

# Nieman Reports

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Winter 1978

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## **Siege: A Striker's Diary**

**Edward C. Norton**

## **Uphill All The Way**

**Alden Whitman**

## **Good News, Bad News**

**Edwin Diamond**

## **Not The New York Times**

**Frank Van Riper**

## **Beleaguered Bill Minor**

**James S. Featherston**

*Associate Nieman Fellows, 1978-1979*

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Winter 1978

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## GUEST EDITORIAL

Obed Kunene, Associate Nieman Fellow '78, is editor of *Ilanga*, a Zulu-language newspaper in Durban, South Africa. The following excerpt is from his first letter to his Nieman classmates after his return home. The newspaper account of his Nieman year, written for the *Sunday Tribune* in Durban, is reprinted in its entirety on page 37.

## Coming Home

[From Mr. Kunene's letter]

... *An unexpected tumultuous reception by close on 300 people. A constant stream of callers knocking on our door, wanting to shake hands and say, "Welcome home." A string of invitations to talk to this group and that organisation. The hassles of getting back to work. And having to move house amidst it all. How could I possibly find the time to write letters to all my friends back in the states?*

Anyhow ...

*We arrived back in the land of the never-never, safe and sound. Yes, it's true about the reception. A big crowd of well-wishers, friends and relatives was waiting at the Durban airport. The whites could not understand it. They thought a coup was being staged. The blacks just about took over the airport buildings. We were escorted in a convoy of motor cars — to our community hall for four hours of speeches, traditional rituals (two goats and a sheep were slaughtered in our honour, and the bile from each animal was smeared on our toes and the tips of our tongues) and dancing to the music of a pop band. We were completely overwhelmed. It made me feel both proud and humble ...*

*I have written on my American experience and the article has generated considerable interest locally.*

*OAKunene.*

(Please turn to Page 37)

# SIEGE: A Striker's Diary

By Edward C. Norton

**As we go to press on November 1st, this marks the 84th day of the strike against *The New York Times* and the *Daily News*.**

Aug. 9 — News of the pressmen's walkout in New York comes on the 11 p.m. news. Other unions, including the Guild, are honoring the picket lines. We are all on the bricks, for the second New York strike this summer. Why didn't I go to Europe, despite the condition of the American dollar?

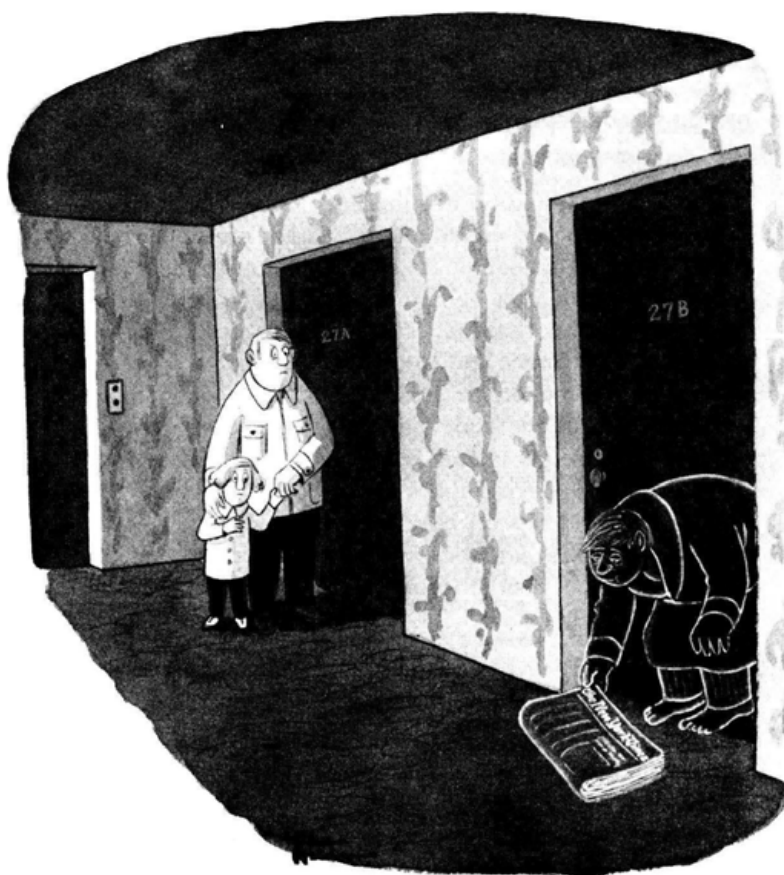
Aug. 10 — A call to the office gets the response from a secretary that she cannot tell us what to do. The Guild, as usual, is slow to respond. Can we clean out our desks, at least? We joke with the other reporters that Myron Farber, at any rate, will get three meals a day.

Aug. 11 — Farber, too coolly insouciant about his predicament, goes before our old pal, Federal Judge Fred Lacey in Newark, seeking release from jail. A mistake. Lacey zeroes in on Farber's book contract. Lacey says Farber's motive is greed. Hard to wave banners and picket for the greedy. Farber and his lawyers, who should have known better, pull back.

Aug. 12 — Soggy heat wave sits on area, crushing any ambition, and magnifying worry how long layoff will be. Only good news is that negotiations resume Monday.

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*Mr. Norton, Nieman Fellow '73 and frequent contributor to Nieman Reports, was until August a reporter with the New York Daily News.*



Drawing by Chas. Addams.  
©1978 The New Yorker Magazine, Inc.

Aug. 14 — Negotiations resume. Local New York television stations have expanded news programs. As guests, they put on non-union columnists and editors from struck papers. All complain how tough it is not having forum for their pearls of wisdom. Word is that broadcast stations are not hiring working press, because they are not making extra money on expanded news coverage.

Fellow reporter says he has offer of job with new daily to come out this week. He said office has one phone, no typewriters. Sounds familiar.

