

Nieman Reports

\$1.25

Summer 1978



Finding Truth in the Classics

John H. Finley

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Conversation with Walter Lippmann

Eric Sevareid

Focus on the International Press

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Volume XXXII, No. 2

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Nieman Reports is published quarterly by the Nieman Foundation at Harvard University, One Francis Avenue, Cambridge, Massachusetts 02138. Subscription \$5 a year; add \$1.35 for foreign mailing. Single copies \$1.25. Application to mail at second-class postage rates is pending at Boston, Massachusetts.

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EDITORIAL

Press Freedom: An Update from Down Under

I write as a novice Associate Member of the International Press Institute, and as one who had never attended an IPI General Assembly until this year's meeting in Canberra, Australia, in early March, 1978. I also write, however, as a professional historian, Asian specialist, and "journalizer" who has attended more annual conventions of professionals than I would care to admit.

So it is with a sense of still-lingering astonishment that I report that the IPI Australia meeting was the most stimulating, serious, provocative, and intellectually nourishing gathering this observer has ever had the good fortune to attend.

I never fully understood what IPI was all about, although our Nieman Executive Director, Tenney Lehman, had come back from the Zurich, Oslo, and Philadelphia assemblies with enthusiastic reports about the seriousness of the organization.

But in the week of sessions in Canberra, I learned two important things: first, that IPI is, world-wide for the media, a functional equivalent to Amnesty International; and second — not a new thought, but newly refreshed for me — that American journalists have almost no understanding of how unique and fragile their professional protections are under the U.S. Constitution's First Amendment.

During that IPI meeting we heard graphic and documented accounts of press conditions that have been tightened (or have never been free at all) in country after country. We heard of the occasional killing, and the widespread imprisonment of journalists (often indefinitely, without charges or trial) and the suppression of newspapers and magazines. We heard of brave practitioners who stood their ground in the face of press suppression, and of others less brave who bent to the suppressors.

There were sometimes large pieces of good news this year. For instance, the astonishing return of India to the

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Finding Truth in the Classics

By John H. Finley

John H. Finley, Eliot Professor of Greek Literature Emeritus, Master of Eliot House Emeritus, author of Four Stages of Greek Thought and a book in preparation on The Odyssey, met in January with the Nieman Fellows for a discussion on the origin of the Greek Classics. Professor Finley was also a speaker at the opening dinner of the Nieman Convocation last October.

David L. DeJean, associate editor of the Louisville (Ky.) Times and a Nieman Fellow in the current class, has edited the transcripts from both occasions and combined them into the following account.

As far as I can see, journalists leaped into an enormous vacuum created by the absence of a central national tradition in this country. England of the Renaissance had a central description of how things worked for the society — Shakespeare's historical plays and Julius Caesar, King Lear. These faced fundamental moral questions, concerns which were carried forward in the novels of the 19th Century. But for the people who came to this continent, everything fell apart. Our immigrant forebears were all in some sense protestors against the ruling classes in those European countries. They came here with a lone sense of individuality on the one hand to face a new and wild nature, on the other hand, and then in between all this quality of American industry starts arising. Emily Dickinson writes — not in the spirit of *The New York Times* — of "all the news that's fit to print:"

*Tell all the Truth but tell it slant —
Success in Circuit lies
Too bright for our infirm Delight
The Truth's superb surprise*

*As Lightning to the Children eased
With explanation kind
The Truth must dazzle gradually
Or every man be blind —*

What she was saying of the truth is not what Mr. Nixon did, or Mr. Lance, but some profounder relationship — who you are as a person in this completely new society. You journalists have leaped into this open vacuum — this center — but you have to do Mr. Nixon and Mr. Lance, because you can't do Richard the Second or Macbeth. (As for Mr. Lance, he could be one of the more inspiring characters in Thackeray.) You journalists have to do that, you have to do Ann Landers, celebrate the death of Elvis Presley — and follow the Red Sox, of course. Who am I to cast off on all this? America is open to us all. Yet those who report must somehow cleave to some higher standards.

What is this standard? It is a style. That's all we've got — how we write, this quality of finding the right word. I think the Nieman year is in part an attempt to find a private stance towards all this which in some sense — in the literary sense, since all of you are literary people — has something to do with style. "Le style, l'homme, c'est meme." It's how you say things and how you see things. None of us can ever know the whole world, but what our slant is and how we express it in words — this is the enlargement of the self. Why does the hawk circle in the air? Is it to practice his wings on Darwinian grounds so that he may jump better on the next chipmunk? No. He has some close relations to the joy of life, a relationship to

the world. And it is a very big reality, at least as Emily Dickinson saw it:

*Grand go the Years — in the Crescent — above them
Worlds scoop their Arcs —
And Firmaments — row —
Diadems — drop — and Doges — surrender —
Soundless as dots — on a Disc of Snow —*

This is the fundamental religious and private problem which we all face, which the press has somehow to meet. This sense that nothing is more important than any private destiny, and that you have to reach this personal destiny is the American thing, and it's very open for us all.

I remember a story which Cabot Lodge, no less, in the class ahead of me in college, once told. Grover Cleveland, a great fisherman, was in West Virginia in the rain — a huddled figure, seated, fishing. Meanwhile, Tsar Alexander the Third had died — “diadems drop and doges surrender.” The State Department had got out a statement, “...the American people greatly regret the death of this important man, we wish to express the President's sorrow...” and so forth. Some reporter from a local West Virginia newspaper came up to Mr. Cleveland and said, “Sir, may I have a word?” “Yes.” “Tsar Alexander the Third has died.” “Why do you bother me? What do I care? I'm sorry anybody dies.” “Any words to express?” “No American's interested in Tsar Alexander the Third.” These two columns came out on the front page of *The New York Tribune*. There must have been some confusion, it was said. Yet Mr. Cleveland's response is the true American response.

It's the sense of identity. This last quote from Emily Dickinson:

*On a Columnar Self —
How ample to rely
In Tumult — or Extremity —
How good the Certainty*

*That Lever cannot pry —
And Wedge cannot divide
Conviction — That Granitic Base —
Though None be on our Side —*

*Suffice Us — for a Crowd —
Ourself — and Rectitude —
And that Assembly — not far off
From furthest Spirit — God —*

This lone self. This is what we bring to the American vacuum which has been created by the absence of any central tradition like Shakespeare's or like Sophocles' or like Racine's.

Let me commend to you Matthew Arnold's essay, “Hebraism and Hellenism” — not because it's a particularly good essay — which it's not — but because the title expresses an insight, this distinction between the self, the individual, and reality, the wider world.

If you were a Hebrew of Old Testament times, the law of your religion determined your view of the world. It began with the Ten Commandments and became the law as a way of life as revealed in Leviticus and Deuteronomy. Then the revising prophets and the priesthood offered clarifications for the individual and the nation. The priesthood explained to you how you should understand things. You looked out at the world and you didn't try to analyze it, really. It was all explained to you from religious and interior grounds. So you expressed your relation to the world poetically — “the lion shall lie down with the lamb,” “the rose shall bloom in the desert.”

*“The Greeks went out to the
world, found what it was, and
brought it back.”*

The Greeks didn't have that. Religion was a matter of cult with the Greeks. If your father was a priest of Poseidon and he did certain things on certain days, you would do them when you grew up. The same goes for your mother, if she were a priestess of Demeter or Artemis. How did you ever know what the world was? Religion didn't explain it to you. The Greeks went out to the world, found what it was, and brought it back.

The movement of Hebraic thought is dead opposite from Greek thought. The ancient Jews moved from the self outward, whereas the Greeks moved from the world to the self; they tried to understand what the world was and then interpret the self. The Greeks were the originators of mathematics, of political theory, of all those things which rise in the first universities or the prototypes of the university — Plato's Academy and Aristotle's Lyceum — and it all begins with the world of Homer. This bias of the Greeks toward seeing the self relatively to the world is what then gets fused in late Hellenistic and Roman times with the re-emergence of internality in Christianity. This kind of thing goes on through the Middle Ages, and modern literature, it seems to me, is the result.

In modern times, (and you people are right in the middle of it, between a lot of physicists and biologists and others who try to describe what the world is, and a lot of interior poets who do things absolutely subjectively) the trouble is, what is in the middle, what is the classic norm,

the things by which one should understand one's relationship to the world?

I've just tried to finish a book on *The Odyssey*. May I bore you with this topic just a little? Imagine Ithaca, the island whence Odysseus comes, a tiny, bare island. Imagine this little island as a point surrounded by two concentric circles. The first circle, to which Odysseus is drawn out by ambition, by youth, by a need to get somewhere in the world, is Troy, which is history. He goes off to Troy, thinks he's going to come back soon as all the others did, but the siege goes on for ten years, and there he sees all the physical types on both sides. This youth, Odysseus from Ithaca, sees to his surprise all these different kinds of people, how they perform, and how history works out, and even some intimations from the gods. He is the chief figure in the famous Trojan Horse that takes the city finally, so one might have thought that he would return home successful, but no. He is cast into the sea — the trackless sea — to seek his relationship, no longer to history, but to that even wider circle, nature.

Even while some of you people are working in Washington around politics, think — in the middle of the Amazon jungles, think of those humming birds, those armadillos, those tree orchids, and a lot of Indians who never heard of Mr. Carter. Life is much bigger than we in our social world think it is. It's into that kind of world that Odysseus is cast.

But the analytical Greek mind already begins to work. Odysseus' adventures fall into three classes. First, he sees the wonders of the world — the island where the Sun pastures his cattle, the floating island whence the winds come, and so on. Second — and this is the marvel of the wide world — he sees societies. He is imprisoned, you

"There are very ancient myths which go back to Sanskrit which say that the wise man, the man who will right society, is the one who has traveled with the dead and come back."

remember, among the Cyclopes, these rude, primitive people so remote from the social Greeks. On the other hand, he's carried to the Phoenicians. The gods sometimes dine with them, it is said. They have magic ships which bring people back without steersman or tiller. They are as much above the Greeks as the Cyclopes are below them.

But chiefly he sees personal, interior travel — the

lotus eaters, and Circe, the very embodiment of love. He passes a year with her, then is carried to the underworld, where he speaks not only with his mother and his former friends of Troy, but learns of his own possible return.

"These three kinds of travel — in the outspread world, in societies, and in these inner states of mind — these comprise the knowledge that Odysseus gains,..."

There are very ancient myths which go back to Sanskrit which say that the wise man, the man who will right society, is the one who has traveled with the dead and come back. Odysseus obviously carries some vestiges of this primitive idea, for it's prophesied to him in the underworld that when he gets back he will get a gentle death from the sea, but the people will prosper under him. Somehow the good king comes back, having seen the dead. I think it is true of all of us in a sense, particularly as one grows older. In the country last year I gloomily realized that all the people I'd thought about all that day were dead — the hired man that lived up the road, or a carpenter that I liked, or my father, cousins I'd admired, these people who had set standards. Well, this is what Odysseus learns, something which transcends the present and comes back.

These three kinds of travel — in the outspread world, in societies, and in these inner states of mind — these comprise the knowledge that Odysseus gains, then he comes back to Ithaca in the disguise of a beggar. The two most beautiful women in the poem, Circe and the famous Helen, whom Odysseus' son Telemachus meets at Sparta in an early book of the epic, have drinks which cause forgetfulness of anything, forgetfulness of sorrow. I take it that the drink is really their beauty, that there's a kind of double causation. Just so, when Odysseus comes back as a beggar, that is in one sense the disguise by which he may recover his place in Ithaca, but in another sense it's description. Once you've seen all the world then you really are an aged beggar, no longer the triumphant king who might have returned victorious from having tricked the Trojans with the famous Trojan Horse. It is in this guise, then, that he finally regains his wife and his home.

This Greek side, to get back to my point, is very different from the Hebraic side. It starts from the outside and rescues people's lives by that understanding. This is a vindication of life by mind. In the Iliad many of the heroes die like lions or boars at bay. Well, it's too bad to die that

way, like animals. The great heroes are the ones who see, who have sight, understanding. This is what is in Greek from the very first. And you get this understanding by going out into the world and seeing how it works.

This travel myth has its antithesis in "Oedipus Rex," the play of Sophocles that Freud paid so much attention to. Oedipus has this marvelous human energy, but his story is the exact reverse of Odysseus. Odysseus comes back and brings flowering, whereas Oedipus brings to Thebes what is soon discovered — a plague. The oracle is consulted and it is said the murderer of the old king must be found. Oedipus, the energetic and vigorous king, a very administrative fellow, says, "Yes, yes, I will do this, I have all sorts of gifts, I can certainly do it." He is really very heroic. "I will find the truth," he says. He believes that just as he has moved victoriously in the past, so his outward course might continue in the future. He thinks the world will ever be open to him and can always be met by him and will increase his knowledge. He's marvelously confident, but he hasn't learned from things. He's sort of superimposing himself on the world. Odysseus learns from the world rather than asserts himself against it, and he comes back the beneficent king rather than the plague-giving king.

Sophocles in his old age wrote the famous "Oedipus at Colonus." Oedipus reappears, a blind old man to whom it has been prophesied that after all his troubles he'll find a gentle death in Athens. It is in the grove of Furies, turned benign with nightingales singing and flowers blooming, that blind Oedipus finds his way forward to the marvelous end of old man Sophocles' play. He's gone through this voyage of his life and taken it upon himself. His self-blinding has shut out his confident assertion toward the world. It is this that causes the world to flower for him, and he dies in the garden.

Jung had the belief that there are fundamental ideas based in nature, in the mind, inherited from innumerable generations of forebears. It is awfully interesting that Oedipus walks alone toward his death, unsupported by his famous and dutiful daughters, just as Dante, after having seen the underworld and having climbed up through purgatory and finally reaching Eden, walks alone. There is this feeling that now you can guide yourself, that after sufficient help you can make it on your own. Dante surely didn't know any Greek. He hadn't read the Oedipus plays, yet this is one of the fundamental things Jung keeps coming back to.

I belong to a professors' dining club which I much enjoy. The other evening a young fellow named David Perkins, who does modern poetry, talked about modernism. He says that in the first part of the 20th century you had in early Yeats, for instance, relics of

romanticism, really quite beautiful and simple, but very removed from life. In later Yeats and in things like T. S. Eliot's "Prufrock" and "The Wasteland," already this new realism comes in, and with Eliot joined now with the bigger myths of various sorts, this is modernism. Eliot leaves Harvard, leaves the United States, and goes to England thinking he's going to get to a more central position. Yet "The Wasteland" would seem to be what he discovered upon leaving this country, not "Hamlet" or "Richard II" or "Henry IV." His struggle for a central tradition really was not achieved even though he had left our chaotic country and wanted to fix himself. In this modernism you have Joyce, who on the one hand wants the very detail of life in Dublin, but on the other hand wants to hitch it to some great myth like the Odyssey.

We modern Americans seem to have this central dilemma: on the one hand we have this Greek tradition of trying to analyze what the world is and draw our understanding of life from analysis of the external world, science, and all the models of Odysseus' struggles, and on the other hand we have the extreme stages of Christian or internal knowledge — now for many people dissociated, I fear, from theology or rigorous belief of any sort. All this is a little schizophrenic, it seems to me. The Greeks held it together pretty well. They didn't really ever talk about the inner life in a Hamlet-like way, much less in a New Testament way. Nevertheless they did see how, in the manner of Odysseus or of Oedipus, you're supposed to hitch your life to external conditions, understand them, and judge your life by them, and your heroism is partly a mental act. You have to have some gift to get to the stage where you will see these things revealed, I guess, but having got there, your main quality as a human being is mental, to grasp how you stand towards the timeless but beautiful gods — it being a privilege to have some connection with the world the gods dominate.

Questioner: You mentioned Joyce and the detail of daily life in Dublin — he wanted to hitch to a myth, some kind of organizing principle. Does America have that myth? What do we hitch ourselves to?

Finley: Well, I suppose it's an awful lot of luck, and at my age I can only testify to that. We're all the products of simple people who've lived in villages. And surely there must have been great privation in those villages. Otherwise, we wouldn't have gone West and so on. And a lot of people thought they would escape the village by going to the city and getting a Chevrolet or a Frigidaire. But I am not here to criticize that. Think of the poverty of

our forebears, so to bail out with a certain materialism is something. Yet I think the tragedy of modern times is that the city hasn't really bailed anybody out. So you could say that the American Myth might be a sort of double thing, a respect for the possibility of moving away from the privations of the farm or the poverty of our forebears, and yet some hesitation towards whether Woolworth's or Zayre's store is really all the same as Elysium, as the Garden of Eden. I have some suspicions of the American materiality and a feeling that, after all, everybody is either male or female, everybody is young and grows a little older. There are certain underlying regularities which have to do with a family and children and stages of life. It is this, at once assent and doubt: Assent to the American hope, utter belief in democracy, belief that everybody has a chance — and yet at the same time, some feeling that we're not Horatio Alger. It's much better to be a Lincoln than Horatio Alger, to try to get a chance to do something, heaven knows. We're all lucky, luckier than a lot of other people.

And yet, I don't think we're all that different from a lot of other people too. My view of the American Myth would be most essentially hope and yet expectation of human reserve of some sort, human rooting. At this very moment, some older woman is working in a hospital or looking out for some frail member of my sex — they all perish like the leaves on the trees — and these women are virtually immortal — and I wonder if they don't see that quite as much as any professor. Surely, it is not misunderstanding of what it is, having once been younger and now to be older, having once having got what you thought was so great, namely that Frigidaire or that Chevrolet, and finding it's not so great after all — and yet being glad you have it. This realization, I should think, must be fairly widespread, and has really rather little to do with education. I should think it describes the human position. So I don't think the Greek view of seeing how one stands towards the immortal and beautiful gods is confined only to intellectuals, and merely to the fortunate.

Questioner: You mentioned the American duality of belief and doubt. Where has that been expressed in American literature, and how was it communicated?

Finley: Well, I don't know. I think any good novel would say that. For instance, Moby Dick, with this nutty visionary Calvinist Captain Ahab who wants to kill the white whale that personifies to him the mystery and perhaps the evil — or at least the inhumanity — of God at the center of things, and of course he dies. Then Ishmael

finds his way back through the experience. Take the contrast of Tom Sawyer and Huckleberry Finn. Tom Sawyer is brought up in a town. He is a great success in the town, think of that famous fence painting episode, virtually out of Horatio Alger — and even when he gets lost in the cave with Becky Thatcher he's sure to get out. Huckleberry Finn, on the other hand, has a far wider perspective, reaching the width of the Mississippi River and covering all the people he runs into. Remember those crazy feuding families and the fellow who pretends he is a dauphin. And Jim, the black whom he admires so much and who is so decent to him. If you wanted to make a real American comparison, Tom Sawyer is the Illiad. This is social life. Huckleberry Finn is the Odyssey. This sees the width of things. But I do think the duality is there in both cases. They reason why Huckleberry Finn is so much better than Tom and why it surprises himself is that he learns to doubt a whole lot of things that Tom Sawyer and Aunt Polly have taken for granted.

Questioner: We talked at lunch a little bit about classical education but I wondered if you could expand a little. What did people who got a good education in the classics and then went on and became lawyers or journalists or something fifty years ago get out of that education for their lives that we who don't have that kind of education don't have?

Finley: Well, Sam Morrison (I just bought a copy of selections from Morrison done by his daughter) thought that the great crime T. S. Eliot had committed was to have given up the classical past, and it has something to do — though, I don't want to be too theoretical about it — with the nature of English. English is a hybrid language. It is said that a cab driver in Paris can read Racine or in Germany can read Schiller, but that it's much harder for the cab driver in New York or London to read Shakespeare. Why? Ah, because of the size of the vocabulary. And because the grammar has been broken down. As I see it, English is sort of a pigeon German. German has three genders with case endings and everything. All English has is the genitive singular and the genitive plural. So the biggest vocabulary has the smallest syntax. Historically I think studying Latin was an introduction to solving both at the same time. When my children were little, they tried to diagram sentences at school, but did they learn how to write English? They certainly did not. But when they did some Latin and found that the subject and adjective had to agree, or the participle had to agree with the noun, it certainly dawned

on them fairly fast, I thought. It's near the beginning of the second book of *Paradise Lost*:

*High on a throne of royal state, which far
Outshone the wealth of Ormus and of Ind,
Or where the gorgeous East with richest hand
Show'rs on her kings barbaric pearl and gold
Satan exalted sat, by merit rais'd
To that bad eminence. . .*

I submit that "exalted sat" is the essence of English. "Exalted" this Latin word, and "sat" this stubby Germanic word. If you had said "raised sat" or "exalted reposed," it wouldn't have been much good. "By merit raised to that bad eminence." "Bad eminence," boy, that's good. If he had said "malign eminence," it wouldn't have been so good. So we have used these synonyms — some stubby and Germanic, and some liquid or sonorous — and this is what I guess would be the main justification of Latin. I've often thought that English should be given up in high school — say in the ninth and tenth grades, and you teach Latin, not as an introduction to Roman Literature, to Caesar, but to English vocabulary. Then since Latin has been such a terrific historical force, you could choose for your early reading some Medieval songs like *Gaudeamus Igitur* or *Dies Irae* and read simple prose, like Einhard's *Life With Charlemagne* or something like that. This would be an introduction to the English language, it seems to me, and also to some extent, to history. Then if you really wanted to do ancient Rome, you could start all over again in your third year and go on to read Virgil and Cicero.

Questioner: But no Greek?

Finley: Well, Greek is pure joy, and some people always find their way out of Proust and Joyce and get to Sophocles and Homer, and they always will. They're so good and so interesting. Sometimes it seems to me that the Adriatic Sea between Greece and Rome is a kind of back wall like Pyramus and Thisbe's, and the Greeks look one way and the Romans look another. Contrast, for instance, Giotto's paintings with Byzantine painting of the same time. One is human, personal — Giotto — and the other is extraordinary abstract designs — Byzantine things — with God the Pantocrator at the middle and the king on one side. There is an abstraction about Greek which gets more and more clear as time goes on, perhaps more complicated and more assertive.

I have been reading a lot of late Greek recently, Plato and Aristotle. It gets terribly abstract. But the great

Roman, Virgil, is full of shadowy things, subtle points, beautifully done but very interior. It's hard to know whether Christianity came largely from a Hebrew source or whether it has something to do with the Roman inwardness. The first great statement of democracy was Greek — first Pericles then Thucydides, who is very abstract.

In contrast to that, the Roman historian Tacitus has this interior light. If any of you have been afflicted with "I, Claudius," which I just can't look at, you know Tiberius. Tacitus begins his annals by saying there are three periods of Tiberius' life. The first is his mother, who is still alive. The second is Sejanus, the prime minister. Then last, when he was left to his own devices. Everything in Tacitus' view of history becomes personal and interior, hinging on the personal qualities. This Roman interior-ness, which goes on to things like St. Augustine, is something the Greeks never did. Even Socrates, very curious and personal though he was, thought it was his task to understand general laws of the world. "Know thyself," Delphi said. Well, knowing thyself was not turning in upon himself like Proust, but to turn outward to understand and try to analyze the laws of things.

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Covering the Real Politics

By J. Anthony Lukas

Mr. Lukas, free-lancer, is the author of three books and is currently working on the fourth which he describes below. Following our custom of taping Nieman seminars from time to time, the editors present a lightly edited transcript of a dinner seminar in March when Mr. Lukas met with the Nieman Fellows and their guests, the Southam Fellows from Canada.

For ten years Mr. Lukas was with The New York Times, where he won a Pulitzer Prize, and he was a Nieman Fellow in the Class of '69.

