circumstances, it will inevitably be difficult for African news to make headlines. We are overwhelmed by events that seem closer to our national concerns.

Another reason to expect a modest level of attention to news of Africa is that the U.S. government defines the news for us to a considerable and embarrassing extent. When Reagan took office in 1981, Secretary of State Haig announced that the country faced one imminent threat — in El Salvador. When Haig spoke, the correspondents went. Suddenly, there were pictures and headlines from El

Salvador. That is a dramatic example but not an eccentric one. When the president or his people say something is important, the journalism business tends to copy. For the government today, Africa has a low priority. Europe, the Soviet Union, the Middle East, Asia, Latin America, just about everything else comes ahead.

American journalism is more and more a journalism of personalities. Or more fairly, journalism speaks to a culture of personalities. We see the revolutionary changes taking place in the Soviet Union through the person of Mikhail Gorbachev. We gobble up personal tidbits about the great. When Nelson Mandela walked out of prison, he brought the South African story to the consciousness of millions of Americans. His person made the story dramatic, human, understandable. But we have a short attention span. This is the age of ten-minute fame and the nine-second sound bite. After a week or two, Mandela dropped down to small type and left the screen — and with him Africa went out of the American consciousness.

As it happens, South Africa is only at the beginning of a profoundly important story, what could be a transforming process. South Africa today is a great story, and all across southern Africa the effects of change in South Africa will be intriguing to follow.

There is no formula for making Africa command our front pages. But serious journalism can and should pay attention to the forces changing that continent, like others, for good and ill. The demands for democracy that have accomplished so much in Europe are rising in Africa, too. There are human disasters, and human possibilities.

American attitudes toward Africa include a certain condescension, not untouched by racism. But Americans can also be concerned, as we showed when public feeling aroused Congress to override President Reagan's veto of the South African sanctions legislation.

## The Greatest Need Is for Democracy

Babacar Touré, editor and publisher of *Sud* magazine in Senegal and founder of the Association of West African Journalists, said that Africa makes news, but it is not in the mind of the journalists who report the news. Journalists can make things happen even if they are not happening.

What exists is a bunch of mistakes, which we should learn from; these mistakes are not African mistakes but mistakes by human beings. Africans have been told we have no past and no future. Africa is a Western failure, the Western model of development having failed. Now, after 30 years of so-called development, it seems we are getting nowhere. We are led to believe it is our fault, since there is no more colonialism, no more imperialism. Africans are trapped and they say, "OK, it is our fault. But where do we go from here?"

Some basic observations can be made from the situation in Eastern Europe. In Africa, whether we are, or were, pro-Western moderates or revolutionaries, that is, socialists or communists, we have one common idea from the communist system — the one-party system. Both liberal and progressive governments have come to that system of state bureaucracy and state-controlled economy and state-owned media. It becomes obvious to those who have been fighting against that monolith in favor of pluralism, that the events in Eastern Europe are instrumental to us. It means for us the end of the one-party system, the end of the state-controlled economy, the end of institutions that have not taken into account the needs and aspirations of the people.

How can we position Africa in the American media? And what Africa are we to position? Is it the one which makes the charity people feel all right, or do we look eye to eye and say, "What the hell have you been doing for the past 30 years?" It is an open question. We can start a process tonight, even if we don't have the right answers. But we can start asking the

right questions. The Western world has a common link, the Judeo-Christian civilization. Why Africa is absent from the news is that any human setting acts or interacts according to shared values, shared beliefs, shared origin. The tendency is that when you do not share these with another ethnic group, then you have a natural tendency to overlook what is happening to people who are different. This happens in Africa, too, from one ethnic group to another.

What we need most is democracy. What we need first is democracy. Most of the time, you'll hear people

saying, "Democracy is un-African." In Senegal, we have been enjoying a multi-party system for ten years. There have been 70 political parties and associations in Senegal discussing how democracy should be resolved, up from 17 parties in 1988. President Mobutu accepts that at least three to four political parties should be recognized. President Houphouët-Boigny of Côte d'Ivoire realizes he should leave, and just two years ago he was saying that an African chief should never know who is going to succeed him.

Africa may be in the news if the

Western world believes that its human values are universal values. We talk about people's participation, about corruption, but we forget that there are not corrupted people without corrupters. We forget that people's participation is everybody, the possibility for all of us to say, "OK, maybe we don't know what we want, but we know what we don't want." We have been portrayed as the dark continent. Now we are longing for some light. And nobody wants to recognize that. Why?

## Competing With Other World News

*Stryker McGuire, chief of correspondents for Newsweek, chaired the panel on competing with global developments and introduced Robert Rosenthal, foreign editor of The Philadelphia Inquirer; Les Payne, assistant managing editor of Newsday; Gitobu Imanyara, editor and publisher of The Nairobi Law Monthly in Kenya.*

Mr. Rosenthal said that the simple answer to the session's topic was that Africa does not compete well. At a time of shrinking news holes and budget cuts, Africa is once again getting the short end of the stick. We are juggling constantly in terms of competition for space and news. News from Europe dominated in the last year, and with the exception of South Africa, Africa probably got less coverage than in memory.

It is important for foreign editors to choose not only story selection, but also the type of correspondent sent to Africa. If you send someone who is just going to cover government, you will get deadly dull stories that most Americans won't pay attention to. Africa, in particular, is a place where you have to send someone who likes people, who has a spirit of adventure, and is fascinated by a culture most Americans are not familiar with. It's

not just famine, war, and deteriorating economies. You can do stories that people will remember, not just interviews with heads of state. You have to plan ahead for stories and do projects that are a commitment and major investment by the paper. These stories make a bigger impact than trying to dribble stories into the paper in small pieces.

You can't send in a correspondent whose point of view is purely American. Too many correspondents bring their own baggage. The coverage won't be real. What is happening now is the examination of Africa by Africans. The burgeoning movement in Eastern Europe is creating more opportunities for correspondents to deal with Africans who want to get the story out.

### Africa—Part of Shift In Global Events

Les Payne, assistant managing editor of *Newsday* and a Pulitzer Prize winner, said that at the 1988 media conference in London, it was generally agreed that in spite of the press crackdown in South Africa, journalists should remain on that story and try to smuggle out news that the South African government had declared contraband. The recent

events in South Africa have proven us somewhat right. None of us foresaw two years ago what is happening in South Africa now, at least not this quickly.

The question of race is, of course, key to the under-reporting out of Africa, given all other factors. But that will be omitted from this discussion, because race is more the key to the problem than the solution. We have to find a way to improve coverage, rather than simply analyze and categorize the ills of the past.

Tony Lewis made the point that the U.S. government defines the news for us, that Africa remains a low priority for the government and, consequentially, for the media. The question really is now, despite government priorities, can we raise the attention level of that story in South Africa and, by extension, the entire continent? There is optimism that we can do that. We have the opportunity. Whether we take advantage of the opportunity remains to be seen.

How can that be done? By overcoming the inertia that Africa has never been covered and never will be covered. Let's find ways to marry that story to what is happening globally. In city rooms at newspapers, we need to show that Africa is part of that global shift and is inextricably linked

to what is happening in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union.

We cover Africa as separate and apart because it is our tradition to do so. For example, what happens to armed struggle in South Africa if the Soviet Union says that all conflicts now must be settled by peaceful means? Is it empty for the ANC to talk about the armed struggle, have the arms shipments been cut off? What about, beginning in 1987, against the wishes of the ANC, the USSR reaching out to Afrikaners? We began to look at that story as a part of the global story. We don't often enough make that connection.

No editor would refuse a good story. The problem is that when it comes to Africa, they have to be really taken by the nose and shown what a good story is. Reporters have an additional burden of selling those stories. The readers are not the problem, the gatekeepers presuppose that readers will not be interested in those stories. That's wrongheaded. And we follow up this assumption by sending reporters we don't really expect much from. That is a challenge that will fall not only to editors, but also to reporters.

Another reason for hope is that the victims of apartheid now have a face and a voice, Nelson Mandela. This is made for television, made for readers.

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You can't send in a correspondent whose point of view is purely American. Too many correspondents bring their own baggage. The coverage won't be real. Robert Rosenthal, *The Philadelphia Inquirer*

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This is a great story, even in American terms, a running story. Teenagers, kids who have never heard of Thabo Mbeki, Walter Sisulu, and the others, knew about Mandela through the London concert in 1988, from MTV. And of course, Mandela went to Wembley stadium this year and that gives us a tremendous opportunity—although the concert was blacked out in the U.S. — to rethink the whole approach of whether or not the American people will buy it. We have these opportunities, but whether we take advantage of them as journalists remains to be seen.

## Reporters Bow To Controls

Gitobu Imanyara, editor and publisher of *The Nairobi Law Monthly* in Kenya, said that Americans see Africa in unreal terms — Kenya means Kenyatta and wildlife parks. The biggest problem facing Americans who want to know about Kenya is lack of accurate information. But Nairobi has the highest concentration of foreign correspondents in Africa, 160 of them. Why then is there not accurate information about Africa? The foreign correspondents in Nairobi operate within a given mandate; when they get to Africa they find an Africa completely different from what they have read in books, they find that to interview someone they need a government permit.

But why do news organizations based in the U.S. accept different standards for Africa? When they come to Africa, they allow the African governments to set their own goals, to determine who will be the subject of their interviews and what areas of the country correspondents can visit. The problem is not so much lack of news, but that the people who come to Africa arrive with pre-conceived ideas, they expect that surviving two days without being eaten by a wild animal or being arrested is an achievement. When an African government permits an interview, that is seen as a scoop. In the U.S., you see journalists chasing

after President Bush asking questions, but African governments maintain a Berlin Wall between themselves and news organizations, granting occasional concessions. When you do get a chance to talk to an African leader, you lose touch with reality because you've been allowed to talk to someone who never talks to the press.

For the future, the U.S. has to fashion a new kind of relationship with Africa, a new basis for coverage of African events. The U.S. is currently concentrating on Eastern Europe, but as soon as Gorbachev announces his new foreign policy toward Africa, then that may determine how the U.S. and news agencies treat Africa. As we see new Soviet policy, news organizations must set up their own new standards for Africa. Africa is not simply wild game, not simply disasters. African events in the 1990's are going to be felt more, because when South Africa becomes free there will be a new equation. South Africa will shape the nature of the African continent in the 1990's.

For a long time, the U.S. has offered asylum to African intellectuals and scholars. Some of Kenya's best brains are trained in the U.S. and teach at American universities. This will change with a new and free South Africa and the international climate will pay more attention to African events. Most of our intellectuals will come back. South Africa has the capacity to absorb them.

Africa was seen in terms of various African leaders for a long time. In Kenya, the issue was "After Kenyatta, what?" In 1978, Kenyatta died and for the next 12 years Moi was seen in terms of an African leader who showed how change can be peaceful and constitutional. In the process, the U.S. news media forgot to address the issues. So, while Moi has been busy destroying the institutions that ensured his takeover constitutionally, there has not been a paragraph about this in the U.S. news agencies. When there is a bloodbath, American news agencies will ask, "Why did this happen?" The 160 foreign correspondents in Nairobi

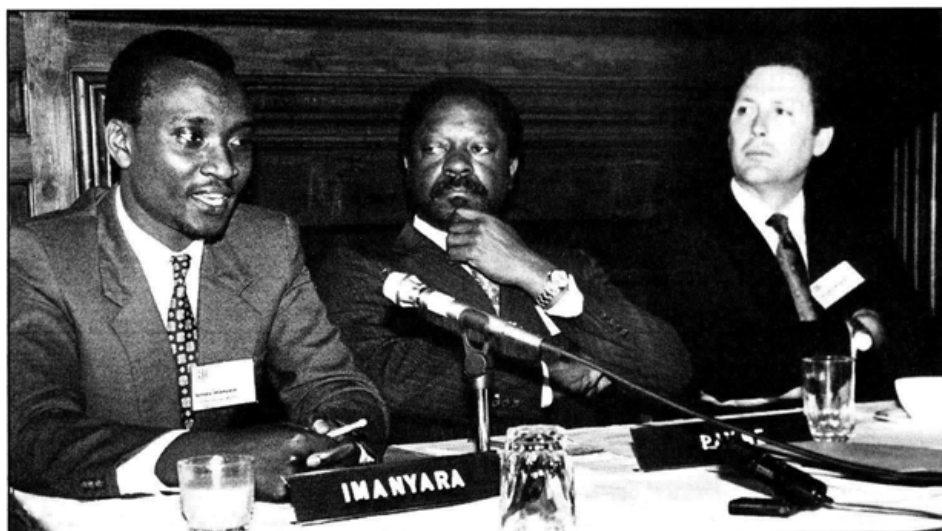


closed their eyes and did not see the country change from an emerging democracy into one where its democratic institutions are destroyed. This has been a gradual process over the past 12 years and it never made news. What made news is that Kenya is an example to the rest of the continent.

## Discussion

An American journalist asked what elements motivate choices that are made about news stories on Africa. Mr. Rosenthal said that some of the decision-makers are packagers and don't care about the content as much as the mix. They don't care what the story says; they will ask for, say, an 18-inch story. There is a philosophical difference between the packagers and the creative end.

Mr. Payne said there is a demand concept that works, but it is artificial. For example, someone will say there are a lot of Jewish readers in New York, therefore we should put a regional bureau in Israel. That should have nothing to do with it, but it does. It should be, "Is there news there or is there not news there?" *Newsday's* first bureau was in Beijing and it was not based on how many Chinese readers *Newsday* had. The news judgment should exist quite apart from the readership. An American journalist asked how you change this system. Mr. Payne said the thing to do is hold them to the rules. Mr. Rosenthal said that you have to have your points of view and go for it. It's up to the foreign editors and the correspondents to set the agenda, and not let others set the



Margaret A. Novicki/Africa Report

**Gitobu Imanyara, left, editor and publisher of the *Nairobi Law Monthly*, on the panel with Les Payne, assistant managing editor of *Newsday*, and Stryker McGuire, chief of correspondents for *Newsweek***

agenda for us.

Another American journalist said that the needs of the constituency work subtly. *The Washington Post*, for example, covers Africa, not because of the large black population in the District of Columbia, but because there is tremendous interest in certain stories and the readers let you know that. When *The Post* had trouble getting a correspondent into Liberia, the paper was clobbered by the Liberian community. The readers definitely let you know what they want.

An American journalist said that not one network or music video station in the U.S. carried the recent London concert featuring Nelson Mandela and rock stars with big followings even though it was widely shown internationally. The U.S. blacked out this concert. When

Mandela was released, the American TV coverage was greater than all the coverage of the previous 36 months, but now coverage has returned to "normal." If TV is consciously, or unconsciously, in lockstep with the South African government, then print people should probe this possible complicity, and then maybe broadcast journalists would be more responsive.

An American journalist asked why Mr. Payne is so optimistic about more coverage of Africa, since South Africa is no longer interesting to news organizations except in the context of the negotiations. Editors are interested mainly in the U.S. angle. Mr. Payne said that there is now an opportunity that did not exist before, given the way the media operates. The reason is that the same story that is happening in Eastern Europe is happening in southern Africa; we are watching democracy flourish. You have to make people care about the story, and push for it. If you analyze what constitutes news judgment, the gatekeepers have no out on this story, except race, and they would never admit to that. Mr. Rosenthal said he agreed, that the story in South Africa is as dramatic as anything happening in the world. But the rest of Africa will be in the same straits as before.

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The people who come to Africa arrive with preconceived ideas. They expect that surviving two days without being eaten by a wild animal or being arrested is an achievement. Gitobu Imanyara, *The Nairobi Law Monthly*

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# Why American Coverage Is Important

*Tami Hultman, executive editor of Africa News Service, chaired the panel on American media coverage. The speakers were Brian Urquhart, scholar-in-residence at the international affairs program of The Ford Foundation, and a former United Nations undersecretary-general for special political affairs; Roger Wilkins, senior fellow at the Institute for Policy Studies, Clarence J. Robinson professor of history and American culture at George Mason University, and vice chairman of the board of trustees of the African-American Institute, and Jerelyn Eddings, N.E. '85 and Johannesburg bureau chief of The Baltimore Sun.*

Mr. Urquhart said that there are three reasons why the interests of the U.S. media in Africa are important both to Africans and Americans. Europeans and Americans are largely responsible for a lot of things that have happened in Africa; there is our self-interest in the stability of the world and we cannot let one large part of the world fall way behind; and Africa is a fascinating and unique story.