Aug. 15 — Negotiations drag on. Realization seeps in how shallow television strike coverage is. Each station has a different story — some are optimistic, some pessimistic, and some indifferent. Street reporters appear incapable of pulling together factual story. Labor stories are usually clear-cut. The issues are not hard to unearth.

Instead we get luscious-looking young women reporters interviewing barely literate pickets old enough to be their grandfathers. The issues escape these reporters. The anchormen are worse. They could pull it together, but they don't.

Realization hits that no strikers are women: No women want to be pressmen? Are there any women printers? Women's Lib doesn't extend to 19th-century printing trades? Just street reporters for Channel 4?

Aug. 16 — Humidity debilitating. Guild meeting in Manhattan. No air conditioning. Guild unit chairman keeps referring to head of the pressmen's union as "Jack Kennedy," even after he is told man's name is "Bill."

Worst news: chairman says Guild contract still not signed because paper and Guild officials cannot agree on what they agreed on in June settlement. Lynch mood prevails. Trip to the state unemployment compensation office, where we get instant recognition, one benefit from the continuous television news coverage of strike.

Later, radio reports that talks have adjourned, after mediator commits *faux pas* by telling reporters that the papers would put another proposal on table. There was no proposal.

Aug. 17 — Humidity supposed to drop today. Lines tossed out to find part-time or sub work come back empty — no one seems to be hiring, at least not strikers who may be out of work today and back on the job tomorrow.

Call from journalism dean about teaching course this semester. Sure, I tell him. Every nickel will help.

Neighbors tell me they have no sympathy for reporter [Farber] with \$75,000 book and paperback contract.

Aug. 18 — The New Jersey attorney general has gotten into the Farber case; he has asked for a "speedy" hearing in the appellate court on the constitutional merits. But the big news is that the *Times* will turn over its notes, its files on the Dr. X case, thus purging itself of contempt. Farber has also turned over his unfinished book manuscript to the trial judge. Both Farber and the *Times* say the files and the manuscript contain nothing that the defense hasn't already seen. Then why all the hassle? Farber, however, is still in the Bergen County Jail. I find it hard to believe that

a publisher saw a book in the case, inconclusive as it was and is.

As a taxpayer I resent the cost of reopening the 12-year old case, and mounting a trial which has gone on for weeks now. The *Times* has paid \$75,000 in fines thus far, and the paper still faces a \$100,000 fine on a related contempt charge. All this, I suspect, will have a rippling and chilling effect throughout newspaper publishing on investigative reporting. It's one thing to get slapped with a libel suit, but another to become a paying party before a court in a criminal case.

Labor and management suspend negotiations — no movement.

Aug. 19 — While the Farber case plays to the national audience, equally interesting First Amendment situation has been bouncing around like a musical comedy not 10 miles away in Clifton, New Jersey. A publisher-editor-writer there, by name Alex Bidnik, puts out a weekly called *The Independent Prospector*, a shoddy piece of work which area newspeople have laughed at for years. Bidnik, a fortyish fellow, was heavily influenced by Walter Winchell at birth.

Bidnik's paper is essentially Bidnik's Winchell-like column, which sprawls over the 20 to 30 pages in each issue. The column is a hash of slam and innuendo. Knowing Bidnik and the community of Clifton for years, I have often wondered how far the former would have to go before the latter stood on its hind legs and barked. The day arrived this week, along with television crews from New York stations. Printed reprisals had kept critics silent for years. A couple of hundred residents of Clifton demanded an end to city legal advertising in the paper. Bidnik announced that he would no longer take legal ads, just an hour before the city council was to put the issue to vote. We suspect there is more meat in the Bidnik case about American journalism than in the Farber-*Times* affair.

Aug. 20 — Tomorrow another strike paper, *The Daily Metro*, is to hit the stands. Funny that pick-up publishers are favoring the tabloid size and format. *The Metro* is the brain child of a young *Times* summer intern. *Newsday* claims that *New York Post* publisher Rupert Murdoch is bankrolling the new entry.

Murdoch is chairman of the Publishers' Association of New York City, the group which is representing the three papers in the strike talks. Murdoch may have found a way to eat his cake and have it too. He wages war against



the unions, and at the same time profits from a cheaply printed paper. But the *City News* and the *Metro* are printed in New Jersey plants, using the offset process. The papers are trucked into the city. Ironically, both papers have been careful to use union help.

Timing is everything in life. The *Trib* folded last winter. It was non-union, printed in New Jersey, and came out in the worst winter of the 20th century. If it had bounded on the scene last week, it would have had a circulation of one million, I believe.

Aug. 21 — Judge Trautwein says he is not satisfied that the *Times* turned over its full file on the Dr. X case. The comedy rolls on. There is also some dispute between the judge and the paper over how much is owed in fines. The judge believes the paper owes another \$50,000. Meanwhile, the trial, like the ice age, creeps on.

Aug. 22 — Murdoch quoted on news radio as saying the pressmen's union officials do not understand that the papers don't want to lay off workers. Union officials say bunk. The Guild has struck *The Post*.

Pal who got aboard an interim paper says advertisers are booking space through Thanksgiving. He also says rumors rampant that Murdoch wants to kill *The Post*, and keep the interim tabloid he invested in alive. Everything topsy-turvy: editors of the interim papers are former reporters.

Word is the Publishers' Association is being advised by same law firm which counseled *The Washington Post* in its battle three years ago with pressmen. Newspaper moguls feel *Post's* action broke the back of the local there.

And, of course, the Guild is still trying for a contract with the *Washington Post*. The paper's argument is they have to compete with the profitable suburban sheets, and they can't do that with unnecessary mechanical expenses. Question arises: How did this bad situation develop? Weren't these papers managed economically in past, or was so much money rolling in that all the executives had to do was come in each day and push the cash off their desks?

