

n i e m a n

\$1.25

summer 1976

ANOTHER LOOK AT SOUTH AFRICA

America's Interests — *Benjamin Pogrund*
Black Rage — *James Thomson*



REPORTING IN THE U.S. AND FRANCE

The French-American Foundation Journalists' Conference

THE INTERNATIONAL WRITERS SERVICE

Getting the Foreign Perspective — *Stanley Karnow*

ON JOINING THE GOVERNMENT

(A Personal Note) — *Joseph A. Loftus*

INVESTIGATIVE REPORTING

The Precarious Profession — *Clark R. Mollenhoff*

The Bicentennial — *"Histories are a kind of distilled newspapers."*

r e p o r t s

nieman reports

summer 1976
vol. XXX no. 2

Contents

- 3 U.S. Interests in Southern Africa
—Benjamin Pogrund
- 7 International Reporting: An Innovation—Stanley Karnow
- 11 French-American Journalists' Conference—Robert Fiess
- 19 On Joining the Government (Part I)
—Joseph A. Loftus

The Bicentennial

- 27 Excerpts from *The New York Gazette*
- 30 "America the Tree"—Charles A. Wagner
- 31 The Outsiders—Robert C. Maynard
- 37 Viewpoint: Investigative Reporting
—Clark R. Mollenhoff
- 41 Book Reviews
- 51 Associate Nieman Fellows, 1976-77
- 52 Notes on Book Reviewers

Editor—James C. Thomson Jr.

Executive Editor—Tenney K. Lehman

Associate Editor—Steven J. Erlanger

Nieman Reports is published quarterly by the Nieman Foundation at Harvard University, 48 Trowbridge Street, Cambridge, Massachusetts 02138. Subscription \$5 a year; add \$1.35 for foreign mailing. Single copies \$1.25. Third class postage paid at Boston, Massachusetts.

Copyright © 1976 by the President and Fellows of Harvard College.

Editorial

Black Rage in South Africa

On Thursday, June 17th, Harvard awarded the last and most prestigious of its eight honorary degrees to a birdlike white woman in her 50's from South Africa; and the 19,500 people present rose to their feet at once for a prolonged standing ovation. The citation read: "**Helen Suzman:** *In her nation the voice of the voiceless; the example of her unflagging courage steadfastly proclaims the possibility of universal justice.*"

The recipient was clearly moved—but also, as one discovered later, preoccupied and distraught. For at the very moment Harvard made her an honorary Doctor of Laws, scores of South African blacks—the voiceless for which she had been speaking—were being slaughtered in the second day of her country's largest urban uprising ever.

Suzman had good reason to be distraught. Not only had she stood her ground as an anti-apartheid member of Parliament since 1952—and for many bad years in the 1960's, as a party-of-one opponent of the ruling Nationalists as they methodically legislated their lily-white police state. She had also warned in three speeches in the current session of Parliament that Soweto and South Africa's other black urban ghettos were about to blow sky-high with accumulated rage and frustration unless the government began to concede minimal rights to the nation's overwhelming black majority.

Her speeches had gone unheeded. In the aftermath of the urban violence, the Nationalists have admitted that even their omnipresent security police had been taken unawares. And then, of course, has come the inevitable follow-up: dark allegations from Prime Minister Vorster and Justice Minister Kruger of outside "agitators" who stirred up the otherwise friendly natives. To some readers in America and elsewhere the Vorster-Kruger allegations might sound reasonable. Even *The New York Times* correspondents were reporting on Soweto and Alexandra as if they were Watts or Detroit or Washington in our own famous summer of black outrage and the burnings of cities.

But there is a gigantic and fundamental difference, too often swept aside. Whites in South Africa are not only a small minority—four million people, as opposed to 20 million non-whites; they also control virtually all wealth and, absolutely, all political power. The non-white majority is denied the vote in all significant institutions, beginning with Parliament; blacks are denied the ownership of property in

(Continued on page 36)

United States Interests In Southern Africa

By Benjamin Pogrund

Many factors have combined to ensure for Southern Africa the prominence it has received in the United States during recent months. The most obvious and striking reason is South Africa's racial violence, with day-by-day reports, analyses, and commentaries in newspapers, on television and radio. Soweto has become a headline word, as Sharpeville was during the 1960's, conveying to the American public the concept of *apartheid* and its destructive consequences.

There can be no doubting that an important element of the high degree of interest is that it is a racial conflict, thus encompassing the issue of our times. More, it is a racial conflict in the world's most deliberately racist society. Even so, the sustained and concentrated attention is extraordinary—and the ultimate explanation would seem to be that Soweto and the subsequent disturbances occurred just as American concern about Africa in general and Southern Africa in particular was increasing. Soweto accelerated the process: it sharpened the interest, deepened the concern, and heightened the alarm.

All this is natural. There is every reason for American attention. The only surprise should be that it has taken so long to manifest itself—with, however, a ready answer in the decade-long national obsession with Vietnam followed hard by Watergate.

Not that Africa and Southern Africa have anywhere near the priority in American minds that these issues did (although there is a view that this could still happen). But an African consciousness has been developing rapidly in the decision-making levels of American foreign and business policy, while among the public at large there is what can perhaps best be described as a fascinated horror as the spotlight has fixed on *apartheid* South Africa. Reports of riots and of policemen shooting and clubbing black school-

children have led to wider examinations of migratory labor, poverty wages, detention without trial, bannings, and the other unsavory aspects of the South African practices aimed at preserving white hegemony.

But it needs to be noted that outside academic and official circles, Americans generally know extremely little about Africa and South Africa. When Soweto first erupted in June, shortly after my arrival in the United States, I was being asked to explain the difference between an African and an Afrikaner! Even among black Americans, who profess the strongest interest, the lack of knowledge can be marked to the extent even of geographical confusion about the location of Nigeria and South Africa. There can be wild talk, unrelated to any reality, about how South Africa's blacks will rise up one night and sweep everything before them; there is often ignorance about the totality of white power; utter ignorance, too, about the role of white liberals in opposition, and a lack of understanding about the cultural gap between black Americans and tribal blacks, as well as about the depth of white roots in Southern Africa. Questioned about their image of South Africa, black Americans tend to resort to generalizations like, "It's where blacks need a passport to walk in the streets," and "It's a spooky place."

Yet overriding the often foggy grasp of detail, I have also found in personal encounters with Americans, both whites and blacks, an essential understanding of the racism that lies at the core of South Africa's existence. Among blacks especially it arouses intense anger and resentment, even though

Benjamin Pogrund, an Assistant Editor and political columnist of the Rand Daily Mail (Johannesburg, South Africa), is currently in the midst of six months with The Boston Globe. He has been made an Honorary Nieman Fellow.

as recently as August 26th a black journalist, Viola Osgood, wrote in *The Boston Globe*: "The most depressing thing about all the bad news coming out of South Africa is the apparent lack of passion that that nation's *apartheid* policies evoke in many black Americans." If anything, Ms. Osgood's complaint, coming at this stage, serves to underline the fact that American blacks are looking more critically at South Africa and are starting to question what their role should be.

This apart, Angola late last year acted as the main initiator of a revised U.S. attitude. The Russo-Cuban involvement, whether it came before or after South Africa's military intervention, brought with it a new and urgent awareness that American and Western strategic interests could stand imperiled—particularly if the disrupting influences stretched into the adjoining conflict areas of Rhodesia and

Soweto has become a headline word, as Sharpeville was during the 1960's, conveying to the American public the concept of *apartheid* and its destructive consequences.

Namibia, and later into South Africa.

This peril can be seen to have galvanized Secretary of State Henry Kissinger into action. His unsuccessful effort to bring about a greater United States involvement to stem the MPLA in Angola has been followed by his initiatives in the other parts of the sub-continent.

Coming to the fore, and obviously a prime motivation for everything now happening, is recognition of Southern Africa's strategic importance. This derives firstly from the Cape sea route: even with the reopening of the Suez Canal, at least 60 percent of Europe's oil travels by tanker from the Middle East around the southern tip of Africa. Secondly, and of similar import, there has been the gradual build-up of Soviet power in the Indian Ocean. Thirdly, there is the abundance of strategic minerals found in the sub-continent. Attention is usually focused on Rhodesia's chrome; what is not generally realized is that the U.S. obtains 25 percent of her chrome needs from South Africa. And while South Africa is invariably associated with gold and diamonds, it is seldom noted that the country is also rich in just about every mineral required by modern society, whether titanium and vanadium or coal and uranium. Fourthly, the West has strong economic ties with South Africa: though only somewhat over one percent of U.S. foreign investment is located there, South Africa is vital to Britain's economic existence and is a major and invaluable trading partner of countries such as West Germany, Japan and France.

No Western statesman in his right mind can therefore

afford to ignore shifts in the area. And shifts there are now aplenty. With the collapse of Portuguese colonial rule in 1974, the structure of white control has become eroded. It has ended in Mozambique and Angola, is under intense threat in Rhodesia, under pressure in Namibia, and has unleashed widespread violence in South Africa. In other words, the *status quo* which was so comfortable to Western interests no longer exists. A new pattern must be developed.

With the strategic motivation, there has also been the role played by domestic interest groups in the United States. For some years a Southern African lobby has sought to influence U.S. policy against the white regimes. It has gained little top-level support, but has recently begun to make its mark on multinational corporations, embarrassing some of them into reviewing and even revising the treatment of their black workers in South Africa. This has coincided with, or may even have helped to stimulate what Richard Young, a Boston stockbroker specializing in analysis of the gold market, describes as a greater sense of "morality" on the part of corporation boards and investors of pension funds about where their money is placed. He believes, for example, that statements by South African government leaders induce feelings of shock in such men and are a factor in their shying away from South African investment.

And as part of the domestic scene there is, of course, the black lobby centered on Congress. While it represents a sizeable constituency, its full potential has not yet been realized (and is unlikely to be for as long as such sizeable numbers of blacks—about 40 percent at the time of writing—are not registered to vote). Nonetheless, the lobby does have a degree of power and will have a considerably stronger voice if Governor Jimmy Carter captures the

There is every reason for American attention. The only surprise should be that it has taken so long to manifest itself. . . .

Presidency in November. It is widely acknowledged that Carter owes a goodly part of his success in gaining the Democratic Presidential nomination to black support, and that he will be particularly responsive to black aspirations whether at home or in foreign relations. According to one of those close to the Governor, his own history as a Southerner makes him especially aware of racial discrimination and its effects.

Until now, the black lobby's interest in South Africa has been sporadic and patchy, not always as informed as it could be, and with little concerted drive or purpose. This too, however, shows signs of changing and is contributing to the

new U.S. attitude. There is a growing emotional identification with the cause of blacks in Africa—a still dimly-perceived notion that the discrimination to which America's blacks are subjected is part of a total discrimination against people of color; and hence, that the complete freedom of Africa's blacks is a prerequisite to the total emancipation of America's blacks.

That the black vote lying behind the Congressional lobby cannot be ignored has been shown more recently also by the Republicans who have been seeking its support. On August 23rd, Secretary Kissinger received a delegation of eight American blacks led by the Chicago-based activist, the Rev. Jesse Jackson. The delegation was intent on broadening the base of American concern about Africa and on exerting greater black influence on official policy; Secretary Kissinger, according to a *New York Times* report, in his turn was interested in developing the "strongest possible" constituency for his new policy on Africa. At the end of August, Secretary Kissinger spoke to a largely black audience at the Opportunities Industrialization Center's convention in Philadelphia: he made his sharpest remarks to date on pressing South Africa for racial equality, in what the press described as part of a campaign by the Ford Administration to obtain American black support for its African policy. And at the start of August, even before President Ford had won the Republican nomination and at a time when he was still sensitive to conservative attack for the Administration's earlier condemnation of white rule, Kissinger spoke in Boston to the annual convention of the National Urban League.

His speeches are prominent among the recent statements, actions, and articles which illuminate the motivation and shape of American interest in Southern Africa, and this

... The complete freedom of Africa's blacks is a prerequisite to the total emancipation of America's blacks.

speech in particular deserves examination, due as much to its audience as to its content.

With some amplifications, Boston was a repetition of Kissinger's much-publicized policy speech in Lusaka in April. The repetition was significant because it was delivered to the Urban League's largely black audience. Kissinger, it is known, had sought such a platform: he had wanted to speak at an earlier conference of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, but conflicting dates had made it impossible. So the Urban League was given the chance to be his host.

The occasion was especially noteworthy because it

was—astonishingly—the first time that a U.S. Secretary of State had spoken to an American black gathering about Africa. As is known, Kissinger put his foot in it through his evasive responses to questions about blacks in the State Department and U.S. investment in South Africa. Which is a pity, because the ruckus overshadowed the fine things he said.

The cynical, or realistic, will say that morality and sentiment hardly feature in the determination of U.S. foreign policy; that Secretary Kissinger in particular is an exponent of a stark *Realpolitik*. However that may be, Kissinger's Boston address was a sensitive and sympathetic view of Africa. Expressing concepts that, because of their "softness," would normally go unreported in the public press, he spoke of a continent "emasculated by a cruel legacy of

Until now, the black lobby's interest in South Africa has been sporadic and patchy, not always as informed as it could be, and with little concerted drive or purpose.

history"; bearing "a crushing burden of poverty"; "the chronic victim of natural disaster, . . . dependent on the world economy to an extraordinary degree."

And, in stirring terms, he said that history linked America to Africa in a special bond:

The heritage and the struggle of 23 million black Americans has inspired throughout this country a profound awareness of—and support for—the aspirations of the African peoples who seek their freedom and their future against great odds. In this generation the assertion of black nationhood in Africa has coincided with the new affirmation of equality, dignity, and justice in the United States. Americans know that the values their country stands for—peace, equality, economic opportunity, and national independence—are today being tested in Africa as nowhere else in the world.

From the "moral imperatives" behind America's African policy, Kissinger then discussed the "practical considerations": the immense size of Africa, strategically located with nearly 50 nations of increasing influence on the world scene; its vast natural resources, essential elements of the global economy; direct U.S. investment and trade growing apace; Africa's importance to America as a producer of energy and commodities and as a market already substantial and bound to grow, one important also to other industrialized democracies.

After these thoughts, Kissinger moved on to the "global challenges," clearly revealing their role in this new official interest in Africa. Equally clearly, the Angolan episode and

the drive to ensure that Communist influence (or more) goes no further was behind his declaration of the independence of African nations and of the need to keep Great Power rivalry out of the continent. Consequently, then, the U.S. dedication to use its power and prestige "in the search for negotiated solutions in Southern Africa before time [runs] out." Hence the fresh impetus for developing economic aid schemes for Africa, and the fresh impetus for trying to influence the resolution of the racial problems in Rhodesia, Namibia, and South Africa. And hence, since then, the shuttle diplomacy into which Kissinger has thrown himself.

In his Philadelphia speech, the Secretary pursued all of these matters with even greater vigor, and went into especial detail about the cooperative interest of the United States in the continent's economic problems. What is promised, in this and every other aspect of existence, is an exciting commitment to support and to help. Put into practice, it could have dramatically beneficial effects for Africa.

Reverting to the Urban League convention and to the non-governmental area, it was also significant that executive director Vernon Jordan devoted so much of his keynote

Never mind whether [Kissinger] is doing it for love of Africa or for the sake of the strategic interests of the United States and the West. The fate of all the peoples of Southern Africa is at stake, and anything the U.S. can do to avert the threatening racial cataclysm must be welcome.

address to the subject of South Africa. As a director of Xerox Corporation, Jordan had been to South Africa three weeks before. His passionate condemnation of "the horrors wrought by an oppressive *apartheid* system against black people denied jobs, education, and the fundamental rights of human beings" went in tandem with his call for a new Bill of Rights for America's blacks.

Africa was their "motherland," he said. Blacks were, firstly, tied to the continent by bonds of race and origin. Secondly, they were Americans, and "our interest in our country's future demands we take an active interest in its foreign policy, most especially when that foreign policy has ignored Black Africa while supporting the white supremacist governments of Southern Africa."

The identification with South Africa's blacks led Jordan to tell the U.S. government not merely to make clear that it found *apartheid* intolerable, but to act to push South Africa to change. Just how, he did not specify, but he did turn to specifics in dealing with the role of American businesses

with interests in South Africa. Rejecting withdrawal of investment, he proposed instead a Corporate Alliance for Black Progress—a joint declaration by U.S. corporations to include a statement to the South African government opposing *apartheid* and urging justice for blacks. To accompany this statement, demands for changes in labor laws that American companies say block their efforts to upgrade black workers and pay them fair wages; standards of social responsibility setting forth specific steps each company pledges to follow in the areas of affirmative action, education, and housing; a promise to disregard the trappings of "petty" *apartheid*, removing racial signs on company premises and integrating facilities; a moratorium on future investment in South Africa until some signs of changed policy are given; and a refusal to invest in the "homeland" areas so long as they remain the cornerstone of a policy denying black South Africans full South African citizenship.

The point can be made—and must be made—that Vernon Jordan's call is unlikely to lead to anything concrete. The Urban League is not only a conservative organization, but also relies for its funding on many of the corporations against whom it would have to exert pressure if it wanted to make its call effective. And as Jordan himself readily admits in conversation, this is the first time in the League's 66-year history that it has ventured into the field of foreign affairs: it is uncertain how to translate its desires into meaningful action. But whatever the weaknesses, a moral stand has been taken; it can be seen as part of the developing interest in Southern Africa among American blacks.

At a more general level—but presenting views of exceptional significance—is Roger Morris, a former staffer of the National Security Council, whose article, "South African Unmentionables," was published in the June 26th issue of *The New Republic*. Writing before Soweto first exploded on June 19th, he included among the "most likely" possibilities "neither swift collapse nor negotiated settlement, but rather a long and savage race war in Southern Africa."

Morris projected the implications of such a war for the United States:

... its release in turn of a still strong and thinly-hidden racist impulse in the U.S. Congress and the country; and the wider, potentially ominous impact of bloody black and white warfare brought before the American public in living color, with incalculable implications for our own domestic peace. ... Southern Africa threatens to become a foreign policy issue unlike any other in recent history, and the most divisive since Vietnam.

There, encapsulated, is the real and dangerous bond between the United States and Southern Africa. As the United States, in its Bicentennial year, with all the rhetoric of rededication to its founding principles, obscures the lingering but still potent disabilities to which its citizens of

color are subject, across the ocean all the horrific results of color discrimination can be seen openly.

As Morris perceptively goes on to say about America:

In an extraordinary way the Southern African crisis may bring together a number of forces we have not learned to control—the random emotional power of television news, the white racism uncured by a decade of civil progress, the black rage still coursing beneath poverty and discrimination, the immeasurable psychological scars and paralysis of will following the Vietnam defeat.

Hitherto, he maintains, there has been vacillation and hypocrisy in U.S. diplomacy towards Southern Africa, American policy effectively supporting the white minorities while ritualistically condemning racism. Looking at the Kissinger initiative announced in Lusaka, Morris argues that practical measures are needed for the U.S. “to stand clearer of the white states and also signal them that the new policy is more than common verbiage.”

Kissinger's drive to mediate between white and black must rank as being the most positive of the possible U.S. responses. Never mind whether he is doing it for love of Africa or for the sake of the strategic interests of the United States and the West. The fate of all the peoples of Southern Africa is at stake, and anything the U.S. can do to avert the threatening racial cataclysm must be welcome. Whether Kissinger can succeed, however, remains to be seen. Certainly, at the time of writing, the odds are massively against any easy or early solution: white power is too entrenched and too determined about the rightness of its cause to be willing to give way. One dearly hopes that Kissinger fully understands the realities—and, even more, hopes that his striving to protect U.S. and Western interests will not lead him into seeking to maintain the *status quo* of white supremacy, with only some change in the outward appearance.

Some progress is conceivable in Namibia, if only because such progress is in accord with South Africa's own long-term policy perceptions. In Rhodesia, the attainment of a peaceful transition to true majority rule remains difficult; even when achieved, internal stresses and disunities could continue to create severe problems. For South Africa, any kind of majority rule is not even a possibility at this stage.

What is sure is that American interest in Africa, now aroused, is not going to disappear. No matter whether Kissinger remains as Secretary of State after the November election: this will not be one of those fashionable issues of fleeting moment. It cannot be, because the factors that have brought about the American interest are going to remain; indeed, if anything, they will intensify during the foreseeable future, as Southern Africa in particular becomes yet more critical.

The United States can no longer neglect Africa.

International Reporting: An Innovation

By Stanley Karnow

Journalistic innovations are not always easy to promote. Publishers tend to be wary of added costs, and editors often resist fresh ideas that do not fit the formulas to which their readers are accustomed. Space in newspapers is chronically tight, and recent economic difficulties have made it even tighter. So it is both surprising and gratifying that the International Writers Service, which Anne Chamberlin and I launched last spring, should be making such remarkable headway.

The International Writers Service is a non-profit agency designed to furnish the U.S. press with articles that describe and analyze how Western Europe and Japan cope with the kinds of social, economic, technological, and political problems that also concern Americans. In other words, we are trying to focus on the questions that preoccupy modern industrial societies in the hope that we can perhaps learn something from others. Why are medical malpractice suits rare in Britain? What are the French doing to improve their cities? How are the Japanese fighting pollution? Why are relations between labor and management so good in Germany? Do consumers really get a better break in Sweden? Or, to continue the list, how do gun controls function in Japan, why is the British social security system effective, what underlies the heavy turnout at German elections? And so forth.

The unique feature of the Service is that the articles are produced by European and Japanese journalists—among them such distinguished figures as David Watt of the *London Financial Times*, Wolfgang Wagner of the *Hannoversche Allgemeine Zeitung*, François Dupuis of *Le Nouvel Observateur*, Mario Deaglio of *La Stampa*, and Yasushi Hara, the chief economic editor of the *Asahi Shimbun*. Altogether we have 18 contributors spread through Britain, West Germany, France, Italy, Scandinavia, Canada, and Japan. Their pieces therefore reflect an indigenous perspective rather than the observations of outsiders, and this, I submit, is significant. For I can testify, having worked for more than 20 years as a correspondent in Europe and Asia, that foreign reporters never quite penetrate an alien culture no matter

Stanley Karnow, Nieman Fellow '58, is the Editor of the International Writers Service, and writes a syndicated newspaper column on foreign policy, as well as a column for Newsweek International. He has been a reporter for The Washington Post, Time, and Associate Editor of The New Republic.

how well they get to know it. Thus the contributors to the International Writers Service are relating how "we" deal with problems rather than how "they" handle them.

Our purpose is not to replace the American correspondent abroad but to supplement his output, and the success of the Service so far can be measured by the number of U.S. newspapers using its material. These include *The Washington Post*, *Chicago Tribune*, *Los Angeles Times*, *Newsday*, *Miami Herald*, *Minneapolis Tribune*, *Nashville Tennessean*, *Cincinnati Post*, *San Diego Union*, *San Francisco Chronicle*, *Sacramento Bee*, *Rocky Mountain News*, *Detroit News*, *Birmingham Post*, *Anniston Star* and even the weekly *Havre de Grace* (Md.) *Record*. Every now and again we dis-

cover that papers are using the material without informing us, largely because they lack the staff to send in clippings. They may also lack the money to pay for articles.

Although the Service is a foundation-supported operation—more of which I will explain below—almost all the newspapers prefer to pay for the pieces. Some pay a regular subscription, as they do for commercially-syndicated stuff, while others pay on a usage basis. We also have a unique arrangement with *The Wall Street Journal*, which purchases the Service for ideas that can be assigned to its own correspondents overseas, since it only publishes articles by staff members. Not long ago, for example, *The Journal* ran a long piece from its Paris man on the declining

How the British Beat Malpractice Costs

By Rudolf Klein

(Klein, an associate of the Center for Studies in Social Policy in London, writes on social problems in Britain.)

LONDON—When British doctors discuss the possibility of emigrating to the United States, as happens from time to time, one of them will sooner or later mutter the word "malpractice." A horrified silence will fall on the company, as someone points out that in California a surgeon's insurance policy may amount to as much as a British doctor's entire yearly income.

The subject will soon be changed. Those present will reflect that, while Britain's medical system may have its frustrations, malpractice is not among them.

British doctors can, of course, be sued for negligence in the courts just like everyone else. But such actions are exceptional events. They make the headlines because of their rarity and not, as in the United States, because of their frequency.

The scale of the problem can, indeed, be accurately measured by the activities of the Medical Defense Union and the Medical Protection Society. All British doctors protect themselves against actions for negligence by taking out a subscription with one or the other of these two nonprofit bodies, which are in effect controlled by the medical profession itself. In return, they get legal advice and support, as well as indemnities for any damages that may be awarded against them.

In 1974, the latest year for which figures are available, the two groups together paid out only \$2.5 million in legal fees and indemnity payments. This is the equivalent of less than \$40 for each of Britain's 70,000 doctors. And even these payments exaggerate the story, since both organizations include among their members doctors working in Canada, South Africa, and other Commonwealth countries.

So it is not surprising that the annual subscription to the Medical Protection Society, for instance, is a mere \$80, a figure which may perhaps prompt some American doctors to start thinking of moving to Britain.