J. Anthony Lukas: I have been in your shoes all too many evenings, and having grown weary of pontification from this seat, I'd like to speak reasonably briefly, and then respond to what you are interested in. It's been suggested that I might talk very briefly about what I'm doing these days. We were discussing at dinner an obsession of mine, the notion that American journalism is far too concerned with politics conventionally defined. We have with us one of the best political reporters in the business, Marty Nolan, whom I do not mean to offend with these remarks, because I think that he does what he does enormously well, and there are others in the Washington press corps who also do it very well.

But I suppose that I'm an example of a reporter who rather early in his career got enormously bored with politics. I did spend two years on the Baltimore *Sun* covering the Baltimore City Hall, which is probably enough to put anybody off politics for the rest of his life. I recently attended a session of the Boston City Council and compared notes with Barney Frank, whom I hope you will have an opportunity to meet while you are Niemans. He's certainly one of the wisest and wittiest of Boston's politicians. I told him that I found it more ridiculous even than the Baltimore City Council, a line which I'm told he repeated to his friends; obviously Barney regards the

Boston City Council as less than the model of a perfect political body. But, for whatever reason, I guess that after perhaps five of my ten years with the *Times*, I had pretty much decided that I did not want to cover politics. Now, again we were talking at dinner about what politics means, and I'm sure that's something that we've all thought about, and if you take the Aristotelean notion of what politics is, which was the life of the *polis*, the life of the Greek political body, then politics can be seen as virtually all that is interesting to write about in any society. In that sense I *do* find politics interesting. I do not find politics compelling when it is defined conventionally to mean partisan politics or electoral politics or particularly quadrennial Presidential politics. And, again excepting Mr. Nolan, I am not aware of much that was written during the fall of 1976 about Jimmy Carter that I find very helpful in understanding what is going on in Washington today. I think it is very possible that we could have dispensed with 99 percent of what was written that fall and still have understood Mr. Carter as well as we do today.

Which is my way of introducing the fact that I now find myself at what I hope is mid-career, writing a book about a subject which some journalists might feel I was wasting my time on. It is not exactly one of the single

burning issues of American life today, as conventionally seen. It is not SALT. It is not who is going to be President in 1980. It is not energy or even who's going to win the 1978 pennant. Probably, even for many people in this room, it starts with an enormously tedious subject — the question of what do we do about schools and race in urban

"It starts with an enormously tedious subject — the question of what do we do about schools and race in urban America."

America. If I were to add the word busing, many of you would probably doze off over your coffee.

It was with realization — that that word is soporific in the extreme — that I decided originally not to write about busing, but to write about the lives of three Boston families. I came up here in the summer of 1976 to select those three families. I ended up selecting my first family in Charlestown. I don't know whether a Nieman these days strays into Charlestown. If most of you haven't, as I suspect you haven't, you ought to. To me, Charlestown is one of the most compelling communities in this area, the

"It was with [this] realization... that I decided...to write about the lives of three families."

site of course of Bunker Hill. And on the slope of Bunker Hill, I found a family who regard themselves as Irish, but my research shows that they stem from an Anglican clergyman on the Isle of Man in 1760. So they're one family.

A second family is a black family who live in a subsidized housing project in the South End (not to be confused with South Boston). The eldest daughter of that family was bused into Charlestown for two years and graduated last June with the eldest son of the ostensibly Irish family in Charlestown.

The third family is an ostensibly Yankee family. I say ostensibly Yankee because it turns out that this family is actually Northern Irish, and rather similar in background to the ostensibly Irish family. But they think of themselves as Yankee while the other family thinks of itself as Irish. What I'm getting at there is sort of a subliminal attack on the Michael Novaks of this world, who see everything in

terms of very rigid ethnic categories. I think those categories are often more confused than Mr. Novak or Father Andrew Greeley would admit. This third family is made up of a Harvard-educated lawyer, who went to work for Mayor Kevin White for four years, and his wife, who runs a Yankee-Jewish foundation which gives a lot of money to Boston's black community.

So it's the lives of these three families over a decade that I've been following for the last two years. And, getting back to my original notion, I'm also examining the political relationships between those three families and the three communities they represent. This will be buttressed by my look at four public figures, whose actions influence those three families: Mayor Kevin White; W. Arthur Garrity, the judge who ordered busing in Boston; Cardinal Medeiros, the successor to Cardinal Cushing as the head of the Boston Archdiocese, and Tom Winship, the editor of *The Boston Globe*. The way those four individuals intersect with the lives of these families — for me that's politics in this country today. I don't deny that Carter versus Ford is politics. I don't deny that it has a profound effect on the lives we lead and that we need talented journalists to report it. I'm not here to impose my vision on you of what a journalist ought to do, and I don't want to be overly didactic, but — all right — I suppose I feel that kind of politics ought to concern us as much, or more, than politics conventionally defined. If we regard ourselves as covering the real politics of this country, the real politics of this country certainly include the politics of class and race in cities like Boston.

Among other things, it's the question of why does Arthur Garrity hand down a busing edict which requires the poor of Charlestown and the poor of the South End to mix in schools, while exempting the middle class of Newton or Everett or the other suburbs of Boston. Now, one answer to that, which I'm constantly reminded of by my lawyer friends around this town, is that the Supreme Court's decision in the Detroit case virtually exempts the suburbs from such orders. Judge Garrity is a very fine

"If we regard ourselves as covering the real politics of this country, the real politics...certainly include the politics of class and race in cities like Boston."

judge. I'm not criticizing him personally. Under Supreme Court precedents, he had very little choice. I'm questioning the broader political role of the judiciary in

maintaining the status quo. I would remind you — and I'm sure that you don't need to be reminded — that the legal profession is as subject to politics as any profession, as is the medical profession — a notion which often seems to be missing in the way most American newspapers cover those professions. We often tend to accept the mystique of the law and medicine, as defined by those professions, and forget that they are as politically and economically motivated as the rest of us.

Again, I don't mean politics in the conventional sense — electoral or partisan politics. I mean politics in the sense of the broad power relationships between different segments of our society. And I would suggest to you that nothing could be more political in that sense than the relationship between the poor and minorities increasingly huddled in our largest cities and the overwhelmingly white, middle and upper classes who predominate in the suburban rings around those cities. When the Kerner Commission warned ten years ago that we were becoming two societies, it was talking at least, in part, about that as well as the narrower question of who goes to what school. Can we really attack the question at its root if we simply shuffle poor blacks and poor whites back and forth across our cities and ignore the suburbs? Shouldn't we all bear the burden of making those two societies one?

Well, those are some of the political issues which I am currently concerned with, and I find them, I must tell you, the most utterly compelling political issues which I have ever written about. I've had my share of big political stories as a reporter. I've covered Watergate for the New

"And I would suggest to you that nothing could be more political in that sense than the relationship between the poor and minorities increasingly huddled in our largest cities and the overwhelmingly white, middle and upper classes who predominate in the suburban rings around those cities."

York Times Magazine. I have covered some presidential politics and a good deal of the domestic turmoil and the racial turmoil of the 1960's, and I can tell you that nothing in my professional life have I found as compelling as what I've been doing in these past few years.

And I think I will end this stirring peroration by simply saying that I would hope that some of you would

leave your years as Niemans or Southams and go back to your profession eager to write about politics broadly defined, to be defined as the power relationship which exists in society at large, rather than narrowly defined which I take to mean the quadrennial or biennial struggles that go on around an election to a particular office. So I think that I will leave it at that for the moment, but I'd be delighted to respond to your attacks or questions.

Questioner: May I ask you why you chose Boston rather than another place or another town?

Lukas: It started with the busing issue. But I came to realize that Boston had other advantages, quite apart from the fact that I happen to like living here and the fact that I had a fellowship at the Institute of Politics last year which helped to support me here. But I increasingly see the battle that I just described in class terms as well as race terms. And it seems to me that Boston is a particularly good place to study that. Somebody asked me the other night why Boston was the most racist city in America. I said I wasn't at all sure that was true, but you might argue it was the most "classist" city. For instance, the city proper is the smallest in relation to its metropolitan area of any major American city. In part, that's due to the peculiar relationship between the Irish and Yankees in Boston, because many suburbs, Brookline being a good example, did not want to be subjected to Irish Boston. The end result of those factors is that class warfare is, it seems to me, more visible here, not more present, but more visible and more easily describable in Boston than in most American metropolitan areas. And so that when I look at the relationship between "my" three families — I get very possessive about these families — when I look at this peculiar urban triangle, it seems to me that the class issues are more interesting here than they would be in Cleveland or Detroit or San Diego.

Questioner: But are they expressed as class issues, or does it come out as racial issues?

Lukas: Well, let me tell you one of my most interesting discoveries of these last two years. When I talk to the Charlestown family about whom they really loathe, I end up with something rather strange. If you've read Oscar Handlin on this subject you would expect them to loathe the Elliot Richardsons or the Frank Sargents — the Brahmin Yankees. But what I find is something quite different. And I hope I'm reporting to you without interposing my own judgment here, simply reporting to you the names that come up in our conversations. The names are almost invariably Irish. The man they hate the most is W.

Arthur Garrity. The name that comes up second most frequently is Ted Kennedy (I should add parenthetically that they still idolize John Kennedy; he's a saint; you cannot say anything bad about John Kennedy in that household. When I said to them, "Come on, wouldn't John Kennedy have been for busing if he had lived 15 years longer?", they said, "Probably, but this doesn't affect our judgment of this great man.") Anyway, Ted Kennedy is second. Much to my surprise, Tip O'Neill is probably third. Then comes the hierarchy of the Roman Catholic Church (but, interestingly enough, not including the Portuguese Cardinal; the father in this family carried on a correspondence with him, but not a terribly vitriolic one — he still holds an office which they revere. In fact, the people who bear the brunt of their anger are the Irish priests, monsignori or whatever of the Archdiocese underneath Cardinal Medeiros.) Then comes Kevin White to a degree, School Superintendent Marian Fahey to a degree. Indeed, so relentless is the list of Irish names that I am inclined to agree with a friend of mine who calls the whole busing battle an "Irish morality play." Busing has been called the Yankee's revenge, which in a kind of metaphorical way I suppose it is. It's the Yankees who live outside the city saying to the Irish, "You can have our city. You can't have our banks, but you can have everything else in there, but you have to take the Niggers too." That's very metaphorical because the Yankees don't count for much any more. Increasingly as I see it, it's a battle between the Irish who've made it and the Irish who haven't. Charlestown and Southie are largely communities of Irish who haven't made it. They will tell you they don't want to make it. They will tell you that the lives of the Irish who have made it disgust them, that they're traitors. But that doesn't ring terribly true to me. I think they would like to make it if they could. They've turned necessity into a virtue. They have said that since they can't become lawyers in Newton or insurance men in Saugus or doctors in Quincy, they are going to proclaim Charlestown as the best place in the world to live. But that I don't think disguises the class conflict. So in response to your question, no, they don't express it in class terms, certainly not in Marxist terms, but that's the way I read them.

Questioner: I have a question about your dilemma, and it concerns selecting these families and getting them to participate in this. How did you get them to agree to this, and then how do you keep them from becoming your family?

Lukas: Well, it's been absorbing. It's been difficult. In the first place, I didn't select them scientifically, not the way a social scientist would. I looked for families with

whom I had rapport, and families to and from which I could draw interesting and diverse connections. The three families I chose are related in unusual ways — the black and white inner city families, because of busing, have children who went to Charlestown High School together and graduated together. I say "together;" that doesn't mean the two kids were friendly. They weren't. At the start, I think they were even hostile and they never became friends, but a kind of truce developed. The middle class white family and the black family shared the same immediate neighborhood for six years, until the white family moved to Newton. And the three oldest sons in the black family were part of a gang in their housing project which committed some of the crimes which ultimately persuaded the white family to move out of the area and back to the suburbs. I'm not saying they committed any crime which directly affected the family, but their friends and neighbors felt the impact.

As for maintaining rapport, I think I've been able to do that pretty well with all three families. I think we genuinely like and respect each other. I hope we do. And I hope we will after the book appears. But obviously that raises problems. Certainly, it's easier for a Harvard-educated, ex-*New York Times* person to cozy up to the Harvard-educated lawyer and his wife than it is with the other two families. They have read my earlier books, they have had me to dinner and taken me to the Pops. But I'm very much on guard against getting too cozy. I must always remember that I am writing about them.

The same thing applies to some degree to the other two families. The mother in the black family has gone through an incredibly difficult year and a half during the time I have known her. Her third oldest son has been convicted of rape, and I attended the trial. He raped a white Trotskyist woman from Cambridge, a woman who came to the help of a member of his family in a racial confrontation. They met at an interracial party and then he took her back to the housing project where he and his family lived. He's been sent away for a long time because he committed the rape while on parole for another crime, and I'm not sure how long he's got to spend, but it won't be short. That was painful for me, because I know him quite well. I feel sympathy for him and his family. But I feel sympathy for the victim too. So certainly part of me has to sit back and say, "I'm a friend of this family but I'm also reporting this, and I've got to keep my distance from it."

I was present on the night that the Charlestown family's oldest son graduated from Charlestown High School and the mother was in tears, because she had kept four of her kids out of school for several years as a protest

against busing, and I think she's increasingly aware of the high price they have paid for that. And, you will understand, I feel that too. I know the kids very well, particularly the oldest daughter, whom I've spent a lot of time with, and I know she was in tears that night too. She went to watch her brother graduate and realized that she was probably never going to graduate from anything.

My relationship with the Charlestown family is in some respects the most complex. At the start, they were rather suspicious of me. We had some testy times. But, in some ways, I'm most pleased of all about the relationship I've established with them, because I think some real mutual respect and liking has developed. The husband is a postal worker and he works very long hours in the afternoon and evening. He sleeps late in the morning. So the only time I could really talk with him was Saturday nights. That's the time he wanted it. It raised a little hell with my social life. But for a whole series of Saturday nights I'd take a bottle of Cutty Sark and go over there about 7 p.m. We'd sit down at his dining room table and go at it. The more we drank, the better it got. We don't agree on everything. But we respect each other.

Questioner: Does the time ever come when you have been so involved that you have to say to yourself, "Okay, here's my material, I need to feel very coldly about this; I'm going to write about it?"

Lukas: I think one has to remain capable of a sensitive response to the lives of these families, capable of real empathy, and yet one must keep the requisite distance that any reporter needs in order to write honestly about events. But it is only because the families have let me get so deeply inside their lives over two years that I'm required to draw that line. Most reporters never have to worry about it. I have been fortunate enough to get close to these families, so it does become an issue for me. But by the same token, I count myself fortunate to have been allowed such intimate contact with three such disparate families.

Questioner: You haven't told us why this view of politics and our history is so compelling, more compelling than the drama of a Presidential campaign or a congressional election. And how is it that this says anything about anything other than Boston?

Lukas: Well, let me take the second one first. I'm not sure that I'm ever going to claim that it does tell us about something more than Boston. I think it would be a big mistake in this book to make claims for what it tells us beyond what any sensitive reader concludes that it tells

him or her. I think the way the book is going to be written is that it's a book about three families in Boston.

Comment: But the implication is there, and nobody in California will buy that book unless they think it has implications for them.

Lukas: Well, I think it does have implications for them. I think it involves issues and themes that ought to concern all sensitive Americans. John Kennedy and Martin Luther King are characters who run through the book. The book begins on the night of King's assassination as the husband in the suburban family is already wrestling with his conscience — his guilt — because he has accepted a job with Wilmer, Cutler and Pickering, the hot-shot Washington law firm headed by Lloyd Cutler, who represented the Automobile Manufacturers Association and was doing battle with Ralph Nader. This guy ranked very high in his Harvard Law School class — 1968 — and he could have had just about any legal job he wanted, and he felt somewhat guilty about going to work for a firm which represented so many trade associations. King's death greatly accentuated that guilt. He felt he had to *do something*. Three weeks later, he attends the annual banquet of the Law Review at the Harvard Club in downtown Boston. The city is still literally smoldering from the riots that followed the assassination. And who is the main speaker at the dinner? Kevin White, the man who has just defeated Louise Day Hicks for Mayor of Boston. White delivers an impassioned speech asking these exceptionally bright young lawyers to come help him bring racial justice to Boston. So my subject, this bright young Harvard man, goes home and stays up all night with his wife asking, "What shall I do?" What he does finally is to give up his job with Wilmer, Cutler and Pickering and go to work for a relative pittance for White. That's where the book begins. The questions it raises, I think, are obvious. Can he have an impact? Can he make a difference? Can anybody make an impact on the deep divisions in American society?

Obviously, I think that the triangle of interest I'm describing — black working class; suburban Yankee (could be suburban Jewish just as well, but it happens to be suburban Protestant), and Irish working class (could be Italian or Polish, but it happens to be in this context, more or less Irish) — yes, I believe that's an enormously important triangle in urban America, and it has implications, but it would be foolish of me to say in an introduction or to say anywhere in the book that in my opinion these families "stand for" or are "representative of" anything because in some respects they happily stand for nothing more than themselves.

That was the response to question two really. As to why I think the book's important. For me, the single issue in American life — including SALT and the Presidential election of 1980 — the single issue that preoccupies me most of all is whether at age 200 or age 202 or age 204 this country will live up to the notions of equality and justice for all to which it was dedicated. It happens that the most dramatic single incident in my book occurs on July 4, 1976 — the bicentennial night — when one of the uncles in the black family, following a racial attack on their house, wheels his automobile around a corner in Dorchester and smashes it into three white kids, eventually causing one of them to have a leg amputated. As Arthur Fiedler is raising his baton down on the Esplanade for Handel's Water Music — the bicentennial concert — racial warfare is going on in Dorchester, and my family is at the heart of it.

Two hundred years ago we said we believed in equality and justice for all. You asked, "Why Boston?" It just so happens that this is where it all began. I don't want to be too heavy-handed about that. Let me just say that there are intriguing historical preludes in this book. The ostensibly Irish family lives on the slopes of Bunker Hill. When I asked the father one night how he felt about keeping four of his kids out of school for two years, he turned and, pointing up Bunker Hill, said, "Do I need to remind you what happened up there? If I have to choose between freedom and education, I choose freedom." I didn't choose at that moment to remind him that for certain black families in the city, from their point of view, there could be no freedom without education.

One member of the so-called Irish family — one of their ancestors — was married in the year 1900 to Susan Hayward, the lineal descendent of Joseph Hayward, who fell in the battle of Concord and Lexington, when he came around a barn on the road to Concord and sighted an English soldier and said, "You're a dead man," and the English soldier said, "So are you." They fired simultaneously and both dropped dead at a well, known to this day as Hayward's well.

So wherever I turn in my research, I cross American history and the book is constantly going to dip back into that as a way of reminding the reader that it began here 200 years ago and that the themes — the questions struck then — are still with us today.

Questioner: Let me ask you if you've perceived anything or if you've come up with anything in the form of a new racial etiquette?

Lukas: Etiquette seems to me too polite a phrase to apply to these families. The book has turned out to be enormously violent.

Questioner: Does that surprise you?

Lukas: Yes, it does in a way. I'm astonished at the level of violence that goes on around these families and their compatriots all the time. The middle class white family moved out of the South End after a series of crimes were committed on their street by, it turns out, a gang in which the three eldest kids in the black family were members. And the most dramatic incident of all, I guess, occurs on January 7, 1976, the start of the bicentennial year. Having experienced a lot of crime in the South End, the husband in the middle class family kept his Little League baseball bat (from the year in which his team won the Lexington championship) by the door of his house. On this particular evening, he heard a scream from out on the street, grabbed the bat, went out on the street, and found a black woman at the base of his steps who said her pocketbook had been stolen. Just then, he sees a man run out of an alley with a pocketbook in his hand. So he gives chase, as he has many times in the past. But before, he's always confronted a fleet 14-year old kid who ran like an N.F.L. end, who was always away before he could get close to him. This time he realizes that he's not confronting a fleet little kid; it's a 34-year old, slightly pudgy man who's lumbering down the street and he's gaining on him rapidly. "God," he thinks, "I'm actually going to catch him, but am I really going to clobber him with this bat?" Well, he comes abreast of him and he does hit him over the head with the bat, breaking the bat, and bringing the guy down. He turns him in to a passing policeman. And a few minutes later, he's walking with the shards of his Little League bat in his hands, back down the street toward his home. And he says to himself, "Eight years ago I came into this city to help bring racial justice to Boston and now I'm jumping out of my house to hit dark-skinned people over the head with baseball bats. I've got to get out of here." Seven months later, in August of the bicentennial year, he and his wife leave Boston and move out to Newton, to the suburbs they left eight years before.

Along with this geographical move, the family has made a corresponding political shift. It would be oversimplifying it to say they merely moved from left to right, although there was certainly some of that. But they definitely shifted from a genuine faith in the capacity of governmental action to bring about social change to real skepticism about the efficacy of such action. Meanwhile, the other two families were changing too.

Ultimately, that's what my book is about — the shifting relationships between the three families in the decade from 1968 to 1978. Where have we come in that ten years — and where have we come in 200 years — in the place that it all began?

In-Depth Reporting: A Valuable Perspective

By Jerome Aumente

Journalists can approach their information in a number of ways. The most common is the hit-and-run technique of daily reporting — scooping up the bits and pieces under terrible deadline pressures, shaping the fragments so they have balance, style, some grace and a minimum number of cracks showing. While the reporter feels satisfaction in the end product — a professional pleasure at winning in the sport — the readers or viewers seldom know the difference unless they have personal knowledge of what went into the story, and what is missing.

A different approach to information gathering, more common to the book and periodical fields, has important implications for daily print and broadcast journalism. That is when reporters wish to immerse themselves totally in the subject over long periods of time. This approach focuses on the human condition, and observes people in a wide variety of situations in their own surroundings. It is exemplified by the decisions of talented journalists such as J. Anthony Lukas who chose three Boston families, cut wide and deep into the slice of life they represent, and came up with a better sense of how they are affected by the busing situation.

Another writer, John McPhee, immersed himself in the life of the northern wilderness, or paddled a canoe through the wilds of the New Jersey Pine Barrens. In the process, he was able to convey his experiences with both the people and the places in extraordinary and insightful ways. Theodore White did it in a leisurely exploration of

how Presidents are made. There are any number of examples. The problem is to find which of the techniques are transferable to daily journalism.

Good journalists have always been troubled with the question: did I get it, and did I get it right? But “right” too often is measured in the most narrow sense of accuracy. “Right” should also include some measure of the depth and dimension in which the story is covered. Does it merely peel back the top layer?

When President Jimmy Carter made a token visit to the South Bronx, for instance, he was trailed by dozens of politicians, bureaucrats and the press. The event had its own momentum and superficiality. As usual, the entourage of mostly middle class visitors, who ordinarily travel in insulation, was stunned by the urban destruction, the burned-out shells of tenements, the crumbling walls and the general sense of being in a combat zone.

As important as that visit was for later federal funding, the real story was not in the symbolic walk-through, but in the lives of the people who survive in the South Bronx, night and day, long after the Presidential helicopter brings the President back to the comfortable surroundings of the White House.

No wonder news photos and television footage of such events inevitably turn up the same cliché montages of people either very angry at being used by politicians, or momentarily wonder-struck by the royal visit. Pencil journalists push forward for the apt quote. The camera people, like paparazzi, jockey into position for the “human interest” shot — usually an emaciated senior citizen hugging the President, or a covey of unemployed street youth lashing out in anger at the first, living bureaucrat they have within earshot — whether mayor or President.