As Sylvanus Olympio, the first president of Togo, said at the time of African independence: "By breaking

up Africa into economic and commercial compartments, the colonial powers did their greatest harm. The effect of their policy has been the economic isolation of peoples who live side by side, in some flagrant instances, within a few miles of each other, while directing the flow of resources to the metropolitan countries. For example, although I can call Paris on my office telephone in Lomé, I cannot place a call to Lagos, which is only 250 miles away. Other problems are more serious. Trade is the most effective method of creating good will among nations, but in Africa trade barriers are legion, railroads rarely connect at international boundaries, and where they do differences in gauges necessitate trans-loading. Highways have been constructed from the coast inland, but very few connect at economic centers of trade. The productive central regions of Togo, Dahomey, and Ghana are as remote from each other as if they were on separate continents. And these are the problems which we must tackle first."

We have to remind ourselves of that when we think about the problems of Africa.

The cold war had an extraordinarily distorting effect upon the perception

of Africa by people in the West who don't actually know it. There seems to be a feeling that the cold war is over, but it is not over in Angola or Mozambique. The cold war had very little to do with Africans and their real problems. Until it is over, it will be hard to establish a serious view of what is going on.

Another worry is the future stability of what is rapidly becoming an interdependent world system. No major part of the human race, nor any major geographical region can possibly be left out, if we are to avoid the most dangerous development in the world — the steadily growing gulf between rich and poor. Now that the Soviet Union and China are trying to join the industrialized north, there is a great danger that many countries will become a residual south problem, sinking further behind. That will be devastating, morally unacceptable, and unacceptable from a practical point of view.

There are some promising signs, such as the independence of Namibia, which was a remarkable performance. The significance was not just for the whole region of southern Africa, but also the turning point for the validity and desire for internationally supervised free and fair elections. That was due in part to the interests of the press, to NGOs, and UN deserves a lot of credit, and certainly the people directly involved including SWAPO, the political parties, and the South Africans.

We need to also realize that it is important for countries that have suffered an awkward legacy of history to be fully included in the process of trying to shape the future. African countries must be enabled to do that, and helped. And they are going to need help for quite some time.

## African-Americans Must Do the Job

Roger Wilkins, senior fellow at the Institute for Policy Studies, Clarence



Margaret A. Novicki/Africa Report

Left to right, Brian Urquhart, scholar-in-residence at the Ford Foundation; Jerelyn Eddings, Johannesburg bureau chief for The Baltimore Sun; Tami Hultman, executive editor of Africa News Service, and Roger Wilkins, senior fellow at the Institute for Policy Studies



J. Robinson professor of history and American culture at George Mason University, and vice chairman of the board of trustees of the African-American Institute, said that in the Vietnam war, U.S. officials consistently underestimated the capacities of the enemy because the enemy was not white. In a bipolar world, the U.S. is a great big island. An intellectual living in Tel Aviv or Dakar knows he has to get out of there every once in a while to see other parts of the world. An intellectual living in Dubuque may be moved to visit Chicago, but will not feel moved to learn a foreign language, or to understand more than rudimentary European history.

We don't know how blind we have become, with our massive military and economic power. We don't even understand how others can view us. We are so culture-bound and prideful of our culture that we really are ill-equipped for the world that is emerging. No longer are we going to be one of the two mighty powers in a bipolar world; rather, we are going to be an ordinarily strong power in a multipolar world and we will have to compete, to discuss, to learn, to negotiate, and not always on terms that we can dictate. Slowly, we are beginning to learn about Japan, for example, because of our relationship with Japan.

The question is, How are we going to learn about Africa, as well as Europe and Asia? The issue comes back to us. If African issues are going to be forced on the American news agenda, African-Americans are going to have to do it. Of course, this is a racist society, racism affects how we make these judgments. And changes in this area, although assisted by good white Americans, are going to have to be made by African-Americans.

The other day, a group of prominent African-Americans went to see Secretary of State Baker and they asked him to maintain sanctions against South Africa and increase aid to the whole continent. His response, three times in the conversation, was, "I am told that there is an insufficient lobby for Africa in the U.S. to make

Congressmen sit up and take notice." It is not entirely true, but it is partially true. This is the great challenge before us, essentially African-Americans, and also friends of Africa in the U.S.

## News Coverage Affects Decisions

Jerelyn Eddings, Johannesburg bureau chief for *The Baltimore Sun*, said that journalists through their coverage are influencing discussions in Washington, with effect on how much aid goes to Africa and U.S. foreign policy. One example of that is the Free South Africa Movement, which would not have been as successful in aiding the passage of a sanctions bill in 1986 if not for the media coverage of South Africa. Suddenly, the American public was interested in South Africa, because the public was seeing it on television and reading about it in the papers. Food being used as a weapon in the Sudan in 1989 became a major issue after reports by American papers. The discussions on Capitol Hill were really sparked by what was written. The people in Washington have to feel there are constituencies and the way constituencies get built is by people reading things in papers and watching them on the TV news.

This same phenomenon happens with domestic issues as well. They

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If African issues are going to be forced on the American news agenda, African-Americans are going to have to do it.

Roger Wilkins,  
Institute for Policy  
Studies

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grow out of news coverage, but on Africa the problem is availability of information. Therefore, what little information is available takes on added importance. What happens is that the government responds when the public, which depends on the news media for its information, applies pressure.

It is not only the government influencing the media, it's also the media influencing the Government, which realizes that the media influences the public, and the government's attempts to manipulate the media to help them influence the public.

## Discussion

An American participant commented that the hope for Africa coverage lies in the continent's rich culture and history; the story is a human interest one, a people story. Another American said that his newspaper's coverage of Sudan and Ethiopia generated extraordinary reaction in the black community, but advertisers were not interested in the readership that was attracted. It is not racially motivated, so much as economically driven, unless there is some other compelling force. The economic becomes racial, in that the advertisers want to reach audiences that will reimburse the advertisers, that is, the suburban readership. Ms. Hultman asked if there was the same sort of reaction to coverage of Eastern Europe. The American responded that the newspapers which immediately sent correspondents over there were ones with large Polish-American or other Central European communities. More importantly, however, the stories which are consistently overlooked are the MTV stories, which are an opportunity for news organizations to cultivate a young audience. It is an inability to see news as it occurs because it does not fit into traditional concepts. That decision is being driven by economic forces, not journalistic forces.

An American said that the competition for attention among American readers is brutal. African coverage has to compete with Asian and European stories. Another American journalist said that because there are only 22 minutes for the TV news, very little time is assigned to foreign news. The choices that are made are filtered through gatekeepers who look alike, sound alike, talk alike, and they make decisions that affect domestic coverage in the same way. There is a sameness of thought. Choices are being made about where coverage should be, but it never seems to have to do with Africa. Another American journalist said that many of the present gatekeepers spent years as correspondents in Eastern Europe and that is what they know about. We have to find a way to somehow educate them about Africa. Ten years from now, we will be hopefully in their positions and things will change, but obviously we cannot wait that long.

An American participant said that the South African story is an enormous challenge to the media, because the way this story is covered will affect the perceptions of Americans about all of Africa. At present, the story is about civility, order, and economic development, and on the other hand, about change as represented not exclusively by Nelson

Mandela but by what is happening in the country, as reported by the media. And what the media reports about is violence. The release of Mandela was accompanied by stories about violence. The issue of violence is at the heart of what Americans will understand about the transition process, and the distinction is being made by many that Mandela is as different from the ANC as Buthelezi is different from the *impis* in the townships. The question of the process that will bring about change is a challenge to the editors and the correspondents, because if the story is not fully reported, in many ways it is best then not to report it at all.

Ms. Eddings said that one problem is that the correspondents are stretched, and can't do an adequate job. Mr. Wilkins said that there is white violence and black violence. The way the press reports the initial sparring between the government and the ANC, it is, "The government wants the ANC to renounce violence." You rarely see it reported that apartheid is violence, and this request of the ANC by the perpetrators of massive violence is ironic and cynical. But you don't get that, you get the sense that a legitimate political request is being made.

A South African journalist pointed out that there is an ironic touch in

how events in Eastern Europe played in South Africa. It happened quickly and painlessly in Europe, overnight, and that created an expectation that the South African transition might be the same thing. But it is really the politics of the long haul that is taking place in South Africa. Editors and correspondents must look beyond the immediacy of the violence and the posturing of the political leaders; it is just pre-positioning.

Ms. Hultman said that a major story in Africa is the debt burden, but there is no reporting about the debates on that issue. Mr. Wilkins said that it is not news that Africans can't manage their debt because it's expected that they can't and it is totally forgotten that these countries are 30 years old and were left mangled by the people who created them. Ms. Eddings said the media like to identify stories with people, as Mandela has given a face to the victims of apartheid, but it puts people to sleep to hear about the implications of World Bank policy on Africa. Debt is a hard story to put faces on. Mr. Urquhart said it is extremely hard to make stories out of subjects such as development in Africa; you almost never read about what is happening in Zaire, all you read about is Mobutu's castles in Spain.

## Media Amid a Changing South Africa

*Charlayne Hunter-Gault, national correspondent for The MacNeil/Lehrer News Hour, chaired the luncheon session. Speakers were Richard Steyn, NF '86 and editor of The Star of Johannesburg; Moegsien Williams, editor of South; and Brian Pottinger, NF '90 and assistant editor of The Sunday Times of Johannesburg.*

Richard Steyn, editor of *The Star* of Johannesburg, said that a great cloud has lifted in South Africa as a result of the initiatives of FW. de Klerk, stemming from his decision to unban the ANC, the Pan Africanist Congress,

and particularly the South African Communist Party. That bold stroke has brought light flooding back, illuminating the political debate, and rendering many of the curbs on free expression obsolete. For the first time ever, the country has been opened up to rational discussion and open political debate.

There are still dark clouds about. The media are still subject to many legal inhibitions; a lot of the news broadcast on television is anesthetized. There is a growing intolerance of the other side's point of view. The suddenness of de Klerk's volte-face has

shocked many conservative whites, creating the potential for a backlash along Algerian lines. There is also the possibility of another security clamp-down if the deteriorating situation worsens. In Natal, a vicious civil war is under way, in which reporting the truth is often more than a black reporter's life is worth. Also, black journalists are being pressured into not working for publications thought to be unsympathetic to the ANC or the PAC. There is a danger that if any extremist faction gains control of the country, whatever journalistic values remain will be further trampled



Margaret A. Novicki/Africa Report

**Richard Steyn, editor of The Star of Johannesburg**

underfoot.

Despite decades of pressure on the press, South Africa today has the most diverse array of newspapers it has ever had. That is despite the government. Besides the established press, there is now a range of combative opposition newspapers targeted at particular sectors of the population. This sector of the press is expanding. Freedom of speech is being exercised more vigorously today than ever before.

Television, too is changing. White people brought up on a diet of anti-ANC propaganda are being exposed cautiously to the views of Nelson Mandela, Walter Sisulu, Thabo Mbeki, and others. There is a long way to go, but a start is being made.

The role of the media in the new South Africa is no different in essence from what many of us have been trying to do for years in the old South Africa — tell the story as best we can, serve as a channel of communication and a forum for free and open discussion of the issues of the day. There is talk of making the press more responsive to the needs of the masses, of making the media more broadly based and representative of the people.

There is an over-concentration of ownership in the South African press.

If the needs of a post-apartheid society are to be addressed, the media will have to become more broadly based. Measures are bound to be taken to correct the current imbalance. But if the state is to be called in to assist in the establishment of community-based media, then the urge to create state-owned media should be strongly resisted. We have only to look behind the Iron Curtain to see what happens when governments run newspapers.

There is a strong body of opinion in the Mass Democratic Movement that the primary purpose of journalism is to advance the cause of the people, that newspapers should be answerable to political movements, that developing countries cannot afford the luxury of an inquisitive, adversarial press that holds African society to Western standards. Perhaps the best example of this approach is in Zimbabwe, where the government controls most of the press. Despite reassurances by ANC leaders about the independence of the media in an ANC-led South Africa, there is pessimism about the prospects of press freedom. Given South Africa's traumatic history and subversion of democratic traditions, it seems inevitable that any new government will insist on keeping control of the various competing political and economic resources, and therefore keep some control over the media. Our task is to hammer home the argument that security, prosperity, and efficiency are better safeguarded in societies with free media than in those without them.

## Commercial Press Is Major Concern

Moegsien Williams, editor of *South*, said that journalists, because of the great influence they wield, need to wrestle with the preconceptions formed over many years especially when assigned to duties in Nairobi, Cairo, or Johannesburg. A problem is the failure to understand the basics of the profession and the lessons of history in Africa and how they affected

the African people. It is also necessary to prick the F.W. de Klerk bubble, the belief worldwide that de Klerk had a great dream like Martin Luther King and told the world all about his dream on February 2.

The South African situation is a struggle that started in 1652 when the white man first set foot in South Africa. The previous discussions that compared South Africa to the situation in Eastern Europe — the end of totalitarianism and the march of democracy — are really not true. The ANC was formed in 1912, five years before the Russian Revolution, in a settler community that had divided the country and the riches between the groups that comprised that settler community. Any historian in the year 2000 will draw the conclusion that de Klerk's February 2 speech was the result of the formation of the ANC in 1912.

The more things change, the more they stay the same. The reality for the people of South Africa has not changed. Yes, Mandela walked out of prison, the ANC and the PAC are allowed to organize. It is an historic development, but on the ground for the oppressed community the situation has not changed and will not change in the immediate future, unless certain very different perceptions are formed by people in the U.S., in Europe, and by Africans themselves.

The press in South Africa must be seen in that context. As far as press freedom is concerned, the situation has not changed. Fundamental change must be closely tied to the majoritarian grouping in the country. No amount of intervention by Mr. Baker or Mrs. Thatcher will change a truism that the majority of people in South Africa realize that they will have to be the agents of fundamental change. It is a situation that has much to do with the reporting of the South African situation in recent years. There is a need to understand basic issues, and stick to them. The Natal situation, for example: If Americans are really interested — and Americans apparently want digestible forms of



news — they should make a simple analysis of Natal. It is a civil war against a section of the regime, but more basically it arose from the ravages of apartheid — huge unemployment, poverty levels that are unthinkable. There is a need to understand the situation in terms of history and the struggle for independence by the people of Africa.

South Africa is no different from what happened in Algeria, in Mozambique, Botswana, Zimbabwe, or Angola over the last 30-odd years. The regime is a remnant of a settler community that came to South Africa 300 years ago. Through the most devilish system, it has been able to cling to power. But in the context of history, it is inevitable that the regime is faced with an historical imperative — South Africa is being decolonized and it is the last remnant of colonialism in Africa. Some South Africans contest this argument, saying that descendants of the settlers have no place to go back to, that they will not give up their wealth and privilege. We will fail to understand the South African situation if we don't realize that the majority of South Africans tie their freedom and independence to Namibia, Zimbabwe, Angola, and Mozambique. They see their freedom in terms of the freedom of the people of Namibia and that is an inescapable fact.

There could be a future where press freedom will not survive, where there won't be a diversity of debate in publications. The commercial press is the biggest concern. It is controlled by four monopolies, two Afrikaans- and two English-speaking, and the broadcasting services are in the hands of the government. The commercial press controls about 95 percent of all publications in the country. The concern is rooted in the fact that the commercial press has very close links with the old order that's about to die, that it failed to read the writing on the wall and was unable to break away from the old order and align itself with the new, that it failed to understand what Nelson Mandela was try-



Margaret A. Novicki/Africa Report

**Moegsien Williams, editor of South**

ing to say. The absolute control, tied in with major business interests, is another liability of the commercial press. That two of the newspaper groups have close links with Anglo American Corporation is a source of major concern to the oppressed people in South Africa.

If the Argus Company in 1980 had stayed in Zimbabwe and had fought for press freedom in an emerging nation, if they hadn't sold in the face of majority rule, maybe the situation in Zimbabwe would be different today. The big fear about the commercial press in South Africa is that they will do likewise. Faced with majoritarian government, they might sell up and cut loose. This is based on the Zimbabwe example and on the money connections between the press and the major corporations which are going off-shore, in effect divesting from South Africa. Another reason is that the commercial press has been unable to stand up against the excesses of the South African regime. The last four years is an example, the inability to stand up against the inroads into limited press freedom. The commercial papers have not been upfront when it came to protection of whatever press freedom is left.