What explains the contrast between the American and the British experiences? Writing from Britain, it is tempting to suggest that the British National Health Service is superior to the American system of medical care, and therefore malpractice suits are unnecessary. But this is oversimplification. There are a great many possible explanations for the difference.

One is that British lawyers are not permitted to accept cases on a contingency fee basis. Aggrieved patients considering an action for negligence know that they will have to pay the legal costs themselves if they fail. Moreover, the lawyers advising them probably have little or no experience in handling negligence claims against the medical profession, while the doctor will be backed by the legal experts of the Medical Defense Union or the Medical Protection Society.

The legal dice are therefore loaded against the patient, all the more so since doctors are notoriously reluctant to give evidence in court against colleagues.

The other reason for the rarity of malpractice suits is connected with the nature of the National Health Service. Britain's tax-supported Service offers free medical care to all patients, and there are no direct payments to doctors for services rendered. Patients tend to be extremely grateful for the care received, as all public opinion surveys indicate. Equally, the doctor is not seen as enriching himself at the patient's expense. The relationship is not perceived as a financial or commercial one where the aim must be to prevent cheating and assure value for money.

Also, there is an elaborate machinery, dating back to 1911, for dealing with patient grievances against general practitioners. More recently, a national ombudsman was appointed to deal with complaints in the hospital sector. The system is still being developed, and has been much criticized for excluding complaints about the clinical competence of doctors. But at least it offers a safety valve, and may present some grievances from escalating into malpractice suits.

Looking at the American experience with malpractice suits, therefore, the British may complacently congratulate themselves. But self-congratulation ought to be tinged with self-doubt. The U.S. health care system has created the demanding patient, who is inclined to rush off to the courts if things go wrong. The British system, in contrast, has created the deferential patient, who is inclined to suffer in silence.

No doubt the British situation offers an easier life to the medical profession. It is less clear, however, whether it also offers better protection to the consumer. British consumers may need less protection than Americans. The National Health Service offers doctors fewer direct financial incentives to achieve excellence than the American system—but it provides no incentives at all to carry out unnecessary operations and procedures.

(International Writers Service—April 29, 1976)

The Real Strength Of Italy's Communists

By Mario Deaglio

(Deaglio writes for *La Stampa*, the *Turin daily*)

TURIN—Italy's Communist Party is a powerful force—and is likely to remain so—because it is regarded by numbers of Italians as the most effective social movement in the country.

Thus the outcome of the recent elections, while important, must be considered less significant than the fact that the Communists are deeply implanted in our society—even more so in many areas than the Catholic Church, which has been functioning here for nearly 2,000 years.

The greatest strength of the Communists is that, unlike our other political parties, they have managed to give people what I would call a "sense of belonging."

This is particularly true in the suburbs surrounding Turin, Milan, Genoa and other industrial cities, where working-class families living in the anonymity of large housing developments have lost their identity along with the community feeling that once existed in small urban neighborhoods or in peasant villages.

In these places—and increasingly in middle-class districts—the Communists avoid Marxist doctrine and focus instead on local issues. They talk about the necessity for new hospitals, schools and bus stops rather than the need for revolution.

Like Tammany Hall and the other American political machines of the past, their local branches are also responsive to the problems of average citizens. They act, in short, as public interest lobbies.

In addition, the Communists often provide the only entertainment in many regions by sponsoring festivals and fairs. Parents anxious to keep their children off the streets enroll them in Communist youth groups or Communist-run summer camps.

With all this, the actual performance of the Communists in the cities they control has not been brilliant.

Bologna, which they have managed for 30 years, is visibly cleaner than most Italian cities. But according to economic indicators, it is no more prosperous than similar towns in northern Italy.

Nor are the Communists immune to corruption, as they demonstrated in Parma, where members of their administration have been jailed for malpractice in town planning. In other cities, they are known to favor Communist cooperatives with building contracts.

But in the eyes of many Italian businessmen, Communist corruption is acceptable because it is predictable. As the owner of a small construction firm explained to me: "With other politicians, the bribes keep piling up. When you pay off a Communist, it sticks."

In their efforts to woo Italy's businessmen, the Communists have frequently asserted their respect for the "market mechanism" and defended "reasonable profits" for private companies.

Their program is opposed as well to further nationalization of industry. But this is a somewhat specious position, since so much of Italy's industry already belongs to the state that the economy could easily be socialized.

Another motive underlying the moderation of the Communists, especially on economic matters, is their realization that Italy, dependent as it is on foreign trade, could not survive more than a few weeks without Western support.

It is largely for this reason that they carefully refrained during the election campaign from spouting anti-American slogans—even though the United States clearly brought pressure to bear against them. For this reason, too, they would prefer to join a coalition with the Christian Democrats rather than rule alone—at least at the present stage.

I do not doubt that the Communists eventually want to establish a Communist regime in Italy. But they seem to have scrapped the old Marxist idea that the end justifies the means. They have been behaving in a civilized, tolerant, human manner, and their influence is here to stay.

(International Writers Service—June 21, 1976)

fashion in France for graduates of American business schools. The subject had originally surfaced in an article by Jacqueline Grapin of *Le Monde*, who writes on French economic topics for the Service.

Managing an operation of this sort is somewhat like being the contractor who built the Tower of Babel. For journalists, however talented they may be, are essentially national, and adapting their contributions to the reading habits of Americans is not simple.

We have found, in the first place, that European journalists are inclined to be in the discursive rather than reportorial tradition—which means that they are often given to large intellectual generalizations without bulwarking their statements with hard evidence. As a result, we sometimes have to query them for anecdotes or facts that lend credibility to their arguments. Recently, for instance, we received a piece from a London contributor who made the interesting point that the British view American elections as a sport, in much the same way they follow horse-racing, and that Brit-

ain's leading bookmakers even quote changing odds on the contest. We had to telephone the contributor for the latest odds, since he had not thought to mention them in his piece.

Then there is the matter of style, which is just what you might expect it to be. The Germans can be ponderous, and they not only put the verb at the end of the sentence but the lead often comes at the end of the article. The pieces from France often resemble soufflés that are tasty in their original version but quickly evaporate after translation into English. The Japanese, on the other hand, sometimes turn in statistical reports that lack any synthesis, while the British often seem to prove Churchill's contention that Britain and the United States are two nations separated by the same language.

Thus we must not only translate but transliterate—which, to put it more simply, means rewriting pieces so that they have a beginning, a middle, and an end, and do not overly tax the intellects of Americans as they strive to cope simultaneously with their newspapers and their breakfast. I prob-

ably would have preferred our articles to retain more of their exotic flavor than they do. But, I fear, they would have read like Robert Benchley's famous pastiche of the Paris press, and that is not a regular diet for anyone.

We find, too, that the Service works better when we propose subjects to the European and Japanese writers than the other way round. We frequently rely on client editors for advice, since they can tell us what topics might interest their readers, and we often try to distribute pieces that are timely. When Proposition 13 was up for a vote in California

. . . I can testify, having worked for more than 20 years as a correspondent in Europe and Asia, that foreign reporters never quite penetrate an alien culture no matter how well they get to know it.

in June, for example, we got our German science writer, Thomas Von Randow of *Die Zeit*, to produce an article on the protests in Germany against nuclear energy plants. Similarly, our British science writer, Bryan Silcock of *The Sunday Times of London*, delivered a piece on the drug problem in Britain as a result of a request from Gerald Warren of the *San Diego Union* that we look into how the narcotics issue is handled abroad. We try to consult as much as possible both with the writers overseas and editors at home, but there are inevitably flaws in the system. Despite my pleas to the contrary, one European contributor insisted on doing an article on the intricacies of the Common Market currency exchange "snake." It was returned with a polite rejection slip—which, I should add, the writer accepted courteously. We did lose one contributor, however, who persisted in sending us abstract "thumbsuckers" on U.S. foreign policy as seen from Rome, replete with citations from *Foreign Affairs* and *The Economist*. He did not accept his rejection slips courteously, and we parted company.

The International Writers Service began to take shape back in the spring of last year, when I was approached by Benjamin H. Read, the president of the German Marshall Fund of the United States. The German Marshall Fund had been started in 1972 with a no-strings-attached grant from West German Chancellor Willy Brandt as a memorial to the Marshall Plan, and its objective was to foster international understanding. Read asked me to look into the possibility of a journalistic enterprise that would highlight "the problems common to industrial societies," as their charter goes, and I began by sounding out U.S. editors on articles by European and Japanese contributors. Among the most encouraging

editors at that initial stage were Philip Foisie and Philip Geyelin of *The Washington Post*, Charles Bailey of the *Minneapolis Tribune*, John Seigenthaler of the *Nashville Tennessean*, Walter Friedenberg of the *Cincinnati Post*, and Gerald Warren of the *San Diego Union*.

With that I lined up a number of European writers, and, at the same time, the Aspen Institute joined the German Marshall Fund in sponsoring the project. It was under the auspices of the Aspen Institute that we brought together several of the European writers and a group of American editors in West Berlin in order to kick around ideas, and that meeting was valuable in itself as an exercise in breaking through the "culture barrier." For it revealed, to me at least, that while journalists of different countries belong to an international confraternity, they still mirror distinct national attitudes.

We had planned to begin distributing articles in late March, but one small obstacle remained to be hurdled. Discussing the project with one American editor, I learned that it was imperative that we distribute "scannable" copy, especially for many small newspapers that lack the personnel to prepare material for their scanners. As a consequence, Anne Chamberlin became involved in acquiring the proper IBM typewriter and ball, and lining up a Washington outfit that could duplicate our material to meet the technological requirements. The delay was an education for

. . . We must not only translate but transliterate . . . rewriting pieces so that they have a beginning, a middle, and an end, and do not overly tax the intellect of Americans as they strive to cope simultaneously with their newspapers and their breakfast.

us both, but we finally managed. The footnote to the story is that I discovered, on revisiting the editor who had initially counseled me on how to prepare our material, that the scanner at his newspaper had been broken for months, and we might just as well have been sending him copy on the backs of brown paper bags.

After five months, I think that our venture is on track, and our principal problem at the moment is expansion. The major newspapers are receiving the International Writers Service and using it, but we must spread out to many of the smaller publications that, in my estimation, ought to be interested in the down-to-earth stuff we provide. That will probably take time. Until now, however, it seems to me that we have demonstrated that a good idea well executed can take hold—and that the newspaper business, with all its rigidities, is still flexible and receptive to change.

French and American Journalism

By Robert Feiss

The new and—in some ways—unique French-American Foundation declares one goal: to “encourage problem-solving by professionals of France and the United States in areas of common concern and to promote better understanding between key groups of the two countries.” As the very first step to achieve this legitimate but difficult task, the Foundation decided to bring together French and American journalists and give them the opportunity to exchange views—on each other’s press, on the ways in which each country is seen by the other’s readers, viewers, or listeners.

It was a striking idea (when government policies are lacking, who else but the press can promote a better understanding between two countries!) and—for a kind of *Bap-tême du feu*—a rather good PR shot.

The conference was held on the 15th of May, on the eve of President Giscard d’Estaing’s visit to the United States, at the School of Advanced International Studies at Johns Hopkins University in Washington. Twelve leading journalists of each country attended, as well as many observers. For a full day they participated in panel discussions on such topics as the styles and traditions of reporting in France and the U.S.; media audiences and influences on public opinion; stereotypes of and misunderstandings about each other’s country; covering the presidency at L’Elysée or at the White House. The conference closed with a plenary session on the problems of reporting foreign policy, attended—on this muggy Saturday afternoon—by some one hundred and fifty guests, the so-called “consumers” of foreign news from the diplomatic corps, government and industry.

On the whole—thanks to the excellent presentation on both sides—the discussions matched the expectations of the organizers. As one observer remarked, “The points of the program were well adhered to. No one slumbered or ducked out. The atmosphere happened to be a very favorable one. Hardly any of the participants did not know or had not worked with at least one or two of the others. Hardly any of them had not had an outstanding experience when reporting on the others’ country. So the conference started with an advantage of definite homogeneity.”

But it was precisely this homogeneity, in my opinion, that must be questioned. Although there was common agreement among the participants that in both countries most

people get their information mainly from television, American television was scarcely represented at the conference and French television had sent only one representative. One had also to regret the nearly complete absence on both sides of the wire services—one representative from l’Agence France Presse, none from the American services—and from the regional or local press, only one representative, from the Bordeaux paper, *Sud-Ouest*.

Their minimal representation was regrettable, for, in my view, the problem is not so much the intensity and quality of reporting—and the difficulties bound with it—in *The New York Times* or in *Le Monde*, in *Newsweek* or *L’Express*. At least they report foreign news, even if in very different styles.

As I see it, the conference would have been much more successful if, with the help of a broader list of participants, it also had reflected on the obstacles and the means to extend the coverage and the diversity of foreign news in less “elitist” newspapers or magazines, as well as on television or in the regional papers. Today, the problem is not the information the New York broker (sometimes overinformed)

Today, the problem is not the information the New York broker (sometimes overinformed) has or can get—but the information the Idaho milkman has—generally misinformed, if not uninformed, about foreign countries.

has or can get—but the information that the Idaho milkman has—generally misinformed, if not uninformed, about foreign countries.

We exchanged views and facts, opinions and anecdotes in the true sense of the Foundation’s general purpose. And there was, at least, one example of what this can produce: a French journalist was asked by one of *The New York Times* participants to write an article for that paper on the supersonic plane Concorde, giving the French point of view such as he had presented it during one of the panels. (The article, “The Concorde is Flying—Let It Land,” appeared on May 30th.)

But the question remains: how constructive have we been? A full written record of the encounter is available from the French-American Foundation; 684 Park Avenue; New York, New York 10021; (212) 734-7344. It should be read in all schools and faculties dealing with journalism in

M. Fiess, Associate Nieman Fellow '76, came to Harvard from *L’Express*, where he was a general editor and correspondent. Back in France, he is currently working on a book about his family’s extended stay in the United States.

the United States as well as in France. For the coming generations of journalists it surely will be an appreciable document of some of the problems they will face if they happen to go into the noble art of foreign policy reporting.

Excerpts follow, with the kind permission of the French-American Foundation:

The Influence of The Media on Opinion

Mr. Wahl questioned: "What is the journalist's responsibility for educating and explaining? And is it toward the elites?"

Mr. Kraft answered that if a journalist wants to change things he must address well-defined groups rather than mass opinion. The audience—200 million activists—form their feelings from the rich experiences of daily life, and even *The Washington Post*, *The New York Times*, and *Time* cannot hope to change basic attitudes of people who don't give a damn about foreign news and foreign people. Mr. Chace believed foreign news is, in fact, aimed at the elites.

Mr. Redmont characterized the general feeling for foreign places: "Never go abroad, it's a dreadful place." He insisted that the journalist must combat this with information rather than stereotypes. Yet a recent survey of the dimensions and character of information on five U.S. news developments that had appeared in the leading French media revealed significant gaps in information essential for understanding. (The written press was judged to be better than television; *Le Monde* was selected as best of the newspapers.)

Mr. Goldsborough believed that readers' misperceptions do reflect what they have been reading. Thus a lot of their misinformation is the fault of the media. In order to interest readers, the journalist is faced with the dilemma of how to write a story the editors will accept, yet keep it accurate. A news story on Charles de Gaulle, the challenger, was easier to write than one on Giscard d'Estaing and his more pro-American policy. Mr. Chace noted that European correspondents currently tend to cover personalities. Germany may be a focus of news interest not necessarily because Germany is more powerful, but because Helmut Schmidt is more attention-getting than Giscard d'Estaing.

M. Tatu stated that a reporter cannot engender interest where there is no story. M. de Segonzac agreed that the big story will get published. The difficult one to tell is the economic story of a country. For example, that France is ahead of Great Britain in economic development is a good story, but no one has written it.

Mr. Wahl asked Mr. Prendergast why he had not communicated his own accurate picture of French industry and

balanced economy to his readers? Had the story been rejected by his editors? Mr. Prendergast explained that with the limited appetite for foreign news, a journalist is forced to choose which aspects are most significant, which most likely to interest his readers. Background stories that might explain the Gaullist movement in France, for instance, are hard to get published. M. Todd added that part of the reason Americans don't know about the improved standard of living of the French is that television coverage of France is minimal in the United States, yet most American impressions are formed from TV. An interesting story on French industry for television is admittedly hard to do, he noted, and there is always the pressure of time.

Editors and newsmen do have their own special interests. Mr. Kleiman observed that in France the press—particularly *Le Monde*—is intellectually more interested in left-wing ideology. Chile is always a big story in France. Since informed Americans form much of their opinion about French attitudes from reading *Le Monde*, Mr. Koven wondered whether *Le Monde* accurately represents the American public to Frenchmen, and whether its reporters are sympathetic and open to the American experience? M. Tatu assured him that *Le Monde* presents views and ideas as facts of political life, whether good or bad. A correspondent may be a victim of his own misconceptions, but he has not been chosen because he is anti-American.

M. Todd noted that in the United States there is little interest in the complex nuances of leftist ideology. The French Left have complained that their Party Congress has

... To explain the details of another people in a distant country requires space, which is always limited and more than likely pre-empted by hot news. It is a basic problem of the trade. . . .

not been properly reported in the United States, but why should American readers be interested in semantic exercises that are difficult to translate into news copy?

Earlier in his career, M. Fiess had felt the responsibility to cover the political issues and attempt to make them understood. Yet to explain the details of another people in a distant country requires space, which is always limited and more than likely pre-empted by hot news. It is a basic problem of the trade, and there is less and less feeling that it has to be done.

Mr. Koven concluded that though reporters do have some responsibility for correcting the false images of France, that responsibility does not have precedence over correcting all the other wrong perceptions in the world.

Participants Mentioned

Chairman

James Chace: Managing Editor, *Foreign Affairs*

French Journalists

Alain-Marie Carron: North American and Latin American News Editor, *Le Monde*

Oliver Chevrillon: Publisher, *Le Point*

François de Closets: Scientific Editor, French Television

Robert Fiess: *L'Express*; Nieman Fellow '76

Jean Lagrange: General and World News Manager, Agence France Presse

Jean-François Lemoine: Publisher, *Sud-Ouest*, Bordeaux

Pierre Salinger: *L'Express*; former Press Secretary to President Kennedy

Adalbert de Segonzac: Washington Bureau Chief, *France Soir*

Michel Tatu: Foreign News Editor, *Le Monde*

Oliver Todd: Assistant Editor-in-Chief, *Le Nouvel Observateur*

Alain Vernay: Financial and Economic Editor, *Le Figaro*

American Journalists

Leslie Gelb: Diplomatic Correspondent, *New York Times*, Washington Bureau

James Goldsborough: Political Reporter, *International Herald Tribune*, Paris

John Hess: Reporter, *New York Times*; former Paris Correspondent

Oswald Johnston: Diplomatic Correspondent, *Los Angeles Times*, Washington Bureau

Stanley Karnow: Syndicated Columnist; Editor, International Writers Service; formerly *Time*, Paris Bureau

Robert Kleiman: Foreign Affairs Editorialist, *New York Times*; former Paris Correspondent

Ronald Koven: Foreign Editor, *Washington Post*; former Diplomatic Correspondent, *International Herald Tribune*, Paris

Joseph Kraft: Syndicated Columnist

Richard Mooney: Assistant Financial Editor, *New York Times*; former European Economic Correspondent, Paris

Curtis Prendergast: United Nations Bureau, *Time*; former Paris Correspondent

Bernard Redmont: Paris Bureau Chief and European Correspondent, Westinghouse Broadcasting

Jerrold Schecter: Diplomatic Editor, *Time*

Scott Sullivan: Chief Diplomatic Correspondent, *Newsweek*; former Paris Bureau Chief

Non-Journalist Participants

Yves-André Istel: Partner, Kuhn, Loeb & Co.

Edward Tuck: Partner, Shearman & Sterling

Nicholas Wahl: Professor of Politics, Princeton University

And the responsibility is not completely journalistic. "The government has the first responsibility; correspondents are reflectors, not creators."

Case Studies of Mutual Misconceptions

Concorde

To study the influence of the press on its audience (and the influence of its readers on the press), M. de Segonzac identified the supersonic transport Concorde as the best illustration of mutual misperceptions and misunderstandings between the two countries:

Americans, ignorant of French technical achievements, find it difficult to believe France has been able to develop a superior machine like the Concorde. Then, too, disparaging remarks are still made that the grandiose plan was begun during the de Gaulle period merely to gain prestige for France. Most of this criticism has been unfairly saddled on the back of France rather than on her partner, Britain.

Having overruled the SST, Americans themselves have a basic resistance to the French (and British) decision to proceed with the Concorde. This resistance has been reinforced by a fear that technology is getting out of control and that there may be limits to what technology can achieve. They note the limited passenger capacity, the wasteful consumption of energy, and above all, the threat to the environment—a concern the French do not yet share. With

regard to the point that Americans resist the SST because they struck down their own, Messrs. Prendergast and Mooney suggested that perhaps the United States is (to paraphrase Gertrude Stein) "the oldest country of the 21st century," and France—a young country technologically—is insisting on the virtues of the supersonic breakthrough because it is her first.

On press handling, Mr. Tuck felt the Concorde had been badly explained in the U.S. press because of the mind-set against an enterprise not yet profitable. Americans do not appreciate the technical achievement and misunderstand the social planning that the Concorde represents.

M. de Segonzac criticized the initial coverage in the American press (with the exception of *The Wall Street Journal*) as merely following events without in-depth analysis; but he judged that in the last few months the written press has attempted to be more objective and analytical. Mr. Goldsborough argued there is little understanding in the United States that the Concorde has a certain number of virtues, and that the American correspondents have not explained what it represents to the French. M. de Segonzac commented that the French press has been so enamored by the beauty of the plane that they assumed the Concorde would sell itself. They, too, have failed to extoll its virtues to the American audience or to explain its problems to the French.

For the French, the Concorde has, in fact, become *l'union sacrée* in a country where consensus is rarely achieved—this

being the second time in contemporary history (World War I having been the first), M. de Closets announced. But as a consequence of this overwhelming consensus in France, one does not read anything critical of the Concorde and "we misconstrue the Concorde even among ourselves," M. de Segonzac responded.

Mr. Prendergast questioned whether any of the French papers had analyzed the American objections to the Concorde? M. Lemoine replied: "One cannot be French and speak objectively about the Concorde." But his paper, *Sud-Ouest*, (which is located in Bordeaux near Toulouse, headquarters of Aerospatiale and the home of the Concorde) had attempted to put aside national pride to determine the truth about the Concorde. An expert on aircraft was brought in to judge the technical merits and profitability of the plane, and key people in the States, including William Coleman, were interviewed. The conclusion: the Concorde is technically sound, representing a genuine technological breakthrough; it will be economically viable only if permitted to land in New York; and the American environmental objections to the plane have been exaggerated.

In addition, M. de Segonzac cautioned, there is a lack of understanding of the American system by the French. Accustomed to a strong central government, they have difficulty believing that state and local pressure can stop the federal government. To them the U.S. government has promised that the Concorde could land in New York and should be able to keep its word. M. Carron disagreed; the French people do understand that the American federal government cannot impose its will in New York, but they

Victory against the Concorde as a foreign danger to the environment is easier than winning battles at home. Environmentalists are silent on military supersonic flight. . . .

do not understand why the American people object. In either case, Frenchmen are not convinced of the sincerity of the environmental opposition. As MM. Lemoine and de Closets observed, they suspect the reaction is inspired more by fear of competition on the part of American airline lobby groups (e.g., Pan American and TWA) than by genuine concern for the environment, and they bitterly resent this new evidence of American imperialism and protectionism. And to complicate matters, M. de Closets added, there is the rumor that American aircraft companies have their own second-generation SST on the drawing boards. Boeing has

indeed been lobbying for the Concorde so that environmental resistance to SST flights can be eroded.

Mr. Prendergast chided that environment is a real issue in America, and bad reporting has been done if the French have been told something different. Mr. Hess agreed that the Concorde has become a symbol for the environmentalists, who had won their first big victory in defeating American plans for SSTs. Victory against the Concorde as a foreign danger to the environment is easier than winning further battles at home. Environmentalists are silent on military supersonic flight; New York's Governor Carey can more easily afford to be concerned over the noise of the Concorde than he can be about General Electric's poisoning of the Hudson River.

M. de Closets noted that the French might well complain about the enormous investment made to develop the plane and its still uncertain economic success; but American arguments based on noise are unpersuasive and antagonizing. To stop production now, to suddenly eliminate the large number of jobs affected by the Concorde, is just not possible. For France, unlike the United States, always faces the Socialist/Communist alternative.

Watergate

Commenting on how Watergate was perceived in France, Mr. Goldsborough judged that the French people have not been able to understand that the series of developments—Vietnam, Watergate, the CIA revelations, and a front-runner from the hills in the election campaign—are connected by a common strain: "the redemocratization of America." And in reporting the Watergate story, the French press never went beyond the individual elements, which eventually became boring, to put what was happening into the proper context.