To their credit, many news organizations go beyond the top layer coverage. Some have run continuing pieces about the problems of the people in the South Bronx. Still, the net effect is a superficial sense of life there, usually

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held by the linchpin of a news or feature angle — the problem of arson; the despair of fire fighters; the visit of a President or mayor; the promise of renewal aid; or the escapades of roving gangs who scavenge the bones of the dead neighborhood.

But how many of the stories capture the true essence of what it is like to be trapped in South Bronx either as a resident, or as a city employee whose misfortune it is to be assigned there? What is it really like to be too old, too young, too poor and to be in South Bronx? What if you are a merchant tied by a frayed economic thread to a neighborhood you dread walking through? How many stories get deeply into the financial implications of bringing change to the South Bronx, or portray the jealous feelings of competition from other boroughs which also desperately need help?

Even reporters who come back afterward for the longer piece, the so-called “in-depth” look at South Bronx, arrive in the artificial atmosphere left by the Presidential visit. Again, they face the same limitations of time, poor contacts, lack of space or air time once the story is completed, and dozens of other variables which contribute to thin reporting.

Can we solve the problem by merely giving journalists more preparation time, more space or longer air time? It seems to be more than just these limitations which contribute to the difficulties. It is also the narrowness or the expansiveness with which the press approach the subject, and the degree of support from their editors, publishers and station managers once they have the material.

In the South Bronx, as in Grosse Pointe, Cambridge, Watts, Perth Amboy, Shaker Heights, Butte, Bar Harbor or Bedford-Stuyvesant, there is life that is important and which exists long after the press are gone, or if they never come.

Sensitive reporters and editors are needed to capture the life and essence of these human conditions without the artificial drive of a news or feature angle, even though those limited results may very often be important and highly readable or viewable reports.

Jacob A. Riis saw his work, *How the Other Half Lives*, published in 1890, probably not realizing he had produced a classic study of slum poverty. He had arrived in New York City from Denmark in 1870, and spent half his money on a revolver he wore outside his coat. Years later, when he began working as a police reporter for the *Evening Sun*, he walked his East Side beat, Mulberry to Fulton, from 2:00 to 4:00 a.m., and during these early morning hours he saw the slum “when it was off guard.” He not only gathered the news, but grew to care about it. He wanted to educate the slum dwellers to their plight and thus bring

about change. As a result, he soon found himself showing his remarkable collection of glass slides with a “magic lantern” wherever an audience would gather in a hall or church.

Lincoln Steffens, sticking to what he called “brave, indignant probings,” had *McClure's* magazine for an outlet in 1902. Unscientific in his fact-gathering, he found it impossible to write about all the issues of even a single city. But he wanted to create the shame over civic shamelessness — “I wanted to move and convince.” To do so, he immersed himself in his material, just as other

*“He not only gathered the news,
but grew to care about it.”*

muckrakers did in uncovering the corporate robber barons, the processors of filthy meat, or the inhuman mental hospitals.

As important as probing, in-depth investigative reporting is, the idea of total immersion in the lives one is reporting about is a technique that goes beyond this outer circle of information gathering.

When James Agee decided to record the lives of tenant farmers he probably did not realize, like Riis and Steffens, that his work would survive as an example of classic documentation of the human experience. Along with the masterful photographs of Walker Evans, *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men* sets out to capture “the nature of a portion of unimagined existence,” and the immediate instruments were the printed word and the “motionless camera” of his colleague.

Tools aside, Agee tells us that the governing instrument was to be an individualistic, anti-authoritative human consciousness he would bring to the work, and to the interaction with the people he documented. He wanted, furthermore, an exhaustive record, with no detail left untouched, no relevancy avoided. With all this, he still found the results were a portent, a fragment, an experiment. The photographs did more than illustrate; they took on an equal coexistence with the words. In fact, Agee felt it might even be better if there were only photos and no words at all.

“...the rest would be fragments of cloth, bits of cotton, lumps of earth, records of speech, pieces of wood and iron, phials of odors, plates of food and excrement,” Agee wrote. “Booksellers would consider it quite a novelty; critics would murmur ‘Yes, but is it art?’ and I could trust a majority of you to use it as you would a parlor game.”

"A piece of the body torn out by the roots might be more to the point," he wrote of his frustration in trying to capture these lives and experiences in the hollows of Appalachia.

When Herbert Gans wanted to measure the quality of life in Boston's North End he lived there, and the result

"A participant observer is much like a politician for he must always watch his words and his behavior, think about the next question to ask, and plan strategy for studying a prospective event."

was an excellent study, *The Urban Villagers*. A sociologist and planner by training, he brings an academic discipline to his work. He wanted to know how people achieved a livable and personal existence in a sprawling new suburban development. So he bought a house in Willingboro, New Jersey, just outside Philadelphia. The result was another important book, *The Levittowners*. In his introduction he writes that he wanted to study the new community, Willingboro, from the perspective of the people who live there, rather than from the literary viewpoint of authors who often catalogue human shortcomings from their personal predilections.

His questions were grounded in sociology and public policy. How were the groups in this Levittown shaped by the plans of the founders, and to what extent were the planner's plans fulfilled? To find answers, he attended public meetings, interviewed key people, circulated surveys and questionnaires, took part in the life and organization of the overall scene, but nonetheless remained an observer.

Gans bought a house in the community and told people who he was and what he was studying in community organization. He posed his questions carefully, and was soon accepted into groups. He found people flattered by his interest in their lives. He rarely took notes, but memorized important items and kept a journal. He was careful not to alienate his sources and to maintain neutrality on issues. He avoided any tendency to seek out only those he liked, but instead cultivated people for a broad overview.

"A participant observer is much like a politician for he must always watch his words and his behavior, think about the next question to ask, and plan strategy for studying a prospective event," he writes. Because he was not a daily journalist with a deadline and an immediate

outlet for his work, some people did become suspicious of what the final outcome of his writing would be.

In studying the quality of life in the development he was guided by three elements, worth considering:

1. The standards of the residents themselves should be reflected because they were the best authority on the quality of their lives. Different perspectives might be added later but should be clearly delineated from what is documented. In other words: don't edit in a point of view that wasn't theirs.

2. There are an infinite number of ways of living well, all valid if they do not harm other people.

3. Keep the analysis and the evaluation separate.

In daily journalism, the process of total immersion can be achieved in a variety of ways:

Encourage reporters to consider individual and team assignments, increasing their chances of thoroughly understanding the sources over long periods. And it would not just be a matter of taking a good, tight story and larding it with extra details, pontificating about the results and slapping a "news analysis," "five-part series" or "interpretive" tag on it — not if the information is going to be gathered in the usual "Q and A" approach, with a little color and detail tossed in to garnish the same old lettuce. The reporters would also have to avoid "advocacy" or "participatory" journalism. If anything the method is harmed by an opinionated, high visibility journalist who elects to affect the process rather than to observe and interpret it.

Concentrate on the more complex areas involving human experience and the human condition as they are affected by outside events and the environment. These should fall beyond the first outburst of news events and cute feature angles which are superficial and often wash over the people.

For instance, all kinds of stories are written about redesigned downtown city centers — and we are in for a new wave of such stories based on the Carter Administration renewal plans. But unless a Boeing 747 slams into the Renaissance Center or the World Trade Center, or someone bribes a city official in the initial construction, the press has a tendency to forget about it. How people are affected by the physical redevelopment, how they change what is around them, and are changed by it, and how they force public policy considerations, come from a slow, thoughtful, non-news event kind of intuition and reporting.

Publishers and broadcasters should realize that the investment in time and resources is far different from even that allotted to the special writer or investigative team. But editors can count on insightful, if not original, prize-winning results when staff members are encouraged to

take such assignments, and the middle and upper level editors give off the right support signals.

Certainly the larger news organizations can afford to

“How people are affected by the physical redevelopment, how they change what is around them, and are changed by it, and how they force public policy considerations, come from a slow, thoughtful, non-news event kind of intuition and reporting.”

rotate one or more staff members for this careful, open-ended kind of observation. It might also be possible to structure the work week so that part of it encompasses such duties while the rest of it is taken up with assignments under shorter deadlines. Why not assign a reporter to follow a child through eight years of grammar school, high school and college? What happens to a family when it evolves from the first courtship of future husband and wife, through marriage, child-bearing, child-raising and the steps leading toward retirement? How does an elected official grow or diminish in office and beyond it?

Even the smallest daily or weekly can handle the kind of in-depth, non-news observation of the human experience if the pattern is spread out over a longer time span. Reporters and editors might even turn inward upon themselves, their neighborhoods, or their life conditions for some inkling of what is happening on the larger scale, and how it affects individuals.

A marvelous and gentle example of this leisurely long-range look at life can be found in the *Martha's Vineyard Gazette* and the work of its editor, Henry Beetle Hough. He gives us in his weekly journalism and outpouring of books the wisdom and passionate concern about an island and its people. The unhurried and low key commitment he brings to his observations do much to preserve the beauty of the island against threats of chaotic expansion; he affects the sensibilities of enough of us with the reminder that no one is an island.

The following caveats should be mentioned:

Journalists who practice a long-term approach will have to guard against the danger of getting so close to their subjects that they develop a proprietary interest which can cloud their observations, sacrifice truth for friendship, or create an unnatural condition in the daily operation of that family or individual.

They will also have to take caution not to create “media families and individuals” — people who become so self-conscious and self-aware of their roles as information sources that they lose the naturalness that was the initial reason for observing them in the first place. But by varying the materials, the number of persons observed, and perhaps setting ground rules for public identification of the subjects, adjustments can be made to correct this.

With the electronic media, the presence of hardware will be an initial problem. But the new, smaller video equipment which allows for hours of taping in natural light can gradually make the broadcast journalist as unobtrusive as the pencil reporter. With documentation limited to sound recording, the problem is even less.

In all this, print and broadcast journalists can follow their obligation of being the primary observer and responsible source of the stories that ultimately reach the screen or the newspaper. The main difference will be observing in natural surroundings rather than in the constricted time of a breaking news event.

With care, however, the above dangers can be avoided, and reporters will be rewarded with the knowledge that they have presented a fuller sense of what

“Journalists who practice a long-term approach will have to guard against the danger of getting so close to their subjects that they develop a proprietary interest....”

life is all about for their viewers or readers. In fact, journalists with the talent and inclination of a McPhee or Lukas, a Riis or an Agee, can have tremendous impact on the journalism of the future. They prove that the field should not be left solely to sociologists, anthropologists, political scientists, historians and others of an academic bent. Mass audiences are in desperate need of understanding their own life condition and how they and their neighbors can cope with the confusing events of this century.

In the process of sounding the individual, the rhythms of an entire society can be heard, whether from a Danish prince called Hamlet, or the head of an American family struggling with the issues of school imbalance.

After all, fables, anecdotes, morality plays, tragedies and comedies have shown for centuries that people still love a good, simple yarn and can draw a lifetime of insight from it.

Whose First Amendment?

By Daniel Schorr

Mr. Schorr, veteran CBS News correspondent who resigned from that organization in 1976, was awarded the James K. Hackett Medal by the City College of New York last autumn for "outstanding achievement by an alumnus in public speaking and broadcasting." Mr. Schorr, a 1939 graduate of CCNY, delivered the following speech at the time of the award presentation.

The James K. Hackett Award fills me with great appreciation and some small discomfort. I feel a little like the Northern trouble-maker ridden out of a Southern town on a rail after being tarred and feathered. "If it wasn't for the honor of the thing," he said, "I'd just as lief go some other way." I have mostly gone some other way in 40 years as a reporter, preferring the press table to the head table, practicing the First Amendment rather than preaching it.

Then in February, 1976, something funny happened on the way to the studio. The *Village Voice* blossomed with a committee report, critical of the CIA and FBI, that the House of Representatives had voted to suppress. The document had come from me. I found myself with the sudden need — and a great deal of sudden free time — to ponder the theory and application of the freedom of the press.

Since resigning from CBS a year ago I have talked a lot, have listened some, to students at Berkeley and elsewhere, have lectured around the country, taking note of questions and comments, and I have worked my way through a book therapeutically titled *Clearing the Air*. Now that the shouting and tumult have ebbed, let me share with you some of the fruits of reflection.

One thing I have come to realize is that the legal contest for freedom of the press cannot be considered in a vacuum, but must be seen in the context of where the press stands in our society. On the issue of confidentiality of sources, a bellwether issue, the line has been successfully held on three fronts in the past year. Four *Fresno Bee* reporters were freed from jail without disclosing their source. A Federal judge in New York refused to compel a *Newsweek* reporter to testify about his source in a narcotics case. And the House Ethics Committee backed away from its intention of trying to have me cited for contempt for declining to say where I got the Pike report.

The line was held, but I do not call these real vic-

tories. We can expect to face new challenges to what we term First Amendment privilege so long as the Supreme Court holds, as it did in the case of colleagues Branzburg and Caldwell, that the needs of justice may outweigh our needs to guard our sources.

What's the answer? Shield laws to protect reporters from having to disclose their sources? I find little salvation there. For one thing, as Fresno showed, the court may defy the legislature and assert its inherent right to conduct judicial business despite a shield law. More fundamentally, the law that may be written today to shield the press can be amended tomorrow to plague the press. When we ask for laws in an area where the Constitution says the Congress shall make *no* law, we are starting down what my lawyer friends call a slippery slope.

There is another law — largely unwritten — called Common Law. It reflects, over time, the courts' recognition of society's demands. It is largely from common law that acknowledgment has come of the sanctity of the confidential relationship between husband and wife, doctor and patient, lawyer and client, priest and penitent. Society wants these relationships to function and insists that the confidentiality essential to their functioning be legally protected. And the courts accept the premise.

Why, then, do the courts not give equal weight to *our* premise? Have we not patiently explained that if we are forced to break our trust and betray our sources, we will lose our sources, and be at the mercy of managed news, and then corruption will abound, Watergates will multiply and the nation's institutions will be threatened? We have explained. But the melancholy fact — as I have discovered in a hundred humbling meetings around this land — is that, while individual actions of reporters may be applauded, the press is not universally trusted and valued. People are not willing to repose unquestioning confidence in our need to maintain confidentiality in the way that they do for priests, doctors and lawyers.

Why not? One reason is fairly obvious. For citizens,

these other relationships are first-hand, directly experienced, *their* confidences; press confidences are second-hand, indirect, *our* confidences which we ask people to respect by reposing confidence in *us*. Our role, however, is not valued in the way the other professions are. Why not? Well, let me pass on the distillation of a thousand conversations in the past year-and-a-half about the news media:

- Many believe that, while mouthing clichés about the right to know, we do not hesitate to corrupt the nation's morals and its youth with pornography and violence for fun and profit...

- that we are quicker to invoke the freedom of the press to invade the privacy of the weak than to storm the ramparts of the strong...

- that, especially in broadcasting, freedom of the press is a hypocritical cover for the freedom of personal and corporate profit...

- that inside government Machiavellian figures, and even traitors, exploit their anonymity to manipulate us, and, in turn, the public...

- that some of us use "informed sources" and "it was learned" to confer verisimilitude on otherwise bald and unconvincing innuendo and speculation, devoid of any source save our fertile, headline-grabbing imaginations...

- that we take some unholy delight in scaring the daylighters out of them, shocking them, depressing them, exaggerating the bad news and burying the good news...

- that some of us — again, especially in broadcasting — have developed into a self-elected elite more potent than the power elite we profess to monitor, potent and malignant enough to bring down their elected leaders, including Presidents.

We lack, in a word, credibility. Until we gain it, we will not sink roots into the common law that will ultimately cause the judiciary to set a higher valuation on our First Amendment privilege. In order to gain it, we must show — in deed, not only word — that the privilege we claim serves the public, not only ourselves, our employers, our egos and our greed.

The First Commandment is: Do not take the First Amendment in vain for self-serving purposes.

Of all the security and other controversies surrounding the publication of the Pike report, the one most appalling to me was the raising of a question of property right — whether CBS owned the document which I, as a CBS employee, had acquired. It seemed to me that a Government report, free of copyright (like all Government documents), compiled at public expense, was not CBS property or my property, but the public's property. Indeed, the notion that neither CBS nor I had the right,

once this report had become available, to withhold it from the public was the heart of the matter as I saw it then — and as I see it still.

Whoever talks of public information as private property does no service to the credibility of the press.

Obviously the news business has evolved since the framers of our Constitution threw a special cloak of protection around a band of gadflies to keep the Tom Paines and John Peter Zengers from being squelched by the Government. From the original anti-establishment press has grown, paradoxically, a great press establishment. Yet, from one-man printshop to mammoth media enterprise, it is still the Press — the only private industry invested with a special constitutional protection.

That protection, though, was designed to bolster journalistic courage — individual and institutional.

If the Press wants public respect, there will have to be more risk-sharing along with the profit-sharing. There are shining examples of newspapers, like *The New York Times* and *Washington Post*, that have taken big risks. Television networks have sometimes taken risks and sometimes faltered; local stations, very seldom. And sometimes they have complained about the risks to which they felt exposed by their networks.

If reporters are to risk jail, networks and their affiliates will have to risk the wrath of the White House and Congress to keep the public fully and fairly informed. That comes with the franchise. What also comes with the franchise is that news organizations should not try to bottle up information under their control or silence journalists in their employ. The news media are news, too. It ill becomes an enterprise whose life's blood is freedom of expression to try to restrict the freedom of expression of its employees or to match exaggerated government security with exaggerated corporate security.

The First Amendment was not meant to be exercised only when prudent and profitable for the news purveyors. It was meant as a protection for this nation and its free institutions. When Americans are convinced that they are being fearlessly and fairly served, and not managed and manipulated by the media, the press will have a more loyal constituency. Then the Supreme Court, which follows more than the election returns, may give a better reception to future Branzburgs and Caldwells, who seek respect for what we do in gathering the news. Who knows? Maybe some day the judges will take us as seriously as doctors and lawyers.

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A Remembrance

Conversation with Walter Lippmann

By Eric Sevareid

The Nieman Foundation for Journalism moved last January into new and larger headquarters, an 1836 Cambridge landmark called Walter Lippmann House. Located at One Francis Avenue, the structure stands as a stately and classic memorial to the journalist who helped found the Nieman program 40 years ago. (See story on Walter Lippmann Memorial Fund Drive on page 28.)

To further honor this journalist-statesman, the editors are pleased to present Eric Sevareid's "Conversation with Walter Lippmann" of April 8, 1964, which took place ten years before Mr. Lippmann's death in December 1974. For examples of his foresight, lucidity, and wisdom, we recommend the following to you.

April 8, 1964

Sevareid: You have been writing and with great influence for some fifty years about the affairs of this country. I can't think of any record to match it in American journalism — not even Horace Greeley's. You have been personally acquainted with Presidents, Cabinet officers, military people, many people of high rank. In fact, Presidents have come to see you. How do you maintain a relationship with them that is intimate enough so that you can go to them when you want information and yet write critically about it if necessary? Do you restrain yourself in any fashion to keep that relationship?

Lippmann: No, I think there are certain rules of hygiene in the relationship between a newspaper correspondent and high officials, people in authority, which are very important and which one has to observe. Newspapermen cannot be cronies of great men. Once a man, even if you have known him more or less as a crony for years and he becomes something like a Governor, much less a President, it's all over. You can't call him by first name anymore.

Sevareid: Well, to go to something more impersonal and more important, Mr. Lippmann, a couple of years ago you said that we were achieving a superior position in

terms of power in the world vis-a-vis the Russians, but a year ago you felt that our alliance was coming somewhat unstuck. How do you feel about this general balance now?

Lippmann: I think we're living in the aftermath of the threat of nuclear war between the Soviet Union and the United States. That threat has for a time been dissipated as a result of the fact that the United States achieved superiority in nuclear weapons but, of course, not omnipotence. In other words, we're in no danger of a threat, of an attack, by the Soviet Union. On the other hand, we're in no position to order the Soviet Union around. This stalemate with our own superiority was demonstrated in the Cuban crisis and is, I think, enshrined in the test ban treaty. The test ban treaty is really, if you look at it from here as to Russia, is an acceptance by Russia of our existing superiority and an admission that, while we are superior, they can live with that. We can't use it as a threat to their existence.

Sevareid: Well, now, what is the result of all this in world politics? Are the great powers paralyzed by this thing?

Lippmann: The result is that the military alliances and military arrangements (I'm not talking only of NATO but of the alliances in Asia too) which were based on the fact that the world had only two powers that might go to

war, are coming apart. You see, when we had the terribly dangerous confrontation of these two nuclear powers everybody was so frightened that they crowded into one or the other. Now that the fear has been lifted, they tend to their own ambitions and troubles. That's why the world is much more disorderly but it is much less dangerous.

Sevareid: Are you then less disturbed by reason of what has been happening with the North Atlantic alliance?

Lippmann: Yes, I agree with General de Gaulle. The alliance's agreement, a very solemn agreement that if one of us is attacked we will all go to the help, that is not coming apart. What is coming apart is the military structure of the integrated forces that General Eisenhower originally commanded as Supreme Commander and which is called the NATO establishment. That, General de Gaulle believes, is obsolete because it was devised to prevent a Soviet or Red Army invasion of Western Europe.

Sevareid: Then NATO succeeded?

Lippmann: It succeeded and it has outlived the necessity for it. That's why the Europeans no longer really give it any great support.

Sevareid: Well, the depolarization of the world, so-called, what is it going to mean in other terms?

Lippmann: Europe is recovering, of course. It has recovered economically in Western Europe remarkably. In fact, it has entirely recovered, you might say. But Europe, as a whole, is still split down the middle and the full recovery of Europe won't have taken place until that fissure is over — in other words, until Germany is reunified and Eastern Europe becomes part of a larger European community.

Sevareid: Is that happening in small ways?

Lippmann: Yes, there's a great deal of evidence showing that it is happening. For instance, Western Germany, the Bonn Republic, has now entered into relations which are formal in everything but name with an increasing number of Eastern countries — Poland, Hungary, and so on. The trade economic ties between Western Germany and Eastern Europe are growing very rapidly, more rapidly than any other, and the old day of absolute division is over.

Sevareid: Mr. Khrushchev has just talked about a good dish of goulash as better than revolution. Does this mean in your mind a fundamental change in the Russian pattern of approaching the world?

Lippmann: Basically, yes. Marxism is a dying creed in Russia. Mr. Khrushchev wouldn't admit that but it's a dying creed because it doesn't fit the kind of industrialized modern economy the Soviets have begun to develop.

Sevareid: Well, Russia has become, as far as communism goes, the "established church," in a sense, with China the "church-militant." Is this change really

good for our interests? How serious a matter is China for us?

Lippmann: She's not nearly so serious as Russia was five years ago. She is not a nuclear power and therefore she's not capable of the kind of thing that Russia was capable of.

Sevareid: You don't feel very concerned about what China is trying to do?

Lippmann: I feel very much concerned about her influence, but it can't be done by sheer nuclear force. She doesn't have it. I think China can be contained peaceably for another ten or fifteen years and then she will be very much like the Soviet Union today.

Sevareid: You sound as though we have very little to worry about.

Lippmann: If you want to have a great big worry to worry about, I can't think of it at the moment.

Sevareid: You're not worried about what may happen in Southeast Asia in terms of our interest?

Lippmann: I think we have in Southeast Asia a very serious thing for which it's hard to see any satisfactory solution.

Sevareid: President Kennedy said he believed in the "domino theory" — that if one part of Southeast Asia falls the rest will go. Do you believe in that?