We in the alternative press realize that if press freedom is to survive, we

will have to carry it on our own shoulders. We can't depend on the commercial press. We have reaffirmed our independence, *South* and other alternative media. We are attempting to train as many of the oppressed community as possible to take places in the media in a post-apartheid South Africa. The oppressed community must take the lead in restructuring the society. It is sobering to point out that there is not a single black editor on any of the major metropolitan newspapers in a country where blacks outnumber whites 5 to 1.

We have undertaken campaigns to educate not only the broader community, but also the structured formations within the anti-apartheid movement about the need to preserve and build press freedom as a democratic value. Any future government will try to suppress unpleasant news, news that may be damaging. If we are unable to convince the majority of our people that press freedom is an important component of any democracy, then it surely will not survive. The majoritarian grouping in South Africa, unfortunately, has a cynical view of press freedom due to the dominance and sectarian nature of the commercial press.

## All Viewpoints Must Be Heard

Brian Pottinger, assistant editor of *The Sunday Times* of Johannesburg, said that the question is whether the society as a whole, including the media, has come through the storm or whether it is in the eye of the storm. Have we been caught in a possible Prague spring, a cruel and illusionary moment which can only end in further repression either applied by the current government or a new government representing the majority of South Africa?

It is important to look both backwards and forwards. The central question is, "What state is the South African media in at the moment?" There is optimism about the way the media has emerged. The costs of the

state of emergency were significant. One newspaper was banned for three months, two newspapers were banned for one month, five journalists were detained, five foreign correspondents were expelled. Yet, it was a period of enormous ambiguity — on the one hand stood an awesome array of government weaponry for the control of the press, on the other hand, there was a selective approach to the use of those powers. What one actually found was the government would act selectively, sometimes circumspectly; it would use its powers rather in the way that nuclear deterrence is used. The alternative media carried a heavy burden of that assault.

There is a new fluidity and it creates responsibilities and challenges for us in the media, as both a recorder and shaper of our political future. There are four major challenges confronting the South African media. The first is not to be seduced into believing that the changes taken so far are irreversible. At the moment, openness serves Pretoria's interest. Revelations of death squad activities serve the interests of the president, who is



Margaret A. Novicki/Africa Report

**Charlayne Hunter-Gault, national correspondent for The MacNeil/Lehrer News Hour**

attempting to reassert political control over the military. That openness which is here today could be gone tomorrow. We must not drop our guard.

Secondly, and this is crucial, all South African journalists must understand that what the battle is about is not the triumph of a party or a set of principles or a personality, but to ensure that all parties, all personalities are heard. Our primary response rests in creating the atmosphere in which those views can be heard. We do not want arrogant presumptions of either the left or the right that journalists must be committed to one or the other.

Much of what Moegsien Williams said about the commercial press is ground for concern; certainly, the concentration of ownership is a problem. But it is a major leap to suggest that the commercial media, per se, should be denied the rights they have had in the past to express particular views about the process of political change and the economic order. The commercial media has enunciated all those values which do underpin democratic societies: the unbanning of the ANC, the release of political prisoners, etc. In terms of our resistance to the emergency powers, it is not correct to say that we accepted them easily. We protested, we went to court, and we fought legal actions at enormous costs.

The state of emergency did induce in journalists a degree of self-censorship. The challenge which confronts us is to think ourselves into the position of being reasonably free people operating in a reasonably free press regime. We should also seek to open our newspapers and our minds to a broader range of people, to try and expose as much as possible the views of the divergent communities in our society and the fears and aspirations of those communities. There is no longer any excuse why newspapers cannot reflect the views of the resistance groups.

South Africa is a society which does not allow easy and facile

optimism and it is wise to be cautious. But we are closer now than ever before in 350 years to beginning a process of transformation.

## Discussion

An African journalist asked how a politically committed journalist practices his trade in a pluralistic society. Mr. Williams said it would be foolish not to learn the lessons taking place in the rest of Africa, in Eastern Europe, regarding openness and the need to look at societies in a critical and objective way. In South Africa, the vast media resources are located in the hands of a minority, which is about to be overthrown. Millions of people have absolutely no access to the media. As journalists, we have to sum up the realities of the situation, to see different political actors on the stage. We have to analyze which of those political organizations is going to achieve our ideals and aspirations. We are not a party mouthpiece for the ANC; we publish critical articles on the democratic movement in South Africa.

Mr. Steyn said it was not correct to say that the oppressed people did not have access to the media. In the Natal situation, the papers have been full of both sides of the issue. There is a wide range of opinion being reflected on this and other issues, and the access is there. Mr. Pottinger said that views are conveyed, but there is insufficient concentration in reportage on the issues which most directly affect the black community. However, it is too broad a statement to say that people from the oppressed communities are denied access to the media. Mr. Williams said the coverage of the ANC in the commercial press after February 2 is remarkable, but before that date it is a different story. When we speak of access, obviously the ownership of the media will have to change, or the attitude of the owners will have to change. The kind of access we speak about should be part of a democratic and normal society where all voices are heard.



# How to Strengthen The African Press

*Babacar Touré, editor and publisher of Sud in Senegal, chaired the last panel of the conference on strengthening the African press. Speakers were Margaret Novicki, editor-in-chief of Africa Report, Bill Kovach, the Nieman curator, and George Krimsky, vice president and executive director of the Center for Foreign Journalists.*

Ms. Novicki said that the major problems weakening the African press are two basic constraints:

1. The official atmosphere in which most journalists are required to operate, meaning that there is some level of absence of press freedom, from government mistrust to outright intimidation and censorship. The press is often state-owned, and the independent press, where it exists, is frequently not allowed to do its job, whether through harassment or subtle means such as withholding newsprint or scaring off advertisers.

2. The level of development in many African countries is reflected in a dearth of opportunities for training, skills enhancement, and a lack of technology. There are journalism departments at universities, but they are frequently understaffed and poorly equipped. Many journalists learn on the job, with few avenues to improve their skills. Financial resources for the purchase of equipment are limited.

What can we do in the U.S.? Journalists in Africa are always asking what opportunities exist in the U.S. for scholarships, fellowships, or internships. The opportunities are limited and they tend to go to the *crème de la crème* of African journalists. We need to look at developing more in-country training programs for the media in Africa, ones that can be self-sustaining and can eventually be taken over by the journalists themselves. The Center for Foreign Journalists and the African-American Institute have run such a program for the alternative press in South Africa;



Left to right, George Krimsky, executive director of the Center for Foreign Journalists; Bill Kovach, curator of the Nieman Foundation; Babacar Touré, editor and publisher of Sud; and Margaret Novicki, editor in chief of Africa Report

it involves American foundation funding, South African university logistical support, and it is run by the newspapers themselves. This kind of project could be replicated in other African countries.

There are informal ways to help strengthen the African press, by building bridges between American and African journalists. Professional interaction at every level is helpful. When journalists travel in Africa, they should make an effort to meet with their counterparts; these contacts are useful both ways. When journalists come to the U.S., we should try to host them at our news organizations and provide whatever assistance is possible, and encourage African journalists to write for our publications on a freelance basis, or as stringers.

As Babacar Touré said, what Africa wants first and foremost is democracy and the opening up of previously closed political systems is beginning across the continent. Our South African colleagues are concerned about the role of an independent press in a post-

apartheid society. Out of the culmination of what is the very early stages of a democratization process in Africa hopefully will emerge a freer atmosphere for journalists and this will be an important step in strengthening the media. We can play a role in that by encouraging as much as possible an independent role for the press in Africa, and we can focus more attention on the way the media is regarded in various African countries. When there are cases of extreme crackdowns or denial of rights of journalists, we should write about it and speak out about it. African governments are sensitive to what we write, and by supporting our African colleagues we are emboldening them to carry on with their careers.

## Help in Finding Nieman Applicants

Bill Kovach, curator of the Nieman Foundation at Harvard University, said that despite the programs of

Nieman and other organizations there is a limited amount you can do. It is important that we think about strengthening African journalism in the sense that Ms. Novicki suggested, because we are confronting the fact of the technological revolution in the world; the communications industry

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**"What we need most is democracy. What we need first is democracy." Babacar Touré, Sud magazine**

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is increasingly an international network. Journalists have more in common now with one another worldwide than they have with their own governments at home. Our relationship among ourselves as journalists and the role we serve in our societies is the point on which we should all focus. In-country programs are the way to do it, but Nieman has a role.

The Nieman Foundation is the oldest mid-career journalism program of its kind in the world, and it has been replicated in a number of places in the U.S., at Stanford University and the University of Michigan. Thus there are three such programs for foreign journalists, particularly Africans, because each of the programs has a special interest in finding at least one African journalist for the fellowship each year. The weakest point of the system is the network for finding those journalists.

The Nieman Foundation began simply as an American approach to an American problem, to elevate the standards of American journalism. It began in 1938 with 12 U.S. fellows, continues with 12 U.S. fellows. We introduced a foreign component in the 1950s, and that was in direct

response from an interest in England, and for the first seven or eight years the program was available only to the English and former colonials. Beginning in the 1960s, the program seriously got into adding an international component, and began to attract African journalists, particularly South Africans. The first South Africans came to the Nieman program in 1961; the black candidate had to accept voluntary exile, and the same thing happened to the second black South African fellow, in 1963.

The Nieman Foundation told the South African network that it would continue the program only if it were equally available to white and black journalists, and because Harvard got behind the program, eventually Pretoria became sufficiently interested in continuing. Since then we have alternated white and black journalists from South Africa each year. Over time, we have built a network of 34 South African journalists; arguably the best journalists in South Africa are former Niemans. It's a hell of a network, an important system not just for journalism in South Africa but also the society.

At the same time, Sub-Saharan Africa, absent South Africa, has provided us with five Niemans. We don't get the applications. Our network does not throw them up, the countries don't come forward. It is the weakest part of the system. We try through foundations to find candidates, encourage their applications, we work through journalists asking them to spot talent, but to this point the system has been frustrated. In the last couple of years, the process is getting better. The foreign contingent has never numbered more than nine, but we are hoping to raise that to 12, to match the American group.

The Nieman experience is special to any journalist. It's the only time in a career when you have the chance to sit back and really think about what you do, and to examine the practice of journalism in a more thoughtful, philosophic way. The journalists who go away with this experience return

to their countries and news organizations with a stronger sense of how to perform the job in a way that rises above conflicts. This year, we have discussed the moral and ethical dilemmas of journalists, the sense of what is news, why is it news, and how do you determine news. This question keeps coming up because all sorts of social signposts are disappearing, political relationships are collapsing, and suddenly we have a chance to look at the world in an entirely new way. At the same time, we are beginning to feel the pressure of all sorts of people who have not had their voices magnified, and suddenly they have that opportunity. Not just blacks, but women, the gay community, the Native-American community, all seeking to help the press understand its role as the cement by which a community holds itself together because it understands itself.

Those kinds of questions are not going to get addressed at a workshop in-country to help a copy editor move copy, or around the newsdesk at the end of the day. The only place you can address those questions is in a program like the Nieman program where you are free of all pressure and restraint, and the only thing you have to do is to relate to your journalist colleagues as a journalist. That may be the most important journalistic experience. You should do everything you can to let the dedicated journalists know about the Nieman Foundation and other programs.

## **Senior U.S. Editors Could Go to Africa**

George Krinsky, vice president and executive director of the Center for Foreign Journalists, said the problem is a very dry sponge and only a few drops to go into it. The Center is one of those drops. In the U.S., the communications industry is the largest private employer and until fairly recently little has been done to share what we have in the profession with those from less-advantaged systems.

The Center is just one of a number of organizations, with the main difference being that we try to meet a range of needs and requests. Certainly, the elite programs, the ones that are the Mercedes of the assistance area, are the university-based programs, such as Nieman, Michigan, and Stanford, even though they are not skills-oriented programs. There is a great deal one can absorb if motivated.

The big player in terms of funding programs for journalists remains the U.S. government through the USIA international visitor program, which brings up to 5,000 people from countries all over the world, mostly for month-long professionally oriented trips. Of that number, 20 percent are in the media-related field. But Africa is being affected by this new look toward Eastern Europe. Of the 2,300 journalists and media managers who have come through the Center, fully one-quarter are from Africa.

There is not much optimism about the ability to fully share know-how and help in the strengthening of the African news media. It is difficult to convince the non-media establishment in the U.S. of the need to help journalists in training. No one sees all the complicated aspects; the private sector has not yet stepped forward, despite prodding. The most effective kind of assistance we can render beyond funding for newsprint, beyond technology transfer, is in-country assistance tailored totally to the Africans' needs. There is great danger in making generalizations about what Africa needs because those needs differ from news organization to news organization within a country. There is great potential for the American news media to share more of what it has. One of the ways is to get some of the more senior internationally minded editors and reporters to take time off from their newspapers and spend time with African news organizations over a protracted period of time. Hit-and-run workshops, two weeks of razzmatazz, doesn't have much staying power. Self-sustainability is the cornerstone for any assistance

that can be given. To try and transplant the American system in Africa is a mistake. It's unique and can't be transplanted anywhere.

## Discussion

A South African journalist said that the future of the African media can be decided in Africa. What is needed is to develop a media culture, which can sustain a press and involve the whole community. The journalist who studies in America and then goes back and challenges will probably end up in prison. That's not helpful. The alternative press in South Africa would not have got under way unless it had the opportunity to start up newspapers.

An American journalist said that in many places the U.S. sends American reporters who then rely on "native" staff as office managers or stringers. To use African journalists would be an easy way to provide training. White Americans might be just as well served by having Africans inform them about Africa. Mr. Kovach said that editors at news organizations have discussed this question time and

place, responses will come from Africa and there will be greater need for training and strengthening of the press. But at the same time, there is a shortage of resources from the U.S. and journalism is not considered a priority need. The challenge is how to bring certain programs into play in certain areas. And freedom of the press is one way to test the genuineness of the political changes.

Mr. Kovach said that the concept of news is in the process of redefinition, in the context of form over substance. How do you define news to excite people, not to inform them but grab them? The form of the news is beginning to determine what the news is. If the Africans help us redefine the news the way they are trying to look at it, they will have served a purpose for us as well. That kind of exchange can't go on unless we are involved in these discussions. The most important journalistic question that faces us is how we define the news. Were it not for what is going on in South Africa and in Eastern Europe, the case would almost have been closed in favor of form over substance, in favor of color and graphics over content.

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We don't get the applications. Our network does not throw them up, the countries don't come forward. It is the weakest part of the system. Bill Kovach, Nieman Foundation

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again and never do anything about it. They have staff people who make the bureau work and never get a by-line. Also, you now see all these desk-top published journals cropping up everywhere to serve the niches the established press leaves behind as it reaches out to a larger and larger homogenized audience.

An American participant said that in light of the political changes taking

The door has been reopened a bit.

An American journalist said that since there has been so much foreign news in the last year, editors have begun to realize that foreign news is interesting and readers can become interested in foreign stories. Another American observed that the press has to be reinvented from generation to generation. Should we cover Africa to help out Africa, which has a certain



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There is great potential for the American news media to share more of what it has. One of the ways is to get some of the more senior internationally minded editors and reporters to take time off from their newspapers and spend time with African news organizations over a protracted period of time. George Krinsky, Center for Foreign Journalists

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patronizing quality? We have to cover Africa for our own sense of completeness. It is a self-education process — we have to raise the level of our thought, find ways in the print media of telling stories with the same dramatic impact that television appears to offer. There is an illusion of immediacy in TV coverage.

Ms. Novicki said that the attention focused on Eastern Europe is not taking away attention from Africa. They are not competing. If we are not going to get enterprising journalists who are prepared to take up African issues and press them on their editors, we won't see the coverage, whether Eastern Europe is on the front pages or not. Mr. Kovach said that Africa is redefining itself and that before the next media conference we ought to be thinking about more creative and imaginative approaches that would be of real use to journalists in the U.S. and in Africa.

## Closing Comments

Mr. Ferrari said that the Eastern Europe coverage, as Margaret Novicki said, adds demands to the African coverage and it attaches an incentive in redefining the story, to look at the Africa story in a global context. Too often in the past, the issue has been defined almost as if African coverage was without a broader application in its relation to other issues.