Aug. 23 — Lots of yard work done. Joke with wife that if all else fails one could become a Lawn Doctor. Plenty of fresh air. Good exercise. Work keeps moroseness away. Figuring the worst: the strike could last to the end of the year, and *The Post* could die, leaving the world's communications center with two daily newspapers. Suspect at some point one or the other publisher will try to break the strike by publishing.

Interim papers getting advertising — the class stuff, from Bloomie's, and the big Cadillac dealer in Manhattan. Interim publishers will make big bucks. How long can *Times* and *News* let that go on? *Star-Ledger*, which had been dime, went this week to 15 cents.

Heard from *Ledger* editor that paper has had problems with hijackers following their delivery trucks in New Jersey, stealing bundles and selling them in New York at two and three times 15 cent price. What's the penalty for stealing newspapers?

Aug. 24 — Watched the hour-long 11 p.m. news on WCBS-TV last night and it was a comedy. Expanded news coverage has become a joke. No news, but plenty too much of "comic" Soupy Sales reading the comics. Neither was funny, and Sales was painful. Worse was a fashion segment, featuring a "hype" promo for Gloria Vanderbilt's new line in clothing. The nadir was reached when Diane Judge did the gossip segment. She is columnist for *The Post*, and terrible. She confused the names in her lead bit of inane trivia, and in an attempt to correct it the anchormen confused it more. Chief anchorman Jim Jensen, normally a straightforward, no-nonsense newsmen has looked pained through the run of this "expanded" news coverage.

The use of marginal newspaper features on television proves my point that print dignifies. You don't have to watch the culprit make a fool of himself, or even read it, if you have no interest in the gibberish. Television news is a flowing river; to get the gems you have to take the old tires and stench as they all pass before you.

Aug. 25 — Best news of otherwise depressing week: There may be a wildcat postal strike next week. No bills. And, of course, it'll be impossible to walk the gas card payment to Tulsa.

Aug. 27 — Typewriter breaks, right in the middle of Chapter 22 of the novel I'm writing. Damn! Difficult to find parts of old manual machine; everything today is electric. Maybe repair can be written off on taxes? Checked, no luck. Corporations can write off skyscrapers, jet airplanes, and limos for the execs, but a writer can't write off the tool of his trade. Might be better if writers incorporated themselves — if you can't beat them, join them.

Aug. 28 — As suspected, the repair shop doesn't stock the part. They may have to weld the old part together.

Strike news pushed to back of local papers. Experienced labor mediator Theodore Kheel, not involved

in the current crisis, quoted on radio as saying that publishers are working from a prepared script which called for a crunch in August. Kheel said nothing will happen until both sides decide to negotiate. Wonder when the script directs the publishers to begin talking turkey.

Mail strike threatened for midnight.

Aug. 29 — No mail strike.

Morning local paper has lead story about judge telling *The New York Times* it acts "imperially," and has not handed over all its files on Dr. X case.

Lots of yard work today, despite heat and humidity. Nothing like hard physical labor to cool the mind.

Negotiations resume at 5 p.m. Why so late in the day? I wonder. The evening news reports that Murdoch said the publishers have another offer. Can it be that they see all that lovely holiday advertising wafting away to the interim publishing parvenus?

Aug. 30 — Pressmen officials go back to talks with their own proposals. At least the sides are meeting.

Down to the state unemployment office. Trenton hasn't ruled yet on whether the situation is a lockout or a strike. Woman at counter said paper hasn't confirmed my employment. It doesn't seem to occur to anyone in the state bureaucracy that there is no one at the paper to open their letter of inquiry. Those who normally would are down on the unemployment line.

Aug. 31 — Local morning paper says Myron Farber was released last night, after the state supreme court decided to hear case. Farber walks!

Strike talks resume; radio news says both sides optimistic, but still far apart. Mid-September might be a reasonable end to the siege. Other mechanical trades and Guild strikes against *The Post* have to be resolved before all go back to work. The irony is that the settlement will be one which could have been worked out last March between reasonable parties, and without anyone losing a day's pay.

Must check typewriter shop today, so I can get back to Chapter 23.

Sept. 1 — Shop says they can't fix machine until next week. Can't find part.

Negotiations break off again, may not resume until next week sometime.

Ironically, this year I won't have to work Labor Day, as I have so often in the past. At least Myron Farber gets a weekend home with his family.

Sept. 3 — Spoke with two colleagues. They both suspect

that interim papers may be financed by struck dailies. No evidence, but interims are working against settlement by giving advertisers a place to go. I recalled that in 1962-63 strike interims were slow getting started.

The *New York Post* and *Newsday* appear to be engaged in name-calling over alleged *Newsday* inroads in *Post* circulation by recruiting out-of-work *Post* employees and moving in on Queens. *Newsday*, of course, denies the charges.

Sept. 7 — Radio news (where I get all the news now) says that a batch of editors and reporters for one of the interim papers has quit after disclosure that Murdoch invested in the paper at its formation. Radio also says publishers may try to put out their own interim paper. Also that they may offer the pressmen a long-term contract with built-in attrition, like the one signed with printers in 1974.

Typewriter still out of commission. Dunderheads in the shop bleat that it broke during their busiest season: college kids repairing portables before returning to Spiro Agnew Tech.

Sept. 11 — Veteran labor mediator Theodore Kheel has been hired by the printing trade council to sit in on strike talks. This is good news, as Kheel has access to broadcast journalists, and credibility.

An anonymous volunteer at Guild headquarters in Manhattan explains that we are not on the master computer list for strike benefit checks. He says the computer firm refuses to make corrections, additions, because reprogramming would cost them money. What fool ever convinced this nation that the new technology would be any improvement over the old technology? If anything, it's worse.

Sept. 15 — Talks, which seemed promising, break down today, amid reports that the publishers will try to resume printing either the individual papers, or a joint publication.