Lippmann: I don't think it's all going to go like dominoes. I mean, if the worst happened in Vietnam it would be overthrow of the government by Vietnamese — by South Vietnamese — who would then proceed to negotiate what would amount to a surrender to North Vietnam. Part of this would be ordering us to leave the country. We would lose our influence in the whole Southeast Asia, which includes the Southeast Asia peninsula and Indonesia. And loss of influence for a great power is a very serious thing.

Sevareid: Well, how do you explain to people why the United States is involved in the Vietnam war? Ought we be in it?

Lippmann: There was a vacuum. The old empires — the British empire, the French empire, the Dutch empire — broke down. They were conquered by the Japanese and the Japanese empire broke down. There was no government and we were involved in all these places. We allowed ourselves and maybe had to — there are some differences of opinion about that — get sucked into Vietnam because the French had to get out. I believe in the old-fashioned American strategic doctrine which was, before Korea, never to get engaged in a land war on the mainland of Asia. Sea power, air power, yes, but never land. I've heard it said by a very eminent American soldier that any American who committed American troops to a land war in Asia should have his head examined. That's the prejudice

with which I approach this thing. I would never have gotten in as deeply as we did into Vietnam but we're in and you can't cry over spilt milk. The question is: how do you finish with it?

Sevareid: Is General de Gaulle and his proclamations about that helping us or harming us now?

Lippmann: I think it's very difficult to say. The proclamations don't make a great deal of difference to us. We have had a government in Saigon which was corrupt and reactionary, the Diem government, and we did our best to hope it would disappear, which it did. That government was probably getting ready to negotiate some kind of an arrangement with North Vietnam. It certainly wasn't fighting the war very vigorously in South Vietnam.

Sevareid: Do you really feel it's possible to negotiate some neutral status for Vietnam?

Lippmann: I don't. I think it may be too late. I think it has been possible. I think the French, from what I know of them, wonder if it isn't too late. But if anything is negotiated that does make a settlement there short of the actual military conquest of Indochina by the Chinese, it'll have to be done with China. General de Gaulle, at least, has analyzed this correctly. Whether he can pull it off, I don't know.

Sevareid: There are a number of people who call him a mischief-maker and say he's broken up all the grand designs for the postwar world in Europe, in relation to us. Is his recognition of China mischief for us?

Lippmann: Well, of course, if you have a frozen position and somebody breaks out of that and does things that don't accept the assumptions you've accepted, that always is mischievous and a nuisance. All your plans get thrown into confusion, but we have to open our minds to the possibility that on a lot of things de Gaulle may be right and we may be wrong.

Sevareid: But he, by saying that certain things are the real realities, may be bringing them about.

Lippmann: Let's take an example from Southeast Asia. He may be right that it's impossible to stabilize Southeast Asia without coming to terms with China. We may not be able to do that. I know we can't because we have commitments to the Nationalists and Chiang Kai-shek, but de Gaulle doesn't have those commitments. The fact that he doesn't do what he would have to do in the period when we were practically omnipotent in the world should not disturb us.

Sevareid: Can he do these things because he personally is a very powerful figure in a country that is essentially weak in relation to us? He is not picking up the responsibility in Indochina.

Lippmann: Yes he is. Only he knows from nine years

of warfare that the French conducted in Indochina that you cannot get a military solution of Southeast Asia.

Sevareid: But if there were a neutrality agreement, it would be American power, not French, that would have to guarantee it.

Lippmann: Certainly, certainly. He'd be the first, I think, to admit that. But it won't be done by American power of people flying around in helicopters in South Vietnam. I don't wish to be misunderstood. We have to try and stabilize a government before we can do anything else, but the great power that we have is economic, sea, and air power. That's our power in Southeast Asia. Otherwise it's way beyond our reach.

Sevareid: Doesn't de Gaulle suffer from what Senator Fulbright called mythology?

Lippmann: I don't doubt that everybody has his myths. He undoubtedly has his, which is about the grandeur of France. But de Gaulle's positive side — the thing that will make him regarded, I think, as a genius in history — is his ability to foresee what is happening now and in the near future. He's the first head of state who has realized and acted upon the realization that the postwar period has ended. That's the meaning of de Gaulle in Europe.

Sevareid: Do you agree with his prophecies about Russia and her gradual move back into the Western world?

Lippmann: Yes, I think that's happening and the Russians are very conscious of it. In Eastern Europe, in Hungary and Poland, where I was not long ago, the interest in being Western is very extraordinary.

Sevareid: Would you say then that the Cold War in relation to Russia, if not China, is really over?

Lippmann: The Cold War in its dangerous and malignant phase, which was when nuclear weapons were the ultimate thing, that's over. The rivalry of the political systems, the social thing is not over and probably won't be over for a generation.

Sevareid: The world has changed. Maybe our policies and thinking about it haven't changed very rapidly but aren't we really overextended in too many ways and in too many places? Would we be wiser if we concentrated our foreign aid efforts in fewer places?

Lippmann: Yes, I think so. Foreign aid is, in a sense, very unpopular with Congress because it's an awful phrase. We've used such aid as a kind of "slush fund" around the periphery of Asia. We support armies, give them arms they don't need, give them planes they don't know how to fly, just to keep the officer-class happy because they're the people who control the government and they threaten that if we don't subsidize them they'll go over and join the Communists. Now, that part of it I

think we have to do. Every big government has a "slush fund." There's no use fooling yourself about this and we musn't be too moralistic and serious about it. But serious foreign aid of the kind which is really intended to develop an underdeveloped country should be concentrated in those places where there's some chance of success.

Sevareid: We are not deeply involved in Africa yet. We are in Latin America, we are in Asia. Is the trend now to try to pull back or ought we be further into Africa?

Lippmann: I think the trend is to limit our commitments abroad rather than to extend them. I would say that Africa south of the Sahara is a place where we should never get in and be the primary power. We are in for a number of reasons, partly because we are over-committed and partly because we ourselves have an African problem in this country, but we are not well suited to take a leading part in Africa south of the Sahara. So I think we should always be the second man, the third man, not the first man in these issues.

Sevareid: Is Cyprus the kind of place where this country ought to be involved?

Lippmann: Our country has to be involved there but not actively. It isn't actively involved in the sense we have troops there. I think Cyprus is a good example of how we should proceed in places where we don't want to get involved except through the United Nations or some other alliance organization. We are not in the front of the thing. We're not responsible for who gets killed and who doesn't get killed in a Cypriot village.

Sevareid: Are we learning a little sense of reticence now?

Lippmann: I think that, yes. There are signs of it. I think we're increasingly realizing that we are not, as we were apparently at the end of the Second World War, omnipotent. We had everything, everybody was prostrate but the United States. We had the only nuclear weapons there were. We had all the money that was disposable, that could be lent to anybody. Russia was prostrate; all of Europe was prostrate. Eastern Europe didn't exist. China was in terrible condition. Also Japan. From that we developed an illusion that our omnipotence would last forever. The great thing we're having to learn now, have had to begin to learn, in the past three or four or five years is that that period is over. That's what's meant by the postwar period ending.

Sevareid: Is this what you take Senator Fulbright to mean when he talks about the persistence of a mythology in our thinking about the world?

Lippmann: Yes. When he speaks about myths persisting he means what we believed — and what was probably true when we believed it well back to the Second World War — about Russia, about China, about various

countries. Our conceptions of what these countries are like and what they're up to stay frozen while actual events move on; that's what he's talking about.

Sevareid: But how do you unfreeze the given practical position we have on our problem in Cuba, for example? What can be done?

Lippmann: I don't think we're doing badly about Cuba. The Soviet people are withdrawing there. They are down to very few people now and all the military people will probably be gone in a few months. In fact, there's a little subsidiary worry in our minds, now that they've left and are not manning the anti-aircraft guns. Those guns are now in the hands of Castro, which may be more dangerous than when the Russians were there. However, we'll get by that. This is not a problem which will have a quick solution. If it has a peaceful and satisfactory solution over a number of years that's good enough for us. I think that the time will come when Castro will feel the pressure enough and is pushed by the Soviets into negotiations, not necessarily with us, but with some of the Latin American countries for readmission to the Organization of American States and a lifting of the severity of the embargoes and the boycotts. I think that's probable.

Sevareid: You don't think it's for us to voluntarily lift the embargo?

Lippmann: No, we can afford to wait. Castro can't threaten us. He's no danger to us, as Senator Fulbright said, and we're in no hurry. He'll be the one who will have to be in a hurry.

Sevareid: I think you said sometime ago that if Castro were successful in what he's trying to do with Cuba this would really be dangerous in the rest of Latin America.

Lippmann: If he were able to produce a brilliant Communist state in spite of us, in spite of everything, it would, of course, be a very dangerous example. It's only as an example that you have to fear Castro. The agents and a certain amount of arms are really a trifling matter compared to the other. The example is what counts.

Sevareid: Suppose other Latin American countries turn Communist in the meantime?

Lippmann: Well, things could go very badly but we have to cross that bridge when we come to it — if we do.

Sevareid: Since you last talked into these cameras five years ago, this country has experienced a couple of historic things at least — the beginning of what some people call a Negro revolution and the abrupt ending of the Kennedy era. I wonder if you think enough time has gone by now so that one can judge John F. Kennedy and how history may judge him thirty years from now. How do you feel about his time in the White House?

Lippmann: Well, I don't think enough time has gone by. The shock of his murder is still so close to us and the

people now are still either grieving deeply or missing something that fascinated them tremendously. They are in no position to make an appraisal.

Sevareid: What was it about Kennedy that so fascinated people?

Lippmann: His looks, his way of dealing with things, the fact that he was a new kind of American politician. I'm not sure how much the country was at home with this new kind, but he was new and a whole new generation sort of pinned their hopes on his success.

Sevareid: Was he successful during his three years as President?

Lippmann: That is something nobody can answer today. This is the reason why any genuine historical judgment is quite impossible. We have yet to see how a lot of the things that he is identified with come out. For example, he may have brought to an end the threat, for the foreseeable future, of nuclear war, but it's awfully early to be sure that this is true. Then, he initiated certain things at home, such as a new fiscal policy, a really serious attack on the problem of Negro rights, civil rights, that President Johnson is now carrying on, and he was preparing the campaign against poverty. Until we know how those come out we won't know what historians will say.

Sevareid: Certainly his style, so-called, was very different. How important do you think this matter of style is in a chief executive?

Lippmann: I think it's very important. But this doesn't mean that there's only one style. I mean a man must be true to his own style, not to somebody else's style. The Kennedy style was something that the country had never seen before in a President.

Sevareid: What have been your own impressions of President Johnson's method of conducting this office?

Lippmann: My feeling about that is this: When President Kennedy was murdered the situation abroad and at home was in a state of crisis. His own policies were blocked at home and they were frustrated abroad. The country was very deeply and bitterly divided about him. There was sectional feeling. There was class feeling. There was racial feeling. President Johnson is by nature a healing man, a man who heals. That's been his function, his mission, in his first hundred days.

Sevareid: Are you saying, in effect, that while Johnson may not have the fervent phalanx of admirers in the country that Kennedy had he has fewer enemies?

Lippmann: Oh, very many fewer. And the country is far more united and at peace with itself, except over the issue of Negro rights, than it has been for a long time.

Sevareid: You attribute this to the accession of a new President?

"I feel...that the difficulty over Panama arose not over the words which were quarreled about but over the perhaps excessive fear that if a revised treaty is negotiated, as undoubtedly it will have to be sooner or later, it will be very difficult to pass it through the Senate."

Lippmann: I attribute it to the accession of President Johnson. Not any man who succeeded Kennedy could have done it. But this man's genius in politics, which he's tried out for fifteen years in the Senate, and thirty years in Washington, has been finding the point at which a consensus, an agreement, is possible. That's a very broad area that he takes in. The country feels this about him, somehow, and he has responded to it.

Sevareid: The President has done pretty well with the Congress. Perhaps better than Kennedy.

Lippmann: He's done extremely well. He's done, I think, what President Kennedy could not have done had he lived.

Sevareid: You felt a very few months ago that the Congress was almost conducting a sit-down.

Lippmann: Oh, I spoke before of the crisis that existed when Kennedy was killed. The Senate had deliberately brought the Kennedy administration to a standstill, and they wouldn't even appropriate, perhaps, the appropriation bill. That's as near an absolute confrontation as you can get in our system of government. Well, that's broken up, partly by the shock of the assassination and partly by the skill of President Johnson.

Sevareid: Every political leader has some flaws and faults. When you watch President Johnson at work do you detect any particular weaknesses that may catch up with him?

Lippmann: Well, I suppose, yes. It comes out of his background and experience. He is so much the product of the legislative branch of the government that his executive action is, and rightly most of the time, deeply attuned and extremely sensitive to what Congress wants. Now, you can't conduct foreign affairs wholly in that method. I feel, for example, that the difficulty over Panama arose not over the words which were quarreled about but over the perhaps excessive fear that if a revised treaty is negotiated, as undoubtedly it will have to be sooner or later, it will be very difficult to pass it through the Senate. I think President Johnson has done extremely well with

this problem, except now and then one sees, I think, an excessive deference to the prejudices — and what Senator Fulbright called the other day, the myths — which exist in the Senate.

Sevareid: Would it be a fair generalization at this point to say then that whether policies are wiser or not, at least the machinery is better oiled and is working better.

Lippmann: Well, the policies are the same. There's no difference in policies between the two Presidents. This should be known not as the Johnson administration, but as the Kennedy-Johnson administration. It is a continuation. Every important measure and every important policy continues from President Kennedy. He would have had to do what Johnson is going to have to do before he gets through — revise some of those policies. But they started as Kennedy policies.

Sevareid: So far this is more continuity than transition, is it?

Lippmann: This is continuity.

Sevareid: At some point President Johnson must have a Johnson stamp on all this, must he not?

Lippmann: But not for the sake of his pride or anything. Of course if he's re-elected and has a substantial majority, not a hairline majority such as Kennedy had, he will be able to do in a sense what Eisenhower was in a position to do when he came in. He was able to revise some of the old standards, old stances, old myths of his own party and of the Congress and of the country. And that's going to be Johnson's work if he's re-elected.

Sevareid: Are you one of those people who worry about the extreme pace of his personal activity, particularly in view of the fact that he has had one heart attack?

Lippmann: I'm going to leave that to his doctors and his wife. I don't think I'll answer that.

Sevareid: Are you willing to make any prediction about who will be the Republican nominee?

Lippmann: Oh, I can't make a prediction. I think it lies between Nixon and Lodge and conceivably William Scranton. The man I think has the greatest promise as a public man in the coming years is Scranton but he's not known. He's not experienced at all. If I were his campaign manager I'd run him for Vice President and get him well-known, even though he was beaten.

Sevareid: How do you account for the Lodge phenomenon? After all he's 10,000 miles away, saying nothing, and yet he's winning primaries.

Lippmann: There are a number of things to explain it. "Nature abhors a vacuum." "Absence makes the heart grow fonder."

Sevareid: Yes, but there's another old saying, "Out of sight, out of mind."

Lippmann: But Lodge is not out of sight, what with modern means of communication. He's very visible. Besides I think there's a genuine feeling that he is a moderate, that he belongs to the wing of the party that has to be dominant if it's ever going to win. It's the Eisenhower wing of the party, really.

Sevareid: Are there some romantic trappings in his present setting?

Lippmann: He's out there doing a hard job, which people admire — public service at considerable risk to his reputation and even to his self, physically, and all these things work in his favor.

Sevareid: What works against him?

Lippmann: The politicians who worked with him in 1960 don't think he made a good campaign and don't like him. I think the straight machine politicians don't want to nominate him. That's his greatest difficulty.

Sevareid: What about Mr. Nixon? Is he deeply entrenched in the affections of this party or is he rather shopworn by now?

Lippmann: Well, he's not entrenched in the affections of the party. His nomination would be the nomination of a caretaker for the party in a bad year. Nixon has, as a candidate, certain qualifications. He has a reputation for knowing a great deal about foreign affairs and his party will talk about foreign affairs a great deal. And he is an infighter. They undoubtedly will have to try to do something to weaken President Johnson's personal standing in the country. Nixon is more willing to do it than almost any candidate.

Sevareid: Do you think that Goldwater and Rockefeller have pretty well run their course?

Lippmann: I think they've run their course.

Sevareid: What's the trouble with Governor Rockefeller? He's had a lot of federal government experience, he's been Governor of the biggest state in the country. Why hasn't he done better in this campaign?

Lippmann: Apart from the problems of his private life and his marriage, he was the man best suited by background and training to seize the middle ground for the Republicans but he hasn't done it. He has conducted a campaign in which he never quite knows whether he's trying to be like Senator Goldwater or whether he's trying to be not like him. He has underestimated the American voter, which I think is what the New Hampshire primary vote shows. That's probably the most dangerous thing a politician can do. He's tried to get down to a level which is

below the level of the people who really make opinion and decide elections and they don't want to be talked down to. They know he's talking down. They know that Rockefeller isn't as folksy and palsy-walsy as he says he is. This has been, I think, fatal to his campaign. He's done what a really good politician cannot do — he's stooped to conquer and he's not conquering.

Sevareid: About a year ago in one of our discussions you said, I think, that perhaps the Republicans ought to nominate Mr. Goldwater and put to a test, finally, an idea that has persisted in the party at least since Taft's time — that if you nominated what they call a real Republican he could win. That you would bring out a lot of voters who normally don't come out. Have you changed your feeling about this?

Lippmann: Oh, yes. I wasn't really anxious to have Goldwater a candidate but I thought, as against John F. Kennedy, it might have cleared the air very much. The real objection to nominating Goldwater is that it would wreck the Republican party for maybe two presidential elections. It would put the party in the control of a far-out extremist wing which never can win in this country. There aren't the votes there. New Hampshire was a good measure of this. Senator Goldwater got less than twenty-five percent of its vote. I think that with Kennedy's death and with the very fragile character of Goldwater's support once he was exposed in front of television and in public meetings, that the unsuitability of his candidacy has become so evident that I don't think we need the test.

Sevareid: Do you wish to speculate about who might have the best chance on the Republican side?

Lippmann: I wouldn't say that any of the candidates we hear about has a much better chance than any other one. The Republican problem is to rebuild their party, which is in very bad condition due to their division between the far right and the moderates.

Sevareid: Is it a terribly important question just whom the Democrats nominate for Vice President?

Lippmann: My feeling is the President Johnson's position is unique in that he cannot be helped by anybody who is named as a possible candidate.

Sevareid: Which of the various gentlemen mentioned for Vice President would be the greatest help to President Johnson?

Lippmann: That's not a good question, Eric, because I'm not that kind of a political dopest.

Sevareid: You said that nobody who is now named would be of great help. I don't quite understand you.

Lippmann: I mean that Johnson can win with one of the people mentioned and he won't win more because he has one of them on the ticket than if he didn't have them.

Now, there are choices among them as to who would make the best President. That is the real consideration in this case. That's the point I'm trying to make. For Johnson the only real consideration is who would be a good successor.

Sevareid: Well, since I'm not talking to the President of the United States, but to Walter Lippmann, who do you think would be the best Vice Presidential candidate?

Lippmann: It lies between two men in my mind — Senator Humphrey and Secretary McNamara. I think we'll have to wait a little longer to see how McNamara makes out in Vietnam and how Humphrey makes out in civil rights before we need come to any conclusion.

Sevareid: McNamara as a Vice Presidential candidate presents an interesting problem. He's a Republican, isn't he?

Lippmann: I suppose he was a Republican but, of course, that's the way the Kennedy administration was constructed — putting Republicans in key points. It was an attempt on Kennedy's part to create something like a coalition government.

Sevareid: You don't think that McNamara's party identification would present a real problem at a convention?

Lippmann: I suppose there'll be Democratic politicians who may object but I wouldn't think it would make any difference if President Johnson decided that McNamara is the man he wanted.

Sevareid: You haven't mentioned among possible Vice Presidential candidates Attorney General Robert Kennedy. Do you think he's going to play a part in this?

Lippmann: Well, he'll play a part. He's a political power in the Democratic party, but I don't see any reason why he should be nominated for Vice President.

Sevareid: You make it sound as though President Johnson would be a very hard man to defeat next fall.

Lippmann: I wouldn't like to have the job of trying to defeat him. Of course, if things go very sour and we have an economic breakdown or some catastrophe abroad, which nobody can foresee today, everything said today would change. It's conceivable that something terrible will happen and that it would be easy for a Republican to win. But it isn't easy today and I think all Republicans know that.

Sevareid: If something were to happen that really made trouble for President Johnson wouldn't it almost have to be something of a domestic nature? Foreign affairs, unless they're totally catastrophic, normally haven't affected incumbents so much, have they?

Lippmann: I agree. As long as the country is united and trusts the President he can suffer a great many setbacks abroad and not necessarily lose by it at all. After all, President Eisenhower accepted a good deal less than a

The Walter Lippmann Memorial Fund Drive

We are pleased to report that the Walter Lippmann Memorial Fund Drive is approaching the half-way mark. Nearly \$200,000 in contributions and pledges have been received as the drive continues towards the goal of \$400,000.

Response from the media, Nieman alumni/ae, and friends and admirers of Walter Lippmann is especially encouraging, as individuals — singly and collectively — seek to honor the memory of this man and, at the same time, celebrate his contributions to the field of journalism.

The fund drive was officially launched on September 15, 1977, when President Derek C. Bok of Harvard University announced a grant of \$100,000 to the Nieman Foundation for Journalism in memory of Walter Lippmann. The grant, to be matched by external donations, was made to inaugurate the special fund drive. However, the drive seeks a goal of \$400,000 beyond the original grant with the monies to be used for the renovation and full endowment of the new Nieman headquarters, now called Walter Lippmann House.

Readers who wish to participate in this unique memorial to Walter Lippmann, journalist and statesman, should make their checks payable to the Nieman Foundation and forward to:

Walter Lippmann Memorial Fund
Nieman Foundation for Journalism
Harvard University
One Francis Avenue
Cambridge, MA 02138

Contributions are tax deductible.

victory in Korea. That was certainly a peace without victory if ever there was one. And the people liked it — they were really glad it was over. It didn't hurt him politically.

Sevareid: Do you think it might not be possible that the civil rights demonstrations in the streets of this country this spring and summer might not get out of hand and provoke a reaction among white people to the extent that President Johnson could really be hurt next November?

Lippmann: The whole civil rights affair — the bill and

the situation which it springs from — are explosive under our society. That's one of the catastrophes I had in mind when I said something terrible might happen. Yes, it's conceivable. It's conceivable that a long filibuster over the civil rights bill will produce race riots in which whites, in the North as well as the South, will join. Yes, it's possible.

Sevareid: Do you think of the filibuster as a legitimate form of check and balance against the will of the majority?

Lippmann: I've always defended the filibuster or opposed easy cloture. I've always opposed them when the issue was one which would be better dealt with if you could get the consent of the minority. I don't want to override Southerners. I don't want to override the South, for example, by a fifty-one percent majority. On the other hand, I'm sure we've reached a point where holding up the civil rights bill indefinitely is intolerable. You can't have filibusters in time of war. You can't have a filibuster which denies this country the right to promote the internal peace of this country, which is what the civil rights measure is about. So I think that after they've had a good, long talk about it (it shouldn't be hurried) I'd like to see a cloture passed, if that is necessary, but I hope none will be. The value of the filibuster is that in a crisis it could be a very great defense of liberty in this country.

Sevareid: There seems to be nothing of a mighty and dramatic nature that the United States can do abroad now. We have reached a period of a great slowing down of the cataclysmic events we've lived with. What is the task of this country? A great country must have some great enterprise. What ought it to be? I presume it's here at home, is it not?