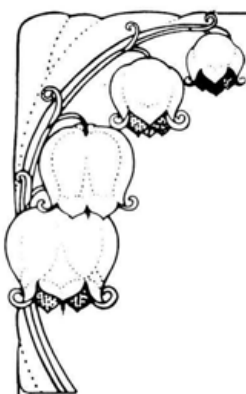
As our South African colleagues emphasized, the differences from the past make us keep our eyes on what has not changed as well as what is changing, and what kinds of programs can now evolve that can assist that change process and strengthen the press in such a way that it continues to make a contribution.

We at the Institute, in cooperation with Bill Kovach and others, will continue to examine the programs we have, how they can be expanded to bring resources together to do something more in an active way to pursue what has been put on the table. And the biannual African-American conference, which will take place in Cairo in January 1991,

will bring together Africans, U.S. congressmen, media representatives, and the private sector. □



Margaret A. Novicki/Africa Report  
**Frank Ferrari, senior vice president of African-American Institute**



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***(See page 39)***

# The Issue That Won't Go Away

By Charles W. Bailey

*We're in for a bad time and all who believe in free speech must once again be willing to stand up and be counted on unpopular side*

*Here are excerpts from a speech by Charles W. Bailey, newspaperman, educator and novelist, to the American Library Association convention in Chicago on June 25, 1990. Bailey served as a Washington correspondent for The Minneapolis Tribune from 1954 to 1972, then as Editor of that newspaper until 1982. From 1984 to 1987 he was Washington Editor of National Public Radio. He was chairman of the Washington Journalism Center from 1985 to 1989. He is the author of *Conflicts of Interest: A Matter of Journalistic Ethics* (1984) and co-author of several other books, including the novel *Seven Days in May* (1962). His new novel, *The Land Was Ours*, will be published in February 1991.*

Although nowadays I write books, I am really still a newspaper man. I worked at the trade for thirty-two years, and that kind of work is what shaped my attitudes about governments and bureaucracies. From the police station in Minneapolis to the White House in Washington, and at other places in between and beyond, I found that what was required of a reporter in any situation was pretty much the same.

At the police station I had to learn to read upside down so I could glean information from reports that the detective captain wouldn't hand over to me. And in that same place I first learned to be skeptical of what I was told by government officials.

When I got to the White House 13 years later I didn't have so much use for upside-down reading — they usually put their papers away before

they let a reporter in. But strong skepticism about official assertions was essential to covering the White House in the Johnson and Nixon years. It remains a useful attitude today and presumably always will.

When I first went to work in Washington back in the fifties reporters were not celebrities, and they did not expect to be. Most of us had come into newspapering because it seemed likely to be fun, and we stayed because it was fun. It let you travel a good deal at someone else's expense, and it gave you a front row seat for whatever was going on.

We weren't in it to save the world, and we certainly weren't in it for the money, because there wasn't any, and we weren't in it to become celebrities, which was just as well, because even the best and the brightest reporters were largely unknown to the public. In those days most readers didn't even notice, let alone remember, the by-lines that meant so much to reporters.

Nowadays of course things are different, thanks mostly to television. In the view of the men who run television, news is just another profit center, like game shows and daytime soaps. As one Texas newspaperman wrote: "TV news is for people who think they're getting an in-depth report if the sign on the bank gives both time and temperature." The real business of television, of course, is entertainment, so television uses the techniques of show business in covering the news, and we should not be surprised when television news people are chosen for their looks, or their charm, or their previous condition of

celebrity.

As reporters have become famous, or at least notorious, they have also become socially acceptable. Now, God help us, we have to read the society pages to find out what the big-name pundits are up to. That wouldn't matter much except that it makes them even more susceptible to what James Reston calls the biggest occupational hazard in Washington — the tendency to confuse what you are with what you merely represent.

Walter Lippmann figured that out 50 years ago. In 1940 he wrote that "the most insidious of all temptations is to think of oneself as engaged in a public career on the stage of the world rather than as an observant writer of newspaper articles about some of the things that are happening in the world."

That has always been true in Washington, but it's worse now because of television's tendency to turn reporters into celebrities and to prefer noisy confrontation to reasoned discussion. Every one of the weekend panel shows seems to offer a flood of opinions, but hardly any facts. (That calls to mind the wise — and cynical — remark of a former editor of *The Manchester Guardian*. He noted that "comments are free, but facts are expensive.")

Speaking of "comment" brings us around to the First Amendment. News people tend to talk about it as if it were their private property. It is not. To the founding fathers, freedom of speech meant the freedom to stand on a street corner and criticize the King of England, or the United States



government, without being thrown in to jail. The authors of the Bill of Rights could not have dreamed of a press like the one we have today. They were trying to protect the right of printers to publish newsletters reporting ship news, political gossip and opinion — without being haled into court or having their printing presses smashed.

So contrary to what some in the news media would have you believe, the First Amendment is not the exclusive property of the press. It belongs equally to rock bands and record stores and avant-garde little theaters and art museums — and bookstores and libraries — and Salmon Rushdie, too.

The news is not all bad. There are still a few good voices in Washington. One of them belongs to a man named Fred Grandy, a Republican congressman from that notorious hotbed of advanced social thinking, Iowa. Referring to attempts to restrict the kinds of art that are eligible for federal subsidy, he said:

"I cannot sign off on language that attempts to proscribe the human imagination, because I believe it cannot be written."

That's a brave thought, and a true one: "Attempts to proscribe the human imagination." The human imagination: That's what literature is all about, isn't it? We should encourage other members of Congress to think as clearly as Mr. Grandy.

The Congressmen could especially use some backbone-stiffening these days on another subject — the American flag . . . The issue is simple: Do we want to protect the flag by damaging the First Amendment? It is that simple because if a constitutional amendment were passed outlawing the destruction or desecration of the flag, it would mean that one kind of speech was no longer free. And if that happened, what would prevent Congress and the state legislatures from punching other holes in the First Amendment?

A lot of this would be absurd if it weren't so important. For example,

the sheriff of Broward County, Florida, who brought obscenity charges against a rock band, seems to find no fault with a local establishment called R-Donuts, which purports to be the country's only topless doughnut shop.

But it is deadly serious business, and it is neither easy nor simple. First Amendment cases almost always deal with worst-case situations, and the protected speech is usually offensive to a large part of the community. Reasoned opinions offered in polite language by nice people rarely are the stuff of great constitutional cases.

Of course that's beside the point. None of these things — controversial art, rap music, books, even the burning of a flag — does any harm to the public. Until now, the only allowable restraints on the freedom of speech have applied to words or acts which could actually harm innocent bystanders. The examples usually cited are reporting the sailing of wartime troopships and falsely shouting "Fire!" in a crowded theater.

You all know the current uproar is mostly politics. The Republican leader of the Senate has been chortling about how flagburning "would make a good 30-second spot," and the chairman of the Republican congressional campaign committee called it "an excellent issue on which you define your opponent, his character and values."

The political courage of those members of Congress who voted against the constitutional amendment has repelled, at least for this year, this particular attack on our basic freedoms. But the issue won't go away . . .

We're in for a bad time, and all of us who believe in free speech will once again, as in the past, have to be willing to stand up and be counted — in the full knowledge that in the short run the right side will probably be the unpopular side. But we'll have company, and it will be good company.

There is irony in the fact that these venomous challenges to our liberties arise at a moment in history when men in other countries are desperately

seeking to guarantee those same liberties. All across Eastern Europe, in the Soviet Union, and even in China, reformers are trying to write new laws and constitutions modeled on the American Constitution, and particularly on our Bill of Rights.

In Moscow two weeks ago a member of the Supreme Soviet stood up and criticized a proposed anti-censorship law — because, he said, what they really need is true freedom of speech as embodied in the American Bill of Rights.

Every country has a flag, as House speaker Tom Foley said, but no other country has the Bill of Rights. We should act accordingly.

Obviously these are not the best of times in the United States for freedom of speech. One roll-call in Congress does not permanently protect the First Amendment; neither does one decision in the Supreme Court. The struggle continues, in legislative hearing rooms, in political campaigns, and in art museums and publishing houses and theaters across the country — and in libraries, too. There will always be people who want to limit liberty in the name of conformity or decency or piety.

At this moment and in this city of Chicago, and before this audience, whose members are responsible for protecting and preserving and propagating the printed word, it may be appropriate to recall some words of a former governor of Illinois. In 1952, Adlai Stevenson told a roomful of newspaper people:

"Your typewriter is a public trust. Its sound may be the most beautiful noise you know, but it has meaning and justification only if it is part of the glorious symphony of a free society."

Stevenson was reminding us that the First Amendment belongs to all Americans, and therefore its protection is the business of all Americans.

His warning still applies today. We will ignore it at our peril. □

*Reprinted from the Newsletter on Intellectual Freedom, Vol. XXXIX, Nov. 5, September 1990. By permission of the American Library Association.*

# Clampdown in Kenya

continued from page 2

routinely receive phone calls from President Moi himself ordering stories not be run.

In one well-known case last year an editor was ordered by Moi personally not to run a story reporting on corrupt practices of a cabinet minister, practices which made millions of dollars profit for the minister while virtually bankrupting two government-operated industries. The editor tried to argue that the story was well known and keeping it out of the newspaper served no purpose. In the end he complied and killed the story, but because he had first resisted all government ads were withdrawn from the paper; the paper was not allowed to advertise on the Voice of Kenya radio broadcast and when Parliament reconvened shortly after that the publication was banned from covering the meetings for several months.

Such discipline has virtually eliminated from the Kenyan press any reporting on government corruption, which even party officials admit is rampant, or criticism of the government of any utterances of advocates of a multi-party political system.

Philip Ochieng, editor of *The Kenya Times*, the official voice of government, serves at the pleasure of Moi and not surprisingly defends these practices.

"Kenya is not ready for democracy yet," he says. "We need the firm control of President Moi and the Kanu party until we are ready. If we do not maintain control we will only plunge Kenya into tribal mayhem and destroy everything we have gained."

Mr. Ochieng sees no conflict in his role as a leader of the Kanu party and his duties as a journalist. His decisions are made on a simple basis, he says: "What is good for the government and the party is good for the people."

For similar reasons, Mr. Ochieng does not feel that *The Kenya Times* needs to report upon government corruption. Although readily admitting the 1988 elections to be "the most corrupt ever" he adds:

"The government is aware of the extent of the corruption and will do something soon to correct that."

It was into this atmosphere that Mr. Imanyara introduced *The Nairobi Law Monthly* to give voice to scholars and lawyers and church leaders on the principles and practices of democracy and the meaning of the Kenyan Constitution. The magazine was an immediate success. Circulation had reached 15,000 and the editors had a backlog of articles submitted by eminent scholars and writers sufficient to fill six editions when the magazine was banned.

By 1989 events in Central Europe had raised hopes of similar reforms in Kenya, a hope expressed by a popular and articulate young minister in Nairobi in a New Year sermon. The sermon, urging the Moi government to heed the warning against one-party rule inherent in what happened in Central Europe, reached a responsive audience and touched off a wave of demands for political pluralism and greater political freedom. It touched an even more responsive chord within the government, leading to a series of arrests and mysterious deaths — at least one was clearly an assassination — and repressions on the part of the Moi government that have continued to the present day.

The banning of Mr. Imanyara's magazine has effectively shut off the last independent voice in a country increasingly cast into darkness and ignorance "for its own good," as Mr. Ochieng says.

But the spirit of Mr. Imanyara has not been broken. He is fighting his

ban and he continues to speak out. A statement issued upon the ban of his magazine is a powerful testament of his belief in the cause of human rights:

"At times such as this our liberties stand on trial. Freedom of conscience, of expression and therefore of the press are central to democratic society. And when any of them is clamped, our humanity is that much restricted and democracy destroyed.

"On that ideal *The Nairobi Law Monthly* was founded. On that ideal it has grown. And it is because of its pursuit of that ideal that it has been killed. We believed and still believe that any time a human being fails to stand up for that ideal they negate their humanity.

"But we also realize it is possible to crush a magazine as has been so amply demonstrated by the banning of *Financial Review*, *Beyond*, *The Development Agenda*, and now *The Nairobi Law Monthly*.

"It is possible to crush the human body for it is frail and finite.

"It is also possible to crush all human establishments for they too are fashioned of the finite materials of this world.

"But no one, however powerful, can crush an ideal. That is our hope and strength. We glory in it." □

Bill Kovach is curator of the Nieman Foundation.



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# Television and the Persian Gulf Crisis — Lessons Learned by Media and Pentagon

continued from page 4

first bombs dropped on Tripoli in 1986. But the very magnitude of this movement made the decision to broadcast simple. The evidence was plain to see on the highways and in dozens of bases around the nation. It was impossible to alert a quarter of a million troops to pack up for war and expect to keep it a secret.

Ironically — given the openness of the troop movements — one of the first casualties of Operation Desert Shield was the Pentagon press pool. The bastard child of editors outraged at being cut out of the Grenada invasion and reluctant defense department officials, the pool has never worked properly. Now, in the first hours of Desert Shield, it was not working at all. The Pentagon said it asked Saudi Arabia for permission to send in reporters with the first wave of U.S. troops, but was denied permission. But among reporters, the excuse was made to sound like a parody of a popular beer commercial: "Let me get this straight," said Defense Secretary Dick Cheney to King Faud, "we can send over all the troops and equipment we want, but not one correspondent? We can live with that."

It would be five days before pool reporters were allowed in, and nearly two weeks before Saudi Arabia — under pressure from a Pentagon besieged by angry publishers and news presidents — allowed unilateral coverage. But once inside, journalists labored under strict rules not to identify people, locations or units. To supplement their coverage, each of the networks and many newspapers saturated the entire region and besieged Riyadh, Baghdad and Washington for more access. Costs soared into the hundreds of thousands per day.

The delay and restrictions

amounted to censorship, said NBC News president Michael Gartner in an op-ed piece for *The Wall Street Journal*. "... This censorship in Saudi Arabia — a censorship of facts, not of plans and strategies — exceeds even the most stringent censorship of World War II," wrote Gartner. It was the continuation of a policy born under President Reagan in which the press had been shut out of Grenada and cooped up in Panama, he said.

"So what we have is this: A war, or near-war, that had not been declared by the President, that has not been debated by Congress, and that cannot be reported by the press. Further, it's a three-front war, and no reporters can get into Kuwait, the few who get into Iraq can get no meaningful information and those allowed into Saudi Arabia are censored."

The frustration cut both ways. "Seventy-five percent of what I deal with is Pentagon pool business — either bureau chiefs wanting more from the pool, or wanting me to get their people in. I don't have time for anything else," said Assistant Secretary of Defense Pete Williams two weeks into the crisis. "Once the Saudis open it up [to unilateral press coverage], I'm out of the pool business."

and especially seen — in the media during the first crucial days of Desert Shield. Reporters had been initially skeptical of the magnitude of the buildup. We were seeing units placed on alert, but not necessarily moving out. But senior officers in each of the services provided details that revealed the true size of the Pentagon's war plans. The networks were told where to be and when to be there at bases and naval ports around the nation to capture scenes of mass troop movements. Officials who had never been accessible before suddenly offered their home phone numbers. After months of turning down requests for aerial views of their F-117 Stealth fighters, the Air Force did an about face and gave reporters access to refueling scenes of the deadly-looking planes headed for Saudi Arabia.

The result was a constant beam of pictures showing American military on the move. Baghdad could not miss the point. But it was a case of perception falling far short of reality. For the first three weeks of Desert Shield, American and Saudi forces were grossly overmatched while Iraq wavered in indecision. Had Saddam Hussein launched his forces then they would in all probability have overrun Saudi Arabia's rich oil fields, and quite

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*"Officials who had never been accessible before suddenly offered their home phone numbers."*

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But while the Pentagon didn't go out of its way to get reporters in with the first wave of troops, it was keenly aware of what was being written —

possibly the entire country as well. For the first month of the deployment, network crews in Dharhan and Riyadh were provided special tours of



selected units. But because the Pentagon still would not release specific numbers or locations, television provided an image of a far larger and more capable force on the ground than actually existed. It was a smoke and mirror game that no one on this side ever questioned. What went on in Baghdad is another question. Without benefit of spy satellites, high altitude overflights and electronic monitoring, Iraq has apparently received much of its intelligence about U.S. actions and intentions from American television. The better question at the conclusion of this whole exercise might be what impact television had on the plans and thinking of Iraq's ruling elite.