A colleague who attended a Guild session said the leadership has nothing to report. There seems to be a "bitter-end" aroma to the negotiations, which indicates to me that whenever the strike is settled, all parties will be losers.

Sept. 20 — Myron Farber returns to the Dr. X trial, and today he's hit with two more contempt citations. Then the trial judge reverses himself. Television news shows Farber walking into the courthouse, smoking his pipe, and walking out of the courthouse, smoking his pipe.

Ted Kheel admits the strike could go to Christmas. The federal mediator asks that both sides go to Washington. Maybe President Carter will bring both sides together the way he did Sadat and Begin.

Sept. 21 — The New Jersey Supreme Court ruled 5-2 that Farber has no right to withhold his files. In the minority opinion, Justice Morris Pashman questions whether the court can treat a newsman so summarily.

On television this evening, *Post* columnist Murray Kempton said that Farber has served more time in jail this year than many muggers. He explained there are all sorts of legal safeguards for citizens, except for those who run afoul of a judge. The judge can lock you up immediately. Kempton added that he would provide the files. Kempton said he was a citizen first and a reporter second. I agree. A man on trial for murder supercedes a batch of papers whose ancestry is well-known to the defense lawyer. No source's life or safety is on the line, and here it would seem that Farber and *The Times* picked poor terrain to do battle. Farber may go back to the clink on Tuesday if he refuses to cooperate.

On the strike front: nothing new, except the publishers said they don't want to go to Washington to bargain. On TV, however, one publisher's spokesman said they would go to California if the pressmen would budge a little.

Filed a formal appeal to the state unemployment compensation official turndown of benefits. State officials said they have been bombarded by scores of angry *Daily News* and *Times* workers who have been locked out, and technically are not on strike.

Sept. 26 — Farber gets a last-minute reprieve — Justice Potter Stewart grants the reporter and *The Times* a stay so they can appeal.

Meanwhile in Washington the strike negotiations go on. Late news has both sides returning to New York tomorrow. What worked for Begin and Sadat apparently doesn't work for all problems.

Sept. 28 — Murdoch walked out of talks yesterday, saying that Kheel is trying to arrange a deal. Richard Reeves in latest *Esquire* points out that Murdoch is only publisher who is making money in strike. Reeves estimates Murdoch is making \$1 million a week from *Village Voice*, New York magazine, and back door investment in *Daily Metro* interim paper. I can't understand why other publishers don't balk at this.

Latest today? Ken Moffett walks. He's the federal mediator; a blander individual cannot be imagined. What

the hell. We're all out of work, but Moffett still gets paid, whether or not the sides have done any real negotiating for the last two months. In his television appearances Moffett seems destined for better things. He has mastered the art of saying nothing in long sentences.

Sources told me today that they expect a weekend settlement between the pressmen and the *Times* and *News*, leaving Murdoch to settle his own hash. The *Times*, they say, is anxious to resume publication. Even with a pact it'll take a week to ten days to arrange settlement of the other strikes and round up workers. Spoke with a fellow reporter today about a possible settlement. He said he doesn't want to go back to work. Said he has too many irons in the fire, and he enjoys working for himself as a freelance.

The mail is a joy and a sorrow. Today it is a joy. I got a hand-written unsolicited note from a real estate bozo who wants to sell my house. Tempting, but where then? With it came an invitation on paper strong enough to support the entire Walton family. It asked my appearance at the late October dedication of the Kennedy Center at Harvard. Mr. Bok, himself, and Senator Teddy, himself, want me there. I may be just another newspaper geek, but I sure get interesting mail.

Oct. 2 — It's all a Looking Glass World: last night the pressmen reached a tentative agreement with Murdoch and his *Post*. Murdoch was the first one to walk out of the negotiations. How does one negotiate after one has walked out? No wonder the public is suspicious about what they read in the press. The pressure will be on the other two journalism titans to settle quickly, so that Rapid Rupert doesn't snatch all that lovely advertising away. I suspect there is much yelling going on in the executive suites of the two titans today. The titans pulled Rupert into the tent this year because they feared him outside, and yet they still got snookered. Serves them right. Rupert may be the first of a new line of personal, as opposed to corporate, publishers in New York. The shades of Greeley, Dana, and even Joe Pulitzer would recognize him.

Oct. 3 — Pressmen ratified the new contract agreement with the *Post*. The *News* announced that once the strike was ended, it would cut back its major suburban operation in New Jersey.

Oct. 4 — The Guild reached an agreement with the *Post*. Murdoch announced that his paper will be on the street tomorrow. Talks continue between the *News* and the *Times* and striking units. The scuttlebutt has it we'll all be back to work by next Monday.

I'll believe it when I see it. □

# Good News, Bad News

By Edwin Diamond

## "AGENDA SETTING" AND OTHER MYTHS OF MEDIA POWER

Everywhere, it seems, television's influence is being felt in American society. Gerald Ford and Jimmy Carter spent on television time over half of the \$21.3 million allotted to them under the federal campaign laws. The hair styles of a television personality like Farrah Fawcett-Majors can be seen blossoming on thousands of heads on city streets from New York to San Francisco, just as the jokes of a television host such as Johnny Carson are retold from East Coast to West Coast the next day. Law officers and psychiatrists — and committees of the Congress —

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*Mr. Diamond, formerly a senior editor at Newsweek, is presently senior lecturer on political science at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. The above text is an excerpt of two chapters from his newest book, Good News, Bad News, a criticism of press performance. He is the author also of The Tin Kazoo: Television, Politics and the News, and he has recently begun writing a column for Esquire.*

endlessly debate the alleged pervasive influence of television on young minds and disturbed minds: do sex and violence in popular entertainment programming encourage antisocial behavior? Do terrorists and other criminals take their cues from television, seizing hostages because they know these actions will guarantee exposure — for themselves or their causes — in the media?