Watergate struck a chord in the French, and the approach of the French press was to object to Watergate as an attack on authority, against a strong President who had ended an unpopular war and was well-liked by the French. There was not a misconception of the detailed happenings but a complete lack of understanding. The process was as alien to the French as Charles de Gaulle had been to Americans. American reporters never quite understood General de Gaulle as the logical consequence of disaster, humiliation and defeat for France of one kind or another. Currently it is difficult for the American press to explain to Americans that Giscard d'Estaing's efforts to redress some of de Gaulle's negative impact on U.S.-French relations by greater amicability and pro-American statements are not popular in France and encounter strong opposition. In short, impartiality toward the Watergate story has been as difficult for the French reporters to achieve as it was for American correspondents reporting on de Gaulle.

M. de Segonzac felt the French press tried to explain the

Watergate story fairly, but because of the enormous differences in perceptions, the French people as well as the French elites reacted as follows: "They have bumped out the best President they ever had." Messrs. Kleiman and Sullivan disagreed about whether the English understood it any better, and Mr. Hess accused the American press of arrogance in assuming that they themselves understand Watergate. The American columnist William Safire has written that Watergate and Richard Nixon were not an aberration but a continuation of a certain kind of Presidency which has not changed much over the years, and that Americans have not learned the lessons from Watergate. Continuing, Mr. Hess judged that although ten years from now Americans may be able to understand the lessons, today they are still debating Watergate.

Styles of Reporting In France and the USA

M. Lagrange delineated two national reporting styles: the French *article de fond*, wherein commentary and "straight news" reporting are often inextricably combined; and the American "straight news" and "investigative" styles which place greater emphasis on the exposure of facts than on interpretation of their significance.

Mr. Hess sought to refute the "cliché" that American reporters are more "objective" than their "polemical" French counterparts. He defined "investigative journalism" as an "aggressive, adversary attempt by the journalist to find information heretofore unpublished which is embarrassing

Watergate and Le Canard Enchaîné

By way of example, Mr. Hess compared the handling of two scandals: Watergate and the affair of *Le Canard Enchaîné*. He perceived a general self-congratulatory attitude among U.S. journalists who credited themselves with exposing Watergate and bringing about the resignation of Richard Nixon. In fact, he felt, only *The Washington Post* editors, fueled by the aggressive reporting of Bob Woodward and Carl Bernstein, and the determination of Judge John Sirica, pursued the Watergate story. Watergate and other scandals—milk pricing and ITT, for example—were not actively pursued elsewhere. In brief, American reporters kept looking for a "smoking gun" (i.e., conclusive evidence) that, for most, was considered impossible to find. In contrast to Watergate's effect on Americans, the affair of French government wiretapping of *Le Canard Enchaîné*—a satirical weekly which serves a function similar to Jack Anderson as an outlet for embarrassing leaks—did not generate moral outrage in France. The French audience, concluded Mr. Hess, always suspects the worst of its government, and "no suspicion is seen as an aberration."

Mr. Johnston suggested that for an American paper to support a serious investigative effort, there must first be a predisposition to believe the worst, as was the case with *The Washington Post* and Richard Nixon. In France, however, even the mere suggestion of governmental wrongdoing is widely accepted. Mr. Salinger agreed that for the French "wiretapping is a way of life."

In explaining the different coverage of the Watergate scandal and that of *Le Canard Enchaîné*, M. de Closets emphasized their contrasting political and systemic contexts. For Americans, Watergate was viewed as an aberration of more limited consequences. In France, however, a complete investigation of *Le Canard Enchaîné* scandal might have implicated the entire government. French journalists were reticent because such a scandal could eventually challenge the fundamental institutions in France. Since there is a much higher degree of political and social consensus in the United States, American journalists did not have to fear carrying out an investigation "to the bitter end." To Mr. Karnow's remark, "Perhaps American reporters have more faith in the system than do the French," M. de Closets replied: "In France, we cannot even settle our birth date; we could never agree on a Bicentennial."

Watergate struck a chord in the French: the press objected to Watergate as an attack on authority, against a strong President who had ended an unpopular war and was well-liked by the French.

to established interests." Under such a definition, Mr. Hess estimated that only one in a thousand U.S. reporters may be fairly considered "investigative reporters." Most journalists are "passive recipients" of information. Those who undertake serious investigations risk physical harm, lawsuits, and controversy. In fact, the U.S. media are under a general public attack for appearing to have "created" the problems which the press reported, e.g., Vietnam and Watergate. There remains a greater need for investigative reporting in the United States because of the general "naiveté of the U.S. public."

Dissimilar Press Traditions

United States (Investigative Reporting)

Mr. Salinger maintained that investigative journalism is an older and more widespread tradition than Mr. Hess has implied. From his years of reporting on criminal stories, he

affirmed that there remains a profound local interest in investigative reporting—not only aimed at the government, but at social conditions as well. Mr. Hess agreed that it is abundant at the local level (blatant welfare fraud being a favorite revelation), but rare at the high, crucial levels of government. One inhibition might well result from the libel laws. Some U.S. papers, such as *The New York Times*, will defend their reporters against libel suits; others will not because of the prohibitive legal fees. Mr. Karnow found the case to be the opposite, observing that all young reporters are now seeking to emulate Bob Woodward and Carl Bernstein, and *The Washington Post* is straining to find a new Watergate.

In conclusion, Mr. Mooney warned that the greater danger lies in a lack of aggressiveness rather than an excess of zeal. Furthermore, the many layers of secrecy in the private sector, as seen in the ongoing Lockheed scandal, are even more difficult to penetrate than in the public sector.

France (article de fond)

MM. Lagrange and Vernay asserted that national reporting styles do differ, reflecting the dissimilar press traditions. M. Vernay explained that the French press has not enjoyed a traditional role as a "Fourth Estate." Unlike American journalists, who desire the role of "ombudsmen," French journalists who become "too good at the Jack Anderson game" become suspect. Contrary to the philosophy of *The New York Times*, French journalists believe that "there is news that is not fit to be printed, or at least not too early." This is why, explained M. Vernay, "half-repressed" or potentially scandalous news may linger in the more popular newspapers, such as *France-Dimanche*, before finally appearing in the "serious" dailies, e.g., *France-Soir*, *Le Figaro* and *Le Monde*. Mr. Koven commented that scandals exposed in *Le Canard Enchaîné* are normally not followed up by the more serious press. "*Le Canard Enchaîné* is our bad conscience," M. Tatu explained. M. Todd warned that its importance should not be overestimated, for only one out of every five stories turns out to be true.

In contrasting the investigative role of television in the two countries, Mr. Istel noted that in the United States television is not government controlled. The majority of people get their news first from television, with the written press picking up the stories and pursuing them further. In France, since many of the stories do not appear on television, they are never picked up by the written press. Mr. Blocker (Producer, CBS News, Washington) agreed that French TV news is very bad, with important stories never being picked up by television. He felt this results in part from limits on media freedom in France and in part from the "lack of community" in the French press in which cross-fertilization can take place between the written press and television. M. Lagrange noted that television is trying to be

more provocative, and for the first time there is now a degree of commercial competition.

In Mr. Salinger's view, French television is not so bad and is now improving. In any case, it is true that the established press is often reluctant to develop the scandals raised by *Canard* and others. M. Vernay responded that this is true and unfortunate. Scandals become too distorted in France before the serious press begins to deal with them.

In comparing the French journalistic tradition to the American tradition, Mr. Prendergast found the essential difference to be: "In America it's facts, in France it's opinions." M. Tatu explained that the French like ideas ("We think we like ideas; we have been told and still believe we have all the philosophers," M. Todd interjected) and present very pluralistic ideas because all are *facts* of political life. In the United States only the fact is important.

Since American reporters are taught to separate fact from opinion (although this may be changing in the post-Watergate era), Mr. Redmont noted, the French reader often dislikes the American press because he may not be able to tell what the writer is thinking. M. Jacques Fauvet (who heads *Le Monde*) had once remarked to Mr. Redmont that the American distinction between fact and opinion is perhaps not valid. After all, the journalist brings certain personal values to his analysis of any subject and must, in any case, add content and context to "hard news." To Mr. Redmont himself, "objectivity" means "total independence [from] parties, ideology, or special interests."

In rebuttal, M. Vernay cited the remarks of *Le Monde's* André Fontaine: a reporter must follow a concept of honesty, not the illusory goal of objectivity. One cannot always aspire to write what is "true," but only what, to the best of

"We [French] think we like ideas; we have been told and still believe we have all the philosophers." "In France, we cannot even settle our birth date; we could never agree on a Bicentennial."

one's knowledge, is true. In the opinion of M. Vernay, while objectivity might demand a separation of news from views, the French readers still prefer "views to news." Thus the French admire the "great intellectual" who may later become a journalist, whereas in the United States the "great journalist" may later be considered a great intellectual. The French newspapers are, however, evolving toward *la presse à tout faire*—no longer, for the most part, reflecting a clearly identifiable "party line." He also detected a new public interest in the working functions of the French press, as

evidenced by widespread public reaction to a recent television program on the power of the press.

The Origin of Difference

Mr. Kleiman questioned: "How can we explain this difference between French and American reporters? Is there something about what kind of people become journalists? Is it that Paris *is* the French press and the provinces are much less, whereas in the United States there are large important papers in other parts of the country, outside New York and Washington? What is the origin of difference?"

Mr. Goldsborough suggested that part of the difference might be attributed to the social difference of journalists in France—where they are a part of the elite and are received with great dignity, considerably less "grungy" than their American counterparts. Mr. Mooney refuted that possibility, stating that the polls indicate American status is 100 percent better. Rather, the difference lies in the great difficulty of finding sources of leaks in France. It is much harder to find people inside the Quai who have strong personal views against the official policy and who are willing to give the other side.

M. de Segonzac stated that the French have "no sense of investigative reporting," so much a frame of mind in the United States. American journalists also approach news reporting in a more intense and competitive way and conceive of their job from a totally different perspective. The French journalist likes to be close to power, gains friends in power, and from that point on is not a free man. He would never expose a friend.

M. Vernay believed the styles reflect different cultural values. For example, the French are still secretive about money in politics and about the health of their leaders. Mr. Wahl also perceived the difference as a phenomenon of cultural determinism. Whereas the French have a great respect for public authority, Washington does not symbolize *l'état* for the American citizenry. He agreed that French journalists show appreciably more deference to public figures than American reporters do. One explanation may be that French journalists are often conscious of not being of the same "class" as high government officials.

M. Chevrillon concluded that the weakness of French investigative reporting stems from the relatively limited resources of French publications and the weaker national consensus. Because French reporters know the weakness of this consensus, they must exercise greater self-restraint.

The Concept of State

Mr. Karnow agreed that one of the most important roots of the difference is the concept of state and the need to protect the national interest. With respect to the CIA scandals, for example, he believed the French were shocked that the U.S. Senate and press would publish reports of CIA

activities potentially damaging to the United States. Similar scandals in France would more than likely be repressed under the heading of the "national interest." The U.S. press will readily publish leaked documents, such as the Pentagon Papers, but *Le Monde* fired one of its reporters, M. Simonot, for having used a stolen document. M. Carron explained that the reporter was fired for stealing the document, not for having published it. *Le Monde*, he added, sought to save M. Simonot from some embarrassment by explaining that he was forced to resign for having arranged publication of the document without the prior consent of his editor.

In Mr. Salinger's judgment, there *are* legitimate government secrets, but those which should not be published are only those which would affect "national security," not those that fall under the broader term of the "national interest." For example, the Pentagon Papers were no longer justifiably classified in 1971, when *The New York Times* decided to publish them. On the other hand, a 1961 *Times* report on American methods of detecting underground Soviet nuclear explosions did necessitate a significant change in U.S. monitoring methods. Nevertheless, lacking the French concept of *raison d'état* as a means of suppressing information, the American press does better fulfill an adversary role.

M. Todd accepted that there is a built-in bias in the French press to "protect the Elysée, both in fact and principle." Above all, the Elysée itself should not be "seen as a source of scandal." For example, it is generally known that a high French official is involved in scandals similar to the bribery utilized by Lockheed, but no French paper will

Mr. Redmont: "The journalist's mission is to serve truth, compassion, and fairness . . . He must fulfill a highly ethical, moral mission."

Mr. Hess: "To withhold news is to play God."

publish his name. M. Fiess agreed that the French journalists do not really do their job on numerous scandals involving the government, and gave as one example the Compagnie Internationale d'Informatique/Honeywell merger that sold out French interests for nothing. M. Vernay gave as another example of cooperation with government interests the fact that *Le Figaro* did not disclose a scandal within a real estate financing operation in order not to compromise the government's investigation. Instead, the

newspaper decided to cancel advertising for the financial concern in question.

M. de Closets argued that the French journalists are in a different position because France is a much less powerful nation. As an illustration, American writers were free to criticize an American SST without fear of recrimination. Although to arrive at "truth" is much more difficult than to gather news, and conclusions can only be tentatively made by comparing French data and processes with those of other countries, a French journalist could still not explain the technical or cost arguments against the Concorde or the Mirage competitor to the American F-16 in the *marché du siècle* (when French technology was judged inferior) for fear of being labeled a "traitor" to vital national interests. In some respects, society imposes self-censorship on the media.

Lack of investigative reporting on the King and Kennedy assassinations by the U.S. media has been puzzling to French journalists, M. Lemoine pointed out. They and the French public have the lingering suspicion that the Americans want to believe that these were individual acts of madmen, M. de Closets added. Messrs. Redmont, Salinger and Schecter rejected the implication of self-censorship and suggested that the French public simply does not want to believe the outcome of the investigations which do not substantiate a conspiratorial view. Thorough investigations have been made, but without really contributing any new elements which would substantially contradict the Warren Commission's findings. Mr. Koven noted that Americans are more inclined to believe things can happen for random reasons and are not always contrived. Mr. Salinger agreed that there is an American bias to the extent that since previous assassinations had been the acts of madmen, Americans had a proclivity to believe that history was repeating itself. But new interest in the assassinations has been sparked by the Watergate period. M. Vernay conceded that the French are more inclined to believe in conspiracy theories because France is not a united society and conspiracies do indeed exist.

Another source of wonder, M. Lemoine noted, is that American journalists do not openly question the intellectual competence of President Ford. The American participants responded that Mr. Johnson's description of Mr. Ford—"Jerry Ford can't walk and chew gum at the same time"—was resurrected when he was nominated for the Vice-Presidency.

Despite these exceptions, M. Lemoine believed that French editors are more concerned about possible damage to national interests by unlimited investigative reporting. For example, during the visit of President Giscard d'Estaing to the U.S.S.R., the French press attaché criticized newsmen for emphasizing that Leonid Brezhnev's poor health resulted in a delay in meeting with the French President. The French press is also deeply reluctant to discuss the

health of French leaders, M. Lagrange recalled. Though in the case of the late President Pompidou, this respect for privacy was compounded by the fear that the conduct of national policy could be adversely affected by Pompidou's health. Mr. Johnston noted that Americans often have the impression that French newspapers are addressing an elite audience trained to "read between the lines"—as in the case of the veiled references to M. Pompidou's ill health. Of course, the particulars of his illness were hard to obtain, and the Elysée was determined to cover up the facts, M. Tatu agreed. But M. Todd suggested that if a similar case were to occur today, the health of the national leader would be less sacrosanct. M. Carron added that there is a growing debate stemming from the Pompidou experience on whether the French media should publish details of the President's private life.

M. Mooney pointed out that the U.S. press also exercises some self-censorship in reporting on public figures. Details of Franklin D. Roosevelt's health were not fully reported, nor are the personal problems, such as alcoholism, of present members of Congress. The criterion for deciding on how to treat such information should be whether one's personal life is impairing his public functions. Mr. Hess warned that any self-censorship may be dangerous. In the case of the Kennedys, their public image was, in fact, a great political asset. To the extent that the press may unfairly protect this public image, it may have an important effect upon resultant public policy. Messrs. Hess and Schecter concluded that both the Americans and the French come under such pressures, but this self-censorship becomes a vicious circle. Instead, the press must use its power to help create a proper social consciousness and fully educate the reader. Mr. Redmont agreed that except in wartime, when censorship may be imposed for military reasons, there should be virtually no limits to what newspapers can publish. He concluded: "The mission of the journalist is to serve truth, compassion and fairness . . . He must fulfill a highly ethical, moral mission." Mr. Hess declared, "To withhold news is to play God."

Correction:

In the last issue of *Nieman Reports*, a word in Dean Krister Stendahl's remarks on "Ethics and Journalism" was erroneously transcribed: "cold," instead of the correct "whole." The sentence, in the second column of page 28, should read:

Looking at moral problems from the point of view of the will, [Kant] set up a style of dealing with values where the main thing was an ethical will which was in antagonism to both the temptations and the instincts—an enormously will-centered pattern of character—over against what is often described as the Elizabethan character, where the point was to somehow have the outside be coterminous with the inside, to be a whole person so that that which appeared to be was that which really was.

On Joining the Government

(A Personal Note)

By Joseph A. Loftus

When the Nixon Administration assembled in early 1969, Herbert Klein, for whom the President created the job of Director of Communications, briefed the Cabinet on the world of Public Information. Klein's mission was to mold the departmental information chiefs into a working unit that would "think" Nixon.

The President, through Klein, intended to make the publicity engines of government responsive to his needs and wishes.

Right off, Klein told the Secretaries that experience in the Washington political jungle should weigh heavily in their selection of information chiefs to work with the White House. Klein was correct, as he proved when he disregarded his own advice. He brought with him a California newsman and handed him over to a Secretary who also was new to Washington. In that exposed position, the newsman did not long survive.

Despite this example, Klein loyally and ably served Nixon. He did not deserve the unkind Nixonisms revealed by the tapes, or the stomping he got from Chuck Colson, whose grandmother presumably was not placed as conveniently as Klein.

Nixon's pick for Secretary of Labor was George P. Shultz, dean of the University of Chicago's Graduate School of Business, who had tested the Washington waters two or three times. Shultz chose me as Special Assistant for Public Affairs, although weeks passed before the news reached me.

Shultz and I had not met, except for a brief pre-inaugural visit I made to his temporary office in quest of news. He had a handle on me, however, because, while a student of labor-management problems at M.I.T., he had made my *New York Times* labor pieces required reading.

No mention of a job was made during that visit. Some time later, while casing the Houston Community Action program, I got a message to call Klein. I tried twice to return the call. After making sure that word of those efforts had reached a responsible person in his office, I gave up, though still vaguely curious. As became apparent later, something interrupted him; he was stalling.

Shultz must have insisted, for after 10 days or more Klein called me at home and asked me to drop in. I couldn't make it before 4:00 the next day, a Saturday, but Klein waited. He

then told me of Shultz's interest and asked me two questions.

What was my political designation? I had an old Democratic registration in Pennsylvania, and I so told him. I minimized the party label, rationalizing that I had often voted for Republicans and had repeatedly, over the years, turned down jobs in Democratic administrations.

Second, what was my feeling about the Taft-Hartley Act? I replied that I considered myself a "pro" in the labor field and I had no bias that would interfere. That question, I guessed, had come from Nixon, who had been a member of the House Labor Committee when the 1947 act was coursing through the legislative rapids. The hearings and later political maneuverings occupied me full-time for many weeks that spring and summer. Nixon also knew me from his later campaign travels, which I sometimes covered.

My meeting with Klein lasted about three minutes, after which he called Shultz and gave him a go-ahead. Shultz then called me. We met at his home on Sunday and made a deal. The job had been vacant for years. I was to be a staff officer, as distinguished from the Director of Information, Publications and Reports, a civil-service line-officer whose staff cranked out releases, edited technical papers, made the physical arrangements for news conferences, answered routine mail and telephone inquiries, and so on. I was to be the liaison with the White House on everything touching public affairs.

My appointment, though firm, had not been announced when Shultz invited me to meet the President at a Labor Department function to launch the Shultz operation. The President, obviously informed, was not surprised to find me there. He was warm and gracious as he harked back to the Taft-Hartley hearings 22 years earlier.

"You have not always been on our side, but you were always fair," he said. Nixon apparently had forgotten the time he confronted me as I was leaving a party he had given for newsmen and others who accompanied him in the 1966 Congressional campaigns.

That night, with straight arm and accusing finger, he said, "You think I'm a fascist, don't you?"

That approach, with no warning, came as a stunner. But I was not too stunned to duck.

"I do?" I asked, using the inflection of surprise and inter-

Mr. Loftus, '61, was the first Louis Stark Fellow under the Nieman Program, an award designed for specialists in labor reporting. Before entering government, he served for 25 years with the Washington Bureau of The New York Times.

rogation. That ended it. He was busy bidding goodnight to others and there was no opportunity for argument.

Breaking with The Times

The day after Shultz hired me I told Max Frankel. Three stories were backed up in New York; the editors there ruled that they could not be published, certainly not under my byline, after I became a government employee. I had invested considerable travel and *Times*' expense money and I wanted to see my last articles in print. New York agreed to jam the stories into the newspaper that week, which was done, and Frankel posted a "confidential" notice of an office party on Friday evening.

The Secretary and Mrs. Shultz attended the party and afterward joined my family and a few friends for dinner at the Frankel home.

I was eager for the new job. Scores of newsmen in my time had joined the government and probably scores of others, like me, had declined to join, not only in the dim but in the recent past. Back in 1952, three C.I.A. functionaries sat me down to lunch at the Mayflower Hotel and propositioned me. They wanted my labor background but wouldn't tell me why or where. I didn't know whether I was to bring my own cloak and dagger or a typewriter. They had in mind a pay-cut, not a raise, but I was to enjoy the psychic reward of a patriot. Otherwise, the lunch was pleasant.

Journalism is ego-supporting, an attraction that many publishers exploited directly and through the wire services until the Guild came along. (In general, *The Times* did not exploit.) Even now, the remuneration is more psychic than

The Times, a bit top-heavy with longevity, would not want to retard the departure of a 62-year-old legman when they were combing the acne set for the brightest and most vigorous.

economic. I recall one or two periods of low morale at the Associated Press when I actually sought a government job, hoping at the same time that none would turn up. I felt in those days that leaving newspaper work would have meant defeat in a career I cared about.

Now here was 1969. I was 62. Second, I had worked about 43 years in journalism (add five more for part-time work), nearly 25 of them with *The Times* in Washington. Third, the bid came from a man who impressed me, not a politician. I would be working in a department I knew something about, with people inside and outside (newsmen,

for example) whom I knew and who knew me. I was aware of what the job needed and, although I am not always so confident, I had no doubt I could meet those needs. Fourth, my relations inside *The Times* had passed their peak. Fifth—and this was about the order of importance—there was a gain in pay, not a sacrifice.

Prospects were exciting, but the break did not occur without regret. When I told Frankel of my plans, he asked if I would reconsider, even offering to call New York to straighten out a kink. This was a gesture—very understanding of the emotional break—that would do Frankel no good. *The Times*, a bit top-heavy with longevity, would not want to retard the departure of a 62-year-old legman when they were combing the acne set for the brightest and most vigorous. Frankel was moved by an innate decency which, happy to say, also had moved his predecessors in my time—Wicker, Reston, and Krock—all of whom had contributed to an enviable *esprit de corps* in the Washington bureau.

Party night was fun until I finished my light-hearted reply to the flattering salutes. When I tried to say a sentimental word or two I choked up and fled.

Finally, Punch Sulzberger signed an extravagant letter and enclosed a check in four figures. Fine people, aware of an emotional fracture that goes with the termination of a career, lubricated the transition in the nicest possible way.

Memories of Hagerty

Russ Baker, witnessing the transmogrification of a newsman, cornered me that evening to recall an incident in 1954 when he, as a *Baltimore Sun* reporter, joined the White House press corps in Denver where President Eisenhower was vacationing.

Baker, so green to the beat that day, pointed to Jim Hagerty, Eisenhower's press secretary, and asked, "Who's he?"

My reply, Baker recalled with the devil's own grin, was: "He's the enemy."

I despised the White House beat because one knew news had to be abundant but so little was extractable. It was not a good feeling going home at night, knowing history had been written a thin partition away and one hadn't written a worthwhile word. Hagerty was the symbol of that frustration, hence the enemy. He held the reporters at bay, amiable though he was. The White House staff, when they would see one at all, reported afterwards to Hagerty and, to keep Hagerty happy, made sure they had little to report.

Hagerty held the reporters in low professional esteem because he had made them need him and they accepted the condition.

"They don't know how to go down to the railroad station and buy a ticket," he said to a visitor who had been a White House reporter in an earlier era.

Hagerty worked at making the reporters dependent. He fielded a lot of queries and came back with answers the same day, a chore he could have easily shirked. Had he shirked, reporters would have at least tried to track down original sources, but White House sources, as noted, were wary of reporters who did not confine themselves to the press office. Hagerty did not want a lot of reporters loose in the pasture. He helped make life easier for us and we fell into it. Elementary politics! Jim came by that honestly as an able political reporter for *The Times* and as the son of Jim, Sr., a highly esteemed political reporter.

One day, in a rare abrasive moment, Hagerty snapped at a reporter: "The President is paying my salary, not the publishers."

Who is paying your salary? I wanted to ask. But I remembered an impertinent question I had asked on another occasion. Nobody followed through. I was out of step.

So I went to work for the government.

The Labor Department: Getting Out the News

Reporters never rated the Labor Department as the mother lode of sparkling news, but during the Nixon years its yield increased more than the Administration cared to see. As in all departments and agencies, some information is routinely withheld. Who, for example, is going to issue a list of the employers who were investigated last month for violations of the health and safety regulations? What employer short-changed his workers under the minimum wage law, and how much did he settle for? What deal was made with what Congressman to renew funding for a manpower project in his district, or to keep a Job Corps Center open?