If there are to be any major lessons for television here from the Persian Gulf crisis, they have yet to fully develop. Editors and news presidents had already come to distrust the Pentagon pool for timely coverage. They can only feel now more justified and more determined to launch their own correspondents despite the cost and restrictions.

But there is also evidence that the pool concept will not be totally abandoned. Should the 7th Infantry Division (Light) be suddenly deployed from California to, say, Manila, a pool would go with it, say several Pentagon officials. And a team of Defense Department media specialists recently returned from Saudi Arabia where they worked on plans to deploy correspondents with specific units in the event shooting starts. The Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Gen. Colin Powell, stung after the sloppy handling of the Panama pool, has given assurances that he will not forget the press again. By not allowing reporters along when the 193rd Infantry Brigade stormed Manuel Noriega's Comandancia, the Pentagon is facing great difficulty in refuting allegations it kept secret the number of Panamanian civilians killed.

NBC Pentagon Correspondent Fred Francis, who represented the networks in Panama, does not think the Persian Gulf will prove an end to the

eight-year-old pool plan. But like many of us who work the building, he doesn't think Saudi Arabia will be the best place to cover the war from once the shooting starts. "My crystal ball says that when the troops go in, they'll pull the plug on all the press over there for 48 to 72 hours, maybe more. They learned their lesson in Panama. They know the other side watches television too. Oh, reporters will be

there with the troops, understand, but nothing will be coming out. Now that's unacceptable to me as a journalist. But it is quite acceptable to the American people. If you doubt that, just ask 'em." □

*Jim Stewart, Nieman Fellow '81, reports on national defense issues for CBS News in the Washington bureau.*

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## 10 Ways to Energize

*continued from page 8*

important ingredient of an editorial page. Maybe it's my late 60's personality. I think you're *supposed* to want to change the world." Amen.

You editorial writers *are* our last best hope to re-energize the press. For most publishers and station managers are in a state of shock these days over what they perceive as a free-fall in advertising dollars.

Too many editors have been transformed into bean counters.

And reporters, huddled in the warmth of their union blanket, are smoozing along, dressing well and resting their legs. So, who's left standing? You are; you who control the voice of your newspaper and station. Use it.

It is mandatory that editors and reporters pull together for the army of government flaks out-mans us every time. Ours is a fragile institution which needs all the help it can get.

I like, especially the late, great A.J. Liebling's description of our profession: "The American press makes me think of a gigantic, super-modern fish cannery, a hundred floors high, capitalized at eleven billion dollars, and with tens of thousands of workers standing ready at the canning machines relying for its raw materials on an inadequate number of hand line fishermen in leaky rowboats."

As an old toiler in this fish cannery,

I have to say again, I am so pleased to be receiving this award. I can't think of any honor I'd rather have. I do realize this award is your salute to the First Amendment, about to celebrate a grand 200 year-old birthday. Isn't it exciting that the celebration comes at a time when countries in Eastern and Central Europe, the Soviet Union, South Africa and the Third World are openly clamoring for First Amendment privileges of their own?

I want you to know I have been a connoisseur of gloom only because of my intense love affair with the press. I live and breathe news. I just want to see it try harder, dig deeper and keep more heat on our national leaders.

We are blessed. We are the most free and most professional press in the world.

Yet, today we are still basking in our freedoms, but we're not tending to them diligently enough. Nowhere is this more evident than in our Capital City. In recent years, our citizens all too frequently have been unable to achieve a "redress of their grievances" against any irresponsible national government.

Why? Because the Washington press corps, particularly in the 80's, failed to keep the public properly informed — and warned. We can do better.

For listening to me, thank you. □



# Lyons Award Presented To Colombian Journalists

**T**he 1990 Louis M. Lyons Award for Conscience and Integrity in Journalism was accepted on behalf of Colombian journalists September 23 by Fernando Cano, co-editor in chief of *El Espectador* in Bogota.

Cano, a Nieman Fellow this year, said that he accepted the award on behalf of:

"Those who have been assassinated because they dared to write and denounce drug dealers.

"Those who have been compelled to leave the country when their lives have been threatened.

"Those who are still fighting in the front line with their typewriters, their microphones or their camera to defend democratic institutions."

Cano, who was forced to seek exile in Spain last year because of his work on the drug story, said the sacrifices made in the fight against drugs have not been in vain. The Colombian Government has adopted stronger measures against the cartels, but more significantly, he said, consumer countries are "now cooperating with us and they have realized that their responsibility goes beyond 'just say no.'"

The award was presented with the "deepest admiration and awe," by Ann Marie Lipin-

ski, a reporter for *The Chicago Tribune*, representing the 1990 Nieman Class, which selected the Colombian journalists for the honor. Ms. Lipinski explained why the class had chosen a representative of *El Espectador* to accept the award on behalf of colleagues in Colombia:

"It was *El Espectador* that was singled out by the drug lords even before they announced their total and absolute war against Colombia's democratic institutions last summer.

"Because of the paper's unflinching coverage and editorial campaign against drugs and corruption, several of its top employees were assassinated, its investigative reporters were killed or forced into exile and

a year ago this month its newsroom was bombed, destroying half of the building and causing \$2.5 million in damage."

Mr. Cano said that more than 40 Colombian journalists have been shot. His father was one of those assassinated. The Committee to Protect Journalists, a New York-based human rights organization, has documented the assassination of 20 reporters and editors in the last five years. Other estimates of the death toll have been higher.

James Squires, a 1971 Nieman Fellow and member of the Nieman advisory board, who is lecturing at the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard this year, welcomed the guests at the ceremony.



Jane Reed/Harvard News Office

**Ann Marie Lipinski presented Louis M. Lyons Award to Fernando Cano, center, who accepted it on behalf of Colombian Journalists. James Squires presided at the ceremony.**

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# THE BOOKSHELF

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## Rusk, the Son, Asks His Father, Why?

### As I Saw It

Dean Rusk (as told to Richard Rusk) W.W. Norton & Company, New York, 1990. \$29.95.

### by H. Brandt Ayers

This is a book with character and personality. Necessarily, it is an insider's account of great and terrible events but it is more than that. It is a story that will absorb any son who aches to know a somewhat reserved father. And, it will hold the interest of any father whose son was lost but now is found.

It is also an account of relations between the press and a man whose passage through the highest corridors of power were as long and as rough as they come. Dean Rusk encountered all of our well-known character flaws — our arrogance (which amused him), our brilliantly devious means of worming out a story from taciturn officials, which he admired), and our temptation to exaggerate, to sensationalize to get our stories played better (which he deplored).

The imperial confidence of princely pundits struck him the moment he entered office. Walter Lippmann and Arthur Krock each sent notes saying that if the Secretary of State would like to call upon them, they would receive him.

He writes admiringly of men like Murray Marder of *The Washington Post* who could put together a snip of conversation, a patch of faded memory, the sight of a foreign limousine in the State parking garage, and an oblique "no comment" and

make an accurate story from them.

The faked-up television reportage of a Marine torching a Vietnam village he cites as only one example of deplorably false reporting. The Pentagon Papers did not make Rusk happy but he acknowledged that they were more of a public relations problem than a security threat. But he admitted to being dumbfounded by the volcanic eruption of the 44-volume series from the depths of the bureaucracy. Rusk says the cottage industry that created the Papers grew from what both he and Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara thought was a routine memorandum about sharing information between the two offices.

The 12-page chapter on press relations could hardly be called "Rusk's Revenge", however. He concludes his critical commentary on the press with these words, "I am deeply convinced that the American people are better served by their news media than are the people of any other country."

He declined even the reminder that those who have gotten to know him well in later years have often heard him give to writers and producers, "Gentlemen, remember, the world of opinion and the world of decision are not the same thing."

His book is mostly about that latter world, the world of decisions that led us to places like Saigon. But, as valuable as those insights are, the most emotionally compelling story line is how the terrible obsession, Vietnam, pulled son away from father and how the tissues of that relationship were painfully reattached.

One of the thousand smaller tears in the fabric of American life caused by the Vietnam War was the separation of Richard Rusk, then in high school and college, from his famous father, the Secretary of State, Dean Rusk.

There was little opportunity for father and son to repair the widening distance between them for two reasons. As the elder Rusk acknowledges, his Presbyterian family was relatively taciturn, not given to showing their feelings. Also, there was the father's fierce dedication to his work. In eight years of 14-to-16 hour days, seven days a week, Secretary Rusk managed about one dinner a month home. There was never a family vacation.

Not until 1984 did Richard Rusk return from Alaska, where he had been living, to begin a six-year quest to learn his father's mind and his heart. It is as honest an account as a son can give of a father — a credibility enhanced by the fact that the two men came together from a great distance and the road they traveled was sometimes hard.

For instance, Richard pressed his father again and again for his feelings on the death of President Kennedy. Finally, his father answered testily, "What do you want me to do? Slobber all over the place?" But this son's narrative also reports that on Nov. 23, 1963, the day after the President was shot, his sister found her father in their living room in tears.

Despite his hereditary reserve and his reputation in Washington for sitting through large cabinet meetings with "Buddha-like" silence, choosing to advise the President privately or in the air-tight security of very small groups, the more approachable man his friends know emerges from this 637-page account. His brilliance and clarity of mind shine through the text, with occasional flights of elo-

quence, as well as his becoming lack of pretension, earthiness and wicked humor.

Stopped in the Atlanta airport by an old lady who asserted, "You're on television!" the statesman replied, "Oh, you remember Hoss Cartwright on 'Bonanza,' don't you?" Rusk reported that the lady went away very happy.

He came by his earthy simplicity naturally. He was born in Cherokee County, Georgia, just north of Atlanta, in a family of dirt-poor farmers. The similarities in their backgrounds drew Rusk and President Johnson together in a personal relationship, different from the mutually respectful but formal way that he and President Kennedy treated each other. About Johnson, Rusk writes, "Occasionally we would argue about which one was born in the smaller house."

President Johnson wasn't the only larger-than-life personality Rusk encountered in a public career that included: chief of war plans for the China, Burma, India Theater in World War II; tours as Assistant Secretary of State for United Nations' Affairs during the founding of the world organization and as a deputy under-secretary and Assistant Secretary for Far Eastern Affairs as China fell and war broke out in Korea; eight years as president of the Rockefeller Foundation; and, finally, Secretary of State for eight years, the third longest tenure in U.S. history.

It is fascinating to listen as the "boy from North Georgia," Rusk's words, dealt with the crude bullying of Nikita Khrushchev, the regal hauteur of Charles de Gaulle and the mischievous doodling of President Truman, who once wrote on his pad during a serious conference on China, "Mousey Dung."

During World War II he made the mistake of offending Winston Churchill and got stung. Rusk, dubious about the usefulness of a Burmese operation ordered by the prime minister, dubbed the exercise, "Operation Pinprick." Churchill roared back with a cable, "Change Operation Pin-

prick to Operation Grapple."

Serious historians will find the volume essential because the one missing recollection of scary moments in our history has been that of a key player, Rusk. He was an indispensable adviser during the Berlin and Cuban missile crises and in the torturous escalation of the war in Vietnam.

Students of public affairs will be instructed by the two mistakes about Vietnam that Rusk admits. He says he overestimated the American public's ability to support limited war and he underestimated the determination of the North Vietnamese.

Friends of Dean Rusk can respect the feeling he took away from the tragedy of Vietnam:

"I cannot redo what has been done. I believed then that I did my duty. I believe it today. Having done my duty as clearly as I could perceive it, I took responsibility for it and tried to get on with my life."

They can also appreciate that his experience as a Rhodes Scholar shaped his belief that armed aggression anywhere must be opposed. During his three years at Oxford University, he watched as Britain's finest young men joined the pacifist Oxford Movement, which he viewed as organized irresponsibility, at a time when Hitler's Germany tightened its

muscles of aggression.

Yet, friends can grieve that so brilliant a man failed to take his own advice implied in an early message to President Kennedy: A nation which doesn't have the will to fight for its own survival can't be saved by a third nation.

But friends and historians and casual readers all will be moved by this book because it is essentially a love story. The device that father and son use to tell their story is excruciating.

The son introduces each section of the book by talking about "Pop," often with feeling, and giving his interpretation of the man and the official in that phase of his life. Then comes the steady baritone of former Secretary of State Dean Rusk describing the great men and events of his time.

Suspense builds as father and son talk on and on but never touch. There is satisfaction, however, in knowing that the two men have said everything they need to say to each other. As Richard puts it at the end, there will be "no restless ghost to haunt my footsteps as they pass . . ."

*H. Brandt Ayres, Nieman Fellow '68, is the editor and publisher of the Anniston Star in Alabama.*

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## How She Broke Old Boys' Barriers

### American Cassandra The Life of Dorothy Thompson

Peter Kurth  
Little Brown and Co., 1990. \$24.95

by Murray Seeger

With university journalism classes dominated by females these days, it is interesting to inquire who the professional role models are: Barbara Walters, Jane Pauley, that

nice-looking, well-coiffured blonde on the Six O'Clock News?

You get those answers and more. But if you ask about Dorothy Thompson, you get stony silence. Never heard of her.

That is just one reason to cheer the publishing of this fulsome biography by Peter Kurth, who was turned on to the subject while doing research for an aborted novel about the Spanish Civil War.

With this thoroughly researched book, Kurth has not only re-

established the status of one of the great international journalists but has also elevated her past the shadow of her long-suffering existence as a wife of Sinclair Lewis, the novelist. Until now, the cruel, tormented Lewis has been the subject of thorough analysis while Thompson was left to growing anonymity.

Dorothy Thompson is not easy to capture in print but it is unlikely anyone will come closer than Kurth. In those wonderful years before television made celebrities out of mediocre journalists, Thompson was a superstar in print, on the radio and in person.

Her column was syndicated first by *The New York Herald Tribune* at the inspiration of Helen Rodgers Reid as a feminine counter-foil to Walter Lippmann from the same stable. But the Reids dumped her in 1940 when Thompson switched sides a month before the election to support the third-term campaign of Franklin D. Roosevelt against *The Trib's* favorite, Wendell Willkie.

She was soon picked up by *The New York Post* and wrote a different column each month for *The Ladies' Home Journal*. In addition, she did regular commentary on the old NBC Radio Network and toured doggedly on the lucrative national lecture circuit.

Even in these days of celebrity journalism there is no one in the public's eye to match Dorothy Thompson in her prime of the late 1930's and 40's. Through it all she maintained a social-intellectual salon and retreat in Vermont, suffered 13 years of torment with her alcoholic Nobel-prize-winning husband, mothered one of his sons and gave another the love he had been missing.

Thompson not only suffered the pain of her husband's addiction but saw their son follow the same dead-end path. The stepson she adored was killed early in World War II.

Clearly there is enough for a major biography and Kurth provides it. No journalist himself, the author does not try to place Thompson in jour-

nalism's pantheon, but he has talked to all of her contemporaries who could.

There is no easy peg on which to hang Thompson. She was not an ideologist; her politics were untrackable. But she was a brave reporter, diligent worker and passionate commentator on the issues that excited her.

Long before the term became a cliché, Thompson was a feminist, a woman who broke barriers in the old boy network of upper level journalism. She became, in 1921, the first female to head a major overseas bureau when the staid *Public Ledger* of Philadelphia put her on full time in Vienna after she had free-lanced for a year.

Thompson stumbled into journalism as did many of her contemporaries. She was a daughter of a Methodist preacher who had a series of pulpits in Western New York State, north and south of Buffalo.

Twice her family lived in the parsonage on Union Street in Hamburg, N.Y., where I grew up. Kurth found a Thompson schoolmate in Hamburg and the only other great figure from that town, the stage director George Abbott, to give first-hand evidence of what it meant to be the minister's daughter.

Thompson had done publicity work for the suffragist movement and a social welfare campaign before curiosity of the larger world sent her to Europe in 1920. Before long she was an expert on the boiling politics of the Balkans and Germany.

In the nature of the best foreign correspondents she was willing and able to go anywhere she thought a story might be breaking. She established herself quickly and firmly as a full-fledged member of the correspondents' fraternity.

"Get the news accurately," she declared. "If possible, get it first. Don't let your likes or dislikes obscure the facts, and remember the laws of libel and slander."

That was a good watchword 70 years ago and could be used easily today for entering journalists. Following the rules, Thompson won early acceptance among a field of correspondents that included William L. Shirer, Raymond Gram Swing, John Gunther, Edgar Ansel Mowrer, Gilbert Seldes and Floyd Gibbons.