I tend to be in the minority in these matters. The dominant view is that television has reshaped American politics, American society, and American manners. The critics tend to be impressed by the reach of American television. A few years ago, the MIT News Study Group examined the viewing habits of Americans and concluded that very few people are very far from a television set in the United States. By the mid-1970's, some 97 percent of all American households — some 75 million homes — had at least one television set; about one in every three households had two or more sets. Television watching in the mid-1970's has become the most frequent activity of Americans after work and sleep. This reach helps explain why someone with something to sell — for example, a consumer product manufacturer or a political candidate — has such high regard for this far-reaching medium. Pervasiveness is one thing, however, persuasion quite another.

The News Study Group's findings, reported in an earlier book, *The Tin Kazoo: Television, Politics, and the News*, concluded that although Americans were watching television more and more, they put less and less credibility in its importance. Television, I argued, was reflective of American styles rather than a major shaping force of these styles. In fact, as a mass medium, television may be the last to know about and describe important events. My opinions ran counter to the prevalent critical view of television as a pacesetter and catalyst in American life. After all, is it not television where we hear and see the



news, first and foremost? The answer is "yes" if we are talking about the headline news of the day. But most of the time, television by its nature cannot do a thorough job for anything that goes beyond the skeletal facts and statistics of the news. The three commercial networks — ABC, CBS, and NBC — spend millions of dollars every four years to bring the two major national political conventions to the home audience. This coverage is the showcase for the networks' talents and energies, and they spend considerable thought and skill on it. But at the 1976 Democratic national convention in New York City, the network anchormen and reporters kept assuring their listeners that it was a "dull," "predictable," "fore-ordained," "suspenseless" convention — a "media event" for the benefit of the cameras, since the Democratic candidate Jimmy Carter already had captured the nomination. The televised proceedings were predictable and dull, reflecting this lack of suspense. However, the political writer Richard Reeves, assisted by a small group of young reporters, brought the convention to life marvelously by exploring the people and the movement off the floor — in the hotel suites, the caucuses, the corridors, and the bars. Reeves's book *Convention* is one measure of just how much the commercial networks — and their audience — missed of the high excitement and low comedy in New York during that July week.

I mention this example not to demonstrate the obvious — that print often can bring the audience information better than television can. More important is my argument that the viewing publics have intuitively recognized that television is a severely limited channel for the movement of information with more content than headline news. It is, of course, an unsurpassed medium for the communication of drama, involving, as it does, our senses of sight and sound in ways that neither print nor radio can.

In *The Tin Kazoo* I argued that the viewing public has grown increasingly skeptical about its television viewing. The audience was not an inert mass to be worked over by the camera. It approached television in a playful mood — for its own purposes. It was becoming more selective. No one would deny the admirable journalistic professionalism of the network news organizations or the care and time expended by the writers and producers of such good entertainment programs as "All in the Family" or "The Mary Tyler Moore Show." But the key to understanding the real effects of television in American life is not to know the producers' purposes but to know the consumers' expectations. After trying to formulate this idea in *The Tin Kazoo* (and not quite succeeding), I came across the work

of a psychologist, James Stephenson, an Englishman now on the faculty of the University of Missouri. In his study, *The Play Theory of Mass Communications*, Stephenson creates the intellectual framework that can help us explain what the consumer of television is experiencing and what I have been attempting to describe. Stephenson's idea is simple — as many great ideas are. The media consumer's life is divided into work and play. Work is what people do at offices and factories; play happens in people's leisure hours, including the play of watching television and reading newspapers, magazines, and books. For many journalists, critics, and academics, of course, the consumption of media is part of their work and not their play — which is one reason why many intellectuals find it difficult to understand the particular way the average man or woman views television.

Because television watching is part of the average viewer's play life, it is not something to be taken too seriously. Television is for relaxation, for entertainment, for fun. But it is not mindless, it requires a great deal of concentration because the form — spoken words and moving images on a small screen — is ephemeral and demanding. Newspaper and magazine reading are also leisure-time activities, but they can have serious purposes, and the attention demands are different. Certainly different expectations may be brought to newspaper reading. Newspapers often serve workaday purposes — for example, to find a job or a place to live in the classified advertising pages; to learn if friends or neighbors have died in the obituary pages; to see the price of groceries and other necessities in the food ads.

Television producers and programmers have intuitively grasped that the various viewing publics approach their efforts as part of the play world. The need to engage viewers, to hold their attention — even a bemused or wandering attention — is the prime requirement of all television presentation. This task is made extraordinarily difficult by the ephemeral nature of those moving pictures — images that cannot be stored, underlined, or reexamined in the way print can. But the play expectations in the minds of the viewers also limit the kinds of messages received, just as surely as the information-poor channel that transmits these messages.

Television producers and users have set for themselves some serious goals. Advertisers want to sell their goods and services, candidates want the voters' ballot on election day and, once in office, the voters' continued support in the public opinion polls; broadcast journalists want to convey the important news of the day.

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But inevitably advertiser, politician, and news producer alike must package their messages in an appropriate form to get past the twin barriers of play expectation and data-poor channel to the viewer. When the journalist T.S. Matthews sought to describe the popular British newspapers of two decades ago, he titled his book *The Sugar-Coated Pill*; the news had to be tricked out with bright artwork, seductive headlines, and attractive photographs. With print, at least, the reading public has been prepared over decades to take its medicine of information

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**On the soul stations, the Carter campaign spoke in a black preacher's voice about more jobs, more housing, better health care; on the country and western stations, the Carter spots used a white voice to talk about welfare reform, lower taxes, and fiscal responsibility in government.**

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with a surface wrapping of graphics. With the neophyte television audience, the coating has to be extra strength — as a television commercial might put it — because no one has ever trained the audience to ingest serious information from television. Once we begin to see television from the point of view of the audience, and once the idea of television-as-play has been grasped, a number of the seemingly contradictory current developments I mentioned at the beginning of this chapter fall into place.