Lippmann: Yes, it is. We had to fight World War II. We had to fight the Cold War. We had to conduct the race of armaments. We had to nullify and neutralize Soviet nuclear power and we've done that. We've succeeded. We're out from under a terrible threat, but doing all this has been frightfully costly. It has cost over half the federal budget. It has also cost the time and energy and emotional concern of our people for twenty years. The result is that we've had to neglect the development of our vast country. And the result is seen in the condition of our schools, in the condition of our cities, in the backwardness of our transportation system, railroad transportation, and in a lot of other things. Now that the critical danger is past we can turn our attention to our own affairs without neglecting our responsibilities elsewhere.

(Permission to reprint this section of the book, *Conversations With Eric Sevareid*, granted by Public Affairs Press, Washington, D.C.)

Special Focus

The International Press

Rosemary Righter

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For the Third World

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From the Cairo Meeting

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Out of Jail and
Back in the Newsroom

Is Western-Style Journalism Appropriate to the Third World?

By Rosemary Righter

The first thing we must recognise is, I believe, that the view that Western-style journalism is not appropriate for Third World countries is very widely held, and is gaining ground. The second is that this view is becoming systematised. Governments in the past argued that developing societies are too vulnerable to withstand the probing implicit in Western reporting. They still use that argument. But they are now attacking the Western model as undesirable in itself. And they are making this the cornerstone of national policies.

If we think we are familiar with the terms of today's debate, it is because we see it as a well-trodden area of government-press relations. Governments from Washington to Lagos, from London to Jakarta, invoke the "national interest" to enforce silence. It is an instinct which comes naturally to governments, and Western-style journalism opposes that instinct on its home ground and everywhere else. There are differences: Western governments have learned to invoke the national interest rarely; and when they believe they have the backing of public support, many Third World governments treat public support as a manufacturable item. And it is also more plausible for Third World governments to argue that developing societies have more urgent priorities than protecting the right to free and open dissent. But everywhere that some

form of Western-style journalism operates, governments make the laws; and the press "reminds the powers that be, corrupt and venal as they always are, of the forces they have to control."

The line of attack which claims that Western journalism is a bad model, regardless of whether or not developing societies can "afford" it, cuts this familiar ground from under us. Its supporters argue as follows. They do not seek to block the free flow of information, but to make it genuinely free — free of the domination exercised by the powerful few, free of "alien" values, free — to quote a non-aligned country's politician — "to defend the interests of society as a whole, and the rights of entire peoples." Free of manipulations of the market, and thus able to be used as the lynchpin of a truly independent, new social order.

There is an organised campaign under way to promote this view among policy-makers, to give it international respectability, and to help governments develop the techniques and the ideological framework for a comprehensive revision of communications along these lines. The principal forces behind the campaign are UNESCO, which since 1970 has encouraged national communications policies as an integral part of development planning, government alliances which naturally see the "decolonisation" of information as a potent device for asserting the primacy of official policy over tastes and opinions; and a well-hooked-up network of private or semi-private organisations which influence both.

This last group of intellectuals and lobbying groups resorts to conspiracy theory. The concept of the free flow of information, they argue, is a mask for the Western defence of its commercial power. It is incompatible with

Rosemary Righter, The (London) Sunday Times in Paris, delivered the above speech in March at the 27th General Assembly of the International Press Institute, Canberra, Australia.

cultural diversity and sovereign independence. The international press is a servant of the Western military/industrial complex, which perpetuates the global *status quo* by exposing developing societies to "inappropriate" patterns of consumption, values and life-styles. Where cultural independence and the "open society" clash, therefore, priority must be given to the protection of the people.

The basic paternalism of such an approach — and the underlying contempt for the ability of people to protect themselves — is attractive to governments. The more so, as it is argued that the only defence against Western "cultural aggression" is to place news within the national ideological framework, using information as a national resource, a tool of diplomacy and Third World solidarity, and as a weapon in the struggle for a New International Economic Order. This exercise in social engineering must, to be effective, cover everything from village chat to satellites, in a "total approach" to all forms of communication.

These arguments are shot through with contradictions. That is not the point. What matters is that they are influencing policy, present and future. The Mexican government announces that it intends to "nationalise public opinion"; UNESCO, that the Commission presided

"As the West drags its feet over the North-South negotiations for a New International Economic Order, frustrated Third World governments become increasingly united in their rejection of Western economic models."

over by Mr. MacBride will adopt a "total approach" to communications. [Editor's note: Sean MacBride, Chairman of the new UNESCO International Commission for the Study of Communication Problems, delivered the keynote address, "The Right to Information," on March 7th.] And the use of news as a national resource suggests, to an increasing number of governments, that society must regulate its import, export, and internal consumption.

The campaign takes its strength from the real discrepancies between the evolving international political situation, and the Western attachment to free markets and free opinions. You heard Mr. MacBride yesterday state

the case. He rightly emphasised that human rights *include* freedom from hunger and economic oppression; I would reply only that at the United Nations in December, a resolution was passed by the Committee which deals with human rights, which placed those freedoms *ahead* of civil and political rights. What I might call the collectivisation of human rights is part of what we increasingly live with, when we consider the situation of the press. As the West drags its feet over the North-South negotiations for a New International Economic Order, frustrated Third World governments become increasingly united in their rejection of Western economic models. And with the search for an alternative form of development, and for self-reliance, goes the rejection of social values which the Western style of journalism exists to protect.

UNESCO has put this campaign on the political map. Since 1970, its long-term strategy has been — I quote — "to strengthen national sovereignty in all its aspects, particularly with regard to culture." What does UNESCO mean by this? To quote from the same document, "When the mass communications media are used for the transmission of traditional values...they can be an invaluable instrument...When they are used consistently to convey information based on alien forms of behaviour and value systems, they deform the national character." UNESCO's Director-General acknowledges that "rationalising" communications "carries with it a danger to freedom of expression." He replies that development requires "the rectification of certain ill-defined or irrational situations."

We have all been concerned by the Draft Declaration which has been redrafted since the last UNESCO conference in 1976, and which will be sent out by the Director-General within the next fortnight. This new version will not help the press anywhere; but it is something of a sheep in wolf's clothing as it now stands. I believe that placing too much emphasis on it in its latest form will be counter-productive. The Draft Declaration on Race and Racial Prejudice, about which there has been much less fuss, is in fact a far more constricting document. The best thing that could happen — for UNESCO as well as the press — would be for a member government to suggest that the new Draft has become an irrelevance, with the setting up of the International Commission, and could properly be abandoned on those grounds. In any case, Declarations represent the passive face of UNESCO; although UNESCO has selected the drafting teams, and used its power to toughen drafts in the past, the Secretariat is here in a real sense simply carrying out a specific mandate from member states.

This is simply not true of the broad sweep of UNESCO's policies on communications. UNESCO officials

are fond of saying that the Secretariat itself has no policies; but this, on the evidence, is part of the necessary hypocrisy of international organisations. UNESCO can and does initiate.

What is it initiating? And why has UNESCO transformed its role in communications from that of useful technical assistant to that of architect and chief engineer of national policies which aim at aligning the content of information with governmental development programmes? Why does it urge meetings of experts — I quote — “to think a great deal about news values... not only what you think is important to people in your country, but what content, what messages you would find relevant?” Why does its Regional Communications Adviser for Latin America say that “a free information system... rejects the fallacious criteria of ‘objectivity’” or that a journalist’s “commitment to the will for liberation of under-developed peoples must be total?” UNESCO’s answer is partly that as an organisation of the United Nations, it has a duty to promote the New International Economic Order, and that development is obviously such an urgent priority that the undoubted influence of the media must be mobilised behind it.

And UNESCO also argues that in encouraging governments to formulate communications policies, it is telling them nothing they don’t already know about controlling the press. And again, that UNESCO’s advice lies within strategic choices, made by governments and essentially political, about the kind of press they want. Its role is therefore neutral in the sense that it merely tells them how to implement that strategy efficiently. Finally, it argues that communications are not necessarily governmental, in spite of the strategic role of political choice. But all UNESCO’s research into access and participation does not alter the fact that it sits — and must sit — on the government’s side of the desk. It is also a fact that most UNESCO officials firmly believe that poor countries require a guided press.

UNESCO’s active promotion of communications as a vehicle for the expression of national sovereignty and “social cohesiveness” goes with its emphasis on the “balance flow” of news. Nairobi was in no real sense a setback to these grand designs: remember that at the end of that conference, Mr. M’Bow said that “we can now speak of a new order in communications.” And the UNESCO Research Programme for 1978/9 explicitly aligns itself with Third World governments, by calling for “the establishment of a New International Information Order.” Some of this research will lead — I quote, although the plan has not yet been finalised — “to the development of principles for international media distribution and news exchanges, including legal and

economic aspects.” Internal discussions are in progress on “establishing an intergovernmental committee on the free flow of information.”

Built into the “developmental approach” adopted by UNESCO are three things which must concern us. First, the risk that the state becomes the arbiter of what “uses” of the media best serve development. Second, the principle that the international flow of the news should be based on respect for sovereignty and cultural diversity. Third, that the “total approach” to communications not only merges the functions of government information, education, and news; but provides an easy formula for converting truth into “appropriate truth — the truth that fits a society.” In the conflict which arises between national sovereignty and the “free exchange of ideas and knowledge” which UNESCO’s Constitution obliges it to promote, UNESCO is veering towards a cultural protectionism which makes for a parochial world, even where governments do not use such arguments to censor the flow of information.

UNESCO’s involvement in communications for nation-building conditions and also reflects the important shifts in Third World politics which are altering the relationship of governments to society, and the individual to government. The issue of communications is now firmly on the agenda of the United Nations for the 1978 session, in a resolution which commends UNESCO’s pioneering role, and calls for a debate on “Cooperation and assistance in the application and improvement of mass communications for social progress and development.” The issue of “freedom of information” will also be debated. And UNESCO’s Director General has been asked to make a formal report on its activities.

The battle-ground is now squarely in the political arena, linked to the demands for a New International

“And we need to take the stigma of ‘Westernism’ out of Western-style journalism.”

Economic Order. The issue is part of the growing bitterness which imperils North-South relations. To meet it, journalists will need to reach governments, on an international basis; to lobby them, and where they can to provide coordinated and practical demonstrations of the value of the free flow of information. And we need to take the stigma of “Westernism” out of Western-style journalism. Can we do all this and have time to write for our readers? If not, we shall have less and less to write about.

Letter from Cairo

By Bernard Rubin

A significant North-South dialogue on current issues relevant to *International News Media and the Developing World: Projects for Cooperation*, took place in Cairo, Egypt recently. This meeting was the second in a series initiated by the Fletcher School on the subject. At a New York City conference last year it was decided that there was a need to provide more background data on international news dissemination and its relationships to developing world problems and aspirations. Thus, the Cairo assembly was organized around specially prepared research reports.

Before dwelling on the proceedings in Cairo a few comments on other background factors are in order. At the UNESCO meeting in Nairobi, Kenya, in 1976 the Soviet Union was supporting a resolution which included the phrase, "states are responsible for the activities in the international sphere of all mass media under their jurisdiction." It is not difficult to understand why the Soviets, and some other countries, would like to get UNESCO tilted in favor of controls by individual governments over all news media operating within national borders. The resolution was not adopted, but it was accepted as a most dangerous signal by all those in favor of the freest possible flow of news.

Prior to the Nairobi debate, in the previous July, 58 developing countries had met in New Delhi, India and

organized a pool of their nationally owned or controlled press agencies. The plan behind the new, so-called "non-aligned" pool was to give emphasis to governmentally supplied news from each nation and to look to the replacement of reports provided by the major Western press services — for example, Agence France-Presse, the Associated Press, United Press International and Reuters.

The so-called "New World Information Order" is being pursued by UNESCO. A month after the 1976 New Delhi meeting, Third World government officials met in Colombo, Sri Lanka, to activate the non-aligned news pool.

By the term "non-aligned," some critics of the Western press services mean to convey a suspicion about what is regarded as objective reporting in the United States, Europe, and other democratic centers of technology. Such critics do not want to be aligned with press services providing stories thought to contain dangerous or misleading information about the developing countries. Alleged distortions of internal affairs of the developing lands are the psychological base for attempts to curtail the free flow of international information.

Among the charges hurled at the meetings referred to (in Nairobi, New Delhi, and Colombo and at another UNESCO conference in San Jose, Costa Rica in 1976) were these:

- a) the developing countries are passive recipients of information that was biased or distorted or inadequate;
- b) freedom of information as interpreted by the West is either a remnant of 19th century liberalism (held not to be relevant to developing nations problems), or an excuse for the domination of international news by capitalistic organizations;

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c) development requirements set by governments were being jeopardized because of prejudiced, unfriendly or inaccurate reporting;

d) Western press services support cultural imperialism;

e) Western press services misrepresent the views of leaders of developing nations and distort their national programs and policies;

f) some reporting is fundamentally dangerous in that correspondents from the West have spread rumors about inter-community relations within nations or have concentrated on the sensational;

g) reporting by foreign correspondents often superimposes the biases of the technological powers upon the events in the developing world.

Taken from the points of view of the directors and correspondents of the West's leading independent press services and of their governments, there appears to be a basic threat posed to freedom of the press. Worries about the increased political determinism of UNESCO not necessarily resulting in positions accepted by Washington, London, Bonn, or Paris (etc.) make many thoughtful analysts in the so-called First World convinced that great problems are in prospect if the Nairobi resolution sentiments prevail. To illustrate, it is feared that there could be:

a) drastic curtailments of the right of newspeople to cover stories;

b) domination of all international news by some governments with censorship on virtually all information about domestic or foreign developments;

c) a tremendous loss of information available to citizens of the more developed, technological states;

d) reduction — or in some cases elimination — of the movement of films, television programs, literature of all categories, scientific, technological or commercial information;

e) a threat to international business;

f) a threat to much international travel if trends toward isolation of countries in the developing world were to follow the Nairobi theme.

With such prospects for polarization implicit in the differing views on the 1976 Nairobi resolution and subsequent meetings, it appears that much understanding will be needed to allay the fears of many Third World leaders, and to gain their support for the free flow of information based upon the standards of Western nations and their independent press services. We all have to look objectively to examine the complaints about: sensationalism; distortion; emphasis on Western needs; concentration on stories which do not relate to developmental ambitions in the cultural, commercial, industrial or

political spheres; bias. So-called "key hole" reporting and insistence upon encapsulating complicated and continuing stories also deserve critical evaluation.

Under the agreed upon rules for the Cairo conference, no formal resolutions were allowed. The basic purpose of the meeting was to facilitate presentations of essentially scholarly papers which provided the bases for discussions of whatever social, economic, political or professional

"So-called 'key hole' reporting and insistence upon encapsulating complicated and continuing stories also deserve critical evaluation."

communications problems interested the delegates. Most of the prepared papers were written by Americans. At future sessions one looks for much greater participation by developing world representatives in the research phases. The saving grace was that almost all of the papers were traditional research information analyses of data designed to give delegates facts about such subjects as histories of the First and Third Worlds' press services, costs of information transmissions between nations via the technology now generally available, prospects for the economically acceptable uses of new or projected transmissions systems (satellites, etc.). There was one significant paper aimed at a proposed new way of covering non-political developing world stories, by Roger Tatarian.

Among the significant research papers was one by Dr. Gehan Rachty of the Faculty of Mass Communications of Cairo University on "Foreign News in Nine Arab Countries" (Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Qatar, United Arab Emirates and Yemen Democratic Republic, Algeria, Iraq and Syria; Dr. Rachty studied (with some incomplete data relative to Lebanon and Algeria due to non-receipt of newspapers) the following newspapers: Egypt-*Al-Ahram*; Jordan-*Al-Dustur*; Lebanon-*Al-Anwar*; Qatar-*Al-Arab*; United Arab Emirates-*Al-Wehdah*; Yemen Democratic Republic-*Al-Thawra*; Algeria-*Al-Shaab*; Iraq-*Al-Thawra*; Syria-*Al-Baath*). She found that (among other research observations relating to her test period of December 5, 6, 7, 13 and 15, 1977), "Heavy emphasis is placed on news from and about Arab states, 43.6 percent; 36.4 percent of the news was about Western countries, Japan and Israel; 14.9 percent of the items were about developing countries; and only 4.9 percent about Communist countries (U.S.S.R., East Europe and China)."

Also, "There is heavier reliance on news from

Western News Agencies — 46.1 percent of the sources of news were Western. Arab news agencies were the source of 26 percent of the news. However, 25.8 percent of the news published in the Arab newspapers appeared without a source. It is probable that the source of some of these items is Western agencies or Western newspapers and radio stations."

That indefatigable researcher Wilbur Schramm, now at the Chinese University of Hong Kong, provided an extensive background report, resulting from a team's investigation which he directed, on "International News Wires and Third World News in Asia." Douglas Boyd of the University of Delaware faculty offered results of "An Analysis of Ten International Radio News Broadcasts in English to Africa." Both the Schramm and Boyd reports were based on test periods in 1977.

Ithiel de Sola Pool of M.I.T. presented a paper (co-authored with Stephen Dizard) on "International Telecommunications and the Requirements of News Services" which was a major contribution to the delegates' understanding of the more technical aspects of news transmission in the world today. Edward T. Pinch of the International Communications Agency offered "A Brief Study of News Patterns on Sixteen Third World Countries."

If there was any complaint at the New York meeting in 1977 that there wasn't sufficient hard data, there were few at the Cairo conference who took that view. Representatives of all the participating countries dutifully went back to their rooms at the Shepherds or the Nile hotels and studied hard to keep up with all the material available.

As to comments about discussions at the plenary sessions and workshops, the atmosphere at the Cairo conference encouraged consultation rather than confrontation. The trove of research reports, the decision to disallow formal resolutions, and the grace of our Egyptian hosts were factors. In addition, the conference was primarily an American-Egyptian inspiration. All of this tended to encourage the Third World delegates to join their colleagues in downplaying political polemics. Certainly, Nairobi 1976 was in everybody's mind, but not dominant. The major undercurrent was the desire for dialogue to see whether Third World countries and the West (as represented by the U.S., Great Britain, Japan, etc.) had some good rebuttals to the resolution pushed by the Soviets at Nairobi and to the threat to objective reporting it represents.

Many of the really penetrating points made at Cairo were made by Third World editors, reporters and government officials. For example, the leadership and wisdom of James Kangwana, the Director of the Kenya Broadcasting Service, was admired. That gallant and courageous

Convening in Cairo...

The April 2-5 conference was hosted by the Murrow Center of Public Diplomacy of the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy at Tufts University, in partnership with the Middle East News Agency and the Faculty of Mass Communication of Cairo University.

The key organizer, Philip C. Horton, Director of the Edward R. Murrow Center of Public Diplomacy, Tufts University, was prevented by illness from attending. His colleague, Hewson A. Ryan, Edward R. Murrow Professor of Public Diplomacy, Ambassador-in-Residence at the Fletcher School, Tufts University, took up the administrative chores for the American group about ten days before the delegates convened in Cairo. On the Egyptian side, the co-hosts with Ryan were Mohamed Abdel Gawad, Chairman of MENA and Dr. Khalil Sabat, the Dean at Cairo University. Roger Tatarian, former editor and vice president of United Press International and presently journalism professor at the Fresno campus of the California State University, also represented Philip Horton.

Speaking for Third World interests were prominent media and government officials from 32 countries in Latin America, Africa and Asia. UNESCO was represented by Asher DeLeon, Executive Secretary of its International Commission for the Study of Communications Problems.

Within the contingent, encompassing a range of American concerns, were executives and correspondents from such organizations as the Ford Foundation, American Broadcasting Company, Freedom House, Associated Press, Hearst Newspapers, Boston's *Herald American* and Boston *Globe* newspapers, Time and the International Communication Agency. There was also a strong scholastic group of specialists in communications and national development studies: Wilbur Schramm, Ithiel de Sola Pool, Fred Yu, Alex Edelstein, Stanley Harnis, Rosemarie Rogers. To underscore the importance of the meeting to foreign policy influentials in Washington, D.C., the White House, Department of State, and the Senate's Committee on Foreign Relations were also represented.

practitioner from India, George Verghese (former Editor of the *Hindustan Times*), made a deep impression on all who know recent Indian history.

To mention any delegate by name is somewhat unfair because all were of such high caliber. With that said, let

"Many of the really penetrating points made at Cairo were made by Third World editors, reporters and government officials."

me go on to remember the good points of discussion in informal and formal sessions made by such persons as Guido Gernandez (*La Nacion* — Costa Rica); Chanchal Sarkar (Press Institute of India) [Editor's note: Nieman Fellow '61]; Salama Ahmed Salama (Senior Editor, *Al Ahram* — Cairo, Egypt); D.M. Sunardi (*Barita Yuda* — Indonesia); J. Clement Jones (Press Freedom Committee, Commonwealth Press Union — England); Flora Lewis (European Correspondent, *The New York Times*); Enrique Santos (*El Tiempo* — Bogota, Colombia); Mohamed Abdel Gawad (MENA — Egypt) and Khalil Sabat (Cairo University); Edward Bear (Newsweek); William G. Harley (U.S. National Commission for UNESCO); Stanley Swinton (Associated Press); Davis Taylor (Boston *Globe* — U.S.); Dwight Sargent (*Herald American* — U.S.) [Editor's note: Nieman Fellow '51]; Joseph Kingsbury Smith (Hearst Newspapers — U.S.); Sayed Mohammed Ali (Press Foundation of Asia — Philippines); Kunio Shimizu (*Sankei Shimbun* — Japan); Amadon Gaye (*Le Soleil* — Senegal); V.O. Adefela (Nigerian News Agency); E. Wickremasinge (Sri Lanka).

At times opinions differed strongly. For example, when the Nigerian delegate explained how the new Nigerian News Agency (NAN) would operate when fully in business, one of his points aroused considerable reaction. He stated that the need for foreign correspondents would diminish greatly, or even disappear, once NAN got into high gear and visas might be hard to obtain. Internal stories about development and other subjects, he suggested, could better be handled by Nigerians. Outsiders, in his view, do not know enough about the country's culture, politics, or development. Flora Lewis of *The New York Times*' Paris bureau and others responded with arguments in favor of keeping travel and assignment opportunities as open as possible for correspondents of all nations.

Discussions about the intentions of UNESCO as it worked on the "New Information Order" studies brought

mixed reactions. Asher DeLeon presented his views on the objectives of the International Commission for the study of Communications Problems and responded to inquiries such as whether the composition of the membership of the Commission didn't act to tilt the group away from most common sentiments in Latin America.

The issue of distorted news reports came up regularly during the discussions. At one of the workshops, some Third World delegates presented their favorite horror stories to illustrate the problem.

Also discussed at length were the matters of incompleteness of reporting about developing countries and journalistic preoccupations with superficial political news and news of wars, disasters, or sensational events. It was held that development stories were not being reported and that more work should be done, both by indigenous reporters and foreign press correspondents and services, to bring the most important information out. There appeared to be general agreement on the need to get beyond the common items about politicians and their doings into more vital reportage about economic planning, agricultural approaches, housing, finance, energy, ecology and similarly basic subjects. The problem and the need were accepted but no magic formula resulted from the discussion. This alleged neglect of the Third World by the First World press is a continuous annoyance in developing countries.

Third World media people are sensitive to what they term negative news reporting. Many feel that any internationally moved story which shows a flaw in a developing society is essentially negative. A positive story, by the same reasoning, is one that enhances the image of governors or suggests the worth of their projects. Most delegates to the Cairo conference accepted the fact of this sensitivity as a problem that professional media people will have to live with. There was a complaint that a recent story appearing in the U.S. about the hectic traffic of Cairo was incomplete and slanted. Another delegate felt that the world consistently had the impression from news reports that Bangladesh was without sufficient food supplies for its people. He observed that there was presently a glut and the government's problem was to keep the price of rice high enough for the farmers by modifying plantings downward. Another delegate suggested that the late civil war in his country was started by a misleading foreign press service report which spread the false rumor that there was inter-community strife within the nation.