The questions are seldom asked and (or because) answers are hard to get.

Most bureaucrats, honest with few exceptions, prefer to avoid prying questions. They don't know how to deal with reporters and fear to tread publicly in delicate areas. Some information officers, instead of setting a healthy tone, meekly accepted the predilections of the bureaucrats, even encouraged them, or conjured whatever wiles they could to frustrate reporters.

It seemed to me that a moderately aggressive information officer, with some understanding of reporters' needs, will try to persuade bureaucratic colleagues that information policy is not their function. Some information officers will back away from a policy that would tend toward freer passage of information. They feel more secure not making waves. They would not consider trying to confront or persuade high policy officers, many of whom are politically secretive, as well as being abysmally ignorant of sound public relations.

My earliest advice to Shultz was to call no news conference unless he announced a policy decision or other substantial story. A lingering memory of Jim Mitchell, Eisenhower's Secretary of Labor, prompted that advice.

Most bureaucrats . . . don't know how to deal with reporters and fear to tread publicly in delicate areas. . . . Labor's information policy had been so illiberal that I became a winner with reporters just by taking a call.

Mitchell got hooked into regular conferences by a *Washington Post* campaign to open news channels into the administration. *The Post* ran weekly box scores on the results. Mitchell chafed under this and called weekly meetings with the reporters. He rarely offered a story, so reporters fine-combed him on every topic they could think of.

Mitchell, shying from controversy, sweated and parried. For that he got a plus in *The Post's* box score, but reporters went away empty-handed and cursing. They could have done better at any Capitol hearing. Now it was too late and they had to scrounge for a story to justify their day.

Somebody had advised Mitchell that the President met the press weekly with nothing to announce, but neglected to tell him that the President was well-briefed on all the big issues of the day, and that a Presidential comment on anything, tedious or not, always was printable. To imitate was not flattery but disaster. Shultz's policy was to sit for individual interviews, which were costly in time but, in any event, probably were unavoidable, news conferences or not. I usually sat in, not to monitor but to learn.

Labor's information policy had been so illiberal that I became a winner with reporters just by taking a call. Sometimes I think they called to hear an exceedingly cheerful "Mr. Loftus' office" from my secretary, Virginia Kanyan. She chatted with those she knew before buzzing me, and if she were absent, the reporter's first question would be, "Where's Ginny?" She helped support her husband through academe and when he finished and got a position teaching music he insisted that she resign. Mr. Joseph Kanyan bilked the government out of a gem.

The Secretary of Labor just before Shultz was Bill Wirtz, a bright lawyer who treated the government as a private client. After leaving office he remarked to a mutual friend that the reporters had been "vicious." Wirtz actually had been treated far better than he deserved. He communicated so little he made a mute sound gabby. (He'll probably think that's a compliment).

Herb Klein's message to us was, "When in doubt, put it out." He cautioned against overclassifying papers and urged us to move in the direction of declassifying where no military security was involved. He was trying to restore some credibility to the White House after the scorched truth policy of Nixon's predecessor, of whom some said, "Whenever he told the truth he blushed."

Klein strove for an entirely different image and made some progress. That he failed in the end was not for lack of trying. He did not know about Watergate and dirty tricks. Many White House functionaries even today do not know all the truth.

My office chair was scarcely warm when Bill Eaton [NF '63] of the *Chicago Daily News* called and said he was having trouble learning the settlement terms in the wage underpayment case against Company X. I called a career lawyer who told me—reluctantly—that the Department had settled for "less than a cent on the dollar." I passed this on to

Herb Klein was trying to restore some credibility to the White House after the scorched truth policy of Nixon's predecessor, of whom some said, "Whenever he told the truth he blushed."

Eaton. The settlement had been made by an Assistant Secretary of Labor in the preceding administration. No announcement had been made.

Jerry Landauer of *The Wall Street Journal* was an early caller. When I supplied the data he wanted, he asked: "How come you gave me those figures?"

"You asked for them, didn't you?"

"Yes," said Jerry, "but nobody else has given me these figures. I know it's legal but everybody else keeps making me think it's illegal."

I thought of those bureaucrats who freely criticize newspaper inaccuracies but refuse to help a reporter.

Reporters often called department sources directly. I tried never to get in the way. One day Jack Anderson's column criticized the "slow-moving Department of Labor." He had called somebody and gotten no results. That inspired a note I sent, or intended to send, around the official corridors:

When you get a query, answer it as promptly as you can. Reporters have deadlines. If you can't get the information right away, call me and I'll try to help. News is a perishable commodity.

The foregoing wouldn't occur to people without news experience, yet so many people meddled in things they

knew nothing about. Once, when we were announcing, at a news conference, a first-year report on equal opportunity in building construction, a young executive peremptorily struck out of the release a factual sentence. Naturally, the first question popped at the news conference dealt with the missing fact. In Washington, *every* employee is an information specialist.

George Shultz and Some Speech-writing

Shultz knew politics profoundly and understood his job from the outset more thoroughly than one would expect. He knew that an essential way to serve the President was to establish rapport with other power sources in Washington: key members of Congress, leaders of labor, and the press. He knew the priorities and he gave them many of his scarce hours.

It is hard to imagine a camaraderie between an intellectual and George Meany. But there it was. Both knew they could be useful to each other. They discovered a common ground, love of golf. Shultz was the better golfer but he always fudged his answers when questioned about his matches with Meany.

Shultz hunted no headlines, no office, and no glorification. That simplified my job. He simply wanted to be reported correctly. In that he was not always pleased, but he did not whine or make extraordinary demands on me.

The regular order was strain enough. Once, at a post-dinner staff conference, he caught me nodding and softly suggested I get to bed. Daily, when I was in town, my wife drove me to the office and, at my signal, picked me up for dinner, a service well beyond duty. One night a week, I went from the office to lecture to a journalism class for two hours. Preparing for that killed my weekends. That lasted one semester. Enough.

I screened the demands on his time for speeches, TV appearances, lectures to itinerant college classes, labor shindigs, and traveled with him. Klein's office relayed requests from organizations that felt they had a political right to the services of a cabinet minister, any cabinet minister. Some of the matchmaking was absurd and we often had to resist, sometimes strenuously.

If Shultz had complied with all the speechmaking demands relayed through me he would have made a bad Secretary of Labor. As it was, he struggled to oblige and found himself trying sometimes to explain administration policy to mixed after-dinner groups, tilted the wrong way politically and dulled by a superfluity of food and booze. The long, serious after-dinner speech to a besotted audience must be one of the sillier American traditions.

I wrote a few draft speeches which he used in part and paid for in high praise. That, I supposed, should have encouraged me to write more. I could not do more without sacrificing some of the other chores I had laid out for myself, such as digging out answers to reporters' queries. Speechwriting is a confining job, demanding monastic application and fraught with disappointments. Able practitioners are rare, as my hunt for one showed. So Shultz's speeches consisted largely of outlines written by him on the way to the platform.

Once I wrote a draft for Jim Hodgson, Shultz's successor, and unfortunately he used it.

"Did the Nixon administration ever do that to you?" Hodgson shouted to a politically hostile steelworkers' convention. The answer, if any, was supposed to be "No." The delegates roared back, "Yes!" At least they were listening. Moral: Don't ask a question of the audience unless you know what the answer is going to be.

Hodgson imported a speechwriter from California, Bill Schmidt, who solved the problem admirably.

Laurence Silberman: The Art of One-upmanship

Inquiries were not always disposed of with a telephone call or two. Ralph Nader's agents came on strong early in the Administration. They wanted to open Labor's files on certain investigations. The Solicitor (general counsel) held jurisdiction, so I went to see the Solicitor, Laurence Silberman, whose intellectual right to his Harvard Law degree never has been questioned.

I recommended he let go of the files. Silberman's response came in loud, stern tones. I hadn't come to fight and I did not feel defensive. Innocently I asked, "Why are you yelling?" His game soon revealed itself. We had not met before and he was trying one-upmanship. Intimidate the bastard, he was saying to himself. When I indicated I had caught on to his game, he grinned. But he was still not letting Nader get into his files. He saw the politics of the situation right away and said so. Under pressure from Nader he offered a compromise but Nader said nay.

The Freedom of Information Act was only three or four years old and I had closely followed, for news purposes, its course in the courts. I ventured the opinion that if Nader went to court he would win, so why not open up voluntarily?

Nader sued and won. The foolishness of choosing that case to make a fight became evident when the Department of Justice decided not to appeal the District Court's decision.

Shultz and I agreed the Department's information policy

should be liberalized. Together we drafted a brief memo to the top staff:

Policy decision authority on public information has been delegated to Joe Loftus, effective immediately. This includes, but is not limited to, the scope and form of news releases.

The Trap

The directive was not acclaimed by everybody in the shop. Silberman set a trap for me. The trap may have preceded the policy directive and thereby have given rise to it. The sequence is blurred. Anyhow, one morning I was notified that a meeting on information policy would take place that day. The Under Secretary, J.D. Hodgson, the Solicitor, and a couple others gathered in front of the Secretary's desk.

Shultz, undoubtedly prompted by Silberman, asked my views about answering requests for corporate statistical information furnished voluntarily to the Bureau of Labor Statistics for compiling economic indices on, say, productivity or labor turnover. The indices are published, of course, but the sources of each component are not identified.

For a man as acute as Silberman, that was a ridiculous trap. He must have gauged me not as a radical but an anarchist.

To my knowledge, no one had requested such information. If anybody had made such a request I would have promptly told him what I told that meeting: "That's not our information to give out. We ask employers to supply confidential data about their own businesses, so the information has to be kept confidential."

The wind quietly oozed out of Silberman's balloon. "Oh, well," he said, so weakly that I doubt if many in the room had heard. The people who had been invited to witness the quartering of Loftus quietly drifted away as the Secretary turned to other work. The meeting just evaporated.

Notebook Throwing

I managed a working relationship with Silberman, even after he threw a notebook at me. We were on the road with the Secretary, at that time Jim Hodgson, meeting with regional staffs and using notebooks with identical covers. Inadvertently I carried off Silberman's notebook. He found mine and correctly guessed what had happened.

Silberman, who had moved up to Under Secretary, found me in a telephone booth with the door open. Silberman, a baseball fan, tried a beanball. He missed: my notebook struck the inside wall of the booth with a resounding clap. A strange way for an Under Secretary of Labor to behave. I let it pass until I got Secretary Hodgson alone the next day. I asked if this were a planned attempt to get me to resign,

which I would peacefully do if he confirmed my suspicion. Hodgson, hand on mine, assured me that my thought was groundless. He then made a laughing, Freudian observation about Silberman's probable childhood environment.

Silberman unwittingly stimulated such speculation by, for instance, bellowing at subordinates, so loudly that he could be heard across the hall through two walnut-paneled walls. Another example: his mother played tennis well and very competitively. Her son's game was improving and one day he defeated his mother at the net. She never played tennis with him again. Love all!

I once heard a psychiatrist say of an editor who was unfeeling of subordinates in the office: "He must have a quiet home life." Larry did have a gracious home and a most charming and hospitable wife.

Silberman lived politics every waking hour, perhaps even beyond that. He was imaginative and indefatigable and arrived at the office every morning full of ideas which he shared with the Secretary right away. The party owes him much.

He seldom consulted me on matters of consequence. I was not bothered by that, nor by his brusque dismissal should I happen to open his door while he was telephoning. Ordinarily rudeness by a superior officer would concern me, but I had solved Silberman. He suffered from bad manners and a conspiratorial mind. I laughed at him, recognizing his rudeness as impersonal. It's possible he never really lost his temper but simply enjoyed a martinet role.

Besides, he wasn't grim. He could suspend bellowing for a laugh, and the laugh would be as loud as the bellow.

One day he stepped into Dave Taylor's office with a query. Taylor was Shultz's executive assistant. There had been a party the night before, where Shultz had told Silberman he wanted to talk to him about three questions.

"I recall two of them," said Silberman, wrinkling his brow, "but I had a couple drinks and I can't remember the third. Do you know what it was, Dave?"

"Yeah, Larry," said Taylor, managing solemn tones, "he wanted to talk to you about your drinking." Silberman joined Taylor in a belly laugh.

Once, a half-dozen black workers representing some strikers in an obscure Northwestern conflict journeyed to Washington with a complaint to the Labor Department. Their case was thin, but they would not leave the building until they got action.

Came 6 P.M. on a Friday and the Secretary confronted the question: to usher them out or allow them to stay the weekend. Secretary Hodgson hurriedly called a meeting to solicit opinions. General Services (GSA), the housekeeping agency, attended and wanted the visitors ejected. Silberman and I opposed forcible expulsion, contrary to the consensus. Given the decision, I advised the Secretary not to delay unless he wanted some action photography in the

newspapers. Apparently there was no hard resistance and nothing untoward happened.

"Larry," I said, "I never thought you and I would stand together on anything." He said nothing. Later, I decided I had voted wrong. GSA, which is responsible for the physical well-being of the building and probably could have ejected the men without consultation, told me they had to think of the precedent that a sit-in might inspire. A take-over of the Pentagon, for example, could not be tolerated.

The 1972 Campaign

A New Layer at the Top

Nixon's build-up for the 1972 campaign was plagued by inflation. On August 15, 1971, he announced a wage-price "freeze" and called for a five percent cut in Federal employment. At the same time, the Office of Management and Budget notified the Labor Department that it had run up its grade structure too high: the average grade had to be cut back three-tenths of a percent.

Five days later the Department announced the "creation of the Office of Regional Director in each of the Department's ten regions." Each region already operated under an Administrator. Now there was to be a new layer at the top. A three-page single-spaced memorandum fuzzed up the purpose of the addition: to install a political agent at the top of the bureaucratic structure in each region. Silberman was the architect.

Nothing illegal, of course. Such shenanigans are not the monopoly of any party, nor are they limited to Washington. The event took place more than a year before the campaign, long before reporters were geared up to suspect bureaucratic tinkering. They missed the story. Even reporters will agree that some stories are not the obligation of Public Affairs chiefs.

When he left the Department in the sweep-out of February 1973, Silberman tried private practice but soon turned up as Deputy Attorney General. Later, the President nominated him to be Special Representative for Trade Negotiations, but the Senate refused to confirm. "Arrogant," sniffed Senator Carl Curtis of Nebraska, as hard-core a Republican as they come. So the President nominated Silberman to be Ambassador to Yugoslavia. The Senate confirmed.

Oil

Shultz's reputation for working hard and effectively impressed the President, who gave him an assignment scarcely related to the Labor Department. He was directed to chair a

Cabinet committee to report on oil resources and national defense. The job was extraordinarily complex.

Shultz hired a Harvard law professor, installed him and staff in another building with White House security, and cautioned him against talking to anybody about his findings. The volume of inquiries from oil and other business publications foretold intense concern about the results. In Washington, the word "oil" conveyed dissonant overtones long before shortages struck the consumer.

Eventually the recommendations, dealing with quotas, import fees, and taxes were adopted by a decisive vote of Shultz's committee. One could tell by the identity of the "nay"-casters that the oil slickers didn't like the findings.

The President thanked Shultz and dropped the report into a file, never to be publicly mentioned again. In the light of Watergate revelations, specifically illegal corporate payments, I have since felt that Nixon was using the recommendations to give him leverage on oil treasuries in the 1972 campaign. Shultz, of course, had done his work in good faith.

Some Protest Visitors

One day the Rev. Ralph Abernathy, with disciples, paid a protest visit to the Labor Department, accompanied by TV cameras and reporters. This was one stop in a city-wide demonstration tour led by the successor to the slain Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. The official intelligence network advised us of their coming and the approximate hour. Shultz turned over the problem to me. I must have raised my eyebrows.

"You're in charge of communications, aren't you?" he gently needed.

So I headed for the lobby to greet and divert. The disciples delayed outdoors a few minutes awaiting their leader. Somehow they had become separated.

Mr. Abernathy was amiable on arrival so I invited him and his followers to a large conference room on the first floor.

"Can the television come?" he asked.

"Certainly."

He delivered his message to the cameras. I told him I agreed with his objectives and in a few minutes we were all old buddies. Everybody clasped his neighbor's waist and rocked up a hymn. The expansive woman on my right did not make easy one-arm waist-grabbing but I managed to hang on through swing and sway. She was delighted and rewarded me with a kiss. The group was headed for the building exit when Mr. Abernathy was reminded that his people had eaten no lunch. I had the impression that he himself had dined roundly and was suffering no ill-effects. The cafeteria was closed and all I could suggest were the food machines.

"Who's going to pay for it?" a deadly serious young man asked.

"We'll see," I replied, vexed by the only flat note of the event. I was prepared to lay out \$20 if necessary to avoid any last-minute deterioration of fellowship. The challenger turned out to be a Justice Department lawyer, traveling with the disciples presumably in an intelligence role. The problem for me, though not their hunger problem, suddenly evaporated when Mr. Abernathy headed for the front door. I was grateful for the end of a scene that had started with an ugly potential. Shultz was pleased.

Months later we were visited by protesting miners demanding a government-sponsored union election. They wanted to overthrow Tony Boyle, president of the United Mine Workers of America. I guided them to the same conference room and listened until everybody had his say. They left quietly but one of them sent back a complaint directed at the fellow who had heard their demands—me. "He didn't even take notes," the miner complained. John Shinn, a bureaucrat two doors away, called my attention to the letter. I sent it back to John with the notation: "The man is right. I've been covering the miners' union for 40 years and there is nothing new." I heard Shinn's laughter two offices away.

Some time later the anti-Boyle leader and his family were slain in their beds. That was a shocker, but it was not new to the coal fields. I remember most strikingly a rump union leader in the 30's who opened a mailed package at home two days before Easter. It was dynamite, a common commodity around the mines, and it blew him apart.

A writer friend who read the foregoing paragraph said it "makes you look like a hard-hearted bastard." Hard-hearted? I hope not. Hardened? Probably. Did I mean the Yablonski case was Standard Operating Procedure among the miners? Not really, but there has been so much of it over the years the shock value has gone. The miners' society begs for depth perceptions. The miner lives intimately with death every working day. His society is remote, sometimes isolated. His outlet is sometimes lawlessness, as in August 1976, when a long, illegal strike ended only after it brought a Federal court in West Virginia to its knees. That has serious implications for the future of an undisciplined society which rejects even the discipline of its own union.

Arnold Weber and Thoughts of Resignation

When George Shultz took leave of the University of Chicago to become Secretary of Labor he brought with him an intense young professor, Arnold Weber, who became Assistant Secretary for Manpower.

Arnie had a substantial sum to dispense for projects. He

was honest and tough, possessed a sharp mind and a facile tongue. In the occasional few moments when we stood or sat around, waiting for a meeting to start, he was good for a wisecrack on any subject that came up. That did not suggest lightheartedness so much as a purpose to demonstrate a racing mind at work. I tried to cultivate the man, but it didn't work. If he were ever relaxed I failed to perceive it. Even in wisecrack time he seemed to be speeding ahead to his next witticism. I admired his mind but I figured it didn't give him much pleasure. He struggled mightily to manufacture fun.

My problem with him rose out of his belief that he needed no advice or important help on public information. Even that caused no rupture until the manpower PR chief one day came to me with a plea that I intervene and reshape a news release that Weber insisted on putting out. The subject dealt with a local scandal on the West Coast involving Federal manpower funds.

This PR man had never come to me before about anything. When he came back a second time and the Office of Information Director called me on the same matter, I knew Weber was fighting everybody.

I remember the plea by the manpower information man: "Will you back us up?" I assured him I would. I tried to persuade Weber to take some advice, but no. The next morning he not only persisted but also pulled rank: "No staff assistant is going to tell me [a line assistant] what to do," said Weber over the phone. I hung up and wrote a memo to Shultz saying it was imperative that Weber hire an information specialist of his own choosing, who would keep the department out of trouble.

At least a week went by. No reply. I went off on a December holiday in St. Croix as scheduled. On Christmas Day, 1969, less than a year after I had joined the department, I wrote to Shultz.

Dear George:

Now that the season to be jolly is soon to end, I feel I can no longer postpone my resignation. This is it.

For many months I have accepted personal indignities, gross and subtle, from your friend. Now he has forced the issue by injecting himself into my professional role. I have sent him an F-111* for Christmas. I will be in next week to pick up my tools.

* [Lest we forget, the F-111 was the U.S. fighter plane that was falling down all over Germany at the time.]

I did not give Shultz a telephone number—I didn't have one—but a few days later came an insistent rapping on my door. "The White House is calling," a young woman said. I never learned whether Shultz actually employed the White House switchboard—famous for finding people anywhere, any place, any time—or whether his secretary just borrowed the label to get faster action along the line. The short version is that I agreed to go back and talk.

Shultz called Weber and me to a meeting and listened for two hours. He gave me two other half-hour sessions and I was beginning to feel ridiculous about the abuse of his time.

"Some people," I said respectfully, "think the government is run exclusively on brains, and I'm afraid you're one of them."

"It's important," he said.

"Yes," I agreed, "but what's needed are people who can get along with other people."

It took two for friction and I was one of them. That awareness caused me no unease. I did not invent the word abrasive for Weber.

Shultz left five or six months later for the White House to become the first director of the Office of Management and Budget. He took Weber with him and a few days later asked me to go along. I assumed he knew why I refused but neither of us mentioned that.

I decided Weber was all brains and no wisdom, but time should take care of that imbalance. A government run by young geniuses would be madness.

(The issue of his public relations methods was never resolved.)

Nixon and Meany

One summer day in 1970 Assistant Secretary Bill Usery, a spectacularly successful mediator, shadowed my doorway and asked: "Should we be doing something for Labor Day?"

Instantly my mind turned to Nixon versus Meany and decided Meany was too smart to be conned. No, I told Usery.

James D. Hodgson had moved up to Secretary. The idea of a Labor Day project may have come from him, but more likely from higher up. Or Usery could have been the initiator. I reckoned without a full perception of Nixon's brass and Meany's vulnerability to White House blandishments. Nixon set up a Labor Day dinner for 200 in the East Room and a post-prandial circus in the backyard. Bleachers were thrown up and many hundreds attended.

Meany, responding to the President's toast, told about the Presidents he had known, and startled some of his audience, aware of the New Deal's impact in labor history, with the remark: "... and let me tell you, Franklin Roosevelt, he was just as tricky a politician as anyone who bore the name of 'Tricky Dick' could be..."

(This is the first part of a two-part article.
The conclusion will appear in the
next issue of Nieman Reports.)

The Bicentennial

*"Histories are a kind of
distilled newspapers."*

Nieman Reports, approaching its 30th year while the nation celebrates its 200th birthday, joins the spirit of the observance and, like many, looks to the past before evaluating the present or pondering the future. Journalists in particular will take seriously Thomas Carlyle's comment: "Histories are a kind of distilled newspapers."

Consistent with Carlyle's maxim, we have selected various accounts from the weekly newspapers of the City of New York, 1734-1747, to illustrate both the ordinary and the extraordinary in the confusion of events that preceded the trauma we call the American Revolution.

The 20th century comes into focus through a different arrangement of words—verse instead of columns of prose—as pre-

sented by a Nieman alumnus in a prize-winning poem entitled "America the Tree."

To look ahead is also to turn back, and another member of the Nieman family, recalling his childhood and his ancestry, considers today and tomorrow in an essay written specially for the 1976 celebration of the Fourth of July.

In our experience at birthday festivities, a moment comes after the candles have been blown out and smoke rises above the fancy icing, when the passing of time seems tangible. For us that moment came in pondering these three "distillations" as we extracted the question: Have 20th-century battlegrounds become substitutes for the old market place, or can we hope and work for alternate, peaceable means to transform the way human beings regard each other?

The New York Gazette

The first excerpt is a reminder of the loyalty and closeness many of the colonists felt for the Crown, and describes what must have been one of the high points of the social season.

January 28, 1734:

Sunday, the 20th instant, being the Anniversary of the birthday of His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales, the honors of the day were deferred till Monday following, when, at 12 o'clock noon, his Excellency was attended by the Corporation, and all the principal gentlemen and merchants of this city at Fort George, where the healths of his Majesty, his Royal Consort, His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales, and the Ministers, were drank as usual, the cannon round the ramparts firing, and the two independent companies posted here being under arms. In the evening there was a numerous and splendid appearance of gentlemen and ladies at the Fort, where they were received by his Excellency and lady and the honorable family. The night concluded with a splendid supper and ball, which lasted till four o'clock in the morning.

Representing another segment of society, John Peter Zenger, journalist and printer of the New York Weekly Journal, suffered abuse and imprisonment from the governor of that day. His trial for seditious libel, especially as it concerned the law of libel and freedom of the press, has long been considered one of the first steps in American liberty.