There was little electronic communication to hold the news centers together and correspondents operated on the basis of gossip and instinct.

"This was before journalism became institutionalized," Gunther recalled. "We were scavengers, buzzards, out to



Dorothy Thompson in Berlin, 1927



get the news, no matter whose wings got clipped . . . Most of us traveled steadily, met constantly, exchanged information, caroused, took in each other's washing, and even when fiercely competitive were devoted friends."

Thompson was the only female to break into this circle. Swing said she was the only woman he ever met in journalism "who was not a hellish nuisance to work with." Seldes called her "the only woman newspaperman" and asserted: "She never used sex-attraction to get her story."

But she was sexually attractive and active, maintaining two liaisons in those early years until a Hungarian adventurer captured her in marriage the first time, in 1923. And she was willing to use her sex when it suited her.

When a Prague postal clerk gave her trouble in sending a cable, she sent an emergency message to Dr. Eduard Benes, then the foreign minister: "Beloved, will you bring pressure to bear to have the officials in this post office fired?" She signed it "Sweetie". (Since it was sent in German, the signature was probably "Schatzie".) Her cable to Vienna was moved with alacrity.

She dressed as a Red Cross nurse to walk into a Hungarian palace where a Habsburg was attempting to organize a coup to reclaim the Austro-Hungarian throne. Her exclusive helped establish her reputation and infuriated her colleagues — all male — who were outside the palace, with only rumors to report.

Of the many anecdotes about Dorothy Thompson in those early years a favorite described her response to a Viennese lover; "Yes, dear, but right this minute I've simply got to get to the bottom of this Bulgarian business."

Lewis, who proposed on their first meeting in 1927, complained in later years that few of their friends paid attention to his interests. They were always talking about "the situation" with Dorothy.

Early in her career, Thompson

announced that being a bureau chief in Europe "isn't enough for me. It's not what I really want. I'm nothing in my own country. I want to be something there — something no other woman has been yet."

She achieved her goal largely because of her courageous, perceptive reporting from Berlin where she had gone to witness the election of Adolf Hitler as chancellor. Long before most other reporters and commentators saw the approaching horror, Thompson wrote about the Nazis' war on the Jews.

Thompson took her story to the lecture circuit, making a record that inspired Hitler to order her expelled from Germany on her next visit in August 1934. She was the first American journalist to be kicked out, an event that set her star in the ascendancy.

It was hardly noticed that Thompson thought the German people, whom she admired, would get rid of Hitler before he did great damage. Her career was filled with many such errors in judgment as she grew older and more convinced of her own infallibility.

Dorothy Thompson's reversal on Roosevelt was typical. She had opposed his first two terms because she saw the makings of an American dictator in him.

But the President played on her ego and Mrs. Roosevelt became a good friend. Typically, Thompson told Willkie of her change of position over lunch.

As with many journalists, celebrity status eroded Thompson's judgment. Politicians catered to her and she became a pundit whose persistent cries of alarm won her the title, "Cassandra".

Her constant hectoring became tiresome to her audiences and the editors who published her. Her column was dropped by *The Post* in 1947 for "dullness and by a lack of any particularly significant new information or opinion."

The Bell Syndicate distributed her column to 150 newspapers outside

New York but even the provinces started to cancel. She attributed the decline to a postwar loss of interest in international affairs.

But there was a bigger, specific problem. Dorothy Thompson argued against the Zionist campaign to establish the Jewish homeland in Israel and she sought a "generous peace" for Germany.

Thompson lost many friends in Germany, Jewish and Gentile, including a female lover. Ted Thackrey, who as editor of *The Post* in 1945 rebutted personally one of her columns, said she was "vastly more disturbed [by] real or fancied 'persecution' of Germans" than she was of the victims of Naziism.

For one who had been vilified earlier by right-wing fanatics for being a "Jew lover" to be called an "anti-Semite" was confusing and painful. The reversal accelerated her professional decline. She was not helped when she found that her long-time research assistant was a Communist agent who claimed to have persuaded her to be generous to the Soviet Union in her writings.

With typical bravery she told the story herself in an article that *The Saturday Evening Post* entitled, "How I Was Duped by a Communist". Her many friends rallied around her and she found great solace in her successful third marriage, to Maxim Kopf, a sculptor,

"I long for a world, once again, like the world in which I grew up, where one could safely take for granted that one's fellow creatures were what they seemed to be," she wrote.

Thompson lived to see with misgivings the election of John F. Kennedy, but she was no longer a major journalistic influence. She died during a trip to Portugal in 1961 at the age of 67.

Back in Upstate New York, the paper in which we had read "On the Record", *The Buffalo Evening News*, recalled that she "never cared whose toes she trod on, what pride she undercut . . . She was at every moment vibrant with her own emotions, implicated in her whole

society's vision or action, committed without inner reserve."

Women like my mother, who had known her in childhood, saw Thompson as the great achiever they wanted their daughters to be. She is fully worth this fine detailed examination.

*Murray Seeger, Nieman Fellow '62, who wrote from Moscow, Bonn, Brussels, and Singapore, recently was appointed assistant director of external relations for the International Monetary Fund in Washington.*

## GOP Judges' Role In Civil Rights

### Unlikely Heroes.

Jack Bass. University of Alabama Press, 1990. \$17.95

### by Doug Cumming

The way we look back on the civil rights years is still highly magnetized by the presence of Martin Luther King Jr. and the sometimes overly elegiac impulse to honor him. The lengthening of time, though, brings forth other heroes and a richer weave. Maya Lin's new civil rights memorial in Montgomery presents, with the same haunting equipoise as her Vietnam Memorial in Washington, another 39 names of those who gave their lives. The recent reenactment of the Selma March brought back scores of the lesser known foot soldiers, whose stories thicken the historical record. Taylor Branch was there, interviewing for the next installment of his phenomenal King biography.

A whole other dimension of the civil rights struggle was the inspired, not to say aggressive, role played by the federal courts in the South. Their black-robed disquisitions were as fundamental to the story as any scripture-tongued witness from Black Belt pulpits. This struggle was, after all, a constitutional crisis, a drama that began with a unanimous Supreme Court ruling called *Brown* in 1954 and, in a sense, ended when the action was picked up by Congress with the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and Voting Rights Act of 1965. This part of the story primarily involved a handful of white, Southern, Republican men who, each

in his own way, rose to the occasion. Claude Sitton, who covered the early years of movement for *The New York Times* (and will be teaching a course at Emory University next year on the role of journalists in the conflict), put it this way: "Those who think Martin Luther King desegregated the South don't know Elbert Tuttle and the record of the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals."

So that more may know Elbert Tuttle — and Richard T. Rives, John R. Brown, John Minor Wisdom, Frank M. Johnson, and other judges of the old Fifth Circuit in the six Deep South states — the University of Alabama Press has just reissued in paperback Jack Bass's (NF '66) 1981 account of their finest hours. One wishes that the added preface and updating had made more of the changes in the federal judiciary and its grapplings with civil rights over the last decade. The updating here, in fact, is spotty: in one place Bass writes "if a conservative Congress fails to extend the Voting Rights Act in 1982" (it was extended), but elsewhere mentions awards judges won in 1989. One also wishes for a chart (like Laurence Tribe's useful chart of all Supreme Court nominees in his *God Save This Honorable Court*) to help keep straight the chronology, the players, and their positions in the District/ Appeals court hierarchy. *Unlikely Heroes* sometimes seems as organized as a spilled briefcase of research.

But what fascinating research. Judge Wisdom, with his Garden District, private club, old New

Orleans background, is depicted as a peppy gentleman-scholar, given to discussing Elizabethan poetry with his worshipful clerks. Judge Tuttle, a fastidious outsider who had moved from Hawaii to Atlanta because of its bustling promise, seemed to fall into some good constitutional seasoning early when, in the '30's, he won a couple of landmark Supreme Court cases. Wisdom and Tuttle, who helped lead the movement for Eisenhower and Nixon at the 1952 Republican convention, are shown to be progressive but shrewdly political figures. It was the good fortune of most of his book's subjects to be Republicans in the Democratic South at a time when Eisenhower was appointing federal judges. Judge John Brown's angling for an Eisenhower appointment is particularly cunning. How this Republican patronage translated into bold action — a broad application of *Brown*, an innovative use of the injunction, and an assigning of judicial panels that so favored civil rights over states rights that conservative Circuit Judge Ben F. Cameron eventually launched a full-bore public attack on Tuttle — is the most intriguing irony of the story. Bass goes on to show why President Kennedy's judicial appointments in this arena, by contrast, were so weak. (Kennedy considered his Justice Department the place for heroes, the courts as a place to dump those owed favors, such as the stumblingly mediocre Frank Ellis of Louisiana.)

The Republican Party today, in its alleged desire to draw black voters into its Lincolnesque arms, ought to make more of this history. That it doesn't do so makes one suspect that the GOP would rather not risk sending that message of judicial activism, federal injunctions, and forced busing to its growing white Southern ranks.

*Doug Cumming, Nieman Fellow '87, is an editor on the suburban desk of the Atlanta Journal-Constitution. Before that he was senior editor for features at Southpoint, an Atlanta-based magazine which was shut down last June.*

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# Boom and Bust And Politics

## **Fat Years and Lean: The American Economy Since Roosevelt**

Bernard Nossiter. Harper & Row.  
1990. \$22.50

by Robert Deitz

Time once was, and not so long ago, that most U.S. newspapers selected business editors for their ability to make change for a dollar without counting aloud.

Those business editors in turn chose their reporters from the ranks of aging sports writers too feeble or too sotted to follow any longer the baseball or horse-racing circuit. That explains in part why business and economic reports were so bad for so many years.

Well, all of this changed with the first OPEC oil embargo and resulting long gasoline lines of the early '70s.

When gas prices soared and block-long lines of cars slowly snaked their way to the Exxon pump, ordinary Americans, and ordinary American newspaper editors, awakened to a harsh reality:

Broad economic policies intrude into daily lives in a more intimate and uncontrollable way than even most city council or local school-board meetings.

Only when this truth came home did business and economic reporting assume a more urgent and professional place on the editorial agenda. And today, business editing and reporting at most major U.S. daily newspapers is directed by skilled professionals who possess more than casual knowledge of economic theory and practice.

Even so, Bernard Nossiter's new book *"Fat Years and Lean,"* is a must read for business journalists or anybody else interested in economic policy-making.

The book skillfully provides a

balanced, even important study of U.S. economic policy during the turbulent past half-century. It is a gracefully written, highly readable account of how economic theory and practice evolved from the first tentative, then aggressive Keynesianism of FDR to the Reagan Administration's deliberate and callous use of unemployment to restrain inflation, never mind the human pain it caused or the existence of other economic tools to accomplish the same objective.

Nossiter shines particularly bright with his chapter, "Keynes Armed," in which he described how the lessons of World War II taught that a big military establishment wasn't inconsistent with domestic prosperity. To the contrary, spending more bucks to build a bigger bang increased national wealth. "Here was the best of all possible worlds," Nossiter writes. "Stern necessity compelled confronting the Russians with more force; virtuous behavior would yield material rewards for all."

Indeed, Nossiter insists that the huge defense outlays from post-war Truman on were motivated as much by pragmatic economics as anti-Communist ideology. This view was succinctly, if cynically, expressed by John Connally, the former Democrat-turned-Republican Treasury Secretary, during the Nixon Administration's grappling with a \$250 million loan to keep aerospace giant Lockheed afloat following the Vietnam winddown.

"What do we care whether they [Lockheed] perform?" Connally asked. "We are guaranteeing them a \$250 million loan . . ." not so Lockheed can build more airplanes or missiles, but "so they can provide employment for 31,000 people . . . at a time when we desperately need that kind of employment." That kind of reasoning, Nossiter wryly observes, "Hoover would have understood."

Nor is glasnost likely to produce

much of a peace dividend, Nossiter argues. "The ingenuity of the Pentagon and its contractors must not be underestimated. Perhaps the [military-industrial] complex will yet find the formula to continue increased outlays even with a retreating Russia. If they fail, the U.S. will surrender a second great economic stabilizer. Reagan's erosion of the progressive income tax was the first. Without military outlays to sustain them, it is conceivable, if unlikely, that hard-pressed corporations might then become less hostile to government outlays for civilian purposes," he writes.

Moving to the Reagan years, it may not be fair to make too much of Nossiter's convincing indictment of Reaganomics as cynical, soak-the-poor politics. After all, *Fat Years and Lean* paints a much broader canvas to explain FDR, Truman, Eisenhower, Kennedy and Nixon.

And yet . . .

The economic damage done to the broad class of middle- and lower-income Americans by the Reagan country club *cadré* is made so devastatingly clear by Nossiter that it's difficult to contain a sense of outrage.

"Country Club Economics" isn't an idle phrase: Nossiter points out that it was in country clubs with wealthy acquaintances and supporters he courted that Reagan learned what

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The economic damage done to the broad class of middle- and lower-income Americans by the Reagan country club *cadre* is made so devastatingly clear by Nossiter that it's difficult to contain a sense of outrage.

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little simplistic economics he absorbed. Simply put, it was succor the wealthy at the expense of the powerless.

And so it was that the poor indeed became more needy, and the working class suffered during the Reagan years. He notes, for example, that the deliberate attempt to restrain inflation meant that average weekly U.S. wage in 1977 dollars rose to \$198.35 from \$123.43 between 1948 and 1973, but then fell to \$167.45 by 1988 when Reagan's term ended.

Almost as bad were the psychological effects on the American workforce. Nossiter writes:

"Apart from the economic advantages, high levels of unemployment gratify other tastes of the well-to-do. Workers fearful of losing their jobs . . . certainly are more respectful of the desires of employers. Some executives relish what Britons call pulling the forelock, a Victorian practice in which workers touched their hair as a mark of respect. Nobody pulls a forelock anymore, but there are many other ways in which deference can be shown and insecure jobs encourage it."

The bewildering, even alarming aspect to all of this is how the Bush Administration seems to be walking the same grimy path blazed by Reagan with its emphasis on deficit reduction and balancing the budget through Gramm-Rudman induced spending cuts, which Nossiter calls not only "bad economics" but "stunning hypocrisy."

The lessons of the "Fat Years," he says, show in essence that economic policies directed toward full employment and resource utilization, whether through temporary government spending or domestic industrial expansion, are the best answers to economic growth and prosperity.

Economic policies based on high employment have costs, to be sure. One is an increased deficit that many people fear is already out of control. But Nossiter argues that once high-employment stability is gained, less will be spent on joblessness and job training and increased tax revenues

from higher incomes will erode the national debt.

Bernard Nossiter has had a distinguished career as a journalist, economist and author. He spent almost 30 years in New York, much of the time on *The World-Telegram and Sun*, moving then to *The Washington Post* and finally to the *New York Times*. "Fat Years and Lean" is a tribute to the intellectual and practical depth acquired from those experiences.

It is a book that should be read — even by those business editors and reporters who can make change for a dollar with a silent count.

*Robert Deitz, Nieman Fellow '72, is executive business editor and columnist for The Dallas Times Herald. He is co-author of Other People's Money: The Inside Story of the S&L Mess, published by Simon & Schuster in October 1989.*

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## Tracing Path of Child Killer

### Murder of Innocence

Joel Kaplan, George Papajohn and Eric Zion. Warner Books, 1990. \$19.95

by Barbara Ross

**I**n 1988, there was one person murdered every 25 minutes in the United States. Most of them did not make news. Laurie Dann's rampage was an exception.

Dann made international headlines in May of that year when she killed an eight-year-old boy and shot five other children in an elementary school in Winnetka, Ill. The same morning, Dann also delivered or mailed poisoned food to more than a dozen people and tried to incinerate a family that had employed her as a babysitter. That afternoon, she shot an adult hostage before killing herself. In the warped view of the fourth estate, Winnetka's tragedy was a grreeaat story.

The victims, small children, couldn't have aroused more sympathy. This was no drug deal gone bad. The perpetrator was an upper middle class young woman who had a enviable life by most standards. Finally, it happened in a small community where no one had been murdered since 1957 and the crime statistics for all of 1987 consisted of one sexual assault, three robberies, three assaults and three cases of arson. This kind of story is

so strong that it lasts at least a few days in the national press, which normally has the attention span of a toddler; in the local press, every minute detail is reported for weeks, even months.