Candidates for office in the United States today increasingly use television to convey auras to the voters rather than policies. The Ford-Carter campaign illustrates this point quite clearly. The candidates' strategists came to the conclusion early in their campaign that in 1976 the voter's presidential choice would turn on perceptions of character. No major substantive issues — as civil rights or the war in Vietnam had in the 1960's — divided the candidates. The question posed to the voters in 1976 was, in effect, who is best able to restore confidence in government and faith in the American way after the terrible events of Watergate, the excesses of the CIA and the FBI, Vietnam, and civil disorder. What more appropriate way to convey aura and a personality than to use the television medium, where performers constantly project images and emotions? Not surprisingly, both Ford

and Carter eagerly accepted the offer of the League of Women Voters for a series of presidential debates on television to demonstrate this ability. Television did not make the 1976 elections an all but issueless campaign. The candidates themselves did, based on their reading of the electorate's yearnings. Campaign '76 turned on the stylistic issue of character, and television was used to project that character. When there was a need by the two candidates to offer some minimum requirement of issue-oriented politics, both Ford and Carter turned to other media, such as smaller weekly newspapers or ethnic radio stations. In these *narrowcasting* efforts — as opposed to the *broadcasting* techniques of television — the candidates were able to send specific information messages to specific target groups.

Anyone who doubts this analysis ought to listen to the radio materials the Carter campaign used in the last week before the election. There were two sets of campaign spots — one set for soul stations (black radio) in the South, and one set for country and western stations (white radio) in the South. These were high-content materials; on the soul stations, the Carter campaign spoke in a black preacher's voice about more jobs, more housing, better health care; on the country and western stations, the Carter spots used a white voice to talk about welfare reform, lower taxes, and fiscal responsibility in government. Toward the end of the campaign, the white commercials played on the themes of Deep South pride and the need to send a southerner to the White House to end the hundred-year exile of the region from national politics. "The spots just about waved the bloody shirt of the Civil War," a Carter man told me with a slightly embarrassed laugh. For a national political candidate, then, television campaigning may be a necessary — but not a sufficient — medium.

When television is watched from the consumer's perspective rather than the critic's, it is possible to see the relative political importance of nonpolitical programming such as daytime television. Daytime television is usually dismissed as "soap opera," so-called because the major sponsors are detergent makers who aim their laundry products at the predominantly female audience. The attention of this group is captured by dramatic serials of family life, which have multi-character plots typically revolving around a woman or group of women facing such family problems as adultery, impotence, alcoholism, runaway children, pregnancy, abortion, or divorce. This is highly politicized material because these are the kinds of everyday issues most people face in our society. SALT II, South Africa, and the Lebanese civil war may occupy the attention of the evening newscasts, but most people find it difficult to pay too much attention to these global concerns unless they are directly affected (American Jews by



developments in Israel or coffee drinkers by drought in Brazil, for example). And even then these events may be felt indirectly, abstractly. The dictator Joseph Stalin once observed, "Ten million deaths are a statistic; one death is a tragedy." Daytime television dramas have meaning to viewers precisely because they deal with "one life" or "one death" rather than with the statistics of tragedy. And, of course, the soaps treat this material in dramatic form.

One criticism of soap operas among intellectuals who go slumming infrequently on the daytime dial is that they are "boring." They do move with a snail's pace through the trauma of the moment — John's vasectomy or Mary's lesbian feelings. But there is a good reason for that. Larry Fraiberg, the president of Metromedia Television, is the man who gambled (and won) by bringing "Mary Hartman, Mary Hartman" to New York. In his view the soaps, including "Mary Hartman, Mary Hartman," are the one place where television treats issues slowly and continuously. "To change individual attitudes — even to exchange information — about drugs, sex, abortion, divorce, and child-raising may have to take a very long time," Fraiberg says, as earnest and handsome as a kindly doctor on "Days of Our Lives." "And it may have to be done in a humorous way."

The notion that television play is serious news during the day and that serious news is television play during the evening news is a somewhat perverse formulation. But the current place to find the validation of these ideas is in the nighttime television schedule. Prime-time television — the evening hours when 80 to 100 million Americans are grouped around their television sets — is unabashedly entertainment time. But when the careful viewer takes a closer look at certain entertainment programs, the same trends we have been talking about are evident. Two of the most intelligent and popular nighttime series of the past decade have been "All in the Family" and "The Mary Tyler Moore Show." "Family," for all its canned laugh lines, was built on bed-rock matters: husband-wife conflict and generational differences between parents and children. These bitter pills were sugar-coated with comic situations. Mary Tyler Moore's character, Mary Richards, was an unmarried woman in her early thirties who was dealing with the very real problems of identity and intimacy. These are emotional challenges every adult must face. Maturity, Freud suggested, means learning how to love and how to work, but it is not the kind of story that gets on the evening news, at least not yet.

If I were to make any predictions about the shape of television in the 1980's in America, I would guess that the lines separating "entertainment" and the "news" will become more and more blurred. Already we can see the

development of a kind of news-as-entertainment and entertainment-as-news in the latest prime-time programming. The Israeli raid on Entebbe was quickly made into a dramatic documentary for television (in fact, there were two made-for-television versions). The story of the Hanafi hostages in Washington and the life of Lee Harvey Oswald received similar treatment. Perhaps the best example of

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**America is becoming a nation of cynics, who believe that everything has been staged, or restaged, for their immediate entertainment.**

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this new television form was the serialization of Alex Haley's book *Roots*. The book itself, an account of one black American's efforts to trace his ancestry to its African genesis, may have taken certain dramatic liberties with history. The television version recast the narrative into further dramatic forms (including scenes of sex and violence and the use of well-known actors and actresses). As seen on television, "Roots" became symbolic history, much like the Ford-Carter debates were symbolic politics. It was not history but drama, and it succeeded as no other program had ever succeeded before; the largest audience in the history of television watched the program, discussed it, thought about it, and was moved by it.