On the central question of developmental news the conferees got beyond the recitation of horror stories about press reporting of the past.

Roger Tatarian presented a proposal for a "Multi-national News Pool" — a joint venture by news agencies

of the developed and developing countries. By his plan he aimed at better coverage in Third and First World press organs.

A key feature of the Tatarian plan for the multi-national news pool is that it would concentrate on information outside of the daily "hard" news area, i.e., on industrial, cultural, social and economic reports.

Another aspect is that the new pool would supplement existing services. Those participating would come from such organizations as the Non-aligned News Pool and by press services and groups represented by the World Free Press Development Committee.

There would be a directorate of 12 members representing North and South equally. He suggested that at the start, media professionals to represent the South, for example, might come from Egypt, India, Mexico, Kenya, Nigeria and the Philippines. The North might be represented by Sweden, Japan, West Germany, the United States, Great Britain and France.

The reportorial corps could be drawn from experienced correspondents loaned to the pool for at least a year by major newspapers and press agencies. Their salaries would be paid by their regular employer as contributions to the plan. Such organizations would be allowed to provide the services of only one of their regular employees. For the beginning stage, Tatarian proposes a corps of eight to ten reporters from each of the two groups, North and South.

The pool's correspondents would work under the direction of the Directorate. Each correspondent would be based in one country and be asked to concentrate on a single nation or on several nations. No correspondent would be allowed to work for the pool in his native country.

A principal means of delivery to the central distribution office maintained by the Directorate would be air mail. In addition, the four big Western press agencies would use their facilities to move stories when, on limited occasions, air mail was not speedy enough.

Tatarian anticipates that once the new pool is in operation, adequate financing could be secured from participating countries, with limits set to avoid dominance by any single supporting sponsor. Whenever possible private group funding would be sought.

The new Multinational Pool would serve as a needed central clearing house and in many ways would facilitate cooperation between Third and First World journalists.

Tatarian's basic goal is to have such a pool promote objective and fair reportage and to encourage open access to news, internationally.

There was widespread interest in and support for the Tatarian proposal and much commentary about it. One Third World delegate supported the concept but was

worried that the plan might be "placing the cart before the horse" in that definitions for "developmental journalism," "development journalism," and "communications for development" were not firm yet.

At a workshop on research into communications problems and processes in or affecting Third World Countries, three types of media research were urged: 1) gatekeepers and news values; 2) the audience; 3) economic and technical organization of circulating news, particularly with reference to new developments and opportunities for news exchanges in the Third World.

* * * * *

What are the outcomes of this Cairo conference? First, much better understanding of existing problems resulted. The absence of political showmanship or posturing was refreshing. Professional newspeople, government officials and scholars of communications processes compared notes and thoughtfully appraised each other's viewpoints or more formal proposals.

Our Egyptian hosts were extremely considerate and provided all in their power to make our long sessions pleasant. The friendship of the people of Cairo was noted in many, many ways by each delegate.

Before we began the first session, we took advantage of a morning's "free time" and went to the Pyramids. Some of us ventured into the great Pyramid and even climbed through a narrow shaft to the burial room near the top. At that ancient spot, we reflected upon the efforts of all people to live in peace and harmony.

On the third day of the conference we met with President Sadat at his Palace. The press conference was long and rewarding. In one form or another all the questions were about the current Mid-East crisis. After we left, I felt a sudden personal regret that we had not asked the President about a developmental story.

Every morning of our conference I had purchased a copy of *The Egyptian Gazette*. On April 2 the headlines were "Sadat Urges Development of Resources in New Valley. President emphasizes need to conquer desert." Next day, "Sadat: We are Now Embarking on Green Revolution." On April 4, "Sadat: Egypt's Agricultural Future Lies in New Valley."

Despite the length of our press conference, and despite the fact that we knew Sadat had been in the New Valley while we met in Cairo and were discussing the urgent need to engender more development news — none of us had the presence of mind to ask him a question on this most important agricultural effort of Egypt. One excuse! We were all so fascinated by Egypt and so interested in hearing Sadat that we succumbed to the rapture of the Nile.

The Restrictive Side of Vietnam

By Richard Dudman

HONG KONG -- An American reporter on assignment in Vietnam these days is made to feel like a cross between an honored guest and a prisoner of war.

Elements of both sorts of treatment were encountered last fall in a four-week tour of both North and South Vietnam, the first by an American newsman since the Communist victory in 1975.

The experience seems worth recounting, despite an admonition often to Post-Dispatch reporters by Raymond L. Crowley as city editor and later as managing editor: "The reader is not interested in hearing about the difficulties of the field."

Getting into Vietnam in the first place was the greatest difficulty of all. Word came that a visa had been authorized only after two and one half years of nagging, starting with a cabled request to the Provisional Revolutionary Government of South Vietnam in early April, 1975, when it was clear that the Saigon government was collapsing.

There followed a series of cablegrams, letters and other messages to officials in Hanoi, sometimes sent directly, sometimes carried by acquaintances who were on their way to Vietnam or one of its embassies.

The first response, an indirect one, came last June through an intermediary. He said that a Vietnamese official had told him the government was thinking of admitting one or more American correspondents and had asked him to discuss some names. He said he had submitted mine and that of a network reporter.

Mr. Dudman, chief Washington correspondent of the St. Louis Post-Dispatch, was the first American reporter to visit Vietnam since the Communist victory in 1975. He was a Nieman Fellow in the Class of '54.

I immediately wrote to Hanoi, outlining a possible tour and naming officials I would hope to interview. It was an ambitious set of requests which I wrote, and would require at least three weeks to complete. I added that the impact of the resultant articles would be enhanced if they were exclusive.

There was only silence from Hanoi, but on September 10, an American intermediary called me to say that Vietnam had authorized a three-week visa and I should call the Vietnamese mission at the United Nations.

The word there was that I could pick up the visa anywhere in the world whenever I liked. How about Paris or Stockholm? Dacca or Vientiane would be more convenient, I was told. Visas to Bangladesh and Laos are not the easiest thing to get, but the Laotian Embassy eventually provided a transit visa.

Four weeks is about right for an assignment in Vietnam. The first week was full of welcomes, assurances and almost oppressive hospitality. The waitresses at the Thong Nhat (reunification) Hotel had to be instructed forcefully that I was a paying guest and must be permitted to sign meal checks.

In the second and third weeks, the restrictions and frustrations of working as a reporter in present-day Vietnam began appearing. Sometimes it seemed doubtful that enough hard information could be gathered to make the trip worthwhile.

By the fourth week, however, my notebooks had accumulated so many observations, anecdotes and details that there could be no doubt that the assignment would be fruitful. And it seemed evident that, for all their restrictions and rigidities, the Vietnamese were trying to relax and really wanted an opening to the United States, including normal diplomatic, economic and cultural relations.

There was a hint the first day that all would not be easy. One of the cadres (they pronounce it "codder" and

consider it a well-known English word) said he wanted to bring up "a small matter which, if not attended to, could become a large matter."

This ominous subject turned out to be photographs — and when not to make them. He said a Vietnamese customs regulation prohibits anyone from taking exposed but undeveloped film out of the country. Since I was shooting color film, which cannot be developed in Vietnam, I would need a waiver. And if I went about shooting unauthorized pictures, I might have trouble getting them out of the country.

Aside from that warning, the tone of the initial meeting with the Hanoi officials, including a 29-year-old English-speaking foreign service officer who would be my interpreter, was generally upbeat. They said I would be permitted to visit places in both North and South. Even Cam Ranh Bay, the big former U.S. naval base, was a reasonable request, which they would support even though no foreigners had yet been allowed there.

Interviews with top officials might be difficult to arrange, because all were very busy, but I was asked to prepare questions for a possible meeting with Premier Pham Van Dong and I was advised, if received by Defense Minister Vo Nguyen Giap, not to ask about his personal life or background.

As do most foreign visitors, a reporter gets red carpet treatment. He gets spacious hotel rooms, special meals — either Western-style or Vietnamese — usually served in segregated dining rooms, priority on the crowded Air Vietnam flights, and an automobile and driver.

Foreigners are charged for their privileges. Car hire for the four weeks came to \$730 in cash, based on a per kilometer rate and a daily minimum. A harbor-view, air-conditioned room in the Nine Dragons (formerly Majestic) Hotel in Ho Chi Minh City (formerly Saigon) cost \$16.50 a night. A similar room without windows would have cost \$11.

Some foreigners, including representatives of Communist countries of East Europe, consider the transportation rates excessive, especially the plane fares. It cost \$323 on Air Vietnam's one-class planes for a round trip from Hanoi to Ho Chi Minh City and back, a total of 700 miles. An official, observing that there was an extra charge for a stopover in Da Nang, denied the fare was exorbitant.

Photography was the biggest single problem — for me and also, it appeared, for my Communist escorts. When I wanted to make a picture, there was usually a discussion of whether it was necessary, whether it might violate some restriction, or whether it might offend some Vietnamese I wanted to photograph.

Requests to stop the car to make pictures of, say, peasants drying sliced sweet potatoes on the edge of the

*"You are free to go anywhere here
as long as one of us is with you."*

highway met with resistance: There wasn't time, or there would be a better opportunity later on.

When we arrived in Da Nang after an early flight from Hanoi, reaching the hotel at 9:30 a.m., my escorts said I must be tired and should "have a little rest, eat lunch and then begin our program" at 1 p.m. I told them I wasn't tired and hadn't come to Vietnam to rest, but it didn't seem to register.

A few minutes later, seeing none of the escorts, I left word that I had gone for a walk and went off with my camera. I had made pictures of women in a sidewalk "free market" selling such things as Johnson's baby powder, Colgate toothpaste and Johnny Walker Scotch, and was photographing some little boys when the two cadres from Hanoi pulled up in the car, red-faced and out of breath.

"Mr. Dudman, I am very unhappy with you," said one of them. "You have caused us great difficulties with our colleagues here. They are in charge, and everything we do must be cleared with them."

I replied that I had simply gone out to make some pictures and had left a message to that effect.

"When in Rome you must do as the Romans do," he said. "A man here asked why you were taking pictures of these little boys. He asked whether you were doing it with good intentions or bad intentions. You have no passport with you. A policeman could have arrested you."

When they simmered down, one of them said, in what was intended as a conciliating manner, "You are free to go anywhere here as long as one of us is with you."

My camera was a cause of so much anxiety that I sometimes tried to make a joke of it, saying, "Well, I've brought my weapon along today."

In Ho Chi Minh City, one day's schedule called for a visit to a district that had been destroyed by B-52 bombers in the Christmas raids of 1972. Later we toured an apartment house project under construction.

The pictures were so-so, but as we started back toward the hotel we passed a scene that would have told the whole story in a single shot. There was a string of grass-roofed hovels along the roadside, and directly behind them loomed some of the new five-story apartment houses. I asked them to stop the car for a few minutes.

All I got was excuses — there wasn't time, we could do it later, arrangements would have to be made, and we would first have to get permission of the people who lived in the houses.

The car moved on. After a moment, I said, in dead earnest: "I am making a serious request that you stop this car, turn it around and take me back to those houses so that I can make the one picture that will illustrate what you have shown me today."

I showed them that we had plenty of time and that the pictures would be shot at such a distance that the residents could not possibly be offended. Logic was unavailing.

Finally, giving up, I said, "The rigidity of your bureaucracy really amazes me."

That must have touched a raw nerve. The cadre, normally a mild-mannered, amiable young man, snarled, "I don't know how civilized the people are in the United States, but we consider it an invasion of privacy to photograph a person's house without permission."

Talking with individual Vietnamese, especially in the South, seemed to be against some unspoken rule unless specifically approved in advance.

Two Vietnamese whom I invited separately to lunch apparently had to obtain permission first and were required to leave their identification cards at the hotel desk before going up to the dining room.

Others, whose names I had provided in advance, proved strangely unavailable, although they were widely known figures.

A hotel clerk was glad to practice her English and answer questions about her study of Dickens and Mark Twain. But when she was asked whether life was easier now that the worst of the food shortage was over, she said, "I think you'd better ask the people who are accompanying you about that."

None of the high-level interviews requested was provided. Cam Ranh Bay was out, even though it is listed as a tourist spot on a current Vietnamese travel poster, and My Lai and Pleiku appeared to be off limits.

Yet the constant round of visits to factories, hospitals, schools, colleges, museums and local "people's committees" — some requested, others suggested by local officials — provided a surprisingly good look at postwar Vietnam, its problems and its prospects.

Vietnamese officials, moreover, suggested that things might go easier after this first experiment with an American reporter. After all, as they told me repeatedly, it is only two and one-half years since the end of their 30-year war to throw out the foreigners.

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An Update From Down Under

(Continued from page 2)

family of freer nations. A major free-press advocate, Cushrow Irani of the *Statesman* (Calcutta), was a most articulate participant. Helen Vlachos was there, triumphant in the new Greece whose colonels she had outlasted. There were also encouraging reports from Spain and, to a lesser extent, Portugal. And there was the feisty and eloquent example of editor Donald Woods, a featured speaker, who had "de-banned" himself from South Africa.

But the overall picture was not bright. And two resolutions — passed unanimously — set the tone of the meeting. The first focused attention on Latin America as a continent; and the second dealt with South Africa as a nation. (For the texts of these resolutions, not otherwise widely noted, see page 45 and page 46.)

One other and related issue hovered over the Canberra sessions: the on-going battle within UNESCO on the matter of press coverage of "Third World" nations. Was developed-nation wire-service coverage of the developing world indeed skewed, unbalanced? Or, as Rosemary Righter of *The Sunday Times* (London) put it in her presentation, "Is Western-style journalism appropriate to the Third World?"

If the IPI reached any informal consensus on the issue, I somehow missed it. But out of the discussions two persistent ideas seemed to emerge: First, that the Third World might well be phrasing a legitimate grievance; but second, that virtually all redresses so far proposed (including the displacement of "Western" news agencies by government-controlled news services, or a consortium of same) would ultimately create a cure considerably worse than the disease — at least, in terms of the future of press freedom.

I returned from Canberra — as I said at the outset — with a new respect for the unique role that IPI can and does play. But I also returned with a renewed conviction that most members of the U.S. press have virtually no understanding of how unique, precious and fragile is their condition of freedom.

--J.C.T. Jr.

Constitutional Press Provisions: A World Profile

By Emmanuel E. Paraschos

Those of us who have practiced journalism under different political systems and press philosophies tend to have a special affection for the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution because of the comfort it has provided American newsmen through its dynamic simplicity and latitude.

Most foreign constitutions seem to be more restrictive than protective of the media and general opening statements guaranteeing expression and press freedoms usually are followed by a number of qualifications and exceptions to those freedoms.

As this study will attempt to document, from the laconic Swiss constitution which says (article 55) "the freedom of the press is guaranteed," to the plethoric Portuguese, Kenyan or Greek constitutional press provisions, which run several hundred words long, the complexity and length of such provisions might be construed as being disproportional to the freedom they actually provide.

Restrictions to that freedom generally fall in three

broad categories: those concerning information about national security and order; those guarding against the community's moral corruption; and those protecting the name and honor of individuals.

Following is a sample of how foreign national constitutions treat their respective press systems.

EUROPE

The most liberal tradition in European press freedom comes from Scandinavia. Article 86 of the Swedish constitution says: "Freedom of the press means the right of every Swedish citizen to publish matter, without previous hindrance by any authority, which subsequently is only punishable before a court of law. All public documents may unconditionally be published in print, unless otherwise prescribed in the Freedom of the Press Act."

The Danish constitution prohibits the imposition of "censorship and other preventive measures" in article 77. "Any person shall be at liberty to publish his ideas in print, in writing, and in speech, subject to his being held responsible in a court of law," the article says.

Following similar lines, article 10 of the Finnish constitution says that "Finnish citizens shall enjoy freedom of speech and the right to print and publish written or pictorial representations without interference...."

Dr. Paraschos is an Assistant Professor of Journalism at the University of Arkansas at Little Rock. He has worked as a newsman and lecturer in this country as well as his native Greece, and has been a correspondent in many foreign capitals and in the United States.

The same simplicity is found in the 146-year-old article 18 of the Belgian constitution: "The press is free; no form of censorship may ever be instituted; no cautionary deposit may be demanded from writers, publishers or printers."

Licensing and censorship are specifically prohibited by article 13 of the Austrian constitution which provides that "Every person has the right of free expression of opinion in speech, writing, print, or visual media within the limits of legal regulations."

Recognizing "the unrestrained communication of thoughts or opinions" as "precious rights," the preamble to the 1946 French constitution guarantees protection of these rights so that "every citizen may speak, write and publish freely."

But not all constitutional provisions are this uncomplicated. Article 5 of the constitution of the Federal Republic of Germany says: "(1) Every one shall have the right to freely express and disseminate his opinion by speech, writing and pictures and freely to inform himself from generally accessible sources. Freedom of the press and freedom of reporting by means of broadcasts and films are guaranteed. There shall be no censorship."

"These rights," section 2 qualifies, "are limited by the provisions of the general laws, the provision of law for the protection of youth, and by the right to inviolability of personal honor."

The 32-year-old Spanish constitution, as amended in 1967, says that "every Spaniard may express his ideas freely, provided they do not attack the fundamental principles of the State."

The two-year-old Portuguese constitution (article 37, section 1) guarantees to everyone "the right to express and freely divulge his thoughts by word, image or any other media whatever, as well as the right to inform himself without obstacles or discrimination."

Section 2 of the same article prevents "any type of censorship" and section 4 guarantees to the people, "individually or collectively, . . . under equal and effective conditions, the right to reply."

Article 38 of the same constitution guarantees (section 1) "freedom of the press," which defined (section 2) as "freedom of expression and creativity for journalists and literary collaborators . . . and no other sector or group of workers can censure or prevent their free creativity."

Section 3 forbids any sort of administrative licensing for the media and section 5 imposes upon government the responsibility "to provide the means necessary to protect the independence of the press by applying its political and economic powers." Section 6 outlaws the private ownership of television.

The two-year-old Greek constitution (article 14,

section 1) protects every citizen's right to "express and disseminate by word of mouth, in writing or through the Press, his ideas, obeying the laws of the State."

Section 2 guarantees freedom and outlaws "censorship and any other prior restraint." Section 3 forbids the seizure of any publication unless it has insulted "the Christian or any known religion;" it has insulted the "person of the President of the Republic;" it has revealed national security information or intended to cause "the violent overthrow of the political system" or aimed at hurting "the nation's territorial integrity;" or it has "clearly offended" public morals as prescribed by law.

Article 15 of the same constitution specifically states (section 1) that the above press restrictions do not apply to movies, recordings and the electronic media. Section 2 establishes the governmental ownership of electronic media and declares as their purpose the "objective and balanced dissemination of news information, and literary and artistic works, making every effort to ensure the program quality level that is appropriate for (the program's) social mission and the civic progress of the state."

THE EASTERN BLOCK

Constitutional press provisions in Communist countries are primarily characterized by their conceptual uniformity. Article 50 of the 1977 Russian constitution says: "In accordance with the interests of the people and in order to strengthen and develop the socialist system, citizens of the USSR are guaranteed freedom of speech, of the press, and of assembly, meetings, street processions and demonstrations.

"The exercise of these political freedoms," the article continues, "is ensured by putting public buildings, streets and squares at the disposal of the working people and their organizations, by broad dissemination of information, and by the opportunity to use the press, television and radio."

The Czechoslovakian constitution follows the same lines. Article 28, section 1, says: "freedom of expression in all fields of public life, in particular freedom of speech and of the press, consistent with the interests of the working people, shall be guaranteed to all citizens. These freedoms shall enable citizens to further the development of their personalities and their creative efforts, and to take an active part in the administration of the State and in the economic and cultural development of the country. For this purpose freedom of assembly, and freedom to hold public parades and demonstrations shall be guaranteed."

Section 2 says that "These freedoms shall be secured

by making publishing houses and printing presses, public buildings, halls, assembly grounds, as well as broadcasting, televisions and other facilities available to the working people and their organizations."

The Polish constitution, which was revised last year, guarantees its citizens (article 83, section 1) "freedom of speech, of the press, of meetings and assemblies, of processions and demonstrations." Section 2 provides the means and material "to give effect to this freedom," much like the Russian prototype.

AFRICA AND CENTRAL AND SOUTH AMERICA

One of the most complicated press provisions is found in the constitution of Kenya. "Except with his own consent," article 79, section 1 says, "no person shall be hindered in the enjoyment of his freedom of expression, that is to say, freedom to hold opinions without interference, freedom to receive ideas and information without interference (whether the communication be to the public generally or to any person or class of persons) and freedom from interference with his correspondence."

Section 2 lists the exceptions to these freedoms. "Reasonable" limitations "in the interests of defense, public safety, public order, public morality or public health," are allowable. So are restrictions "for the purpose of protecting the reputations, rights and freedoms of other persons or the private lives of persons concerned in legal proceedings, preventing the disclosure of information received in confidence, maintaining the authority and independence of the courts or regulating the technical administration or the technical operation of telephony (sic), telegraphy, posts, wireless broadcasting or television;" or limitations "... shown to be reasonably justifiable in a democratic society."

The Egyptian constitution (article 48) guarantees "freedom of the press, printing, publications and mass media. Censorship on newspapers is forbidden," the article goes on, "as well as notifying, suspending or cancelling them by administrative methods. In a state of emergency or in time of war a limited censorship may be imposed on the newspapers, publications and mass media in matters related to public safety or purposes of national security in accordance with the law."

"Shows and public spectacles" are the only means of mass communication not guaranteed freedom of thought and absence of censorship by article 141 of the Brazilian constitution. Although administrative licensing is forbidden, the article says, "Propaganda (1) of war, (2) of violent methods to overthrow public order, and (3) of prejudice of race or class, shall not be tolerated."

Article 10, section 3, of the constitution of Chile guarantees "freedom to express without prior censorship one's opinions by word of mouth or in writing, through the press or in any other form without being excused from having to answer for abuses which one might commit in the exercise of this freedom and in cases as determined by law."

The Mexican constitution (Article 6) guarantees freedom of expression "except in cases which attack the morals or rights of a third person or cause some crime or disturb public order."

Article 7 of the same constitution says, in part, that "freedom to write and publish writings on any subject whatsoever is inviolable. No law or authority can establish prior censorship, nor exact bond from authors or publishers, nor compromise the freedom of the press which has no limits other than that of respect for private life, morals and public order. And in no case," the article continues, "can the press be shut down as the cause of a misdemeanor."

The Nicaraguan constitution (in article 72) follows similar lines: "Every one may communicate his thoughts by word of mouth or by writing and may publish them without any previous censorship; but (he) will be responsible for those abuses that are committed in the exercise of this right, in the cases and in the manner specified by law." The article adds that, "Press, its accessories or any other media destined for the diffusion of thought, cannot be in any case sequestered as an instrument of an abuse."

The Dominican Republic's constitution (article 8, section 6) prohibits censorship from interfering with one's free expression of "thought in writing or by any other means of expression, graphic or oral." But, "whenever the thought expressed threatens the dignity and morals of persons, the public order, or the good customs of society, penalties prescribed by law shall be imposed."