In *Murder of Innocence*, three *Chicago Tribune* reporters try to get beyond the obvious: that Laurie Dann just went nuts (or was nuts). The result is a mostly gripping and thoughtful book that restores the pathos to this tale and expands it. The book makes it clear that this was a tragedy for Laurie Dann as well as the families of Winnetka and that Dann's violent explosion was inevitable. The warning signs were numerous — and mostly ignored or misunderstood.

Some stark examples of Laurie's bizarre behavior come from her former husband, Russell. When Laurie first got married, she "began adopting superstitions and little rituals to go along with them," like opening the car door at a spotlight and tapping her foot on the pavement, or insisting that Russell not leave the house until she touched the couch for fear "something bad" would happen to him.

Initially, Russell humored his wife, always an awkward loner. Gradually, however, Laurie's rituals and superstitions became unbearable. They fought constantly. Unable to keep a job, or even get dressed on some days, she promised to change. She even washed



the clothes once, but she put them in the drawers soaking wet. She also tried but dropped out of therapy. In October, 1985, after three years of marriage, Russell said he wanted out.

The authors chronicle how Laurie's behavior became increasingly bizarre over the next two and a half years. Much of it was directed at Russell and his family whom she would call and hang up on repeatedly. The harassment escalated when she started making bogus police reports accusing Russell of a burglary, sexual assault, attempted arson, etc. Laurie bought her first gun about six months after their separation. Alerted to Laurie's precarious mental state by the Dann family, the police said Laurie had bought the gun legally and there were no legal grounds for taking it from her. One local cop called Laurie's psychiatrist who refused to discuss his patient, except to say he didn't think Laurie was suicidal or homicidal.

A critical point came the night of September 30, 1986 when Russell Dann was stabbed in his sleep with an ice pick. It was an inconsequential wound; Russell blamed Laurie. Police were skeptical. The Danns were already known to local cops as "a battling couple" and the evidence in this case was conflicting.

The police did find an empty ice pick wrapper in Laurie's room at her parent's house, but they also gave Russell a lie detector test, which he failed. Had he staged the stabbing to get Laurie into enough trouble that she could no longer own that gun?

A contemptuous, contentious relationship developed between Russell and the police; making it harder for Russell and others later on to make their case that Laurie was "truly a dangerous woman."

In April, 1987, their divorce was made final and Laurie moved to Evanston, ostensibly to return to college. She sublet a university apartment and got more weird than ever. When campus officials inspected her apartment, they gagged at the sign and smell of Laurie's refrigerator where thick slabs of dripping beef — the same kind that had been discovered under carpets

and in stairwells in other parts of the dorm — were tucked into every corner in varying stages of decay. In September 1987, Laurie started seeing a Chicago psychiatrist who "apparently concluded" after four sessions that Laurie suffered from an obsessive compulsive disorder. Victims of OCD are not known to be violent, they are consumed with ritualistic behavior, which gripped Laurie. The doctor prescribed clomipramine, an experimental antidepressant.

In late November, Laurie then checked herself into a program for OCD in Madison, Wis. Before leaving home, she bought a second gun. The Madison doctors confirmed the OCD diagnosis and prescribed intensive behavioral therapy and larger doses of clomipramine. After a month, a more stable Laurie went home for the holidays where she apparently overdosed on the antidepressant and started to fall apart again. Christmas week, she resumed her harassing phone calls with a vengeance, making 59 of them one night between 11 p.m. and 1 a.m. She also bought a third gun.

Meanwhile, her victims went as a group to the police, pleading that something be done. They were worried because Laurie also had resumed her routine of babysitting. Police responded by advising area residents to ask for detailed information about prospective babysitters.

After the holidays, Laurie returned to Madison where, the authors suggest, she was inadvertently driven crazier by the mishmash of pills prescribed by different doctors — an antidepressant that was good for treating anxiety but bad for depression, another pill that was just the opposite and a tranquilizer that is not supposed to be used by psychotic patients.

"The effects of combined psychoactive drugs on an individual are impossible to predict, doctors say, especially when a diagnosis is not sharp . . . the notion that Laurie suffered primarily from OCD came from doctors . . . who apparently never communicated with each other and

who had not treated her at length. They relied for their information on Laurie, a chronic liar, and her father, a man of leonine protective instincts."

Laurie abandoned her Madison therapy in late March, but continued taking her pills. Her Madison doctor at the time thought about trying to commit her to a mental hospital but that required him to swear that she was a danger to herself or others and he did not know her well enough to do that. The doctor said later that Laurie's father assured him she was not a danger to anyone and never told him about the phone calls, the stabbing incident, the raw meat or her ownership of handguns.

Whatever he said to the doctor, Laurie's father, who had always defended his daughter, apparently understood how sick she was. In late April, from his winter home in Boca Raton, he wrote to her urging her to acquiesce in the doctor's request that she go to a mental hospital. Meanwhile, the FBI now was investigating a complaint that Laurie had used the phone to threaten an ex-boyfriend who lived in Arizona. Within a month of the net's beginning to close in around Laurie, she was in the elementary school, shooting second graders.

*Murder of Innocence* has one major shortcoming: the fact that the authors, Joel Kaplan, George Papajohn and Eric Zion, were not able to interview Laurie's parents. Thus, a confused picture of them emerges. Initially, they appear as totally insensitive and uncaring about their second born. Later, Laurie's father shows in many ways that he cares, but her mother still seems like a space cadet. It's as if one author researched Laurie's early life and reached one conclusion while the other writers researched her later years and reached another verdict. Not hearing directly from the parents is as frustrating for the reader as it must have been for the authors.

The writers also go overboard in describing the virtues of Nicky Corwin, the eight-year-old boy who died. (All the other children

recovered.) He sounded very special, but he wasn't exactly Ghandi.

These shortcomings do not detract seriously from the book and the authors have put a sorely needed spotlight on an issue that goes beyond Winnetka's tragedy: the criminal justice system appears to be totally inept at dealing with mentally ill peo-

ple (and the psychiatric branch of medicine sometimes seems just as confused.)

*Barbara Ross is a reporter from The Daily News in New York. She is currently on leave as a Nieman Fellow.*

## Why Moscow and Beijing Failed

### The End of the Line: The Failure of Communism in the Soviet Union and China

Christopher Wren, Simon and Schuster, 1990. \$22.95

by Nicholas Daniloff

Once, while I was interviewing a prominent Soviet intellectual in Moscow, the conversation turned to one of the distinctive peculiarities of the American press: its relentless search for facts. My interlocutor, Fyodor Burlatsky, observed that the Soviet press, less able to dig out real facts in a world of classified information and unreliable statistics, indulged more heavily on intuition, opinion, and what passes for analysis.

"On one occasion," Burlatsky recalled, "I was being interviewed by an American reporter. When the hour was up, the correspondent smiled at me and said, 'And Mr. Burlatsky, one last question: are you aware that your leader Yuri Andropov died today?'"

"I was taken aback. I hadn't been informed. But I answered quickly, 'No. I didn't know the latest fact, but I was well aware of the tendency.'"

The comment applies, too, to Christopher Wren's new book *The End of the Line: The Failure of Communism in the Soviet Union and China*. It is a work of admirable observation, filled with carefully gathered facts, checked, cross-checked, and footnoted. But somehow this volume skips across the surface of daily life,

avoiding the plunge into the deeper currents that underlie those capturable facts. In the end, the book which is an easy read, is understandably uncertain where the Russian and Chinese giants are heading following the evident failure of their systems.

But the positive first. Christopher Wren is an admirable correspondent. He has taken the trouble, which was considerable, to learn both Russian and Chinese, an accomplishment few journalists can boast of.

He clearly admires and respects these languages which have given him the tools to dig into the two societies where he, and his family, spent a total of seven years. He has subjected both nations to the pertinent scrutiny: the state of agriculture, medicine, schooling, housing, consumer needs. Nor has he shied away from the darker side: bribery, crime, sexual promiscuity, the intrusiveness of the secret police.

I felt an immediate kinship with Christopher Wren when he described the scurrilous attack against him (and Al Friendly of *Newsweek* and George Krinsky of the Associated Press) in *Literaturnaya Gazeta* in 1976. The newspaper asserted that evidence had surfaced that showed that Wren was carrying on espionage for the United States.

Wren recalls how an editor, Oleg Bitov (later involved in a bizarre defection to British intelligence in London and re-defection to Moscow) received him in one of the newspaper's offices.

There Bitov shamelessly unearthed letters, purportedly written by vigilant citizens, claiming that Wren had tried to wheedle sensitive information out of them. According to Bitov, Wren tried to pry secrets out of a man in Frunze who worked in a military installation. In Moscow, Wren supposedly pumped the wife of a Soviet draftee for details about her husband's military unit, missile forces, and so forth.

These were the same allegations hurled at me — right down to the man from Frunze — when I was arrested in Moscow in 1986 in retaliation for the arrest in New York of Soviet KGB agent Gennadi F. Zakharov. Wren's account rings completely true, and after reading his description, I became more convinced than ever that the KGB has a classified manual called "How to Incriminate a Foreign Correspondent in Ten Easy Lessons" which is routinely applied to any correspondent who probes too seriously.

Anyone who has lived in Moscow on the long term does not have to dig very far to realize that Soviet society is living through a bitter disillusionment. The Russian Revolution held out the hope in 1917 of a more equitable social and political system than existed under the czars. A drastic redistribution of wealth was to take place. There would be work for everybody. Decent housing. Inexpensive staples and plentiful food. Free medicine and education. A great deal of blood and treasure were expended for these goals.

But 70 years later, as Wren so ably documents, the promise has not been fulfilled. The agricultural system has failed, following the liquidation in the 1920's of the kulaks, the most productive private farmers. Medicine has never reached the standards of the West, except in highly restricted hospitals intended for the bureaucratic and managerial elite. Housing is still woefully deficient and in short supply. The pervasive fear of unpleasant news and contradictory information has led to stagnation and corrup-

tion in the creative elite. Bureaucrats are callous and indifferent, as so ably illustrated in the Lenin Peak tragedy of women mountaineers, which Wren, himself a climber, personally witnessed and wrote about.

Yet the system continues to muddle through because bribery, corruption, under-the-counter deals, provide the necessary oil which makes the wheels go round. Malaise and grumbling are everywhere. A sense of purposelessness grips the young, who drown their sorrows in vodka (cologne, shaving lotion, or insect repellent if spirits are not available), narcotics, and loveless sex.

Most Moscow correspondents have asked themselves: is this failure simply a Russian phenomenon, or could a more sophisticated and secure people make long-term planning, plentiful expertise, technocratic experience, central control, information management, Big Brother oversight, work and produce desirable results?

We have, of course, received an eloquent answer to these questions in the revolutions of 1989 in Middle Europe, and most especially in the former German Democratic Republic: NO. Wren could not have known that those events were going to scoop some of his observations about China because he had started writing five years before.

Thus, it comes as no surprise (but it is certainly comforting to know) that Wren's report from Beijing suggests that the Chinese approach, though more sensitive than the Russian, has hardly been more successful.

The Chinese secret police, for example, is less obvious in its surveillance of foreigners than the Russians. The Beijing leadership seems less concerned than the Kremlin administration about contradictory phenomena which do not fit comfortably into ideology or history.

"The Chinese," Wren writes, "characteristically took a different approach: Mao's embalmed corpse remains on display inside a crystal sarcophagus but now he shares the mausoleum built for him in Tiananmen Square with the

memorabilia of Liu Shaoqui, Zhou Enlai and Zhu De. It was as if the Russians left Stalin in Lenin's mausoleum but also made room for his archenemies Leon Trotsky and Nikolai Bukharin."

When it became clear that China was stagnating economically following Mao Zedong's death, his successor Deng Xiao Ping launched an ambitious program of Four Modernizations. Wren describes in close detail how many Chinese peasants took full advantage of the new policy of Laodong Zhifu Fuyu Guanrong — "Get rich through hard work. Getting rich is glorious."

Suddenly, in remote areas, the initiative of enterprising Chinese peasants is unlocked. Farmers begin working 17-18 hours a day. Services and goods begin appearing. Food becomes plentiful. Force-fed ducks reappear. Yet horrendous abuses, rooted in the command mentality absorbed by bureaucrats and ordinary folk over the last 40 years, still occur. The less able sponge off the hard-working. The "red-eyed disease" of jealousy prompts the mediocre to cut down the outstanding.

"Some local authorities," Wren writes, "tried to penalize farmers who reaped too big a surplus by jacking up the quota they owed the state, a practice the government compared disparagingly to 'whipping a fast ox.'"

Despite Wren's conscientiousness, a number of questions are left tantalizingly unanswered. Why is it that

the Chinese seem secure in themselves and enterprising? The Russian, suffering from an inferiority complex and sluggish? Why has free medicine in both countries spawned nations of hypochondriacs who pacify themselves with frivolous doctor calls which, in turn, overburden and bankrupt the system? Why has the state encouraged alcoholism in Russia by relying heavily on income from vodka sales? Can a society like Russia, historically wary of free access to information, survive without violent turmoil in the modern world information explosions? What is the meaning for society of intrusive surveillance which pits citizen against citizen, encourages distrust of unproved acquaintances, and, in the end, destroys creativity and enterprise?

Christopher Wren invites his readers to trek through China and the Soviet Union as he, a journalist, wandered during the better part of a decade. He declares that as a foreigner he observes the passing scene without prejudice or vested interest. And he fulfills that promise. But, somehow, I wish he had laid aside for a while the arduous climb for facts and sought out instead the winding mysterious, eternal rivers below.

*Nick Daniloff, Nieman Fellow '74, who reported from Moscow for U.S. News and World Report, now teaches journalism at the Northeastern University School of Journalism.*

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# NIEMAN NOTES

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—1939—

IRVING DILLIARD of the first Nieman class rolls on and on. He writes that he is now the senior living past president of Sigma Delta Chi, the Society of Professional Journalists (1940-41), the only living past president of Alpha Kappa Lambda (1936-38), and only living past president of the Illinois State Historical Society (1947-48).

In addition, last March 3 was proclaimed Irving Dilliard Day in Illinois and the Collinsville, Illinois, Lions Club named him the first recipient of an award, which bears his name, for recognition of excellence in the community.

In 1960 Mr. Dilliard retired from *The St. Louis-Post-Dispatch*, where he had been editor of the editorial pages for many years. From 1963 to 1973 he was a professor at Princeton and in 1974 was named the first director of the Illinois Department on Aging.

—1950—

As a Nieman Fellow, MAX HALL got so interested in one of Benjamin Franklin's little-known writings that he made it his hobby for the next ten years. The writing was "The Speech of Miss Polly Baker" all ran across it in a course taught by Arthur Schlesinger, Sr. Newspapers and magazines in Britain and America printed the speech as an actual defense offered by a New England woman on trial for having her fifth child out of wedlock, and they reported that she was acquitted and one of her judges married her the next day. After chasing Polly through two centuries Hall wrote a book, *Benjamin Franklin & Polly Baker: The History of a Literary Deception*, published in 1960 by the University of North Carolina Press for the Institute of Early American History and Culture. Thirty years later, in the summer of 1990, the University of Pittsburgh Press brought out a paperback edition, now in bookstores.

—1959—

PHILLIP JOHNSON was part of the management team at WWL-TV in New Orleans that successfully negotiated the financing to buy the station from the Jesuits of Loyola University.

It was an employee buyout. Most employees have invested in the station, and management hopes all do. The management and operating philosophy of the station remain unchanged.

Mr. Johnson, who is the station's assistant manager, has been at WWL-TV for 30 years. It was started by the Jesuits 33 years ago. He writes that the \$102 million purchase price of the station "is the most money I've signed off on since I bought my first car."

JOHN SEIGENTHALER, chairman and publisher of *The Tennessean* and editorial director of *USA Today*, moderated an American Press Institute issues forum on political coverage at the Gannett Foundation in Arlington, Va. According to Editor & Publisher, Seigenthaler told two political consultants who had shown a series of political ads: "You put Gary Hart in a tank, show a farmer with shit on his boots saying grace. You criticize us for cynicism but you show these spots. It seems to me that's in order. We should be more cynical."

—1962—

EUGENE L. ROBERTS JR.'S announcement on July 31 that he was retiring as executive editor of *The Philadelphia Inquirer* generated stories around the nation detailing his success in turning one of America's journalism embarrassments into one of its most honored dailies. The stories recounted how some staffers wept in the newspaper's corridors on hearing the news, how others appeared bewildered as they walked through the newsrooms, seemingly lost in a place they knew well.