November 25, 1734:

On the 17th instant, John Peter Zenger was taken up and committed to gaol, by virtue of an order of Council, for printing and publishing certain articles in the journal or newspaper entitled the New York Weekly Journal, &c., and on the 20th instant he was brought by a writ of habeas corpus before the Honorable James De Lancey, Esq., Chief Justice, at his Chambers, where the writ was returnable, who ordered the further argument of the matter to be at the City Hall, on the 23d, in the afternoon; at which place, after a long debate (the City Hall being crowded with people), the Chief Justice was pleased to order that the said John Peter Zenger should be admitted to bail; himself to be bound by recognizance in the sum of 400 pounds, and two sureties in 200 pounds each, for his appearance the next term, and remanded him to prison for want of such recognizance, which we don't hear is as yet entered into.

Meanwhile, the mundane problems of moving mail and people from one place to another are described in these items about postage and transportation:

May 1, 1736:

Whereas, the giving credit and keeping accounts of postage of letters is found to be both troublesome and inconvenient, and there being now in this Province a sufficiency of small change, so that the reason for introducing that custom is entirely ceased, notice is hereby given that for the future no accounts will be kept for postage of letters, nor any letters delivered till the postage thereof is paid; the Postmaster having been a great sufferer by giving such credits.

July 4, 1737:

These are to inform all persons that there is a ferry settled from Amboy over to Staten Island; which is duly attended for the conveniency of those that have occasion to pass and repass that way. The ferringe is fourteen pence, Jersey currency, for man and horse, and five pence for a single passenger.

◇ ◇ ◇

A different kind of traffic, which many today associate with 19th-century Southern slave owners, had in fact already been well established by the early colonists in their market place. For generations, barter in human beings remained a major commodity essential to trade, both in the South and the North.

October 15, 1733:

A very likely negro girl to be sold, brought up here in town, speaks very good English, aged about ten years; has had small-pox and measles, and begins to handle her needle.

May 25, 1747:

Run away, on April the 25th, from Capt. Abraham Kip, in New York, an Indian man, about eighteen years old, and speaks good English. Had on, when he went away, a gray cloth jacket, an old pair of trowsers, and an iron ring about his neck and one about his leg, with a chain from one to the other. Whoever takes up and secures the said Indian, so that he may be had again, shall have twenty shillings reward, and all reasonable charges paid by

ABRAHAM KIP.

January 13, 1737:

Whereas, Obadiah Hunt, tavern-keeper, having let his house to Mr. William English, of this city, tavern-keeper, has two lusty young negroes for sale, one named Tobey, 22 years of age, brought up in his house from 7 or 8 years old, fit for cooking or washing linnen, or any sort of men or women's work; the other, a lad named Wooster, about 14 or 15 years old, brought up in the house from 8 or 9 years old, and fitting for any work. If any person have a mind to buy one or both of these slaves, may agree with Obadiah Hunt, now living in the same house, next door to the Custom House, between this and the 25th of March next. Likewise, all sorts of household goods to be sold at the same house.

◇ ◇ ◇

Education and entertainment, often indistinguishable from one another, combined for a brief time at the home of a certain city dweller, when residents of New York City were invited to view two wonders of 18th-century technology.

October 17, 1743:

By desire of several gentlemen and ladies, the Solar or Camera Obscura Microscope, which has given such general satisfaction, and so great a concourse of gentleman and ladies continually attend to see it, is now removed to the house of Mr. John Kip, in Broad street, where the sun will serve all the day long.

It is the most entertaining of any microscope whatsoever, and magnifies objects to a most surprising degree. The animalculae in several sorts of fluids, with many other living and dead objects, too tedious to mention, will be shown incredulously magnified, and at the same time distinct, to the entire satisfaction of the spectators; as the circulation of the blood in a frog's foot, a flea, a fish's tail, and in many small insects, that a hundred of them will not exceed the bigness of a grain of sand, with their young in them. This curiosity was never shown before, by any person that travels.

The unparalleled MUSICAL CLOCK, made by that great master of machinery, DAVID LOCKWOOD. This great curiosity performs by springs only; it is a machine incomparable in its kind; it exceeds all others in the beauty of its structure; it is most entertaining in its musick, and plays the choicest airs from the celebrated operas, with the greatest nicety and exactness. It performs with beautiful graces, ingeniously and variously intermixed, the French horn pieces performed upon the organ, German and common flute, flageolet, &c., as sonatas, concertos, marches, minuets, jiggs and Scotch airs, composed by Corelli, Alberoni, Mr. Handel, and other great and eminent masters of musick.

This beautiful curiosity has been shown twice before the KING, in His Royal Palace at St. James's, where His Majesty was pleased to make an observation on the excellence of its beauty, and declared he thought it the wonder of this age. It is allowed by all who have seen it to be more worthy to adorn a King's palace than of being exposed for a common sight.

The inside of this machine may be viewed by gentlemen and ladies, and is to be seen from eight in the morning till eight at night.

NOTE. — This is the last week of showing the above curiosities.

◇ ◇ ◇

Not everyone respects the work of those who build and create; vandalism seems always to have been with us.

July 15, 1745:

Those young gentlemen rakes, who broke so many windows at midnight in this city; to show their unchristian way of rejoicing, may be assured, if they don't make satisfaction for the wooden shutters they broke in Beaver street, their names will be put in this paper and they be proved housebreakers.

Similarly, for others, domestic turmoil often was a way of life.

September 16, 1745:

Whereas, about twelve o'clock on Saturday night last, one Timothy Long, jeyner, aged about 40 years, has a dent on his upper lip, under his right nostril, a scar on his right cheek, is about six foot high, wears a blue coat, a black crape jacket, a light-coloured wig, in company with Thomas Powle, a lusty young man, belonging to the garrison of New York, with the aid and assistance of Judith, wife of Patrick Phegan, of this city, did rob the said Phegan's house of several sorts of goods (the said Phegan then lying dangerously ill of a violent fever and sickness), amongst which were a good feather bed, a chest with sundry sorts of goods, a tea-kettle, frying-pan, and many other things. The said Judith is a thin, lively woman, with hazel eyes, and a small scar on her face; wears sometimes a short scarlet cloak, at other times a long brown cloak, and has taken her son with her, aged about 4 years, a handsome, lively boy, with his hair cut off lately, only a little lock behind. Whoever secures the said persons, so that they may be brought to justice, shall have three pounds reward and all reasonable charges paid by

PATRICK PHEGAN.

♦ ♦ ♦

Whenever smoke and flame erupted unexpectedly, disaster threatened; the peril of fire was omnipresent.

September 20, 1746:

Notice is hereby given to all persons whatsoever, that after the date hereof, the first person that it can be proved against, that shall fire a gun in my woods, or any inclosure on my farm near fresh water, must expect to be sued for trespass, and all damages that I have sustained by firing of guns, &c.; and the reason of my giving this publick notice is, that they may not hereafter plead ignorance. On Saturday afternoon last, the dry leaves in my woods behind my barn was set on fire, and very probably by the wad of a gun; and, the wind blowing fresh; it soon got to a great head, and within forty yards of my stacks of hay, grain, barn, &c.; but by a chance discovery and timely assistance of some people at work hard by, the fire was happily extinguished.

NICHOLAS BAYARD.

June 24, 1745:

Last Tuesday, in the afternoon, the steeple of the new Dutch Church in this city was set on fire, close under the ball, by lightning; but being discovered before it got to a head, it was soon extinguished, chiefly by the courage of a few persons, who broke through the cupola at the hazard of their lives, and of having the lead melted about their ears. And we hear the elders of that church have presented them with *twenty pounds*, besides which they had presents from several other persons for their activity and bravery.

January 19, 1747:

On Wednesday last, in the forenoon, a fire broke out in the roof of the City Hall, at some distance from the chimney; but

by the immediate attendance of the Magistrates, and assistance of the inhabitants (who have always been remarkable for their readiness and dexterity on such occasions), it was soon extinguished. Three persons were observed to be extraordinary active and useful: one was Francis Davison, a carpenter (being the same person that was so instrumental in extinguishing the fire formerly in the cupola of the new Dutch Church), who got out upon the roof with an axe, and cut the roof open where the fire was; the engines at the same time playing the water upon him, and the weather being intensely cold, by the time the fire was out, he was cloathed with ice: the other two persons, Duncan Brown, mate, and John Ebbets, mariner, belonging to a vessel in the harbour:

The next day the Corporation met, and set for the said Francis Davison, Duncan Brown, and John Ebbets, when the Mayor returned them the thanks of the Corporation for their good services, and ordered seven pounds to be paid to the said Francis Davison; and four pounds each to the said Duncan Brown and John Ebbets, by their Treasurer, and also ordered each of them to be presented with the freedom of the Corporation; as an encouragement to others to behave with the same spirit and diligence on such occasions.

It is not certainly known how the fire began; but as it first broke out under the shingles in a room where the criminals were confined, and at a considerable distance from the chimney, it is generally believed the fire was put there by those criminals.

♦ ♦ ♦

Despite the availability of tutors . . .

January 18, 1746:

TO BE TAUGHT,

At the house next door to Mr. Furman's, in Wall street, Reading, Writing, Arithmetick, Vulgar and Decimal; Merchant's Accompts, Mensuration of Surfaces and Solids, and all manner of Artificer's Work, Geometry, Trigonometry, Surveying, Gauging, Dialling, Gunning, Navigation, with sundry other branches of the Mathematicks, with curious instruments for performing operations in sundry of said branches. All gentlemen, and others, inclining to be instructed in any of said branches, shall have due attendance given them, at reasonable rates.

♦ ♦ ♦

. . . Learning in the natural sciences lagged.

January 27, 1746:

We are credibly informed, that some days ago a fish was found dead, ashore, near Horsimas, in New Jersey, opposite the back of this city, having a head nearly resembling that of a man, with some hair on it. It was first discovered by a young man, who, observing the crows very busy at it, went to view it, and at coming home told his father; but his father, thinking it only the effect of an idle imagination, took no further notice of it till some days after, when some other persons, going that way, also perceived it; but not yet thinking it worth their while, or else being afraid to meddle with it, they let it

lie some days longer; by which time the crows had almost entirely carried off all the body, except the bones; which, 'tis said, about the breast and ribs; very much resembled the human anatomy; but as it draws towards the tail, ends entirely a fish. This strange *phenomena* has occasioned no small speculation all over that part of the country, as well as in some parts of this city. However, we are told it has been since discovered, or at least thought to be only a porpoise with his snout cut off; but whether a porpoise has ribs resembling a man's, or anything like hair on its head, must be submitted to those who are better acquainted with the dissection of those fishes than we dare pretend to be.

◇ ◇ ◇

Finally, almost at the mid-point of that century, the year 1747 ended as it had begun, with the problem of newsgathering.

February 9, 1747:

Our kind readers must now naturally expect a great dearth of news, and we are, therefore, quite at a loss what to give that may be agreeable; we must then beg their patience, when we tell them what can be no news here, and what too many of them know experimentally better than we can express; but as it may be news in distant parts, it can't be altogether unreasonable, since we have nothing else better to say. The deplorable circumstances this city is under, from a long series of cold and freezing weather, is matter of concern to all. This now not only hinders our foreign navigation (and so, consequently, prevents news), but occasions our fire-wood to be so scarce and dear as was never equalled here before; the price being from 40s. to 58s. a cord, and almost half the inhabitants in want. Provisions, also, are excessive dear; a good turkey, which scarcely ever before exceeded 3s. 6d., has lately been sold for 5s.; a fat fowl for 1s. 6d.; a pound of butter for 14d., and many other things proportionable. Under all these disadvantages, what must our poor suffer! Our rivers continue full of ice, and a gloomy prospect now o'spreads them.

December 14, 1747:

We have very little news, and the post's not expected in till next Saturday. But as we have lately been obliged to give several supplements, we hope all such of our kind customers as are upwards of one year in arrears will now think it time to discharge the same, as the weather continues very severe, and the printer but illy provided to stand the brunt of a long winter.

◇ ◇ ◇

Editor's Note: *The above items were taken from the Manual of the Corporation of the City of New-York, (pp. 695-737), "Extracts from the Earliest Newspapers of this City," published under the direction of D. T. Valentine, Clerk Common Council, 1862. Each excerpt is printed in its entirety. We are indebted to T. J. Lyons, Boston printer, for his kindness in making this volume available.*

-T.K.L.

America the Tree

By Charles A. Wagner

Cradled in the winds of the world
and high as the burst of sun-fire
is the tree called America
America the tree

Not Daniel Boone's pine-top lookout
or Washington's Cambridge elm
or Kilmer's Jersey oak
or Frost's New Hampshire birch
not these, not these
but the shade-hungry, hope-hung
tree called America
America the tree
in the garden of new Eden,
bountiful, benevolent,
misunderstood but free—
America the tree

clawed by dirty politics
flawed by excess
split by lightning of overzeal
still standing firm and stout as a rocket
branches outstretched still welcoming oppressed,
Grand Canyon roots still burrowing where soils
of all the world's continents patiently feed
on Plato's Athens and Runnymede.

Name me a tree as straight and as strong
as patient in storm and as heavy with fruit
as loud with song as America the tree—
for deep in its trunk's concentric grain
the rungs run hard on a durable tide
of Indian grandeur and Indian pride
with Merrimac, Kennebunk, Manahatta,
Atchafalaya, Cherokee, Lost Mule Flat,
Minnesota, Iroquois, Medicine Hat

and show me a tree as patiently grown
as America the tree out of Mississippi waters
carving flatland curlicues like banjo-strumming Arkansas
or the mist-mantled Wabash under an Albert Ryder moon
where Audubon went chasing for a purple-hooded loon

and was ever a loftier treetop
for the bald eagle's nest
than the canyon-haunted Rockies
and the wide Sierra passes
of heather and untrod snow
silent as tomorrow, cradled on the winds
of a haven-seeking world
of refugee humanity

tall as man made free
America the tree.

A Nieman Fellow in the class of 1945, Charles A. Wagner won the 1975 Gertrude B. Claytor Memorial Award for "America the Tree." It is reprinted with the permission of the author.

The Outsiders

By Robert C. Maynard

Cool slices of late spring air cut through the muggy night and rippled the leaves of Mr. Gaskill's pear tree. We young warriors foresook its cover for the far side of the hen house. The air raid sirens wailed again and we darted for our secret opening in the back fence that led to Frankie Chambers' yard. *AchAchAchAchAchAch*. We aimed our anti-aircraft fire, dead and sure, into the belly of the attacking aircraft. "Got one, got two, got three," squealed Kenny Morgan. "If you boys don't pipe down, Germans gonna hear you and come down here right on your butt," Mrs. Skinner shouted out the second-floor window. All the window shades were drawn, heavy black shades. Some people taped them down and used dim lights during the air raid drills. Our family just turned off all the lights and settled on the front steps with pitchers of lemonade and chatted with our neighbors. There was a suddenness to air raid drills that made them exciting and frightening. No sooner would the wail begin than someone would mutter, "Wonder if it's *the real thing* . . ." and jerk a thumb off to the west in the general direction of "IT," the Brooklyn Navy Yard. "IT" was a friend and supporter of many families during peacetime, but throughout the war we wondered when the Germans might attack it by sea or air. If they did, "It's goodbye, Brooklyn," all the old folks said. So their chatting had a nervous edge and we children playing war games unnerved the adults even more. Soon it became common for them to huddle at the foot of my stoop in clusters of eight or a dozen and speak in an absurd softness lest the Germans hear. The night was clear and we children romped and tromped through the back yards, leaving the old people to fear enemy attack while we made a tunnel out of the night, and the darkened corridors of our Brooklyn world, even in wartime, seemed snug and blue. Millions of blacks lived in far less ideal conditions but that was a discovery a while coming.

When World War II ended, we celebrated on those streets, rejoiced and danced along the white strip up and down Marcy Avenue and shouted victory songs off-key. Neighbors threw open their doors and people who had lived beside one another for decades, sometimes on speaking terms and sometimes not, embraced and wept like long-lost kin. We reveled in a victory of one people. When we spoke of the war, it was our victory. We were black, but did not speak of the trials, tribulations and victories of the black troops; there were Jews but no mention was made in those nights of Belsen; there were Italians, but nobody brought up the name of Mussolini; there were Germans, but nobody

mentioned Hitler. We were Americans and Brooklynites, and I remember old Mr. Mosher weeping and singing some inane song with Mr. Piccarro, our corner grocer, and after reaffirming their allegiance to the United States, those two immigrants swore allegiance to the old neighborhood, to each other.

When "the boys" got back, they all said, we'd open more businesses and clean up the vacant lot and put a store on it. We were going to make that neighborhood, our Bedford-Stuyvesant, the jewel of Brooklyn, and everyone knew Brooklyn was the jewel of New York and New York was the jewel of America. We were, in short, the best there ever was, we West Indians and Jews and black Carolinians and Italians and Irish and Poles. We lived in our separate cultures but we shared a common danger and in the process something had come over this little corner of the world. We were mostly immigrants when the war began. We were all Americans when it was over. Or so I thought then in my sheltered innocence.

It took about five years for the speculators to pick the old neighborhood clean. Looking back, I can see all the forces

We reveled in a victory of one people. When we spoke of the war, it was our victory . . . We lived in our separate cultures but we shared a common danger and in the process something had come over this little corner of the world.

that undid the first America I'd known, but as they did their work then, I was too small to understand. I hadn't heard much of Detroit and automobiles. I knew vaguely of suburbs, but attached no particular significance to them. The only Moses I knew of led his people out of the wilderness; the Moses who raped my hometown with superhighways, Robert Moses, who had no time for blacks and Puerto Ricans and willed their neighborhoods to death, that Moses I didn't hear about until much later. And "white flight" was a term no one ever used then, but little by little we watched the whites depart for Flatbush and Westbury and Garden City.

I remember the day Frankie Chambers moved. We sat on the curb outside my house under the live oak and had one

Robert C. Maynard, *Nieman Fellow '66*, is the former ombudsman for The Washington Post, where he is now a columnist and editorial writer. This piece was originally written for July 4, 1976, a magazine supplement to that paper, and is reprinted by permission from The Washington Post.

last game of marbles, and swore eternal devotion. As the whites left, the speculators turned those fabulous old brownstones into rooming houses and charged more for a room than whole families had paid for an apartment. I was frightened and lonesome on our street. I wanted to move to the suburbs, too. My father said our ministry was on those streets. We would stay.

Journalists are forever trying to explain to non-journalists what makes us choose this way of making a living over law, medicine or ministry. The answers we give can be wildly contradictory and yet all be true. The truth is that most journalists don't know why they are journalists, and that is just as true of me. But when I think back to those early days in Brooklyn, to the death of my neighborhood, I remember a powerful compulsion to know. I wanted to know how my world could have been so sure and snug in wartime and so cold and strange in peacetime. One of the new ladies in Jackie Mosher's house propositioned my dad on his way home one evening from church. His ministerial indignation

I wanted to know how my world could have been so sure and snug in wartime and so cold and strange in peacetime. . . . It was time for curiosity. I wanted to know. It wasn't in the history of Brooklyn that I looked, or in the history of New York. It was in the history of America.

shook the rafters of our house, but it was too late for indignation. Indignation alone was a waste of breath. It was time for curiosity. I wanted to know. It wasn't in the history of Brooklyn that I looked, or in the history of New York. It was in the history of America. And there I settled on the history of the relationship between Africans and Americans. It seemed to me as I grew and groped that something about the way in which whites regarded blacks shaped far more of their lives and their lifestyle than they could ever guess. The black presence forced Americans to make choices they wouldn't otherwise make. I am getting a little ahead of my story, but what I really mean is that the *fear* of the black presence shapes most Americans' lives.

Richard Wright was finishing *Native Son* in the late 1930's around the time I was born. He created in Bigger Thomas a character as true as any invented in American literature. Bigger is the awesome black buck, big and frightening and strong and angry. When whites speak of flight from the city, I suspect that at the core of it they are speaking of fleeing

from this thing of fearful fantasy, this Bigger of everybody's imagination. Bigger looms at the center of the American conscience—and for good reason as we shall soon see—and shapes public policy, private fears and social nightmares. Even when he is in a Brooks Brothers suit, Bigger is a frightful sight. Bigger is angry. Many Americans pretend to have forgotten why he is so angry. They say he is just no good, or won't work or won't be nice to white people. Rapist. Killer. Rioter. Inmate. Death Row. Or football star. Nigger Bigger. The mad figure at the center of the American dream. Richard Wright tried to explain his discovery of Bigger by writing an essay that appeared in 1940 in *Harper's* called "How Bigger Was Born." His description of the process is not as helpful as his conclusion about what his writing meant to him:

Early American writers, Henry James and Nathaniel Hawthorne, complained bitterly about the bleakness and flatness of the American scene. But I think if they were alive, they'd feel at home in modern America. True, we have no great church in America; our national traditions are still of such a sort that we are not wont to brag of them; and we have no group acceptable to the whole country upholding certain humane values; we have no rich symbols, no colorful rituals. We have only a money-grubbing, industrial civilization. But we do have in the Negro the embodiment of a past tragic enough to appease the spiritual hunger of even a James; and we have in the oppression of the Negro a shadow athwart our national life dense and heavy enough to satisfy even the gloomy broodings of a Hawthorne. And if Poe were alive, he would not have to invent horror, horror would invent him.

As everyone should know by now, Wright didn't actually invent Bigger. Bigger was invented by Emanuel Downing in 1645. Downing, an English settler, wrote to his brother-in-law, John Winthrop, that year, and this is part of what he said:

I do not see how we can thrive until we get into a stock of slaves sufficient to do all our business, for our children's children will hardly see this great continent filled with people, so . . . our [white indentured] servants will still desire freedom to plant for themselves, and not stay but for very great wages. And I suppose you know very well how we shall maintain 20 Africans cheaper than one English servant.

That's how Bigger was *really* born. The fantasy that a mindless brute would "do all our business" and make the settlers comfortably off in this new land of riches was transformed in time into a different fantasy, one made all the more real each time there was in fact a rape by a black man of a white woman, or a robbery, or a riot. What white Americans seem never to have understood fully, but what black Americans can never forget, is that the forefathers of white America placed Bigger Thomas at the center of their fears. Or, as Wright would have it, they cast "a shadow athwart our national life . . ."

The first Europeans in Africa were tradesmen and tourists, and slavery was the furthest thing from their minds. The Africans were the first to develop a reliable method of smelting metal, and it was in high demand among the Europeans. A 16th-century Dutch visitor wrote home about the wonders of the city of Timbuktu and compared it favorably to the largest cities of his own continent. Those who followed were far less interested in urban aesthetics than in wealth, and they quickly began exploiting Africa's resources, human and otherwise. The Portuguese were the first to arrive as slavers and the last to leave as colonialists, their role in Africa having spanned more than 400 years. The Spanish, the English and the Dutch came next and in more than 300 years, they wrenched out of Africa no fewer than 40 million human beings. Most died in the middle passage, jammed in the cargo holds of pitiful vessels. An archbishop from Europe in a ship in the harbor blessed the doomed cargo on the way to the new world and to slavery of a sort not known to have existed before. Slaves until then had been prisoners of war or indentured servants in the main, people whose hope for manumission never died. Somehow they could work their obligation off. The American colonists decided to make of Africans a permanent slave caste. There was a special advantage in doing this to the African. It was first of all cheaper—as Downing pointed out—and, more important than any other factor, this slave was color-coded. Since only a tiny number of free Africans found their way to these shores, it was easy in the early days of slavery to know who was a slave and who was free. The black-skinned people were the slaves, and the white and red-skinned people were, generally speaking, free. In an age of enlightenment beset by revolution all over the world, the contradiction of that arrangement was to set the stage for the many contradictions that would follow.

Bigger Thomas is the awesome black buck, big and frightening and strong and angry. When whites speak of flight from the city, I suspect that at the core of it they are speaking of fleeing from this thing of fearful fantasy, this Bigger of everybody's imagination.

"The reaction of Americans to the shocks of revolution," Winthrop Jordan tells us in *White Over Black*, was mixed. "They hoped for the triumph of liberty in the world but not for a complete one. They delighted to talk of freedom, but wished their slaves would not. They assumed their slaves

yearned for liberty but were determined not to let them have it." So they pretended their slaves were not human. Thomas Jefferson played the game while styling the finest document on liberty extant in the world. Patrick Henry said "give me liberty or give me death," but freeing his slaves would have been "inconvenient." And so it went.

A great revolutionary war succeeded in America and established the first nation known in man's history to live by a written constitution that spelled out the liberty of free

They pretended their slaves were not human. Thomas Jefferson played the game while styling the finest document on liberty extant in the world. Patrick Henry said "give me liberty or give me death," but freeing his slaves would have been "inconvenient."

people. All except the blacks. They were, said Chief Justice Roger Taney in the *Dred Scott* (1857) case,

beings of an inferior order, and altogether unfit to associate with the white race, either in social or political relations; and so far inferior that they had no rights the white man was bound to respect.

The next war showed how deep the moral and political division in the new nation had become. And even though it was fought ostensibly over the holding together of the states, it was really fought over the deeply disturbing matter of conscience born of that fateful decision by Emanuel Downing and his contemporaries to create a caste with "no rights a white man was bound to respect."