The same article outlaws "subversive propaganda, whether anonymous or by any other means of expression, for the purpose of inciting disobedience of the law, but, this shall not limit the right of analysis or criticism of legal principles." Section 10 of the article makes "official and private news sources" freely accessible to "all information media" provided that "they do not go against public order or jeopardize national security."

The Guatemalan constitution (article 65) says, in part, that "expression is free without previous censorship." But, it continues, "he who abuses this right and does not respect the private life or morality is responsible before the law."

The same article provides that "criticism or censorship do not constitute a crime of calumny or slander (if

they are directed) against (public) officials or public employees for purely official acts carried out during their public office." But "those who might believe themselves to be offended have the right to publish defenses and rectifications." Furthermore, "Public officers and employees have the right to demand that a tribunal of honor made up according to the formula established by law declares that the article that affects them is based on inexact facts or that the charges against them are unfounded."

According to the article a "fault in the emission of thought" cannot cause "printing shops, radio stations, television stations and whatever other means of expression (to) be decommissioned, confiscated or embargoed, nor closed down or interrupted in their work." "A jury," the article concludes, "will consider privately the offense to which the article refers and a law of constitutional character will determine everything relative to this right."

The constitution of Ecuador (article 141, section 10) guarantees "freedom of opinion, whatever may be the means used to express and communicate it." However, "insults, calumny, and all immoral expressions are subject to the liabilities imposed by law."

The article says the practice of journalism should be regulated "taking into account that the primary object of journalism is the defense of the national interests and that it constitutes a social service entitled to the respect and support of the State. It shall also establish the means to make effective the liabilities that the journalists incur."

But, the article continues, "No authority may suspend or close newspapers or for crimes of the press, the printing presses or impound publications. Neither shall the editors, collaborators, dealers, writers and other workers of the press be prosecuted or imprisoned on the pretext of such crimes, unless their guilt is legally proven."

The same article also provides "free redress" for "false or calumnious allegations or accusations made by the press, radio or any other public medium...."

Finally, section 11 of the same article guarantees "freedom of conscience in all its manifestations, so long as they are not contrary to morality and the public order."

ASIA

The diversity of cultures and concepts of freedom that exist among Asian nations is reflected in their constitutional provisions concerning the press.

The two most dynamic press systems in Asia operate under similarly simple and general provisions. The

Filipino constitution is patterned after the United States'. Section 9 of its Bill of Rights says: "No law shall be passed abridging freedom of speech, or of the press, or the right of the people to peaceably assemble and petition the government for redress and grievances."

Article 21 of the 31-year-old Japanese constitution guarantees "freedom of assembly, and association as well as speech, press and all other forms of expression.... No censorship shall be maintained," the article concludes, "nor shall the secrecy of any means of communication be violated."

In contrast to the simplicity of the above provisions is the Turkish constitution. Article 20 protects freedom of expression of "thoughts and opinions individually or collectively, through word of mouth, in writing, through pictures or through other media. No individual shall be coerced to disclose his thoughts and opinions."

Article 22 says that "the press is free, and shall not be censored," but restrictions are allowable if they are "solely to safeguard the integrity of the State with its territory and people, public order, national security, and the secrecy demanded by national security, or public morality; to prevent attacks on the dignity, honour and rights of individuals; to preclude instigations to commit crimes; or to assure proper implementation of judicial functions."

Turkish television is specially dealt with in article 121, which establishes its federal ownership and declares that "all radio and television broadcasts shall be made with due regard to the principles of impartiality." The restrictions mentioned in the press section are also applicable to electronic news coverage.

The constitution of Kuwait, in article 36, guarantees "freedom of opinion and of scientific research.... Every person," the article says, "shall have the right to express and propagate his opinion verbally, in writing or otherwise, in accordance with the conditions and procedures specified by law." In addition, article 37 guarantees "freedom of the press, printing and publishing... in accordance with the conditions and manner specified by law."

The Pakistani constitution (Article 19) protects freedom of speech, expression and press, "subject to any reasonable restrictions imposed by law in the interest of the glory of Islam or the integrity, security or defense of Pakistan or any part thereof, friendly relations with foreign States, public order, decency or morality, or in relation to contempt of court, defamation or incitement of an offense."

Finally, the Iranian constitution refers to the press in article 20. "All publications are free," the article says, "except heretical books and materials hurtful to the

perspicuous religion (of Islam). The censorship of publications is forbidden," but if "anything is found in them contrary to the Press Law, the publisher or writer shall be punished in conformity with that law. If the writer is known and living in Iran, the publisher, printer and distributor shall be immune from molestation."

SUMMARY

This brief picture of some of the world's constitutional press provisions illustrates, if anything, the importance various peoples, cultures and ideologies attach to their communication media — how much they are willing to

tolerate from their press and what institutions they wish to put above it.

It perhaps is ironic that countries with long, complicated constitutional provisions also tend to be those that nurse problematized press systems. But then perhaps it is not the precision or the encompassment of the language of the law but the spirit behind its enforcement that makes the difference.

The material quoted in this article was taken from information (in the form of books, releases or letters) provided by the embassies of the countries mentioned.

Resolution on Latin America

The General Assembly of the International Press Institute at its meeting in Canberra on 9th March, 1978, observing that in several Latin American countries journalists are intimidated, harassed, arrested, jailed and murdered:

REQUESTS the Government of Argentina to provide full information about all the journalists who are arrested, jailed or who have disappeared in that country;

CALLS on the Governments of Brazil, Chile and Uruguay to remove the restrictions which affect the freedom of the press;

INSISTS once more to the Government of Peru, that the only satisfactory solution to the case of the Lima dailies, confiscated in 1974, is the full restoration of the newspapers to their legitimate owners;

CALLS on the Governments of Panama, Paraguay and Haiti to end their strict control of the press and to establish the freedom of expression in those countries;

CALLS on the Government of Nicaragua immediately to establish a full and public investigation of the circumstances surrounding the murder of the editor Pedro Joaquin Chamorro;

CONDEMNS the Government of Cuba for holding more than 20 journalists in jail, some of them for 17 years.

The Percy Qoboza Case: Continued

On March 10th the South African Government released 10 detainees, including Percy Qoboza. Former editor of The World and the Weekend World (Johannesburg, South Africa), Percy was imprisoned on October 19, 1977. His newspapers were also "banned." See Nieman Reports Winter/Spring 1978.

The following chronological sequence documents some of the events surrounding the action of the South African Government in freeing this group of detainees.

The Editors

RESOLUTION ON SOUTH AFRICA

The General Assembly of the International Press Institute at its meeting in Canberra on 9th March, 1978:

REGRETS the failure of the South African Government's Minister of Justice, Police and Prisons, Mr. J.T. Kruger, to reply to an application for the release of an Institute member, Mr. Percy Qoboza, to participate in the Institute's Annual Assembly;

CONDEMNS the South African Government for detaining Mr. Qoboza and for detaining or banning other journalists in South Africa without charge or trial;

CONDEMNS the South African Government for closing down The World newspaper and other publications without due process of law and without producing any evidence;

CALLS on the South African Government to charge in

open court or immediately release all journalists summarily detained or banned;

CALLS on the South African Government to lift its summary ban on the Union of Black Journalists and to restore publication rights to The World newspaper and other publications summarily banned;

CALLS upon journalists and governments throughout the world to assess their attitudes to the South African Government in the light of its actions against press freedom;

CONGRATULATES the editors and staffs of those South African newspapers which continue to uphold their independence in the face of the gravest intimidation;

PLEDGES to continue all possible support for Mr. Qoboza and for all other detained and banned journalists and for all South African journalists committed to the ideals of press freedom.

HARVARD UNIVERSITY
Cambridge, Mass. 02138

News Office
Mrs. Deane W. Lord, Director
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 10, 1978

President Derek C. Bok released today the text of a telegram he has sent to Ambassador D.B. Sole at the South African Embassy in Washington, D.C., and to Prime Minister B.J. Vorster in Pretoria, South Africa. A copy of the following message has also been sent to U.S. Secretary of State, Cyrus Vance:

"I am deeply gratified by the news of the release from jail of Harvard alumnus, Percy Qoboza. I knew Mr. Qoboza as a Nieman Fellow at Harvard University in 1975-76 and I admire him as a distinguished journalist and a courageous citizen in his struggle for multi-racial justice in his country."

Embassy of South Africa
Ambassade Van Suid-Afrika
Washington, D.C. 20008

March 14, 1978

Dr. James C. Thomson, Jr.,
Curator,
Nieman Foundation for Journalism,
48 Trowbridge Street,
Cambridge, Massachusetts 02138

Dear Dr. Thomson,

I refer to our discussion on December 2 and subsequent exchange of correspondence regarding the detention of Mr. Percy Qoboza.

May I draw your attention to the fact that Mr. Qoboza and nine other Security Act Section 10 detainees were released unconditionally on Friday of last week. Mr. Qoboza, the Minister of Justice stated, was free to return to his profession.

The Minister of Justice indicated that the release of other detainees would be considered at regular intervals and would depend on circumstances. "Depending on the circumstances after these people had been released who are obviously considered to have been responsible for a certain amount of unrest — if things still remain quiet or even become better, it would increase the possibility of the release of others. I would like to express the hope that circumstances will improve to such an extent that all the detainees will in time be released."

The other nine detainees released with Mr. Qoboza are:

- Mr. Moses Chikane, a SASO member from Mamelodi, Pretoria
- Mrs. Elen Khuzwayo, former chairman of the Black Woman's Federation and a member of the Soweto Committee of Ten
- Mr. Vela Kraai, a Soweto businessman and member of the Committee of Ten
- Rev. Justice Legotlo, a Lutheran priest from Pretoria
- Mr. Mortimedi Malaka, a former chairman of the Black People's Convention at Sibasa
- Mr. Kenneth Matima, a former SASO member from Atteridgeville
- Mrs. Rebecca Musi, from Soweto
- Mr. T.V. Sehume, a former BPC member
- Mrs. Beauty Pityana, wife of Mr. Barney Pityana, former president of SASO.

I should perhaps add that press reports on Mr. Qoboza's physical wellbeing following his release from detention fully substantiate the views I expressed to you on December 2, that I had no doubt that Mr. Qoboza would be well cared for during his detention.

Yours sincerely,

Donald B. Sole
AMBASSADOR

March 27, 1978

Honorable Donald B. Sole
South African Embassy
3051 Massachusetts Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20008

Dear Mr. Ambassador:

Thank you for your letter of March 14th in which you informed me of Percy Qoboza's release from five months of imprisonment.

Actually, I was out of the country, on my way back from a conference in Australia, when my office called me to report Mr. Qoboza's release. I welcomed that news, of course, as do all Mr. Qoboza's friends and admirers throughout the United States and the world.

I would be less than frank, however, if I did not add that Minister Kruger's statement (which you quote) at the time of the release of the first 10 "detainees" is strikingly

inhibitive of free expression. As I read it: if "unrest" increases, the others will not be released; and some of the first 10 may well be re-jailed or banned. The heart of the problem, as usual, seems to be that the Minister, and many of his colleagues, confuse the *reporting* and *expressing* of Black attitudes (i.e., "unrest") with the *provocation* or *instigation* of "unrest." They are by no means the same thing.

In closing, I would like to thank you for the time and attention you have given to those of us who have been so deeply concerned and alarmed about developments in your country since the October 19th arrests — and, in particular, about the case of Percy Qoboza. I can assure you that our concern will not diminish.

Yours sincerely,

James C. Thomson Jr., Ph.D.
Curator
Nieman Foundation

Percy Qoboza's first post-detention leader and article are reprinted from the April 7th issue of the new Johannesburg Post.

People's Right to Know: The Editor spells it out

If this was an ordinary "Percy's Pitch", it could have been a joyous occasion in which my characteristic cynicism would ordinarily find an easy outlet.

I could easily chuckle, like that easy-going columnist Cassandra, who finding himself in circumstances wholly unlike mine, could have taken refuge behind a proclamation that reads: "As I was saying before I was so rudely interrupted nearly six months ago..."

Or I could, in typical fashion, have made a light observation that when I was tossed into jail nearly six months ago, I was registered there as a Bantu, but I emerged from that prison as a Plural.

These things I could do but it just so happens that I have undergone a traumatic experience. One that has left me wondering...

When the Minister of Justice, Mr. J.T. Kruger, signed that order banning *The World*, *Weekend World*, I wondered...and having marched to Modder Bee Prison under Section 10 of the Internal Security Act...I wondered.

I wondered what my country and what my countrymen had come to. I wondered because the ban on those newspapers had to be seen in its proper context. Namely that this was not an isolated single incident affecting one

part of the media but a general warning to all newspapers and newspapermen: that the time for talking is over. You either toe the line or else...

To the eternal credit of the Press in general and some Afrikaans newspapers in particular, this action was seen for what it really was. There was all round condemnation of this action, which, it was suggested — and this was later to be proved right — would have a damaging effect on the country's image worldwide.

It is now history what transpired. Against this background then, I am today assuming the editorship of POST and SUNDAY POST. I assume this position totally blind to the "crimes" that led to the Government taking the actions they did. And herein lies my agony. For all our pleas to be told just what law we are supposed to have broken have been met with a stony "you know what you have done." Hardly the type of statement that can stand the critical examination of any court of law.

The only specific thing that has been waved at me has been two sentences taken out of complete context from an editorial written weeks before either the Prime Minister or the Minister of Justice expressed their displeasure at my newspapers.

I am therefore today taking over the editorship of this paper without any guidelines except the highest principles of journalism I am totally committed to. The only guidelines I have are those which I presently subscribe to and which I expect every member of my staff to adhere to at all times. And these are truth, integrity and the upholding of the right of the people to know.

To these there can be no compromise at all. We are sensitive to the needs and the aspirations of the majority of our people. What is more we are completely and keenly aware of the importance of the role a newspaper must play in the circumstances in which our country finds itself. We have a duty and a binding responsibility to put the interests of the country first and to contribute positively to its transformation into a really just society.

I do not believe that I will be serving the interests of my country and all her peoples by suppressing the truth simply because such a truth is unpalatable to certain sections of the population. We will, accordingly, give

credit where credit is merited and we will dish out condemnation where an injustice is being done to anybody, irrespective of who he or she may be.

I have been distressed in the past few weeks at the number of people who have questioned the credibility of the Press. For the Government, the October crackdown had the desired effect on newspapers generally. But surely even before October, it was evident that there was an element of self censorship on the part of large sections of the Press. Existing laws, not to mention the continuous detentions and raids carried out at homes of journalists, created an atmosphere in which it was becoming increasingly difficult for a free Press to carry out its duties satisfactorily.

Because newspapers have for years had to bear in mind laws like the Prisons Act, the Defence Act, laws relating to incitement, racial hostility and others when they produce newspapers.

There is very little doubt that the authorities will be reading newspapers with greater vigilance in the future.

However, within the context of these laws and regulations and in spite of many other difficulties we will encounter, we intend, on this paper, to carry out our task with vigour and determination. Telling it as it is at all times. For to us the Press remains our last bastion against the erosion of civil liberties in our country.

And what is more, we will not apologise to anybody for carrying out our tasks responsibly, truthfully and with integrity. POST has played a vital role in the past few months at a time when our people could have been left without a newspaper they could relate to. We hope to continue playing that part meaningfully in the future.

For here is a paper that historically represented in many ways black journalism at its best.

Today POST has a host of potential great journalists and some of its well known black writers are also destined to make their mark in journalism in this country.

They will be the recorders of today's history and the custodians of our people's destiny. This much we owe our people and South Africa and we intend to do it in the best tradition.

Letters

MEDIA ETHICS

To the Editors:

The comments in Jim Thomson's essay [Journalistic Ethics, Winter/Spring 1978] about decency and compassion in the newsroom were right on target. There is nothing more irritating to most Americans than the sheer arrogance — to say nothing of abrasiveness — of much of the press, especially the metropolitan press.

But conveying that message to editorial people — any editorial people — is a lot more difficult than most realize.

*Philip Merrill
President and Publisher
Capital-Gazette Newspapers
Annapolis, Maryland*

To the Editors:

I just saw a copy of Jim Thomson's recent paper on journalism ethics, and all of the faculty members in the journalism department have commented individually on what a great job was done in articulating the problems we have been kicking around in a week-long seminar. I wish we could have had the copy before the seminar to serve as a starting point for discussions.

I am using the essay in my classes because it pulls together all of the things I have been trying to drum into their collective heads for months.

The emphasis on the importance of "compassion" as an essential ingre-

dient is one I have long believed, but had hesitated to use that term because I have long felt that simple fairness dictated taking into account an understanding of the devastating impact stories can have on the lives of sources and subjects alike.

I am afraid that a large number of journalists disregard their obligation to follow through on a story toward a just end and treat with a subject for the sensation impact and then dash off to the next sensation without looking back at the plight of the whistle blower they callously used. The comments in that essay have given me the courage to deal more directly with this problem of journalists using sources, creating a storm, and leaving the source to fight the storm alone.

*Clark R. Mollenhoff
Professor of Journalism
Washington and Lee University
Nieman Fellow '50*

KUDOS

To the Editors:

The Winter/Spring 1978 issue of Nieman Reports is one of the best issues I've seen. Paul Freund's article on The Bakke Case, Jim Thomson's meditations on journalistic ethics, and Louis Lyons' piece on Conant particularly impressed me.

*Frank K. Kelly
Santa Barbara, California
Nieman Fellow '43*

A RAG-BAG QUALITY?

To the Editors:

I like Nieman Reports, I guess, for its amateur air — an almost ragbag quality that distinguishes it from formula editing which marks commercial reviews such as More. This openness is its opportunity and its strength. I am sure it makes the editing harder because it keeps the range of options wide.

As to the Winter/Spring issue, Journalistic Ethics is a good analysis. I was glad to have Paul Freund's speech on the Bakke case in print, to share it with some who were not at the October Convocation to hear him, but in print it didn't satisfy me. Was an important aspect missed in the editing?

Louis [Lyons] is always interesting, and Conant — the incidental "founding father" of our Fellowships — is as large a figure as Louis pictured him. The report by Chris Argyris on his management study of one newspaper was fascinating, but I found his generalizations on "media" hard to follow. The title and introduction to the Bolles piece didn't tell me I would get a tough and reasoned account of the reporters and editors group, but I was glad to have it.

Investigative Reporting — a practical and useful guide — and Taught or Caught was a light-hearted account, easy to read and worth having. This Far by Fear is an important statement, well documented. On the Qoboza correspondence, Jim's firm intervention was a worthy act and the documents

are instructive. In the article about the free flow of news among nations, I found the footnotes annoying — they should have been worked into the body of the piece. Important subject — difficult text.

In the Summer/Autumn number, I liked the way Morton Mintz used the book [The Power Broker: Robert Moses and the Fall of New York by Robert A. Caro] as a basis for a thoughtful critique of journalism performance. Maybe someone should try the Mayor Daley book, and Women and Words.

That issue had more about the press abroad, country by country, than I could take in one package.

*William M. Pinkerton
Chatham, Mass.
Nieman Fellow '41*

PICTURES PROPOSED

To the Editors:

Photojournalism is such a vivid medium that it can portray complicated events with great sensitivity — yet it is not taken seriously. Because everyone can see a picture, they think they know what a good photograph is, but they are unaware of the manipulative power of a glossy eight-by-ten.

Judging pictures requires special education in photojournalism or visual studies, just as writing with clarity and coherence is accomplished only after years of training and experience with words. Precisely because of all this, I would like to see the editors recognize the power of an image, and begin to do so by including photographs in Nieman Reports.

*Newbold Noyes III
Photographer and Film-maker
Northfield, Mass.*

A RHETORICIAN RESPONDS

To the Editors:

As an academic rhetorician I have long considered it one of my professional responsibilities to keep up on quality publications to see which have the best writers and the most significant information and ideas.

Although Nieman Reports has always qualified on both counts, I have for a long time had difficulty taking it seriously because of what I considered your ugly and inappropriate cover and first page. The idiosyncratic lack of capitals, reminding me of archy and mehitabel, conveyed a kind of disrespect for writing traditions at a time when the language conventions needed defense instead of erosion. The typescript lettering reflected an aura of high school chumminess; I always expected to find "30" at the bottom. The split of the title at top and bottom was mindless and distracting. I finally became so distressed that I wrote you a letter suggesting that your respected organization should have a journal whose format, instead of casting an image of amateurish clutter and disorder, would be suggestive of professional and orderly thought.

I therefore write you now to tell you that I like your new cover very much. It is classic in its restraint; its dignity fits the quality of the journal's contents and eminence of its writers. Its conciseness should appeal to the busy, quickly assimilating readers you must have.

I do have one suggestion. As a political friend of mind once said, "It's perfect, and I know how to make it better." I suggest that in your table of contents you include the useful short summaries which you previously placed on the cover. They helped the busy reader get a handle on what each article contained.

Thank you for making an excellent publication seem excellent.

*Harry H. Crosby, Chairman
Department of Rhetoric
College of Basic Studies
Boston University*

THE LIGHT TOUCH

To the Editors:

I like a light touch, and so especially enjoy reading whatever Edward Norton writes. Nieman Reports is inspiring; it has greatly improved in recent months.

*Barbara T. Kelley
Delray Beach, Florida*

PLUS AND MINUS

To the Editors:

The Winter/Spring issue of Nieman Reports is clearly the best I have seen in a long time. Both physically and substantively it was a pleasure to read, with the pace set by Jim's [Thomson] probings and Ed Norton's musing about journalism schools. Congratulations!

On a negative note, I hope that Chris Argyris' research is better than his use of English.

*Arthur W. Hepner
Houghton Mifflin Company
Boston, Mass.
Nieman Fellow '46*

Nieman Reports welcomes articles, letters and commentaries on or about journalism. The deadline for submissions for the fall issue is July 10.

Books

Joan Little: An Enigma

The Innocence of Joan Little: A Southern Mystery

by James Reston, Jr.

(Times Books; \$12.50)

Someone else should take a crack at debunking or, at least, sorting out the curious mythologies that grew up around the Joan Little murder case. James Reston Jr., disappointingly, has ducked the job in his 340-page account of the 1975 trial that put Southern justice in the dock for a summer-long cross-examination. If he'd only trusted his judgment...

Instead, tape recorder at the ready, Reston trudged through eastern North Carolina dutifully collecting war stories from every bit actor in the drama, losing, finally, his own voice in the bluster of a noisy, confusing reunion.

Not that his interviews aren't occasionally tantalizing. Defense counsel Jerry Paul, for instance, makes this observation: "I could not sell Joan with her negative side coming out... She's not an honest person. She's not a kind person. She is a violent person. That doesn't mean she committed this crime."

"The psychiatrist to whom I later referred her told me: 'Joan is not a real person.' I decided early that I had to create her totally."

Real or not, few Americans who follow the news escaped meeting some version of Joan Little in 1975. Poor, black, female, she was portrayed by a skillful defense team as triply oppressed by a system that demanded her

death for fending off the sexual assault of a 62-year-old white jailer. She became the center-piece in a media morality play, an intruder in the dusty memories of a civil rights movement that had fallen into self-satisfied slumber.

"This case was distinctly Southern," Reston offers. "The manipulation of the national press was possible because (it) brought to North Carolina the nostalgic, fixed view of an Old South of helpless black victims and gross, ignorant white law enforcement officers."

"This was the 60's revisited and it brought out of the closet a lot of those...trappings."

But Joan Little also would become the rallying point for a newer, more uncertain set of movements that were thankful for a flesh-and-blood symbol to give them life. Prisoner abuse activists, campaigners for women's rights, jury reformers, and anti-capital punishment groups all seized her standard.