Some cultural historians might be unhappy at these developments. It was bad enough to believe the theory that television was turning Americans into a nation of uncritical, video-tranquilized sheep. That idea has been exploded now by events over the past five years; the consumer movement and buyers' resistance to inferior products signify that Americans now examine advertising claims critically. (And Watergate showed no amount of flag waving and television talk by Richard Nixon could save him.) But in its place a more dismal notion may take hold: the idea that America is becoming a nation of cynics, who believe that everything has been staged, or restaged, for their immediate entertainment.

I doubt this. Television consumers are still involved with the world through their screens. The more they watch critically — and read, converse, and think — the more they are engaged in life and politics and society. The evening news may be journalistically superficial; the television series "Roots" may be historical fiction. But they are both connections to the present and to the past. As long as people in a democracy stay tuned in, even to such imperfect information, there is reason for hope.

## THE "WATERGATE EFFECT" AND THE FUTURE OF THE NEWS

The future, the comic Mort Sahl used to say, lies ahead. The critic's hope in monitoring the press — watching the watchers as they watch — is to encourage a systematic restructuring of the press institution. There is some evidence that criticism produces a degree of reform, but the critic's main contribution may be in slowly influencing underlying ideas and processes. Meanwhile changes are achieved directly by individual talents, acting and overcoming within the system.

Norman Sandler is part of the future of the press in America. He was graduated from college in 1975. His first full-time job was to cover the Iowa state legislature in Des Moines for United Press International. In the summer of 1977, Sandler spent a great deal of his time on the telephone, calling Washington, Manila, and Hong Kong. The UPI bureau in the American heartland had itself no immediate interest in his enterprise. After Sandler finished his normal nine-to-five duties reporting on the Iowa legislature, he spent his own time on his then current preoccupation — a tortuous, and conceivably dangerous, investigation of the activities of certain foreign intelligence agencies within the United States.

Sandler isn't a journalist anyone very far beyond the city limits of Des Moines is likely to know right now. But he plans to change all that. He doesn't mind working until two in the morning in pursuit of his story or spending his own money to travel 1,500 miles to New York for a rendezvous with a stranger who may or may not be a good source of information about the Korean intelligence service (KCIA) or the Iranian secret police (SAVAK). Like

hundreds of other young or unknown reporters around the United States, Sandler sees himself as an investigative reporter in the tradition of Bob Woodward and Carl Bernstein, the two *Washington Post* men who covered the Watergate scandals, and of Seymour Hersh, the *New York Times* reporter whose stories include the revelations about the My Lai massacre in Vietnam and the CIA's ties with Howard Hughes.

The "tradition" Sandler is working in is scarcely five years old, dating back to just about the time when Sandler, an undergraduate with an interest in politics, was trying to decide whether to go into journalism or the law. "Woodstein" decided for him — and for hundreds of other young men and women. The stories of governmental law breaking and the tragedy of the Vietnam War catapulted the obscure, hardworking, "shoe-leather" investigative reporter to star status — to the top ranks of contemporary folk heroes, the stuff of cultural mythology. Alan J. Pakula, the film director who turned Woodward and Bernstein's best-selling account of their work, *All the President's Men*, into an equally popular motion picture, saw the two reporters as the leading players in a modern version of the movie western. Their story, he said, resonated with "that American belief that a person or small group can with perseverance and hard work and obsessiveness take on a far more powerful, impersonal body and win ... if they have the truth on their side."

There is considerable poetry in this description. Woodward and Bernstein, after all, were employed by the *Washington Post*, less a weak and insubstantial reed than a major corporate institution in the life of Washington. They toppled not the government — the Republicans continued to run the executive branch after Richard Nixon's resignation until the voting public turned them out — but rather a cabal of 20 or so men at the top of an administration. This was hardly lawman Gary Cooper standing alone in the streets at "High Noon" or the solitary figure of Shane riding into town.

But the Woodstein myth does embody an essential truth. Both the Watergate and Vietnam revelations of the early 1970's signified an important break point in the relationship between the American government and the American media, particularly the Washington-based and national media. Before 1972 and 1973, it would be fair to characterize the big media — the three television networks, the wire services Associated Press and UPI, the news magazines Time and Newsweek, and the leading newspapers like the *Washington Post* and *The New York Times* — largely pacified members of the press

establishment. The big media, in general were, to use the phrases from the Vietnam days, "members of the team" and "with the program." If the symbolic journalistic event of the 1970's was the investigative reporting of Woodstein and Sy Hersh, then the symbolic journalistic event of the 1960's was *The New York Times's* decision not to print the story its reporters had obtained about the prospective Bay of Pigs invasion. Its editors, in consultation with the White House, feared publication would harm the operation. Douglass Cater's study of the Washington press in the early 1960's unapologetically called it "the fourth branch" of government.

The experience of Watergate and the Vietnam years seems to place the big media in opposition to big government — the so-called adversary role honored in constitutional textbooks. No less an authority than U.S. Supreme Court Justice Potter Stewart, speaking at the Yale Law School in 1974, declared that "the established press in the last 10 years, and particularly in the last two years, has performed precisely the function it was intended to perform by those who wrote the First Amendment to our Constitution." Press "adversaryism" became good business practice. The *Los Angeles Times* syndicate, selling a new column by Jack Cloherty and Bob Owens called "The Investigators," spoke of "the new breed of columnist, post-Vietnam, post-Watergate . . . our dynamic duo will be naming names, exposing exposes, uncovering cover ups."