When the Civil War ended, black Americans had a brief jubilee. They were free, but no one could say precisely what they were free to do. They had no education, no skills, no money and no love lost from the whites around them. As Richard Kluger points out in his book *Simple Justice*, the black people's freedom had cost white southerners "between two and three billion dollars, using the pre-war auction-block price per head as the basis for calculation." In those days just after the war, Carl Schurz, a journalist, went south to see interracial relations for himself. He reported back to the Senate:

To kill a Negro, they [white southerners] do not deem murder; to debauch a Negro woman, they do not think fornication; to take the property away from a Negro, they do not consider robbery . . . The reason of all this is simple and manifest. The whites esteem the blacks their property by natural right, and however much they admit that the indi-

vidual relations of masters and slaves have been destroyed . . . they still have an ingrained feeling that the blacks at large belong to the whites at large.

Terror reigned down on black people after Reconstruction failed. The nightriders, the Klansmen, the charlatans—all had their turn at terrorizing, humiliating and exploiting the Negro. Those years showed white Americans that honor was not necessary when dealing with black people; after all, treachery had proved itself so successful. The law could be twisted to say of blacks what it would not dare say of whites, that a section of society could be partitioned off under the banner of “separate but equal.” Blacks poured out of the rural South in those years, one of the largest migrations this nation of migrants has ever seen. They searched in the North for jobs and justice and found neither, only more of the same. When the Great Depression came, blacks were already in the basement of the society with no farther to fall. That is when Richard Wright began setting down Bigger in earnest. Those Depression years and the war that followed set the stage for a social revolution that would shake the foundations of the greatest nation on earth. Bigger would break loose in the streets, and the glow from the flames of his anger would be visible around the globe. But, again, I am ahead of my story.

The war was hardly over and “the boys” not yet home before pitched battle began. John O. Killens wrote a novel about one of the GI race riots, *And Then We Heard the Thunder*. It was about how these men had fought a common enemy until the war was over, and then they fought each other fiercely. When the blacks got back to South Carolina, Kansas and Brooklyn, back from the “war to save democracy” in Europe and Asia, having left behind their buddies,

What white Americans seem never to have understood fully, but what black Americans can never forget, is that the forefathers of white America placed Bigger Thomas at the center of their fears.

their limbs, but mostly their innocence, it was clear that Jim Crow would have to crack. The NAACP’s lawyers were on the move across the country taking depositions about school segregation and housing discrimination. Long, long after Jefferson’s stirring declaration, black people were filing law suits to be included fully under the protection of the Constitution and to be recognized as “equal” in the eyes of that declaration. But there was more. It was this dream that “the sons of slaves and the sons of slavemasters” might

together build a great society that moved Martin Luther King’s audience of 250,000 to cheer and weep at the Lincoln Memorial in August of 1963. It was a fight to be free of the hypocrisy that 300 years of racism and slavery had imposed. It was also a fight against this vicious idea that all black people were secretly Bigger Thomas and his female equivalent, a “welfare” mother making babies just for the sake of an allotment check.

Although white Americans might not be able to identify the source of this seething anger, black Americans knew

White flight? Did white people really need to flee — or had blacks all those heinous years been doing anything else but trying to escape the terror, the tyranny and the hypocrisy of white racism?

very well how wide a gap of perception there was between the white version of history, “his-story,” the black Muslims of old were fond of saying, and our own. We had been denied the memory of our roots and our culture, our languages and customs. We had been told we were beasts of burden because we were worthless and inferior, that we were dishonest and would rape, cheat and steal because it was in our nature to do so; and most important, that virtue, rectitude and achievement were epitomized in whiteness, a state of grace to which we could not aspire but whose noblest attributes we would do well to emulate. It would be a time before Winthrop Jordan would articulate for whites what blacks had all along been thinking: “Englishmen . . . used peoples overseas as social mirrors and they were especially inclined to discover attributes in savages which they found first but could not speak of in themselves.” That was the black problem with white Americans from the outset. Bigger Thomas was not the model for the quintessential rapist. We can thank the contemporaries of Emanuel Downing for white America’s role in one of the biggest rape stories in the history of mankind. And as for lazy welfare cheaters, what could top the sanctimony of “I do not see how we can thrive until we get into a stock of slaves sufficient to do all our business”? Who’s kidding whom here? *White flight?* Did white people really need to flee the presence of blacks—or had blacks all those heinous years been doing anything else but trying to figure out how to escape the terror, the tyranny and the hypocrisy of white racism?

What happens, Langston Hughes asks, to “a dream deferred?” The answer came in Watts in August of 1965. It exploded. Then came Newark and Detroit, and one night in

1968, Dr. King was gunned down and 110 cities went up at once, all a hysterical incandescent plea to get this story straightened out and see rape for rape and cheating for cheating, men as men and women as women. Without the plain honesty to see that there had been a monumental injustice at the start of this relationship and face it straight on, without the decency to admit that traffic in human flesh is an abomination, to admit that our ancestors cleared the forests and built the big houses and made America go and grow—if we can't come to grips with the meaning of that

We had to hold back the tears at the memory of a great life gone to hell and great possibilities dead abornin' because people can't face their future before they face their past.

mutual history, then whites will always be in flight. Not from us, from the real American history.

So, when the riots hit, the kid from Brooklyn with the anti-aircraft squadron romping through an air raid drill was coming down some sort of home stretch in his quest for understanding of what happened to that warm and innocent America that had dissolved before his saddened eyes. One

night, while covering a riot in some strange city, I called home because I'd heard there was trouble in Brooklyn, too. Yes, my mother said in a voice so depressed she hardly could speak. There had been trouble all right. "They knocked out Piccarro's windows," she reported of the corner grocer. "They've been running around setting fires, young hoodlums no more than twelve and thirteen. The police are no better, hiding cases of liquor in our hedges right before my eyes, black and white ones. The police, imagine it." I told her I could imagine it because I was looking at some similar behavior in Cleveland even as we spoke. "Just like Cleveland, huh?" she asked. We were silent together and pondered that, all the memories rushing back of the Brooklyn that might have been, the unusual little neighborhood that could have proved that people can work and live together in mutual regard. All that was gone now, the victim of some new and ominous phenomenon called *white flight*. We hung on the telephone that lonely night, not exchanging any real words. She asked, as always, if I'd prayed and I fibbed as always and said yes. She said to be careful because this rioting business was dangerous. I told her to do the same and we had to hold back the tears at the memory of a great life gone to hell and great possibilities dead abornin' because people can't face their future before they face their past.

Well, Happy Birthday, America. You're 200 now. Old enough to know better.

Editor's Note:

The following is a statement of the mission of *Nieman Reports*, a quarterly founded by the Society of Nieman Fellows in 1947. The statement was written by Louis M. Lyons, Curator of the Nieman Foundation from 1939 to 1964, and Chairman of the Society of Nieman Fellows, in his book, *Reporting the News*. (Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1965.)

"It is intended to publish a quarterly about newspapering by newspapermen, to include reports and articles and stories about the newspaper business, newspaper people and newspaper stories.

"... It has no pattern, formula or policy, except to seek to serve the purpose of the Nieman Foundation 'to promote the standards of journalism in America...'"

Nieman Reports
48 Trowbridge Street
Cambridge, Massachusetts 02138

Please enter my subscription to Nieman Reports at \$5 for one year.

☐ New ☐ Renewal

☐ Check enclosed ☐ Bill me

Name

Address

City State Zip

Checks may be made payable to the Nieman Foundation.
Add \$1.35 per year for foreign postage.

Black Rage in South Africa

(Continued from page 2)

86 percent of the country; they too are denied free primary and high school education. (There are also two other totally disfranchised groups: "Coloureds," and South Asians, numbering about two million together; they are caught in the middle.)

Blacks, in particular, are regulated in their daily lives by the infamous "Pass Laws," which are sickeningly reminiscent of what Hitler imposed on the Jews. And at the root of the regimen of ruthless suppression of the non-white majority and also would-be troublemakers of any color (*i.e.*, activist opponents of *apartheid* who endanger the system by word or deed) is a newly sharpened body of legislation that can imprison or detain indefinitely *anyone* whom the minister of justice deems a threat to the state.

Those, then, both South African and American, who so often comfortably package South Africa with *our* treatment of blacks and American Indians as a shared problem are talking nonsense. Although America's race problem remains far from any just resolution, there are two crucial dissimilarities: first, South African non-whites are a massive majority, unlike American non-whites who make up only 13 percent of the population; but second, and more important, American law—through courts and legislatures—has belatedly, in the past 20 years, placed itself emphatically on the side of equal rights and opportunities for non-whites. Tragically, the very opposite has been the case in South Africa over the same time span.

Were there external "agitators"—as alleged by the Pretoria government—at the root of the black urban uprisings that have just occurred, and will certainly recur in the months or years ahead? Yes indeed: the white minority regime itself. Its policies are the agitators, even instigators. Not only *apartheid* and total denial of the franchise, but in recent years something more slow-motion but iniquitous called "separate development"—the legislated banishment of the black majority to black "homelands" comprising 14 percent of South Africa's less desirable terrain, leaving the whites in the other 86 percent of the land; and along with that, so-called "independence" for these scattered black spots on the map, *and* total legal ostracism for all South Africa's blacks—meaning that they will eventually be deprived even of their South African citizenship, though most of them live and work in South African cities, always will, and have never laid eyes on these alleged "homelands."

How can Vorster and Kruger have been surprised by the "black rage" that erupted in June since they were themselves its chief instigators? And how can they, or their successors, be surprised by the inevitable black rage that lies ahead and will one day triumph—unless some miracle of conciliation can still somehow happen?

I write these words about South Africa because I went there for three intensive weeks a year ago and care about the place. I went with my wife, both of us academics but total novices about Africa. What attracted us was the beauty and diversity of the landscape, and also the microcosm of the planet that South Africa's racial problems seemed to pose. How baffling, we felt, that in the presence of all this evil, there was such creative tension in the air. What also attracted us were the heroes and even saints that such intractable problems seemed to create among all races: not only Suzman; but also Robert Sobukwe (the black banned leader of the Pan-Africanist Congress); Gatsha Buthelezi (chief minister of the Kwa-Zulu "homeland");* Nelson Mandela (the African National Congress leader, long imprisoned on Robben Island, whom we didn't see but whom many blacks still esteem); Raymond Louw, editor of the often-brave *Rand Daily Mail*; and especially the Rev. C.F. Beyers Naudé, an Afrikaner Dutch-Reformed clergyman who broke with the ruling secret *Broederbond* and now, as director of the Christian Institute, is a prime candidate for indefinite detention under the new law.

How will it all end? As a child in New York I met my first white (and dissident) South African in about 1942; and he predicted a "bloodbath." Well, many years have passed without that outcome. But last summer we found ways to meet not only with our many white hosts but also with some 50 blacks individually—and another 75 blacks in an unscheduled three-hour session in the hinterland. What happened in Soweto in June came as no surprise to these two visitors of a year ago—but apparently still surprised not only the Pretoria regime but also large sectors of the white community. "Separate development" has, it seems, concealed the intense reality of black rage from most resident whites.

Vorster and his hard-line supporters undoubtedly have enough firepower to kill off at least half of the non-white population before they themselves are finally done in. In the meantime all sorts of foreign powers might intervene on both sides, overtly and covertly.

Far better for Vorster to read the writing on the wall, and to heed its message: that at the least a multiracial state is South Africa's best hope; and that otherwise majority rule, African style, is the inevitable outcome. Because black Africans, like everyone else on the planet, would prefer to rule themselves, however badly, than be ruled by any kind of minority—benevolent or otherwise.

—J.C.T. Jr.

(Reprinted by permission from The New Republic.)

* See Chief Buthelezi's "The Political Logjam" in the Autumn and Winter 1975 issue of *Nieman Reports*.

VIEWPOINT

Investigative Reporting: The Precarious Profession

By Clark R. Mollenhoff

Investigative reporting is a precarious profession, and don't forget it. For the most part it is hours and days—and sometimes weeks—of tedious work in combing records; countless interviews with people who do not really want to talk to you; the running out of endless leads, most of which end as very dry holes or, worse yet, with inconclusive results; and the impenetrable stonewalling of responsible officialdom.

This is not an easy way to make a living as a newsman, even under the best of circumstances—and I believe I have been blessed with the best practical circumstances for more than thirty years with the *Des Moines Register* and *Tribune*.

Investigative reporting is not an automatic way to consistent front-page stories, nor is it the best path to a vast admiring audience or into the heart of one's editor or publisher.

If an investigative reporter is doing his job right, it is almost certain that he will become controversial and subject to the accusation that he favors one political party, political figure, or political ideology. If he plays it aggressively on one side of the political street, he will have one group of dear, dear friends, but another group of bitter enemies.

Unless he is meticulously careful in developing a story as well as in writing it, he is likely to be under attack on charges of "irresponsibility" or "character assassination." Well-financed adversaries and their lawyers will pounce upon his most inconsequential procedural mistake, and it is likely that he will have to defend every word in a critical story.

When he hits it big, he will find politi-

cians, reporters, editors, and publishers clustered around with smiles, handshakes, and pats on the back for "great work." But if he is under attack, and seemingly vulnerable, only a handful of reporters and editors will have the depth of knowledge and understanding to stick with him and give him encouragement and support.

And when his target for criticism is very influential, he must know that a whole new standard must be applied to his procedures and story approach. Unless he takes it upon himself to make sure he is knee-deep in facts, law, and reasonable justifications for everything he has done and written, he will be courting disaster.

Also, there are some circumstances with powerful public figures when no amount of fact, law, and logic can prevail. He will be fortunate if he can recognize these cases far enough in advance to avoid a confrontation.

All of these pitfalls should be enough to make any sensible person wary of investigative reporting as a career. And I must say, many who take a turn at it are discouraged by them, wearied of the long hours of reading and research, and abandon it for a more comfortable existence as a political pundit, columnist, or editor. Or better yet, they stick to a career as a humor columnist or sports writer where the turn of a phrase is an end in itself, which is certainly more pleasant than turning over stones or dead bodies.

With all this, one must wonder why anyone would take up investigative reporting as a career. Why would George Bliss, Sandy Smith, Bill Lambert, Wally Turner, Bob Green, and myself—as well as a host of others—take it up, and stay with it for 25 years or more?

When investigative reporting pays

off quickly with million-dollar dividends such as Bob Woodward and Carl Bernstein are receiving, it can seem glamorous and highly rewarding. There is excitement in the story of two young and relatively inexperienced reporters who had an important role in the development and breaking of exclusive news stories that helped to keep the Watergate investigation alive. And eventually President Nixon was brought tumbling down, which added an unprecedented touch of drama to cap their tale.

The Woodward-Bernstein story had the ingredients for an excellent book, *All the President's Men*, and an excellent movie that gives realistic treatment to one slice of the Watergate story. But it is important to remember that this was just one slice—a part of *The Washington Post* slice of Watergate, but not even all, or the most important part, of *The Washington Post*'s contribution.

It is understandable that Robert Redford kept the story-line as lean as possible in the movie, and did not include the vital contributions of Barry Sussman or the many important, closely-related stories developed and written by Morton Mintz, Larry Stern, Ronald Kessler, Spencer Rich, and George Lardner, among others.

While the drama critics and book reviewers need only concern themselves with the question of whether the story-line was generally realistic and the characters believable, we must avoid oversimplification and try to see through and around the devices of the dramatist if we are to learn anything practical from the Watergate saga.

We owe Woodward and Bernstein, Robert Redford and *The Washington*

Mr. Mollenhoff, Nieman Fellow '50, is Washington Bureau Chief for the Des Moines Register and Tribune. His latest book, for Norton, is *Game Plan for Disaster: An Ombudsman's Report on the Nixon Years*. These remarks were presented at the Investigative Reporters and Editors meeting in Indianapolis in late June.

Post a great deal from the standpoint of putting major focus on the importance of investigative reporting as a force against abuses of power by the President of the United States and other high Federal officials. The impact of the book and the movie has only begun to be felt in our journalism schools and in our newsrooms.

Hardly a week passes that I do not hear of some new incident of an editor with a "Deep Throat" problem. This situation is widespread, and serious, for young and inexperienced reporters are turning up with "confidential sources"

dence is and have years of experience in judging the reliability of informants.

Realistically, it is unlikely that many of us will have a publisher or editor with the dedication of Kay Graham and Ben Bradlee to exposing the truth about Richard Nixon's administration. The question of whether this was solely a dedication to obtaining the whole truth on Watergate is immaterial now, and the rights of a free press should not be, and cannot be contingent upon passing some litmus-paper test of purely non-partisan, objective motivations.

As we know today, they were right on

that standard we do have some degree of vulnerability that can be ignored only when there are compensating advantages on other points.

Since Watergate is the overwhelming story of our era, it is necessary that we analyze it carefully for what it was and what it was not.

First, it was a great example of what a newspaper can do when it is dedicated to obtaining the whole truth, as *The Washington Post* was in this case.

Second, it was an excellent example of what young and relatively inexperienced reporters can do with one hell of a lot of leg-work, persistence, and luck.

But it is a mistake to oversimplify and state that two young reporters exposed Watergate and forced the resignation of President Nixon. While their contribution was significant, it was not vital to any crucial development, for the FBI bureaucracy, the Federal Election Office, and civil litigation by the Democratic party had accumulated most of the hard evidence, and many other reporters and newspapers were on the trail of the same stories.

It was important to get that information into the public domain, and it was simply a matter of *The Washington Post* being a bit more agile and aggressive in getting into print ahead of *The New York Times*, the *Washington Star*, the *Los Angeles Times*, *Newsday*, the *Chicago Tribune*, the Scripps-Howard newspapers, and others. Each of the above-listed news organizations had a good many exclusive news breaks that were probably as important as any single story *The Washington Post* carried.

The press as a whole did a great job, in the finest tradition, but it would be a bit of a myth to suggest that the free press did it alone. The press was dependent upon the integrity of the FBI bureaucracy and the Federal Election Office for the production and preservation of evidence that made the exposure possible.

And, likewise, all of the best work of the press and the government investigators would have meant nothing if it had not been for the courage, ability,

When he hits it big, he will find politicians, reporters, editors, and publishers clustered around with smiles, handshakes, and pats on the back for "great work." But if he is under attack, and seemingly vulnerable, only a handful of reporters and editors will . . . stick with him and give him encouragement and support.

on a wide range of exotic political shenanigans that would amount to libel problems if printed.

Often reporters refuse to identify their sources to the editor, and at the same time hint, and occasionally charge, that the editor or the newspaper, or both, are "gutless" or are a part of a "cover-up" for crooked politicians.

The inexperienced reporter may see his "Deep Throat" as the way to fame and fortune, and be thoroughly frustrated and angered if editors and publishers are less single-minded and less dedicated than the ones at *The Washington Post*.

We must be realistic about whether our publishers and editors should be expected to put their reputations and fortunes on the line on the word of an untried reporter who says he has a "confidential" source. Such a risk is unreasonable with an inexperienced reporter. And it is even a bit precarious when dealing with such experienced professionals as George Bliss, Sandy Smith, or Bill Lambert, who know and understand what corroborative evi-

the basis of the overwhelming weight of the evidence, and were basically right in the aggressive questions raised and pursued as their staff pushed forward on a dozen fronts to make certain that official Washington would not forget the unanswered questions.

But they did take chances. They did go into print on a number of occasions on evidence that many other experienced and objective editors would have found insufficient. They did make mistakes, as all of us may when we force the known evidence to the frontier of projection, and when we make judgments based upon second- and third-hand hearsay for corroboration. It is refreshing that many of those errors and questionable tactics are admitted in the book, even though they are passed over lightly in the movie.

We must all take some chances with regard to the really big exposé, for it is seldom that we can pin down all aspects of a highly controversial story with solid evidence that would be admissible in a court. That should be our goal, however, for every time we deviate from

and integrity of Representative Wright Patman, Senator Sam Ervin and United States District Judge John J. Sirica in late 1972 and early 1973.

Remember the persistent probe by Representative Patman's banking and currency committee that produced a massive factual report on the Mexican laundry before it was aborted by Gerald Ford and Garry Brown and the White House in October, 1972.

Remember the persistent search for truth by Judge Sirica in the trial of the Watergate burglars that frustrated the initial cover-up of the White House role and made it possible for Senator Ervin to demonstrate the need for a Senate inquiry.

Judge Sirica's initially controversial pressures for the truth and the impending Senate probe by Sam Ervin created the conditions for the defections of James McCord, John Dean, and Jeb Magruder.

It is true that the free press aggressively reported these matters and, in this, fulfilled its responsibility to keep the public informed. But there were powerful political forces at work in Congress—I mention only the AFL-CIO as one—that were more important than any segment of the press in finally persuading the House Judiciary Committee to launch the impeachment proceedings.

Although Watergate is behind us, the lessons of Watergate should be remembered in proper perspective or we will be destined to make misjudgments in the future. The next time we might not be so fortunate as to find the free press so courageous, or to find men of the tough, deep integrity of Senator Ervin, Representative Patman, Judge Sirica, or Special Prosecutor Archibald Cox in the right place at the right time.

We must recognize that if there were a single person with the all-encompassing knowledge of "Deep Throat," such an all-knowing source is unlikely to surface in Washington in the next crisis. But, if we analyze "Deep

Throat's" actual contribution, it was insignificant except that it encouraged *The Washington Post* to move with stories it had obtained from other confidential sources.

"Deep Throat" said he would give no information, and pretty well lived up to that promise. He only confirmed that certain facts might or might not be true. A rookie cop would be fired for presenting such anonymous material as corroboration, and no experienced investigative reporter would give it more than casual consideration as a possible source for leads.

Some *Post* people say today that "Deep Throat" was not important in any decisions to move with stories. I would stress the importance of the tireless leg-work of Woodward and Bernstein and the availability of "leaked" information from government investigators who did not want the Watergate cover-up to succeed.

Except in the rare, rare case where a newspaper actually starts an investigation of government corruption or mismanagement, most of the newspaper's success is contingent upon good,

We must recognize that if there were a single person with the all-encompassing knowledge of "Deep Throat," such an all-knowing source is unlikely to surface in Washington in the next crisis. But, if we analyze "Deep Throat's" actual contribution, it was insignificant except that it encouraged *The Post* to move with stories it had obtained [elsewhere].

knowledgeable sources within the investigative or prosecutorial apparatus for "exclusive leaks."

I want to mention briefly a system of investigative reporting that starts from scratch. It is a system developed at the American Press Institute under J. Montgomery Curtis and the great late editor Ben Reese. It is a system of solid investigating that has been in use on dozens of papers from Los Angeles to Long Island, from Miami to Philadelphia and Bangor, Maine.

At the American Press Institute, I developed my first "Blueprint for Investigative Reporting" which Ben Reese dubbed my "Follow the Dollar" speech. In the same API forum, I developed the first check list for investigative reporters which was later expanded by John Seigenthaler, Reese, Monty Curtis, and others.¹

The system of program evaluation review techniques can be used on any city, county, state, or Federal agency, or on any private institution. It involves an analysis of the history of the agency, its purposes, and a study of how those purposes are being advanced from a standpoint of possible conflicts of interest and the administration of its laws and regulations. It comes complete with a check list for the investigative reporter, so he doesn't forget any areas of potential mismanagement or corruption.

George Anthan, James Risser and I have used the system successfully on a four-year project involving the commodity market regulations. We took the old, ineffective Commodity Exchange Authority apart, and those arti-

cles stimulated five Congressional investigations which resulted in the creation of a new, independent agency—the Commodity Futures Trading Commission, which we hope will be a more aggressive and effective regulator.

We did not receive journalism

¹ Paul Williams is presently working on a book that will compile this material, his own important experiences, and the experiences of others in a comprehensive study of systematic investigative reporting.

awards for the commodity trading investigation (which spread over several years), while the major attention of the press was concentrated on Watergate and related matters. But an extension of that investigation won for Jim Risser, of our Washington Bureau, a Pulitzer prize for national reporting on the grain inspection scandals. Risser's work was a follow-through on one aspect of grain-trading activities, using the same solid

There are those who say there is too much investigative reporting . . . There are always too many well-meaning but reckless adventurers in this business . . .

techniques we had used in our investigation of the scandals in commodity market regulation.

We also did a comprehensive series on the operation of the Packers and Stockyards Administration. This investigation of the faults in the laws that regulate the marketing of livestock was planned and structured by our three-man team in the same manner as the commodity trading investigation and the grain inspection probe.

While systematic investigative reporting will not make anyone popular with those being investigated, it can perform a much-needed public service, win journalism awards, and cut down the odds on reporters becoming casualties of our precarious profession. Publishers and editors are rather uniformly pleased with solid investigative jobs that keep their headaches at a minimum and do not result in unreasonable libel risks for their newspapers.

They may not know precisely all the ingredients that go into a successful investigation, but it is not necessary that they know how to do the job if they are understanding of the importance of it, and give thoughtful encouragement to those who do know how.

Over a period of more than 30 years, I have had understanding and encouragement that have permitted me the freedom to pursue any and all investigations in a responsible way, and to call them as I saw them as long as I was right on the facts and the law.

It was an unusual experience, and I believe it was unusually successful. I have worked hard, have taken the job seriously at all times, and have had a measure of luck. I have also had the common sense to make sure that I, personally, could defend all of my investigations and stories before any forum.

There are those who say there is too much investigative reporting. Occasionally these critics point to examples of irresponsibility and incompetence that make me shudder. There are always too many well-meaning but reckless adventurers in this business and too many scoop-happy opportunists.