From the beginning, though, she was an enigma. Poor, yes — black, yes — Joan Little somehow still didn't fit the convenient clichés. She'd gone to high school in Philadelphia; earned good wages finishing sheetrock walls in Chapel Hill, North Carolina; and ended up tangling with the law over

several petty shoplifting charges, carrying a concealed rifle, and stealing a carload of appliances and clothes from Sawyer's Trailer Park in rural North Carolina.

It was a conviction for that last crime that sent her to the isolated women's wing of the Beaufort County jail for 81 days, awaiting her bloody rendezvous with a farmer-turned-jailer named Clarence Alligood.

In a classic case of small-town solidarity, the Washington (N.C.) *Daily News* eulogized Alligood the morning after he was found dead from an icepick wound in Joan Little's cell. The paper failed to mention that the guard's trousers were around his ankles.

But much of the national press would tilt brazenly in the other direction — becoming often an uncritical mouthpiece for defense propaganda. It was as if the media was atoning for the cozy prosecution complex it had developed while reporting the Black Panthers, hippie drug dealers, and student revolutionaries.

The rules of evidence and newspaper deadlines don't always lend themselves to the unraveling of a mystery, or for that matter, an enigma. But Reston's technique, a Rashomon-style accumulation of trans-

cribed interviews, comes no closer to explaining the murky questions of the case than the press did. The versions lack the parallelism needed for comparison. Reston says Joan Little was preened to be someone she wasn't, yet offers scant clues about who she was. Alligood is all but ignored.

When new information is uncovered, Reston seems to slough it off. Less than a dozen pages before the end of

the book, he writes: "There were other worrisome incidents that never came out... how Paul avoided another warrant for her arrest in Newport News, Virginia, when there had been a fight in her motel room; how Paul persuaded her boyfriend to go quietly to the hospital and not bring charges against Joan during her trial after she had stabbed him in her motel room during a sexual encounter; and how

she had brandished a knife at her security guard, complaining he was guarding her too closely."

And there he lets it drop.

Which is, finally, the frustrating problem with his whole book. He seems to have some answers on the tip of his tongue. But he never spits them out.

--Rick Nichols

TV: Do the Airwaves Belong to Us?

Remote Control

by Frank Mankiewicz and Joel Swerdlow

(Quadrangle Books; \$15)

Four Arguments for the Elimination of Television

by Jerry Mander

(Morrow; \$4.95 paperback)

The man who wrote Spiro T. Agnew's infamous broadside against the Network News Tyranny — the speech that even liberals whispered agreement with — now says that the time is past for kicking TV around. It just doesn't have any effect.

"Assaulting television hardly seems worth the effort anymore," moans the conservative wordsmith Vic Gold, in part because fighting the electronic "news monster" has become a mass preoccupation, a veritable "cafeteria of socio-political bitching." Television criticism, he sneers, has become "an area of critical commentary so crowded that one has to stand in line to get a hearing."

One suspects that what bothers Gold is not the proliferation of commentators so much as what is being said.

Along with the elite critics decrying elitism these days is the small army of mothers and others mobilized as media reformers by the likes of the PTA and the Massachusetts-based Action for Children's Television. Their agitation is finally nudging the Federal Communications Commission and the Federal Trade Commission to play a more aggressive regulatory role. It has become clear that only political action can begin to challenge the entrenched power exercised by the broadcast monopolies and their opinion-molding machine.

At the same time, books are welcome which undertake to demystify and analyze the impact that the media has on our lives, particularly because such media criticism is conspicuously missing in much of the media itself.

This is especially true of television which is vying to replace the Church, the School, and the Family as the central socializing institution in the lives of Americans. Ninety-seven percent of our homes have at least one set, while fifty percent of the people are said to get *all* their news from TV. More importantly, television images condition people's perceptions of themselves and their society. We don't have to wait for the advent of the real age of Star Wars; TV is "the force" of our time. It is with us and too often within us.

The pervasive presence of television disturbs the new president of National Public Radio and former political journalist *cum* press secretary Frank Mankiewicz, who, along with writer Joel Swerdlow, have produced *Remote*

Control, a respectable compilation of what's wrong with what we watch. Their content analysis considers the impact that current TV programming has on the way Americans think about and work out their collective politics, sexuality, race relations, and professional lives. They don't like what television does, although they lack a coherent theory for why it is the way it is or the courage to state a clear point of view. "*Remote Control* contains no proselytizing", the publisher brags, "The authors pass no value judgments."

The same claim cannot be made for Jerry Mander's openly polemical and far more provocative *Four Arguments for the Elimination of Television*. Less concerned by what television says than by what it is, he sets out to prove that our national health and sanity demand the abolition of the box itself. While he admits that he doesn't quite know how such a radical objective can be achieved — and for that matter *Remote Control* is vague on how TV might be changed — former adman Mander is convinced that television is too powerful to be reformed.

Both of these books consider television primarily as an instrument of manipulation although the authors explain the reasons differently. To Mankiewicz and Swerdlow, the problem can be traced to the profit-orientation of the broadcast industry. The people who run TV, they write, "are not trying to inform, instruct, or entertain us. Nor is their goal to shock us or to pander to our fascination with violence and sex. The purpose of nearly every television program, including a disturbing percentage of those presented on the so-called public broadcasting channels, is to deliver the maximum possible audience for advertisements. These advertisements accomplish more than just the sale of deodorants, cars and floor waxes; they sell us a set of values." While this may be true, the authors really don't probe

too deeply into the nature of the economic system that requires such a tool for marketing both products and ideology. They have little analysis and less theory.

To Jerry Mander, the technology itself is the problem. "It predestines who shall use it," he writes, "what effects it will have on individual lives, and if it continues to be widely used, what sorts of political forms will inevitably emerge." In an original — if not wholly convincing and at times overstated — analysis, he weaves the findings of scientists, the complaints of critics, and the prophecies of poets into a utopian pastiche of powerful prose. Mander's talent as an advertising copy writer is evident as he builds a cleanly constructed case for smashing your screen. It is worthwhile resisting the temptation to dismiss his claims even though the conclusion seems so preposterous.

Think of this book as a meditation, an attempt to penetrate the rather mystical notion that television has its own "nature." Think of it also as a manifesto that is at once personal and political, one that thinks about processes most critics lack the insight — or perhaps the imagination — to grasp.

He starts inside the set itself, by considering the physical and mental effects of sustained exposure to bombardment with artificial light by the cathode-ray guns that produce the pictures. He finds that the whole area has been barely studied, although a number of scientists are convinced that light exposure can affect physical growth in plants and perhaps in humans as well. The very act of watching TV is portrayed as a potential hazard, especially for the millions who are glued to the tube night after night, hour after hour. Such over-exposure becomes a hypnotic and mesmerizing experience, a virtual addiction. It can literally drive some people crazy, and, more insidiously, encourage hyperactivity in children. Adults in turn are

stimulated into lives of passivity and mindless spectatorship.

Mander considers the mental effects as subtly dangerous as the physical hazards. TV is a mind zap, it replaces experience with images, displaces imagination, and dims mental capacities. In this connection, he quotes several major studies to the effect that most people make no distinctions between fiction and real life — viewers sent 250,000 letters to Marcus Welby, M.D. asking for medical advice — and more money is spent on making commercials than producing programs.

"Television inhibits your ability to think," he asserts in a paragraph typical of the book's seductive style, "but it does not lead to freedom of mind, relaxation or renewal. It leads to a more exhausted mind. You may have time out from prior obsessive thought patterns, but that's as far as television goes. The mind is never empty, the mind is filled. What's worse, it's filled with someone else's obsessive thoughts and images." He buttresses this conclusion with studies which claim that "very little, cognitive, recallable, analyzable, thought-based learning takes place while watching TV."

Television discourages democratic participation in political affairs, argues Mander. Not only do media consultants develop techniques for persuasion that distort truth, but news programs focus on elites. Only information that does not challenge the corporate system is permitted — with rare exceptions. "What can be conveyed through television are the ways of thinking and the kinds of information that aid the people who are in control," he writes. "It is obviously efficient for them to concentrate their communications within a medium that is conveying their forms of mind..."

Mander says TV has perfected the triumph of technique over content — and he is at his best when describing

the techniques he calls "technical events" that keep the screen popping with images. These tricks are speedy zooms, cuts, and edits, designed to fixate a viewer's attention, but not to convey serious information. TV news, Mander says, has built-in biases against accuracy, against subtlety and against sensory experience. It creates a sense of distance between a viewer and the story; it undermines political participation rather than advances it. By its nature it can't convey the truth, if such a thing can be said to exist. In his own way, Bob Dylan put much of this thesis into a few short words some years back when he told TV Guide that he didn't watch TV news. "I'm not influenced by it," he said. "I don't feel that to live in this country you have to watch TV news. . . You have to know how people *feel* and you don't get that from TV news."

These arguments have a certain cosmic quality to them, a "touch-feel" sensitivity that prompted one critic to dismiss Mander's work as the perfect "California book." Perhaps there is something about West Coast living that forces people out of their homes more and into the mindset that life can be a more exciting set of experiences than the vicarious pleasures conveyed each night by the machines in their living rooms. It is a mind-trip but not convincing because it takes a one-dimensional view. Television has an impact that goes beyond power. It doesn't always work in its own terms. (Ordinary people

bring their own outlooks and needs to their TV experiences; there is dynamic relationship between communicator and viewer.)

The critics of manipulation often miss this interaction because they concentrate too exclusively on the points of transmission, rather than the points of reception. You can't fool all of the people all of the time, as A. Lincoln once put it, and TV viewers are no exception. It's not that they vote with their dials — as apologists for the networks would have it with their talk of free choice or "cultural democracy" — but that people often distrust what they're told, and come to conclusions quite different from the ones drawn for them by their anchormen and women or celebrity pundits. It is this disbelief — often sparked by the awareness of a gap between their lives and what's said of them — that leads to credibility gaps and even changes in national mood. The TV coverage of the Vietnam War (which was hardly as critical then as many TV newspeople would like to believe now) helped turn people away from support for the war; likewise, TV coverage of civil rights and women's liberation helped spread those movements.

The technological determinists — be they the McLuhanists who optimistically project the dawn of the "global village" or the Manderites who invert the theory to justify total despair — avoid dealing with the world the way it is. As the English critic Raymond Williams put in his book on *Television*:

Technology and Cultural Form (Schocken Books/1975), "We have to think of determination not as a single force, or a single abstraction of forces, but as a process in which real determining factors — the distribution of power or of capital, social and physical inheritance, relations of scale and size between groups — set limits and exert pressures but neither wholly control nor wholly predict the outcome of complex activity within or at these limits, and under or against these pressures."

This is another way of saying that there are contradictions in all social institutions and societies. The *Remote Controllers* as described by Mankiewicz and Swerdlow cannot contain them, or even impose ultimate controls over the coming new technologies that promise a variety of media possibilities and more alternatives. Likewise, it seems clear that the issues of television and its impact are becoming matters that the public can engage in and debate. Do the airwaves belong to the people? If so, once viewers are made more conscious of issues and become organized, they may realize that they have a role to play in freeing themselves from the visual and verbal pollution of the broadcast profiteers. That won't satisfy Jerry Mander's cravings to get us all back in tune with nature, but it may give the Freddy Silvermans of this world some sleepless nights.

--Danny Schechter

A Long Shelf Life

Reporting: An Inside View

by Lou Cannon

(California Journal Press; \$4.95)

We must admit that we greeted this paperback with skepticism, and a big dose of, "Oh, hell, here's another boring treatise on The Role of the American Press in Society." It would contain the requisite chapter on Free Press—Fair Trial, and it would be Boring.

We were wrong. The title is truth in packaging in this case. Lou Cannon, *Washington Post* reporter, and former California newspaper editor, has written an elegant look at the news business. The word elegant is used in the context of polished. All the important bases are covered — interestingly.

Too often, when reporters write about their trade, the results are dull, self-serving, and worst of all, not entirely truthful. Cannon is truthful. He went around to a variety of working newspeople, mainly in print, but some in broadcast journalism, for their experiences, and attitudes. The result makes interesting reading.

In his first, and perhaps best chapter, Cannon writes of reporters, who they are, and where they come from. Most print reporters come from lower middle-class backgrounds, and they are print junkies. They need the daily by-line fix.

"They also have a high capacity for psychic income — the by-line, the being out with the big hitters, the being able to do things that are big for them as opposed to their roots," Cannon explained.

Until lately news apprentices came from the bottom half, and were usually strivers who after success could boast of blue-collar origins. That's changing a bit, basically because journalism has achieved — perhaps temporarily — a social *cache*.

"Unlike their colleagues in Great Britain, journalists in America are not automatically accorded second-class status."

We suspect that soon other occupations, perhaps medicine and science again, will capture youthful imaginations.

We've known a few journalists who came from a gold-spoon background, but they were all Summer Soldiers who faded quickly for law school or a place in the bank. Those few were flaunting something before family and friends. Being a reporter was a cut above shipping out on a tramp steamer.

These categories do not apply for newspaper publishers or owners. They are probably the last 19th century men and women abroad in the land. They have real power, regardless whether or not they are in Washington, New York, or Podunk, and they run labor-intensive businesses that are only slowly catching up with technological changes. A study of publishers and owners would be valuable, but that's another book.

What is valuable about this book is that Cannon doesn't pull punches. In his treatment of what makes news, Cannon is uncommonly direct: "News-

papers value the appearance of newness almost above everything else and this value is doubled or trebled if the story appears to contain exclusive newness." The trouble, of course, is that not much in this life is really new. The "scoop" mentality is dissected: "...being first is being best even though most Americans, and their number is increasing every year, now get their first news from television and radio. Traditions die hard."

Mencken once said that in his days as a reporter he had never gotten a "scoop." Moreover, he added, most such stories were bad journalism because the rush to print leaves the door wide open for error. Most working reporters know that slippery fear that haunts their professional days. Doctors may bury their mistakes, and lawyers see them jailed, but like professional ballplayers, reporters constantly work in the arena, with the bleachers filled with those ready to howl in glee at the Mistake. The fear can tighten a good writer into formula stuff.

When they are not running scared, American reporters want to better their lot, Cannon writes, but the opportunities today are limited. There are, he writes, about 12 good papers in the whole nation. *The Washington Post* is one of them. In 1976 it had 162 reporters and 129 editors, and 2,500 applications for jobs. That kind of pressure and competition has effects on the institution and those who work

for it. One of the common pressures, at the *Post* and elsewhere, is "play." Get on "one," at any cost. One problem, Cannon reports, is that *Post* editors are aware that reporters file unnecessarily long stories to justify both the assignment and the play.

Cannon details the problems of reporters and editors. The former wants play, the latter constantly fights stressful deadlines.

"Uncertainty is the greatest frustration of the journalist.

"No matter what paper he works for, a reporter always writes with imperfect knowledge of events. Are the facts straight? What do they mean?"

After searching through these foggy areas little discussed in the post-

Watergate professional euphoria boosted mainly by editors and publishers whose newspapers backed You-Know-Who in both 1968 and in '72, Cannon takes on the nitty-grit of news coverage. He gives generally low marks for public affairs reporting on the local and state level, and describes in detail the change in the wind that has made Washington, the White House and to some extent, Congress, the New Hollywood of the 1960's and 70's. Like the Hollywood of 1930's myths, all the young news studs and starlets want to work there.

Cannon complains that such coverage is almost self-defeating: in such a company town, only the Mega-Stars Shine, the faceless bureaucracy prevails, and the new reporter from the provinces quickly learns his other low

status — being from a paper few in Washington have ever seen.

Many of the incidents that Cannon writes of happened in 1975-76, but there is also a timelessness about the topic that will give this book a long shelf life.

This reviewer proposes that journalism instructors ought to make the book required reading for college students who want to major in journalism. The intelligent outsider would find truth and insight about the trade. For the rest of us in the working press the book makes ideal vacation reading for those of us who want to get away, but who know we can't get away from the problems.

--Edward C. Norton

The Underside of the American Dream

The American Way of Graft

by George Amick

(The Center for Analysis of Public Issues, Princeton, N.J.; \$5.95)

"You pay your 10 percent," Boiardo told him, "or I'll break both your legs."

The speaker was that noted New Jersey statesman, Ruggiero (Tony Boy) Boiardo Jr. Tony Boy was explaining the facts of life in Newark during the 1960's to a surprised consulting engineer. Recognized as the boss of that part of the state by even the lamp posts, the short, dapper Boiardo didn't mince words when it came to explaining how things were done. The 10 percent mentioned referred to the tithe all contractors had

to pay The Gang, including the mayor, a gaggle of councilmen, and most importantly, the underworld czars whose greed helped turn the city into a municipal cancer.

What happened in Newark was laid out in a federal courtroom in 1970, and a batch of officials, including the mayor, were sent to prison. Not Boiardo, however. He suffers from a heart condition. He can play golf virtually every day, but he's too weak to stand trial on an eight-year old indictment. If Boiardo could let go of the golf clubs for a few hours, he might

like this book. It contains his kind of people.

Author Amick [Nieman Fellow '69] has put together a sort of scamsters' encyclopedia; a history written from court records about how America really operates. And the underside of The American Dream is The Deal — graft, corruption, cutting jackpots, in short, Grand Theft.

For years acquaintances have shuddered when I told them I worked and lived in New Jersey. From what they had heard and read the state was the world capital of corruption. Not so, I

would tell the shudders. Other states, most other states, were as bad, if not worse. The difference was that New Jersey in 1969 was lucky to get a housecleaning.

Soon, the fever caught on elsewhere — right up to the White House.

"The remarkable thing about this particular time in this particular country is that so many of the rascals are being caught.

"The guilty have included five ex-governors, one a Vice President of the United States, and another a federal judge. Mayors and county officials and city councilmen have been in the dock in wholesale numbers," Amick writes. In his thorough research Amick explains how this business worked: in Newark it was over a banal sewer line; in Hudson County, N.J. the rape of the public till was over a musical-comedy incinerator. Elsewhere, Illinois, Maryland, Pennsylvania, the stories were more or less the same.

It's the American Way. Without being too cynical, it must be pointed out that when these scams were underway in the 1960's the nation, under one devious Democrat President, then a devious Republican President, was squandering blood and money in Vietnam — in the name of Democracy. On the homefront the cities burned, and literally hundreds of public officials were in office solely for what they could steal.

As the politics editor of a daily newspaper in that time I can recall one day coming up with a stunning question: why would a man spend \$100,000 to capture a mayor's chair which paid \$17,000 a year? The answer was all around: contracts, payoffs, The American Way. I once wrote a column about the unsung hero of American politics — the Bagman. He "carries," he has responsibilities, he gets no credit. For the column I got angry stares and the cold shoulder from some of those who were later indicted and jailed.

Are we Americans more corrupt than any other people? I don't know, and Amick doesn't do any comparisons. I suspect our main problem is we are a pragmatic people. The business of America, as Cal Coolidge once said, is business, and the Deal is the sacred totem of the business world. The problems, however, start when The Deal is translated to the public arena. Nobody much cares how Company X outsmarted Company Z to get Company Y's account, but all are involved when the contract is for a multi-million dollar sewer project.

Amick explains, too, that Americans are cynical. They don't expect much of their public officials. They rank them under garbage collectors in public esteem. The public's disenchantment with government goes back to the Boss Tweed days, and perhaps earlier. Every couple of decades some writer

decides to look at the body politic with honest eyes, and we get the revelations. The 1900's had the muckrakers: Lincoln Steffens did the job city by city, and while there were variations between Philadelphia and Minneapolis, the story was essentially the same. It may sound cynical, but maybe reformers were the worst that could have happened to the nation. Maybe they put so many laws on the books that evasion became a way of life. Maybe the governmental pirates ought to be allowed to steal as much as they can provided they pave the streets and pick up the garbage.

Amick makes a series of suggestions for remedial action. They are worthy of consideration, but we wonder if just rejiggering the system will eliminate the pirate.

New Jersey, not alone with its governmental problems, may be unique in that it has The Center for Analysis of Public Issues, a non-profit research unit whose name perfectly explains its mission. Most other states could profit from similar units. The Center publishes an excellent monthly magazine unafraid to tackle seemingly dull topics in an interesting way. Newspeople in other states would be wise to take a subscription; the problems are everywhere.

--E.C.N.



A Reporters' Reporter

The Life and Legend of Gene Fowler

by H. Allen Smith

(William Morrow & Company; \$10)

Newspapermen tend to make heroes of their own kind. Perhaps they see too much of the flimflam that props up public officials. And few can stand the stomach-turning creations peddled to an adoring public for commercial entertainment. So, newsmen look to their own breed. One durable hero for decades has been Gene Fowler. When alive he denied repeatedly that he ever sought the office. He could not understand why his coworkers in the vineyards thought he was worthy of honor or emulation.

The principal reason was that Fowler did what many of his coworkers wanted to do — if they had had the talent or the gall.

In the 1920's in New York Fowler was widely recognized as a reporters' reporter. He did outlandish things. His expense accounts have become journalism tradition. His pranks would fill a book. They have. Brought to the big town by Damon (The Demon) Runyon, Fowler was "That Young Man From Denver" to William R. Hearst. The newspaper czar eventually made Fowler the editor of the *New York Journal*, but Fowler never stopped being a rambunctious reporter. Fowler was also a writer. In the 1930's his talents found a book audience; his first success was a biography of a corrupt New York lawyer.

Fowler eventually went to Hollywood in the 30's, where he was said to be the "thinking man's Gary Cooper."

Fowler took the money, and wrote books on his own time. His biggest success, during World War II, was *Goodnight, Sweet Prince*, a biography of his friend, John Barrymore. The book is a fine piece of work, worthy of being read today. Fowler, the brawler and swordsman, was also capable of sensitive writing, as his autobiographical books, *A Solo in Tom Toms*, and *Skyline*, show.

Fowler died in 1960, truly a legend to his peers in the news business. Since then his work has been overlooked as fads and fashions changed.

H. Allen Smith came to New York in 1929 as a United Press feature writer, and there he met his hero Fowler. Both had worked in Denver. Fowler treated the younger man as if he were nobility. Smith never forgot. By 1941 Smith was himself a successful author, having made a smash with his humorous, *Low Man on a Totem Pole*. The two never lost touch. Smith went on to write dozens of books, until his death in San Francisco in 1976. This biography was the last, and it is a fitting end to Smith's career. The book is about someone he cared about, a man his friend Jack Dempsey called the best barroom fighter he had ever seen, and at the same time a writer of great sensitivity. In a day when most biographies read as if they had been dictated into a tape machine, Fowler's work reads like a writer wrote them.

The Fowler saga would make

excellent vacation reading for journey-men tired of the usual print fare.

One story about the expense account: Fowler in 1921 was sent to the Arctic to find some lost explorers. Upon his return he was faced with justifying \$1,200 in expenses. He labored; he sweated. To balance his books, Fowler had his lead husky die in the line of duty — cost \$80 for burial. He was still short of balancing the account, when he hit on the solution. The final item was: flowers for bereft bitch — \$1.50.

--E.C.N.

Notes on Book Reviewers

Richard L. Nichols is a staff writer the *News and Observer*, Raleigh, North Carolina, and a Nieman Fellow in the current class.

Edward C. Norton, Nieman Fellow '73, is a reporter for the New Jersey edition of the *New York Daily News*.

Daniel I. Schechter, Nieman Fellow '78, is director of news and public affairs, WBCN-FM, Boston, Mass.

“The theory of a free press is that the truth will emerge from free reporting and free discussion, not that it will be presented perfectly and instantly in any one account.”

Walter Lippmann