All of that was accurate, but incomplete. Teary eyes and befuddled faces notwithstanding, none of the accounts carried any hint of the single word that flashed,

through mental hazes, in the heads of a large number of *The Inquirer's* 600-plus journalists:

Party.

Encouraged by much good fortune at *The Inquirer* — and, in large measure, by the charisma, smarts and weirdness of their leader — the staff had, over the years, become skilled in engineering indulgent good times, everything from expensive and improbable practical jokes to enormous bashes. So it was no surprise that within a week, more than 200 of them came together in a knot of committees to plan an appropriate Roberts send-off.

They scoured the city for the proper setting, called a slew of caterers to discover who could make enough North Carolina food to honor Roberts's native tastebuds; gathered lists of his pals and of everyone they could remember who ever worked at the newspaper, then, calling them "foreign dignitaries," hunted them down with invitations and dunning letters; dispatched a crew to travel the nation making a funny and affectionate full-length film; assembled a mini-newsroom for a special 24-page broadsheet party edition of *The Inquirer* with barbs, manufactured outrages, anecdotes from real people and a serious collection of front pages that underscored his journalistic genius; formed a production crew to assemble skits highlighting his funniest traits, and convened a gift committee to decide how to spend the \$20,000 that would come in from the staff, the former staff, Roberts's colleagues and friends.

Meanwhile, they put a paper — a real paper — onto the Philadelphia street everyday, but no one is entirely certain just how that happened.

Late in the afternoon on Saturday, October 20, about 850 people began to converge on the Franklin House, formerly a hotel, now a downtown Philadelphia condominium, but with its stately ballroom intact. Or it had been intact. This day, it was transformed into a sort of lily pad, with frog paraphernalia all about. The place was dripping in green. Roberts, shortly after coming to Philadelphia in 1972, was characterized by a local magazine writer as a guy who





**Gene Roberts, with his wife, Susan, at the Vive le Frog farewell party in Philadelphia**

"looks like a frog just off the Okefenokee Swamp in Pogo." This must have rung true, for immediately the staff began to call Roberts "The Frog," behind him as well as in front of him.

So the theme of the party was "Vive le Frog!" and as revelers arrived, they were handed placards that said "The Frog Leapt Here"; cardboard banners with green, amphibian renditions of Roberts; buttons showing a frog glomming onto *The Inquirer* tower and little plastic frogs to strap to whatever appendage they chose. The crowd assembled outside the ballroom while the Roberts entourage was led, on another route, to the ballroom balcony. There, behind a large green banner, Roberts sat with his family — his mom, in her 90s, was there for the occasion, and his wife Susan, their daughters and families.

At about 5:30, the party officially began when the doors to the ballroom were flung open, a rag-tag *Inquirer* staff band barged in and, behind them, a parade of all the partygoers, who streamed around waving the placards and showing the frogs. After that came the skits, mostly lampooning Roberts's insufferable habit of long silences during what, with more ordinary

folks, would be a conversation. These reduced Roberts to tears of laughter and put the crowd in a merry-making mood. The special newspapers were hawked ("Frog Leaves the Pond," screamed the lede head) and the buffet dinner was served.

The place was crawling with Niemans, too numerous a bunch to name here. Some were from Roberts's class, many were friends from different journalistic quarters. Indeed, if the only Niemans in the room would have been those from *The Inquirer*, there would have been a lot; Roberts encouraged interested staff members to be Nieman Fellows almost as eagerly as he gathered his 17 Pulitzers. On his *Inquirer* departure, 19 Niemans were employed at the newspaper.

At 8 p.m., the agglomeration gathered in the center of the room, and the Roberts entourage sat smack in mid-lily pond, so to speak, for the screening of "The Unnatural," the film tribute — a video to be exact, beamed on to a theater-size screen. It was a sort of This-Is-Your-Life collection of tales about the man, many of them hilarious, and just as many awe-struck. After the final credits, to much applause, Roberts and his wife were escorted onto a stage with a lily-pond motif (what else?) and the presentations unfolded: a huge plaque listing the Pulitzers and offering gratitude for his guidance; three bound volumes collecting letters sent to him after he had announced his retirement; a kitsch portrait on black velvet of John Wayne, which is given to the subjects of *Inquirer* milestones and has traveled back and forth across several oceans; an even kitscher portrait of Roberts as John Wayne, on black velvet; a photograph of the entire staff, shot one recent afternoon on an *Inquirer* truck ramp; a piece of jewelry for Susan, in gratitude for putting up with him and all of them.

But the singular gift of the evening was not a physical one. The staff had decided to give Roberts a living gift on the thing he likes most — journalism. Their money — to which Philadelphia Newspapers Inc. and their parent company, Knight-Ridder, added their gifts, bringing the total past \$30,000 — will endow a prize at the University of North Carolina, Roberts's alma mater. There, each year, an undergraduate journalism student will be awarded the Eugene L. Roberts Jr. prize, money to pay for the reportage of a story in the tradition of Roberts's enveloping brand of journalism.

Everyone in *The Inquirer* newsrooms seems to know what that means, but no one could, until now, describe it definitively. That task was left to associate executive editor Steve Lovelady, who wrote the official definition of the prize, from words Roberts has used about journalism over the years.

"The Eugene L. Roberts Jr. Prize is meant to encourage and is dedicated to the story of the untold event that oozes instead of breaks; to the story that reveals, not repeats; to the reporter who zigs instead of zags; to the truth as opposed to the facts; to the forest, not just the trees; to the story they'll be talking about in the coffee shop on Main Street; to the story that answers not just who, what, where, when and why, but also 'so what?'; to efforts at portraying real life itself; to journalism that 'wakes me up and makes me see'; to the revival of the disappearing storyteller."

Roberts, obviously moved, took to the microphone. "Thank you for this absolutely, utterly excessive evening," he told the partygoers, now stone-silent. "It's great to have the opportunity to see so many old friends, Nieman Fellows and friends from *The New York Times*. You have this tendency to go crazy when you give parties, but apart from that, you're almost perfect. Over the years, I couldn't have asked for a better staff."

Dancing, imbibing and general revelry resumed and continued long into the night. For many, the evening was bitter-sweet; although people appeared genuinely pleased that Roberts will have time to travel throughout the world with Susan (after that, he'll take a teaching post at the University of Maryland), no one was celebrating his departure. They celebrated, instead, the man and his journalistic largesse — and many of them were truly lucky, for the Roberts era had empowered them to practice the sort of journalism that now describes the award in his name. And for that, they were celebrating themselves.

—Howard Shapiro, NF '81

—1967—

WILLIAM F. WOO, editor of *The St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, has been presented the Lifetime Achievement Award by the Asian-American Journalists Association. Woo was honored for being a pioneer in journalism and a positive role model for

young Asian-Americans pursuing journalism careers, according to Diane Wong, the group's national executive director.

Woo, 52, was born in Shanghai. His father was Chinese; his mother American.

Woo has been editor of *The Post-Dispatch* since March 31, 1986. He has worked at the newspaper for more than 27 years and was editor of the editorial page for 11 years. He graduated from the University of Kansas at Lawrence.

Ms. Wong noted that when Woo began working in journalism, few Asian-Americans were reporters. "We're just really honored to have someone among our membership who has been such a strong pioneer for us," Wong told *The Post-Dispatch*.

The association honored Woo at its annual convention in New York City. He is only the second person to receive the award from the 1,100-member group. James Omura of *The Rocky Shingo*, a Japanese-English newspaper in Colorado, was given the award last year for his defense of Japanese-Americans who became conscientious objectors in World War II.

#### —1968—

H. BRANDT AYERS reports success for his plan to set up Heartland Foreign Fellowships for journalists of regional papers to study and travel abroad. The Gannett Foundation has agreed to be a lead foundation to help finance startup of the program and the Southern Center for International Studies will manage it. He explains how the program would work:

The program would operate through university-to-university exchanges. A domestic university would arrange for its foreign partner to provide up to three months of inter-disciplinary, tutorial-style exposure to culture, economy and politics of that nation and region. The fellows would also have an opportunity to travel within the region. They would be expected to do some writing while they were there and produce a series on their return.

The first class of eight fellows would be chosen as follows: three each from two regional associations, the Southern Newspaper Publishers Association and the Inland Press Association, and two from the Alabama Press Association. Selection committees from the associations would choose the fellows based on qualifications set by the associations, one



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of which would be knowledge of how the target nation and region affects the individual newspaper's coverage area. Only editors with substantial ability to influence content (or publishers with strong editorial orientation) would be eligible. The boards of SNPA and IPA and Alabama Press have voted to sponsor fellows in the Spring of 1991.

Three classes of fellows would be sent out and their experiences would be synthesized at a national conference, "Making Foreign Affairs A Local Story". The first class goes out in the Spring, 1991. A planning meeting for the national conference would be held in summer, 1991. In the Spring, 1992 the second class of fellows departs. Fall, 1992, third class leaves. Winter, 1992, the national conference would be held.

After the third class has returned the program would be evaluated by the Institute for International Education or a similar institution.

#### —1974—

NICHOLAS DANILOFF, Northeastern University professor, was a keynote speaker September 25 at a Boston fundraiser for the Center for Foreign Journalists. It was also a part of a series of events marking the tercentenary of the first Massachusetts newspaper, *Publick Occurrences Foreign and Domestick*. The former *US News and World Report* correspondent, who was jailed on spy charges in the Soviet Union, expressed the opinion that the new freedoms in the Soviet Union — press, speech and religion — are not reversible, even if Mikhail Gorbachev were to fall. "The Soviet leadership has come to realize, and some conservatives have had to acknowledge, that the nation needs a more open society and a much freer press," he said.

#### —1981—

The nationally syndicated strip "Kudzu" by DOUGLAS MARLETTE, cartoonist with *New York Newsday*, ran into trouble in North Carolina where *The Raleigh News & Observer* pulled it, and *The Charlotte Observer* moved it to the op-ed page and *The Winston-Salem-Journal* moved it to the editorial pages. Beginning in early October the strip poked fun at Senator Jesse Helms, Republican of North Carolina, facing re-election challenge from Harvey Gantt. Frank Daniels III, executive editor of *The Raleigh News & Observer*, explained that he did not "believe that political commentary on local elections belongs on the comic pages." Marlette's response: "They should be ashamed; they're acting like Helms themselves."

#### —1984—

DERRICK JACKSON, *Boston Globe* columnist, and his wife, Michelle, are pleased to announce the adoption of a daughter, 8-year-old Marjani Lisa Azande. As we went to press, mother, father and son, Omar, were doing well and awaiting the birth of another child.

#### —1985—

SAMUEL RACHLIN called early this fall to say he is now in Washington as bureau chief of Danish TV/2. His new address is Danish TV/2, 2030 M Street N.W., Washington, D.C.

#### —1986—

H.G. (BUZZ) BISSINGER'S best-selling book, *Friday Night Lights*, which follows the Permian High School football team of

Odessa, Texas, through the 1988 season in search of another state championship, has received mixed reaction from the players and the people of this west Texas town of just over 90,000.

Among the players, except for one, the book was well received and considered to be an honest and accurate telling of the story. However, the same is not true of the town's people. The team was placed on probation, for reasons unrelated to the book, and the anger of the fans was taken out on Buzz, who received threats of physical violence. As a result, a promotional trip to Odessa was cancelled.

In a place where football takes priority over academics, these football gods play before sell-out crowds of 20,000 worshipping fans in their \$5.6 million stadium. Most of the players are small and slow but maintain the team's winning tradition. None of the players has received athletic scholarships to college and no "name players" have gone on to be standouts in college or professional football.

*Friday Night Lights* raises interesting questions about high school athletic programs and the pressures that accompany the quest to achieve and maintain a winning program. But it is not just a book about football — it is a book about small town values.

Buzz credits his Nieman year with giving him the confidence to write the book, which is dedicated to Howard Simons, the late Nieman Curator. Since childhood he had been fascinated by stories of high school football players playing in front of 20,000 fans. After his Nieman year he took three weeks to travel across the country, mainly the southern route, before returning to *The Philadelphia Inquirer*. He was impressed by the broken-down towns that contained big, clean football ("shrines") stadiums. Odessa and Permian High School fit Mr. Bissinger's criteria for the book. He felt his year at Harvard was a "special, wonderful year" in his life and he wanted the "glow of the year" to continue. *Friday Night Lights* kept the glow alive.

Buzz Bissinger is currently a reporter with *The Chicago Tribune*.

CARMEN FIELDS, co-anchor of The 10 O'Clock News on WGBH-TV, the Boston public television station, has won the 1990 Yankee Quill Award. The citation, for "a broad influence for good in New England journalism," was given by the trustees of the New England chapter of

Sigma Delta Chi, the Society of Professional Journalists. Ms. Fields is the 31st winner of the award. She says she is especially proud because she is the first journalist of color to be so honored.

GUSTAVO GORRITI of Peru has just had his book, *Sendoro: The story of Peru's 1,000 Year War*, published. The book deals with the Maoist Shining Path guerilla movement. It is currently available only in Spanish.

—1987—

IRA ROSEN of ABC was the senior producer of Primetime Live's segment "Prisoners of Care," which was honored with a Grand Prize Consumer Journalism Award from the National Press Club. The award was presented at a September 17 luncheon at the press club in Washington. The awards are presented annually for excellence in reporting on consumer topics.

—1988—

MITSUKO SHIMOMURA visited Lippmann House early in October while on a trip to the United States. She was proud to report another first in her career. She is now editor-in-chief of the liberal weekly *Asahi Journal* of Tokyo, the first woman to head the editorial staff of a "mainstream, serious Japanese magazine dealing with international and domestic affairs." She has five deputy editors (all men!) working for her.

In 1980 Ms. Shimomura became *Asahi's* New York correspondent, the first female ever assigned to a post outside Japan. On her return to Tokyo she was promoted to senior staff writer at *Asahi Shimbun*, the first (and only) woman to hold the position. She has written more than 10 books, her latest being *Made in Japan: Akio Morita and Sony*, and has won a number of prizes.

In June ROSENTHAL CALMON ALVES, then U.S. bureau chief in Washington for *Jornal do Brasil*, was called back to Rio de Janeiro to be his paper's managing editor in charge of the Sunday magazine and the metro and weekend sections. Mr. Alves, who has kept the title of senior correspondent, spent five weeks in September and October in Baghdad, where he reported on the situation in the Middle East, including the 362 Brazilians then in Iraq.

KABRAL BLAY-AMIHERE has written an article on the political situation in the Ivory Coast for *The Index of Censorship*. Blay-Amihere, a Ghanian, is former editor of *The Free Press*, former director of the Ghana Institute of Journalism and founder editor of *The Independent*. In the article he concludes that change will come to the Ivory Coast, which has been ruled by one man, Houphouet Boigny, for 30 years. "At the ripe old age of 84, Houphouet Boigny has outlived and defeated many opponents and contemporaries," the article concludes, "but he can't outlive death. If change does not come today, in his lifetime, it will come tomorrow, after his death."

BETTY WINSTON BAYÉ an assistant Neighborhoods editor at *The Courier-Journal* in Louisville, wrote the "Shot Across the Masthead" column in the October edition of *The Bulletin* of the American Society of Newspaper Editors. In it she offered this quick test to determine a journalist's knowledge of black culture:

1. What is the Middle Passage?
2. Who were Claude McKay and Zora Neale Hurston?
3. Who wrote *The Invisible Man*?
4. SNCC was an acronym for what organization?
5. Who is John J. Johnson?

If you can't supply the right answers, she says, you are not stupid, but you may be culturally deprived. The main point of her column was that white journalists' lack of interest and apparent lack of curiosity about what's going on in Black America are not only disgraceful, but also come through in news coverage. The correct answers are:

1. The route taken by ships carrying slaves from Africa to the New World.
2. Both are Black authors. McKay wrote *The Harlem Renaissance*. Hurston's best known book was *Their Eyes Were Watching God*.
3. Ralph Ellison. The book is now an American classic.
4. Student Non-violent Coordinating Committee.
5. Publisher, chairman and CEO of *Ebony*.

TIM GIAGO, publisher of *The Lakota Times*, has received the Distinguished Service Award of the Denver Indian Center for his efforts to improve communication between Indians and non-Indians. The award was presented by Wallace Coffey, director of the center. Giago was the keynote speaker at the awards banquet October 20 at the Denver Museum.

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