But there are never too many good, solid investigative reporters for the systematic analysis of government operations—men and women who know how to find out if there is political favoritism or fraud in the way government is operating.

There can't be enough reporters to deal effectively with scandals in a \$400 billion-a-year Federal government, without taking into account the multiplicity of local and state agencies. We are the communication line that is vital to final government accountability to the public, and we should all do our utmost to make certain that the life-line of democracy is not cluttered with irresponsible debris or superficial froth.

Every rash story provides fuel for the fires of those who would discredit investigative reporting and would turn us all into fawning political lapdogs. We cannot control a truly free press, but we can take the responsibility for analyzing the output of that press and expressing our views.

We have the responsibility to praise good investigative reporting, but to analyze and criticize the most glaring

examples of recklessness. There may be times when we do not wish to criticize, but prefer to remain silent about the errors of others. But under no circumstances should we defend irresponsibility other than to state: The free press must have a right to be wrong, or it is not a free press.

If we do not criticize the free press or other investigative reporters from time to time, we are really in no better position than the doctors who will not criticize other doctors, or the lawyers who feel compelled to defend the entire legal fraternity as well as some crooked judges.

If we fail to involve ourselves in a thoughtful, critical analysis of investigative reporting, irresponsible reporting will grow and flourish, and the sound practitioners of our precarious profession will find themselves in even more precarious circumstances.

It is not stretching the point to say that, as our government grows bigger and more complex, the public and even

Every rash story provides fuel for the fires of those who would discredit investigative reporting and would turn us all into fawning political lapdogs.

the Congress are even more reliant upon nonpartisan, thoughtful, and serious investigations by the press for understanding when there may be corruption or mismanagement in government or potential conflicts of interest.

Any superficiality or irresponsibility adds to the difficulty of doing this vital job properly. There are no rules or guidelines that are infallible. Each of us, as an individual, has the responsibility to do his or her best to contribute to the solution and to avoid being part of the problem.

BOOKS

Simple Justice

By Richard Kluger

(Alfred A. Knopf; \$15.95)

About 10 years ago, during one of the periodic riots in Paterson, New Jersey, a photographer and I found ourselves sprawled under a car at 1 A.M. one morning, watching nervously as an angry slum resident tossed Molotov cocktails from the third floor roof of the building across the street. We had swiftly taken position under the car after the first firebombs began to explode. After a few numb minutes under the car, the photographer and I both realized how absurd we were: the car under which we had scrambled was parked in a gas station.

Fortunately, the firebombs did not ignite our hideout. Later, retelling the story in the newsroom, it struck home that during those crazy days and nights of covering the urban civil war that raged across America in the 1960's we were all—we white middle-class Americans—figuratively hiding from black anger in a volatile gas station.

The reasons for the urban eruptions are known: unemployment among a recent agrarian black population unskilled for modern urban life, soul-crushing discrimination in cold Northern cities, and ephemeral vistas and frustrating wants raised among blacks by the politically-motivated and usually corruptly-run anti-poverty programs.

The result was riot—in New York, Detroit, Los Angeles, Newark, Cleveland—all the Northern centers that had been on the black 20th century Underground Railroad since before World War I. These cities promised freedom, jobs, substantial welfare. Farm mechanization in the South after the Second World War pushed millions

of blacks off the farm and into the ghettos. By car, train and bus in the 1940's and 50's they went North, bringing few belongings, farm skills, and aborted education.

This is all roundabout introduction to *Simple Justice*, a powerful and scholarly history of the events leading to the landmark 1954 U.S. Supreme Court decision of *Brown vs. Board of Education*, in which it was ruled that Linda Brown had attended a separate and unequal school in Topeka, and that it was wrong. We are still living with the results of that decision.

Richard Kluger has been a newspaper reporter, copyreader, and book editor. He worked on this massive volume for seven years, and essentially it is a story of a kind of everyday heroism—not the

The Old South . . . became The New South by mechanizing its farmlands, refusing to educate adequately its black citizens, and telling them to go to Newark if they didn't like the schooling and the \$30/week at the gas station.

kind one sees on television cop shows or war movies.

For Negroes in the United States the war has been going on for centuries—and the outcome is in doubt in places like Boston, Chicago, and Newark. There may indeed be two societies in this nation—one black, one white; one affluent and upwardly mobile, one ragging and willing to burn and pillage what remains of big cities east of the Mississippi and north of the Mason-Dixon line.

We read of the New South in flowing, glowing articles these days. It is the heart of the Sunbelt, where wealth and ease flourish. The New South is where industry has moved to avoid high taxes, find low-pay labor, and escape bitter class strife between blacks and whites. The Old South, however, became The New South by mechanizing its farmlands, by refusing to educate adequately its black citizens, and by telling them to go to Newark if they didn't like the schooling and the \$30 a week at the gas station, or the swabbing of dishes at the fried-chicken joint.

All this did not deter a few brave black men in the 1940's. Some of them realized the irony and paradox of having been asked by their Uncle Sam to fight a war against racism and tyranny in totally segregated outfits—second-class warriors as befitted their status as second-class citizens. To sound off against Whitey, or the system, was to ask swift retribution: maybe only a tongue-lashing, maybe threats, maybe murder. A people of relatively no means, little education, and with no promise for change were restive, however.

This is how Kluger begins his history:

Before it was over, they fired him from the little schoolhouse at which he had taught devotedly for ten years. And they fired his wife and two of his sisters and a niece. And they threatened him with bodily harm. And they sued him on trumped-up charges and convicted him in a kangaroo court and left him with a judgment that denied him credit in any bank.

And they burned his house to the ground while the fire department stood around watching the flames consume the night. And they stoned the church at which he pastored. And they fired shotguns at him out of the dark. But he was not Job, and so he fired back and called the police, who did not come and kept not coming. Then he fled, driving north at 85 miles an hour over country roads, until he was across the state line. Soon after they burned his church to the ground, and charged him, for having shot back that night, with felonious assault with a deadly weapon, and so he became an official fugitive from justice.

All of this happened because he was black and brave. And because others

followed when he had decided the time had come to lead.

Makes you want to read further. The writing is smooth, the story is jarring. The history of blacks in the U.S. cannot stand the glare of honest search: it violates all the myths we have grown to love. Americans have been chauvinists since the Revolution; Americans have been racists, pushing around blacks, browns, yellows, and Indians—indiscriminately. Not so long ago, Kluger writes, this nation's press did not even disguise its jingoist, racist character. By 1915, the black man was a character fit only for derision, and for victimization by the emerging KKK. Racial separation was the order of the day—only fools disagreed. Mencken may have slashed at the Old South as the "Desert of the Bose Arts," but Indiana was Klan Country.

Jim Crow ruled the South; in the North, busing was only a minor issue, which tended to center around the financing of a bus or two by local school boards. Common public and legal philosophy had it that the Negro was backward, ill-equipped for modern society, fit only to haul the trash, shine the shoes, and pick the cotton. And, well, they did dance rather well, and some could play musical instruments in a rather unusual, bouncy fashion. Teddy Roosevelt once had invited Booker T. Washington to lunch at the White House and all editorial hell broke loose in the land. It simply was not done. One—including the President—had to know one's place. That's how it was. Negroes could serve lunch, wash the dishes, cook the meals and mind the white babies. They smiled a lot, and maybe became "part of the family." The sour side of the myth was the rope justice played out in scores of simple hamlets across the nation. Kluger traces the paths of new black leaders, such as W.E.B. DuBois, who won a scholarship to Harvard and became the first black to earn a doctorate there. DuBois did not fit the mold that had been prepared for black men.

"By 1940 one out of every four American blacks was living in the North or West. But Eden was nowhere to be found." Young lawyer Thurgood Marshall was making a name for himself by combatting the racism in the courts—using the law for equal justice.

"Before he came along," observes Charles Thompson, editor of the *Journal of Negro Education*, "the principal black leaders—men like DuBois and James Weldon Johnson and Charles Houston—didn't talk the language of the people. They were upper-class and upper-middle-class Negroes.

"Thurgood Marshall was of the people. He knew how to get through to them." Marshall was a mover and a shaker; he went where the most acute

The writing is smooth, the story is jarring. . . . Do not expect to sit a night or two and finish it. This is a book to stir the conscience, perhaps to nightmares.

problems were, even if there were danger—usually from the forces of law and order.

Topeka was a Jim Crow town. Kluger, with smooth prose, pulls all the personalities and history together to focus on the prairie hub where this durable controversy ignited. The legal preliminaries, the paper jousts, the white and black lawyers and judges and their human writhing over this problem of simple fairness—all are the heart of this book. Do not expect to sit a night or two and finish it. This is a book to stir the conscience, perhaps to nightmares. One waking nightmare this reader had was the frightening possibility that it doesn't mean *anything* when justice is secured in the courts, and when judges order things done "with all deliberate speed"—when the society at large, the

majority, do not agree, will not agree, and will resist, abort, and evade judicial orders.

Do we continue to be a racist society? Much evidence indicates we are: housing segregation in the North in the form of suburban restrictions, private schools in the South, the virtual breakdown of the educational system in many inner cities. In the 1960's, when there was promise, there were riots.

In 1970, when there was Nixon, there were budget cuts, "benign neglect," "law and order," and what has become an epithet: "school busing."

The busing controversy leads one to despair that any of the legal victories have led to anything that can be called advancement—in education or race relations. In this basically conservative nation, even political liberals quail when they learn their children must be bused to an inner-city school from their neighborhood one; racists fear for their own neighborhood schools, convinced that the inner-city kids will bring their knives, drugs, and lawlessness along with them. Even though Kluger ends on an optimistic note, many observers, particularly newspapermen in the big Northern cities, fear that the new class-racial segregation typified by the conflict between decaying, tax-poor cities and the booming suburbs that have developed in the last 25 years will become permanent.

Eric Hoffer has written that only in the cities is there imagination and creativity. Yet with the exception of the Sunbelt centers, whites, businesses, middle-class families have all been fleeing what they politely call crime, drugs, muggers, trash, sinking property values—when what they really mean are blacks. As the 1969 Kerner Commission suggested might happen, this nation in 1976 may have already become two societies—one white, one black, not ever to be joined harmoniously despite all the heroism on both sides, in the courts or elsewhere.

—Edward C. Norton

No Thank You, Mr. President

By John Herbers

(W.W. Norton; \$7.95)

Even top-drawer reporters like John Herbers (NF '61) need a bit of luck to get a White House assignment. But fortune surely filled Herbers' sails when he was posted to *The New York Times* Presidential beat during the Watergate period and the first months of the Ford Administration.

The temptation must have been great for a let's-take-another-shot-at-Nixon book. Herbers avoided that. He does shoot a few rounds at Nixon and some of his minions, but Herbers is too intelligent to waste much space on the likes of Ron Ziegler. Instead, he focuses on the problems and dangers in reporting on the White House in this short and eminently readable book.

One major problem is the sheer size of the Federal bureaucracy, capped by the ever-growing Presidential entourage. It's been a decades-long card game, increasingly stacked against the press and in favor of the President—a point Herbers illustrates repeatedly with telling vignettes of the White House press corps *versus* the Palace Guard. He might have also mentioned a point made to me by a senior AP official. I asked him why the major news organizations felt they had to cover every political, social, and personal act of the President. He gave me a distressed look and said, "We're afraid of another Dallas."

This Dallas fixation is nicely illustrated in Herbers' chapter, "The Longest Day," in which he wryly describes a wearying 20 hours chasing after the President and a gaggle of his aides on what can only be called a non-story. It might serve as an antidote for the aspiring reporter who feels he hasn't made it until he gets the White House beat.

But the "longest day," in Herbers' view, is only symptomatic of the crucial problem—the rise of the imperial Presidency and the acceptance of this notion by the press (however much it screams about the situation). As the book jacket puts it (accurately, for a change), the press in part is "both the creator and victim of an overaggrandized institution." It is thus no accident that the first and stage-setting chapter is entitled "The Emperor's Court."

Herbers is no crusader, and as a polished newsman knows that significant changes are none too likely. But in one of his last chapters ("The Return to Normalcy") he usefully spotlights some key problems—which he labels "myths." For example, the myth that in the President's office "*petty politics and gross human errors do not exist* and thus

men of zeal, well-meaning but without understanding."

It's noteworthy that Herbers spells out these myths, not in summarizing the Nixon years, but in assessing the early Ford months. In his judgment, not too much had changed: "Once the Ford administration was in place, the overall press coverage reverted too quickly . . . to many of the old, pre-Watergate ways." In short, the 100-odd White House staffers "directly involved in some type of public relations activity" were still locked in battle with the 70-odd reporters, photographers, and technicians regularly assigned to cover the President. Yet in many ways it is not really a battle, because so many reporters have been "shackled . . . by their own self-restraint," and thus the danger continues that the "Washington jour-

Herbers does not see the President's men as evil persons. In fact, he writes with considerable charity about several men who are none too popular today. Yet he would probably agree with Justice Brandeis, who wrote that the "greatest dangers to liberty lurk in insidious encroachments by men of zeal, well-meaning but without understanding."

cannot be admitted." (His emphasis.) Or, to cite another example, the mischievous myth that "*the President always works hard, even when he is on vacation.*"

Case by case, reporters' myth-generated stories are often of trifling importance. Yet, like water dripping on a rock, they add up to the erosion of quality reporting and, sometimes, gross misrepresentation. Herbers does not see the President's men as evil persons. In fact, he writes with considerable charity about several men who are none too popular today. Yet he would probably agree with Justice Brandeis, who wrote that the "greatest dangers to liberty lurk in insidious encroachments by

nalist . . . can easily be so influenced by the scene that he is covering that his judgment becomes blurred and he begins to think the way those he is covering do."

Any venture onto White House turf naturally invites comparisons with the marvelous Bernstein-Woodward detective stories. That's unfortunate and unfair. Long after we've forgotten Deep Throat and laundered checks, we'll still need these more analytical books to remind us of the seemingly perpetual strains and stresses between the press and the President.

—Donald W. Klein

The First Casualty

From the Crimea to Vietnam:
The War Correspondent as
Hero, Propagandist,
and Myth Maker

By Phillip Knightley

(Harcourt Brace
Jovanovich; \$12.95)

They used to have meetings on the fourth floor of the U.S. Embassy in Saigon, where the political types had their offices, and also up on the sixth floor, in the spooks' area, to figure out how to handle the American press. CIA operatives were entrusted with the most important jobs. They had the aura of inside information, seeming to lend credibility to stories they planted. The journalist recipients were carefully selected for the audiences they reached—and sometimes for their presumed or already proven gullibility (somewhat the way Victor Louis apparently used to, perhaps still does evaluate new foreign correspondents in Moscow so the KGB can decide how to play them). When politics at home required that reports from Saigon go along with the Administration line, as it did, for instance, during ceasefire negotiations in October 1972 and again in the climactic months before Saigon fell in 1975, diplomats and spooks worked hard. They were generally successful, as a review of the "peace is at hand" coverage in some leading American newspapers shows.

Such work came naturally to government people. The embassy in Phnom Penh became so accustomed to lying that it tried to give the same line to Senate investigators—and got caught, partly with suspicious American reporters' help. But that was on detail: it was more difficult to catch and document the delusion in a generally optimistic

official attitude. Some reporters tried; their names have a place in any history of the American involvement in Indochina. Some did not: they stuck to specific actions for direct reporting but passed on to readers and viewers the embassies' evaluations of general situations.

But gullibility is an insufficient explanation. Respect for authority, for official sources, was a factor even if it did not prevent criticism on details. Nationalism and racism are probably better explanations. Even those correspondents who questioned the methods used to win (or lose) the Indochina wars seldom doubted the basic U.S. commitment, and therefore most of them accepted the atrocities of those wars as readily as did senior American commanders, suppressing them not only from their reports but also from their

more difficult, because lying is not a simple explanation.

Is there a difference between lying and just failing to tell the truth? No doubt. But a reporter caught up in the emotions of a war—few on the scene escape, even if it is not originally *their* war—would have a more difficult time answering than the philosopher would, even if the reporter could see through all the layers of obfuscation. The truth of little things which a reporter can see does not necessarily add up to the larger reality, in ordinary hometown journalism or in a war, but war introduces broader complications than even the most skeptical police-beat reporter is prepared to handle.

Phillip Knightley, a member of *The Sunday Times of London* Insight Team—who makes it plain that he has never covered a war—uses the problem

Is there a difference between lying and just failing to tell the truth? No doubt. But a reporter caught up in the emotions of a war . . . would have a more difficult time answering than the philosopher would, even if the reporter could see through all the layers of obfuscation . . . War introduces broader complications than even the most skeptical police-beat reporter is prepared to handle.

minds. It took a man who was not a war correspondent to understand that My Lai was a story. Men on the scene had known about such things for years, but neither they nor their editors back home considered it news fit to print or project into living rooms.

Nor did the French in Algeria feel that atrocities were news—when their side was guilty. But in World War I false stories of German atrocities in Belgium were built into major propaganda campaigns by the British. Truth was not the criterion for reporters. Defining the mixture of motives which provides criteria for winnowing out news from facts and rumors and propaganda is

of truth as a theme to knot together a rambling history of war correspondence since 1854, in the Crimea. The keynote is provided by Senator Hiram Johnson's comment during World War I: "The first casualty when war comes is truth." Since Johnson referred to the way governments act, the time period need not be restricted to wars, but the remark is valid so far as it goes if the selective use of little truths is recognized as part of overall dishonesty.

There is a human tendency to generalize from the most recent example, regardless of its representativeness. Vietnam, therefore, tends to loom large

in thinking about war coverage. Perhaps it should, as an example of the way things are going and as a warning of the future. But some things do improve. Harold Williams covered the Russian civil war in 1919 for *The Times of London* and *The New York Times*. He was still reporting White Russian General Denikin's advance on Moscow through collapsing Bolshevik forces when Denikin's own army was disintegrating. A few years later, this "worst of the war correspondents" in Russia, as Knightley calls him, was made foreign editor of *The (London) Times*. A comparison, which Knightley does not make, might be with Larry Allen's report of Castro's collapse just as Batista was fleeing Cuba, for which the Pulitzer-winning reporter was forced out of the AP rather than promoted.

With a touch of British nostalgia for "the Great War," Knightley says that World War I was the first time propaganda had been used "in an organized, scientific manner. War correspondents were among its first victims. . . . More deliberate lies were told than in any other period of history and the whole apparatus of the state went into action to suppress the truth." The price was paid later. The untrue story of Germans making soap from war dead helped desensitize the Western public for Second World War concentration-camp reports.

Methods of communication continue to improve; credibility does not. So long as governments want people to believe things are working right, whether by hiding the horror of World War I trench warfare or claiming meaningful results from the Cambodian invasion, there will be war correspondents who themselves believe and report the government's line. Investigative reporting has a place in wars, but the emotions of conflict are an additional complication to the ordinary difficulties involved.

—Henry S. Bradsher

CLOSEUP:

How to Read the American City

By Grady Clay

(Praeger; \$10.00)

All of us, but especially journalists of urban and metropolitan affairs, need help in filtering out the clichés and stereotypes which confuse any review of contemporary urban life, its sources and its future. Grady Clay has put together "a Baedeker of the commonplace" to remind us that cities and the enormous urbanizing regions magnetized around them are very changeable, forever changing—and that there is no single approach to rebuilding or preserving them.

We must fully understand the shifting relationship between people and their landscape, Clay argues, and become concerned with research and college courses presented in file-cabinet divisions of specialization. At the same time, we must give more attention to environmental cognition and perceptual analysis.

More simply put, we have not trained ourselves to see what is clearly before us. And we also do not look back often enough in history to see that time is an essential ingredient in urban building and reconstruction. Cities are forever altering; the clues to the new and old are present for even the most bumbling detective, and the best lesson to be learned is that there is no everlasting "right way" of doing things. The urban landscape offers coherence and continuity, he writes, but there are also lessons of cause and effect, challenge and response.

Unfortunately, the American people confront proposals for reshaping the cities and their suburbanized halos

which are often incomprehensible. Clay monitors the urban dialogue with an experienced ear and finds it both dull and hysterical—an awkward mix, as he puts it, of "elitist architectural terms, radical shit-sliding and manipulative lingo of evangelistic bureaucrats."

There needs to be a better fit between how we perceive our environment and the language we use to describe it. He proposes that we observe what the problems really are, describe them and propose solutions both eloquent and persuasive, but firmly anchored in the evidence of daily life.

The language of city rebuilding need not be complicated, abstract or architectural. Our urban future is difficult enough, he suggests, without making it incomprehensible. We are also burdened with an object-ridden language, and this hinders our ability to com-

Cities are forever altering; the clues to the new and old are present for even the most bumbling detective. . . . There is no everlasting "right way" of doing things.

prehend cities which are not objects, but changeable, always in process (a composite of objects interacting).

Example? Clay notes that we often speak of "downtown" as a single, monolithic thing, but it is many places and scenes, actions and games, styles both grand and honkytonk. "Downtown" makes better sense when measured in the specific context of the city, its other parts, and over a period of time, with historical perspective.

The best way to confront such change is to first observe urban phenomena first-hand, and loosen the language enough to describe what *is*. From there

we can proceed, he says, from "Why-did-this-happen" questions to "Why do such things as these happen?" Simple, but often forgotten by the very media specialists who put aside those essential reporting instincts when they become "specialists."

Clay went back to the *Louisville Courier-Journal* after his Nieman year in 1949 with such questions. He has continued to answer them as editor of

formula urban landscapes as stage-settings portrayed by 15th- and 16th-century artists of the "piazza for everything and everything in its piazza" school. The harm? It stifles vital visual language, creates dull pictures needing no answers, and is reflected in plan after city plan of subsidized stereotypes. We do silly things such as prize centrality and central cities when the auto, new communications technology and an up-

quilt and replacing it with a single-piece tarpaulin.

By the same token, we have to watch the identity-makers and fable-builders in the cities. He cautions that the mania for historic preservation can be weighed down by puffery, windbagging and undeliverable promises. Walk the districts and sense the unique, and decide if there is enough raw material to work with. Perhaps there are other "epitome" districts which have even more value and symbolism and are deserving of higher priority.

He shows us how to find the edges of the cities, measure less visible markings where new growth is likely (or where developers are force-feeding the process). There are magnetic fields between dual urban centers, but he also lists the reasons why in-between lands often do not develop, as many land speculators discover after bankruptcy.

See-for-yourself means not automatically writing off "strip" development, but watching how people use it. Put aside the distorting lens of the telephoto approach and sincerely try to see what is happening. Clay traces paths and strip development from Indian trails to today's expressways. He looks at the

... We have to watch the identity-makers and fable-builders in the cities. [Clay] cautions that the mania for historic preservation can be weighed down by puffery, windbagging, and undeliverable promises. Walk the districts and sense the unique, and decide if there is enough raw material to work with.

Landscape Architecture, and as a president of the American Society of Planning Officials.

In *CLOSEUP: How to Read the American City*, he seeks to create a loose, playful, open-minded set of word games, reminding us that "neither language nor landscape stand still for us." He prizes odd-sounding, illusional words to send out sparks, flashes of insight, metaphors igniting new arcs of perceptive energy, with unrelated things fusing together to make new sense.

These are his stated objectives, and in large part he succeeds, if at times we might feel somewhat edgy in learning a new glossary of terms in what is a quest to simplify language. He avoids the McLuhan epiphanies and non-linear pratfalls of idea and observation by, indeed, anchoring his own observations in "life's daily evidence." His observations on how urban corridors of power and human interaction can be found near courthouses, civic centers, law offices and other information-laden places, and how these can be used by the enterprising reporter for news tips are excellent.

He gives a mini-lesson in perspective—how we are conditioned to see

heaven in human settlement and interaction should spark a review of what is really happening to us.

(Publishers could play only a single tune, "Save Downtown and the Central Business District" until technology brought about satellite printing plants; daily delivery from central plants downtown became more difficult and they suddenly saw sub- and ex-urban benefits which had eluded them before.)

There is no good in anti-city talk, but there is even less benefit in ignoring the evidence. If we are to help the cities, then we need enterprising journalists who break beyond the traditional sources and use their own eyes and instincts.

The "urban renewal scouts and tidy-minded city planners anxious to regularize traffic flow" obliterate prime dramatic sites in the city, he writes, and where 19th-century buildings imposed a magnificence and presence on the avenues, expressways and super-blocks and warehouse civic centers today obliterate them. He shows how the expressway mentality destroys the natural "breaks" and fractures which have built up in the urban landscape over time. We ought to be careful in tearing up the

Cities create "sinks," Clay writes, and dump everything from auto carcasses to disadvantaged people in them.

nomadic instincts of Woodstock celebrants and draws comparisons with the "hiving" instincts of mobile, communal predecessors in the 19th century.

We can more carefully measure the "beat" of people movement, starting with our own travel chart, to evaluate the trends and make practical decisions. That would be much better than the large city-planning office Clay encountered, which asked its staff to map "avoidance" areas people simply refuse

to move through, but then declined to make the map public.

If we confront the urban landscape with candor (and love), we might be better off. But we have to ask why certain nodes of activity are formed and deformed; do "stacks" of raw material near industrial buildings signal activity or the end of it, and what are the consequences of noise, fumes, brown waters, and sludge heaps slithering down hill-sides to bury residential districts?

Cities create "sinks," Clay writes, and dump everything from auto carcasses to disadvantaged people in them. We have to understand the "geopolitical conspi-

racy at work." Ironically, these "sinks" often are the sites of tidal marshes, streams, and flowage zones in urban areas which affect the whole ecology and the well-being of the region. So the crime is committed twice.

We are a curiously land-and-property conscious people and establish turf and ownership with boundaries, bushes, bayonet-like tropical plants and brambles. When our storefronts are threatened we revert to "riot renaissance" architecture, with bricked-in windows, fortress-fronts, bars, grills, moat-protected and electronically-guarded "public" malls.

You do not have to line up on either side of the urban argument to accept the essential lessons in the Clay book: look carefully, form your own judgments, clarify the language once you have simplified the process of "seeing," analyzing, and proposing improvements. This makes a great deal of sense for journalists of urban and metropolitan affairs. As Clay puts it, urban life is a continued search for precious balance that is always temporary, and this is our ultimate and only continuity.

—Jerome Aumante

The Russians

By Hedrick Smith

(Quadrangle; \$12.50)

Western travelers to Russia have for centuries tried to penetrate the labyrinth of a society that consciously perpetuates an aura of mystery. Often, they would think they had discovered the key to understanding Russian life, only to find that they had run into a perplexing dead end. In the 19th century the people who attempted to draw a map of Russian society were aristocrats and explorers: the French Marquis de Custine, the British Sir Donald Mackenzie Wallace, and the American George Kennan, great-uncle of the future American ambassador to the U.S.S.R. The 20th-century Western pioneers in Russia are no longer gentlemen voyagers, but foreign correspondents. Covering Moscow is a coveted assignment, but the challenge remains as it was 100 years ago: correspondents must still grapple with the problem of penetrating the official Soviet veil of secrecy and communicating the intricacies of Soviet society to confused Western readers. But in the era of instant mass communication the frustrations and rewards are more intense. As each generation charts its own

An American Family in Moscow

By Leona and Jerrold Schecter, and Evelind, Steven, Kate, Doveen and Barnet

(Little Brown; \$10.95)

topography of Russian society, we inch closer to finding our way through the labyrinth.

American correspondents can today operate in a more open environment in the U.S.S.R. than at any time since the 1920's. However, they are still faced with a problem that has long bedeviled Western analysts. The U.S.S.R. is a half-modern society, where tradition and modernity coexist in an ambiguous equilibrium. There are many deceptively simple continuities between Tsarist and Communist Russia—the stifling, bureaucratic centralized government, the pervasiveness of secret police and strict censorship, the system of exiling dissidents to Siberia, the tension between town and country, and the concerted attempt to Russify all non-Russian nationalities within the multinational state. But similarity in form does not necessarily imply similarity in content. In trying to fathom the degrees of coexistence between the old and the

Russia: The People and the Power

By Robert G. Kaiser

(Atheneum; \$12.95)

new, journalists have to deal with such questions as the degree to which the Stalinist totalitarian model is still valid and the extent to which Soviet society will converge at some point with our own.

Is Russia a revolutionary state or is it rather a conservative, stability-oriented society?

Over the past few years, several American correspondents have grappled with these problems. Three of the most talented have now collected their impressions in excellent books. Robert Kaiser, the Schecter family (Jerrold, NF '64) and Hedrick Smith (NF '70) have done a masterful job of penetrating the Russian psyche and the environment in which it thrives. The Soviet authorities, however, did everything in their power to prevent contacts between these foreigners and Soviet citizens and to present a one-dimensional view of Russian society, concealing some of its complexities. As all the authors realize,

when you are a foreigner in the U.S.S.R., you do not really live in Russia. You operate in a special enclave, beyond the reach of all but the most privileged Soviet citizens. It is only with dogged perseverance and initiative—all of which these authors possess—that any Westerner can begin to understand how Russians live.

Although all three books deal with the same issues, they do not set out to accomplish the same ends. The most unusual book, which has regrettably not received the press coverage it deserves, is the Schecter family's. Jerrold Schecter was *Time's* correspondent in Moscow from 1968 to 1970; he has written the book with his entire family—his wife, three daughters and two sons. The Schecters willingly made themselves guinea pigs by a determined effort not to live like foreigners. Their five children went to Soviet schools and they recall their experiences with Soviet children. Sometimes each member of the family recounts the same incident from his or her own point of view, in his or her own language. Consequently the book is richly textured. Some of the stories are refreshingly artless, direct and evocative. The Schecter book is a sensuous one: its text is tactile and audio-visual. You can touch, see, hear and smell the Russians whom the Schecters describe. It is also a very human book. Through simple descriptions we get to know Russians as if they were our own friends. The Schecters also describe what it was like for them as a "unit" to live in Moscow and how Soviet families live. They look at Russian society from the point of view of the people, as opposed to the political system.

Whereas the Schecters have concentrated solely on describing Soviet society from below, the two other authors have looked at Russia from above as well. Hedrick Smith, who was *The New York Times* Moscow correspondent from 1971 to 1974, divides his book into three parts, the first two of which are entitled "The People" and "The System." The categorization might seem

artificial to Americans, but it is crucial to an understanding of the differences between these books. One of the main features of both Tsarist and Communist Russia has been the dichotomy between state and society and the inability of the state to penetrate society. Although Soviet leaders have done much to remedy this situation, there are fundamental ways in which Soviet rulers are divorced from the people. This has produced political apathy in Russia. As Smith perceptively notes, there is a profound sense in which the Russian people are apolitical. Thus it is in some ways natural to differentiate between the people and the political system.

Russia is a closed society, but there are cracks. . . . Western journalists can perform a vital function by identifying those cracks and working within them.

Smith and Robert Kaiser (*The Washington Post's* Moscow correspondent from 1971 to 1974), both deal with the people and the system. Their books are similar in approach and content and are gracefully written. Their descriptions of the U.S.S.R. are objective and analytical, although they also contain personal experiences. They explain the system through the people, and in this sense their books are more about the people than the power. Since Kaiser and Smith were correspondents at the same time and went on many of the same state-sponsored trips together, they share many of the same anecdotes and descriptions. This is probably inevitable given the limited Western access both to official Soviet news and to non-official information. The secrecy of Soviet society ensures that Westerners will to some extent have similar experiences. Nevertheless, the two books give different perspectives on and interpretations of similar phenomena.

Despite their different focuses, all these books share three powerful

themes. The first is a discussion of the extent to which the Soviet Union is still a revolutionary state and the degree to which it has become a conservative society which fears change. If one wants to understand how Soviet society functions, one must first examine its historical antecedents. This may seem obvious to any Western reader. However, in a consciously revolutionary society like the U.S.S.R., it is more paradoxical. The leaders claim to have created a "new Soviet man" and to have severed all links to the oppressive Tsarist past. But it seems that nothing endures like the past in Russia, although its rulers would rather deny it.

One of the most striking aspects of Russian society which has carried over from the pre-revolutionary era is the sense that each person is his brother's keeper. The Russian concept of what constitutes the proper boundary between private and public life is very different from ours. In the U.S.S.R., people do not mind their own business—they mind everybody else's. The books recount how Russians would come up to the authors in the street and tell them that their children were not dressed properly or that they were not comporting themselves suitably. The more unpleasant side of this is that children are taught from an early age to tell tales on one another, in school and, later on, in the workplace. Suspicion pervades Soviet society: Russians do not trust each other and nobody trusts foreigners. All three authors admit that they were never completely certain of the reliability of any of their Soviet contacts.

The incident which most vividly portrays this mistrust is the P.T.A. meeting which the Schecter parents attended. One must read this chapter to understand how Soviet society works. The school was a "special" one for the children of the elite, and offered intensive training in English. Unlike an American P.T.A. meeting, where parents might discuss issues with teachers and air their grievances, the Soviet meeting was very one-sided. The teacher criticized each

child in front of the group of parents, who meekly responded with resignation. When the teacher came to enumerate the faults of Barney Schecter, however, Mrs. Schecter refused to be silent. Her five-year-old son had been systematically persecuted for writing left-handed. Barney poignantly describes how his teacher encouraged other children to ignore him. Mustering all her bravery, Leona Schecter stood up and criticized the teacher. This was unheard of, and there was a hushed silence. But there was also a sense of mute approval; the teacher was thrown off her guard. Since one is one's brother's keeper in a hierarchical sense, parents cannot talk back to teachers. There is no equality of criticism in the U.S.S.R.

There are other pre-revolutionary social attitudes which have survived into the 1970's. In an era when women's liberation has become fashionable in the West, some feminists might look to the Soviet Union as a model country: after all, women have officially been declared equal to men since the revolution. Paradoxically, there is a women's movement in reverse in Russia. For many Soviet women, their most cherished dream is to be able to stop working and become a housewife and mother. Women in the U.S.S.R. are, as Smith insightfully writes, "liberated but not emancipated." They must work for economic reasons, but when they come home at night their husbands do not help with the cleaning or cooking. Men are definitely not liberated in the U.S.S.R. A Western woman I know who is married to a Russian recounted with some amusement how an old college friend had visited her in Moscow; he was helping her peel potatoes when her husband walked in. The look of shock on his face, she said, was total. He would have been less surprised, she felt, to have found them in bed together.

The state does little to alleviate the "double burden" which Soviet women bear. It ensures that they must work,

but it does not provide adequate day-care facilities. *Babushki* (grandmothers) normally look after pre-school children in crowded quarters; there are great social disincentives for Russian women to have children. Nevertheless, effective contraception is hard to obtain and abortion is the most common form of birth control. Leona Schecter describes the suffering of a Russian woman who had just had an abortion and was desperate for some other form of control. In the non-Russian republics the situation is reversed. It is acceptable for women to stay home and have children. This has created an acute population problem for the Russians, who will soon be in the minority. The Soviet government is now trying to raise the Russian birth rate and lower the Central Asian birthrate, but has so far been unsuccessful.

Although most professions are open to women, all three books indicate that there is little satisfaction for highly educated women. Seventy percent of Soviet doctors are women, but being a doctor is a lower-status profession in the U.S.S.R. than in America. There are virtually no women in the party hierarchy. The only political positions which are accessible to women are in the Supreme Soviet, which is a purely rubber-stamp organization. As the authors point out, some working women enjoy their jobs, but all complain about inadequate child-care facilities. This leads to many disciplinary and emotional problems, particularly given the high divorce rate in Moscow and other large cities. The unhappy conflict in many Soviet families, the books indicate, is as destabilizing a force in Soviet society as it is in our own.

Indeed, the discussion of Soviet problems with youth sounds familiar to the Western reader. Parents will move heaven and earth to ensure that their children obtain the best education. This often involves bribing university officials to accept one's offspring and paying exorbitant sums for special coaching lessons. The Russians also have a problem with what is known as *khuliganstvo*

or hooliganism. "Stevo" Schecter graphically recounts his escapades with a gang of Russian boys who stole, fought, and were drunk most of the time. Alcoholism is one of the U.S.S.R.'s most severe problems and foreigners have to innure themselves to drunken fights on the streets of Moscow. According to Stevo Schecter, this problem is particularly acute among teenagers. For the more affluent, with enough money to purchase Western goods on the black market, there are other ways of spending one's time. Smith points to the paradox of lifestyles among the more privileged Soviet youth. On the one hand, more teenagers are buying Western rock music and jeans—at \$100 a pair on the black market—but this is merely a sign of wealth. Those same long-haired hippie-looking rock music fans will more often than not be loyal members of the Young Communist Organization. Unorthodox outward appearances do not necessarily imply nonconformist political views.

Kaiser, Schecter and Smith report a significant degree of political conformity imposed by the party. The Soviet leaders have inherited some of the bureaucratic organizational structures of their Tsarist predecessors; all three books attempt to unravel the Byzantine nexus of the Soviet party organization, although none fortunately attempts Kremlinological clairvoyance. Smith and Kaiser stress the persistent nostalgia for Stalin. The Soviet people, they suggest, yearn for a strong boss, which explains why they remain so contemptuous of Nikita Khrushchev, whom we tend to consider more enlightened than Stalin. One official told Kaiser that the Russian people dislike ambiguity. It is therefore necessary for the party to take a strong, consistent line on everything, with no room for the confusion of free discussion and free choice. Kaiser concludes that "a sort of hard-hat mentality dominates the Soviet system and Russian society." All the writers suggest that the majority of "Middle Russians" would share a great

deal in common with their fellow Middle Americans. Soviet society and the political system, they claim, are essentially conservative, disapproving of change. Marxist ideology seems to be defunct as a guide for action among the cynical leaders. However, ideology as embodied in the cult of Lenin is still much used to legitimate the regime's actions among the people. It is debatable whether most Russians accept the Marxist rhetoric. According to the younger Schecters, Soviet children believe everything they are taught about Lenin and became enraged when the Americans made fun of it. People still believe the ideology, even if their leaders do not.

When Kaiser, Schecter and Smith were in Moscow, they pioneered the reporting of the dissident movement. The second main theme in these books concerns the subjects that preoccupied them as working journalists. The dissident movement, they argue, embodies the contradiction between continuity and change, between those who want to return to the pre-revolutionary past and those who believe that the future of Russia lies in a Western-type democracy. Solzhenitsyn represents the former tendency. Kaiser and Smith were the first Western correspondents to interview Solzhenitsyn and they have excellent, gripping descriptions of their joint encounter with this imperious genius. After going to great lengths to keep the meeting secret, they arrived only to find that Solzhenitsyn had prepared the entire interview in advance—questions and answers—and when they insisted that he answer their own questions, he threatened to give the interview to a Swedish correspondent instead. After a few hours of hard bargaining, he compromised, largely because of his wife's intervention. Solzhenitsyn emerges as a charismatic, domineering man. He idealizes the rural, pre-modern Russophile past and abhors the rationalism of Western society.

Andrei Sakharov, the Soviet physicist, represents the Westernizing view.

He is depicted as more mellow, holding views more familiar to Western readers. He stresses the desirability of modernization and Western democracy. The conflict between Solzhenitsyn and Sakharov descends directly from the 19th-century split between Slavophiles and Westernizers, who disagreed about whether Russia should look to the East or West.

Although Solzhenitsyn and Sakharov are the towering giants of the Russian dissident movement, its range and depth go far beyond those two men.

These portraits of Soviet dissidents bear out Kaiser's observation that Russian intellectuals are incapable of mundane talk. There really is nothing like the discreet charm of the Russian intelligentsia. Forced to conform in a mediocre society, deprived of outlets for their diversity, members of the Russian intelligentsia have a rich inner life, and an intense curiosity which is absent from most Western intellectuals.

The dissident movement is separate from but linked to the Jewish emigration movement, which these correspondents covered extensively when they were in Moscow. Collectively they broke nearly all the major stories connected with the plight of Soviet Jews. Whereas the dissident movement is concerned with improving the situation within the Soviet Union, the Jewish activists want to ameliorate their lot through emigration. Jews are in an ambiguous position in Soviet society. They are the only major nationality without a homeland in the U.S.S.R., since everyone accepts that the so-called Jewish autonomous republic in bleakest Siberia is a farce. On the one hand, there is government-approved anti-Semitism in the U.S.S.R. Kaiser cites a public lecture he attended where the speaker (in good company with Mr. Agnew) claimed that Jews control 75 percent of the American mass media. On the other hand, Jews are among the relatively privileged groups in Soviet society in terms of education and income.

If one really wants to understand

grass-roots Russian and Ukrainian anti-Semitism, however, one must study Lyuba, the Schecters' maid. Lyuba is one of the most vivid characters in these books. A grandmotherly Ukrainian peasant who loves and cajoles the Schecter family, she expresses the widespread attitude toward Jews. When she discovers that the Schecters are Jewish, she remarks that it is not surprising that their children have such a facility for languages, because Jews "always pushed their children. It paid off, they have the best jobs, they are the intelligentsia with all the privileges. You never see a Jew in a factory or a collective farm," she said bitterly.

The paradox of this point of view, as the three books point out, is that in order to become members of the privileged classes Jews must conceal their origins. Smith claims that a considerable proportion of the Soviet professional and diplomatic elite are "closet" Jews. For those younger and more nationalistic Jews, however, the six-day war acted as a catalyst which persuaded them to fight for the right to emigrate. If one thinks back to Stalin's time, it is astounding that the Soviet government has permitted 100,000 Jews to leave. They succeeded, says Kaiser, "because they made such a noise." For those who stayed behind, however, the situation is deteriorating.

Détente was one of the major issues that surfaced while these reporters covered Moscow, and one question that they raise is the extent to which the Soviet move toward détente was motivated by economic considerations. Their second major story was the state of the Soviet economy, which remains surprisingly backward, despite modernization of major sectors. There are persistent shortages of consumer and more basic goods—the Soviet economy is similar to that of a developing country. Yet the Soviet military sector produces obviously sophisticated technology and resembles that of the U.S. in its state of development. Smith refers to this as the "split-level nature of Russian society." The military sector,

Associate Nieman Fellows, 1976-77

Five journalists from abroad have been appointed to join the 13 American Fellows whose names were announced last June. The Associate Nieman Fellows, who are funded by non-Harvard sources, are members of the 39th Nieman class to study at Harvard. (The Nieman endowment is ordinarily restricted to citizens of the United States.) The newest Fellows are:

Zvi Dor-Ner, 35, Producer/Director with Israeli Television, Jerusalem. Mr. Dor-Ner is a graduate of Boston University and at Harvard will study the part that the mass media play in international conflicts, in addition to the history of science, philosophy, and drama.

Jamil K. Mroué, 26, General Manager of the Al-Hayat publications, Beirut, Lebanon. Mr. Mroué attended the American University of Beirut, and in 1972 participated in a six-month training program, working at *The Charlotte (N.C.) Observer* and later at the *Press-Enterprise* in Riverside, California. His studies at Harvard will focus on graphics, photography, and the social and economic development of the Middle East.

M. G. Gangadharan Pillai, 37, Bureau Chief for *Asiaweek* (Hong Kong) in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. He also represents the British Broadcasting Corporation, *Newsweek*, *The Washington Post*, Radio New Zealand,

and *The London Observer*. Mr. Pillai attended the University of Singapore and at Harvard will study global politics, racial conflict and economics. His appointment is funded by the Asia Foundation and, in part, by the Robert Waldo Ruhl Fellowship Fund within the Nieman Foundation.

José Antonio Martínez Soler, 29, Editor of *Doblón*, Madrid. Mr. Martínez Soler holds a bachelor's degree from Escuela de Periodismo. He plans to study sociology, political science, the psychology of communication and the history of American television. He is the fourth recipient of a German Marshall Fund Fellowship within the Nieman program for journalists from Europe.

J. Hendrik van Deventer, 35, News Editor, *Die Beeld*, Johannesburg. Mr. van Deventer is a graduate of the University of Pretoria and will concentrate on the social sciences, Afro-American studies and American foreign policy. His appointment is funded by the United States-South Africa Leader Exchange Program, Inc.

The Nieman Fellowships were established in 1937 through a bequest by Agnes Wahl Nieman in memory of her husband, Lucius W. Nieman, founder of *Milwaukee Journal*. The Fellows come to Harvard for a sabbatical year of study in any part of the University.

he argues, is isolated from the rest of the economy and operates on a different system. Kaiser disagrees. He says that "the military economy is not apart from the rest; it is the cream on top of the rest." Both writers concur that the Soviet economy operates on a system which Kaiser calls "inefficiency according to plan." The overweening, over-centralized bureaucracy usually formulates unrealistic planning targets. The necessity to fulfill them becomes the focus of all economic activity and ossifies any initiative. The core problem of the Soviet economy is that there are no incentives to innovate because there are no rewards for economic initiative and creativity. Even when a Russian learns modern management techniques, as Kaiser points out, he merely applies them to fulfilling existing inefficient plans.

The main reason why the Soviet economy works as well as it does is because there are really two economies in the U.S.S.R.—one official and one un-

official. The unofficial economy is thriving. Smith and Kaiser give numerous examples of living *na levo*, or on the left, as the Russians call it. Factory managers secure scarce supplies through bribery and *blat*, or pull. Ordinary Muscovites purchase black-market meat and go to private doctors and dentists. One can buy anything one wants in Moscow, provided one has the right connections and enough money.

In view of the importance of détente while these three correspondents were in Moscow, it is surprising that only Kaiser devotes a chapter to foreign policy. He takes a cautiously optimistic view of Soviet intentions. The Russians, he argues, have never been interested in aggressive world conquest. Their foreign policy is defensive and oriented toward stability. Kaiser appears to have a more sanguine view of Soviet foreign policy than of the domestic situation. This raises an important question, namely whether a totalitarian state must pursue a totalitarian foreign policy.

Kaiser implies that while there may not be domestic convergence, there is foreign policy convergence, so far as the U.S.S.R. is a *status-quo* power. To this extent, one can separate domestic and foreign policy as governed by different considerations.

As reporters covering the U.S.S.R., Schecter, Smith and Kaiser devote some attention to journalism in Moscow, both domestic and foreign, which is the third main theme of these books. The Soviet elite, they argue, is the only group that has access to "real" news. Since all Soviet news is heavily censored, there is a special "White Tass" and a top-secret "Red Tass" which inform the party elite of foreign and domestic news, free of censorship. These are the only Soviet publications which print news of air crashes, crime statistics and crop failures. *Pravda* and *Izvestia* print no such news. "Pravda" means Truth, and "Izvestia" means News, leading to the old Soviet adage that there is no truth in *Pravda* and no

news in *Izvestia*. Kaiser has a fascinating chapter on how *Pravda* is written, at least one day before it is published, which does not leave much space for breaking news. Much of the four-to-six page paper is occupied with political news, glorifying a collective farm or heralding North Vietnamese brethren, but these pages are apparently not the most widely-read. The majority of *Pravda* readers concentrate on sports and cultural news. Kaiser also suggests that "letters to the editor" may originate from the editor himself. The day after Solzhenystin was expelled, for instance, *Pravda* published letters applauding the decision from loyal citizens in remote regions—regions from which letters to Moscow take at least a week to arrive. There are only a few innocuous topics on which criticism from readers is permitted.

Foreign correspondents have to cope with many of the problems of the Soviet media. Kaiser, Schecter and Smith experienced tremendous frustrations: since all interviews had to be officially arranged, and the Soviet authorities went to great lengths to prevent the journalists from gaining significant information, they had to rely on non-official sources for much material. Although censorship of foreign dispatches has been officially lifted, there are clearly some topics about which foreign correspondents are not supposed to write. The ultimate sanction, which the

Soviets have no compunctions about using, is expulsion.

The tight control of information in Moscow and the constant fear of provocation makes life difficult for Western journalists. On the one hand, they are by definition in competition for news scoops. On the other hand, there is some incentive to share news leads, if only to confirm rumors, given the paucity of accurate information. The Western correspondent in Moscow is constantly struggling to outdo the Soviet information system.

The authors write primarily about Russia and do not deal extensively with what is the real Achilles' heel of the Soviet system, the nationalities problem. They do, however, give insightful portraits of life in the less inhibited and controlled outlying national republics.

All three books share the same curious love-hate relationship to the Soviet Union, that paradoxical combination of fascination and horror that emerges from any prolonged stay there. All left with mixed feelings. Their dislike of the system and like of the people comes through strongly. Each admits to a certain loss of innocence, combined with an appreciation of the intensity of his friendships with Russians.

A recent Soviet emigré, complaining that he could not adjust to life in the U.S., said: "What you people don't understand is that we are not brought up with the right kind of defense

mechanisms to survive in this kind of society." The positive side of Soviet collectivism is that the state takes care of an individual from cradle to grave: one does not have to deal with the vicissitudes of free competition. Kaiser suggests what is perhaps the ultimate paradox of Russia: some Russians are freer than we are. People born to freedom cannot appreciate the real inner freedom that one can achieve in Soviet society once one has divorced oneself completely from the system and owes nothing to it.

The balance sheet of Soviet society that emerges from these books is mixed. On the one hand, there has been considerable liberalization in terms of the amount of dissent that is permitted. Soviet society is more open now than it has been for fifty years; more foreign travel is permitted for the privileged. The economy is growing and there are more consumer goods available. On the other hand, repression of dissent is still widespread; the Soviet government exercises supreme control over all information and tries its best to prevent contacts between foreigners and ordinary Soviet citizens. Russia is a closed society, but there are cracks. As Kaiser, Smith and the Schecters show, Western journalists can perform a vital function by identifying those cracks and working within them.

—Angela Stent

Notes on Book Reviewers

Jerome Aumente, NF '68, is currently Professor and Chairman of the Department of Journalism and Urban Communications at Livingston College of Rutgers University. He is a former urban-affairs writer for the *Detroit News*.

Henry S. Bradsher, NF '69, is covering foreign and national security affairs for *The Washington Star*. He was formerly a foreign correspondent for AP based in Hong Kong.

Donald W. Klein, a China Watcher in the political

science department at Tufts University, is also a Press Watcher.

Edward C. Norton, Nieman Fellow '73, is assistant assignments editor of the New Jersey edition of the *New York Daily News*.

Angela Stent is a Research Fellow at the Russian Research Center at Harvard and a lecturer in political science at Holy Cross College. She is a contributor to *Change* and has written for *The Times of London Higher Education Supplement*.