Not everyone would agree that press practices conform with textbook theory. The writer Tom Bethel, in a long analysis in Harper's magazine, suggests that the big media are not an investigative adversary of the government but part of that government. The collective "Washington," as Bethel points out, is not a monolithic entity institutionally inclined toward wickedness and corruption "could it but get away with it." Rather it is a series of middling bureaucracies that are usually at war with each other. The press is not a dispassionately critical adversary, defending the people's right to know, standing watchfully on the ramparts of freedom and democracy, but yet another bureaucracy, dependent upon the real government for leaks, documents, and dissident opinion. This is the "fourth branch" of government theory, updated. In this view Woodward and Bernstein did not break open the Watergate story; bureaucratic institutions did, including the FBI, federal prosecutors, the grand jury, and the congressional committees. Woodstein was dependent upon these governmental sources for leaks and stories. Bethel, unfairly, implies the reporters were as much stenographers as investigators.

What is commonly referred to as the "new" investigative journalism is not actually new, and it is neither as exalted as Justice Stewart pictures it nor as routinized as Bethel suggests. Woodward, Bernstein, Hersh, and their colleagues, including the Norman Slanders out in small bureaus, take up a style that flourished in America at the turn of the century. They work in the older tradition of the muckrakers — Lincoln Steffens, Upton Sinclair, David Graham Phillips, Ida Tarbell, and Ray Stannard Baker, among others. Perhaps the lineage goes back even earlier to the social writings of Dickens in England as well as Marx and Engels. The American muckrakers (the word came from Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress* and the man who could look nowhere but downward to the filth on the floor) focused on the corruption of monopoly capitalism and its venal political machinery and set the characteristic style of investigative reporting. Their goal was not any revelation but an expose of wrongdoing by authority. The story that migrant workers received starvation wages was not investigative news to anyone over 10 years old; the story that public officials connived with that arrangement was.

Most critics would agree that there was no sustained period of journalistic muckraking between, say, 1913 and 1970 (although there were notable major individual scoops and exposes, important in themselves, by Heywood Broun, Clark Mollenhoff, Fred Cook, Drew Pearson, and later, Jack Anderson). Was it because corruption and chicanery had disappeared, and there was no official muck to rake? Not at all. On one level, the notion of objective reporting took over American journalism in the early twentieth century and helped improve much of the news coverage. Reporters were to become professionals and stay sober; they were not to pay for stories; they were not to impersonate law officials or anyone else in the pursuit of the news; they were to forsake sensationalism and cheap thrills. Above all they were not to take sides or slant their stories. Objective journalism had for its model the medical doctors: white-coated specialists describing pathologies as if through microscopes. This model corrected many unsavory practices in the press itself and marked a widely hailed progress from the partisan press of the nineteenth century (a press not unlike that in the majority of countries in the world today).

On another level, however, the decline in muckraking may have been also the result of a certain overarching consensus between media and government. World War I united the country, including the press, in a largely popular cause; the prosperity of the 1920's united the country, and press, in an era of jazz and good times; the

depression of the 1930's, the global war, also popular, in the 1940's, the cold war of the 1950's and early 1960's — all closed the majority ranks of American society. Only a few pariahs questioned the general consensus — H.L. Mencken in World War I and I.F. Stone in the 1950's. By the early 1970's, however, much of that unity was gone and, with it, the compliant press.

The new zeal for investigative reporting is probably a cause for more joy than alarm, although some critics fear that the press already is too powerful and all but unaccountable except to public opinion — which the press helps mold in the first instance. But this view overlooks at least three facts of contemporary journalistic life.

First, investigative reporting is still the exception rather than the rule, even among the best and the brightest of the American media. ABC, CBS, and NBC do little regular investigative reporting. Public television's 200 stations do no better. The media conglomerates that own most of the newspapers in small towns in the United States have been, by and large, toothless watchdogs of the public interest. The exceptions have been the Knight-Ridder newspaper chain, especially its outlets in Miami and Philadelphia, and the Times-Mirror Company, publishers of the *Los Angeles Times* and *Newsday*.

Second, there is a long list of things that investigative reporters cannot do. Most newspapers will not as a rule permit reporters to pay for stories, tips, or other information of any kind. Nicholas Gage of *The New York Times* is the investigative reporter of organized crime whose exploits made him the model for the CBS television drama series, "The Andros Targets." As Gage points out, journalists have none of the legal authority of a police officer, district attorney, or FBI agent; the reporter "carries no gun or badge, has no power to issue subpoenas or obtain a search warrant and cannot grant immunity in exchange for information. Anyone who doesn't want to talk to him can slam the door in his face." Gage and other investigative reporters acknowledge that they are dependent for information in part from their contacts within the government bureaucracy. In that sense at least, investigative reporters are not adversaries but accomplices of government.

Third, time, money, and energy set limits on reporting. There is a finite investment that investigative reporters in daily news organizations can make in any given story, no matter how critical the cause. By no means does all investigative reporting feed on tips and government informants. Woodward and Bernstein were

not the passive receivers of leaked documents. They labored long hours to produce their own leads. (Anyone who wants to understand how the investigative reporter works should read their account in *All the President's Men*.) The most celebrated case of a so-called passive expose was the publication of the Pentagon Papers. Daniel Ellsberg, a former government analyst who turned against the war in Vietnam, did indeed hand over classified documents to Neil Sheehan of *The New York Times*. But Sheehan, as a result of his excellent coverage of Indochina as a combat correspondent and his earlier stories of the American involvement in Vietnam, had become well known to every careful reader of the war news. As the French physiologist Claude Bernard once said, "Chance favors the prepared mind."

Distinctions should be made in the styles of investigative reporting. The kind of work done by Woodstein, Hersh, and Gage might generally be called "source" reporting because it is based on wide contacts and the cultivation of insiders. A second type of investigative reporting might be called "cause" reporting, to denote an investigation of expose intended to serve some specific point of view. Most of this kind of work is not done by daily journalists at all; the canons of objectivity tend to rule against it. Among the most notable cause reporting has been the work of Ralph Nader on automobile safety and the writings of Rachel Carson on the misuse of pesticides. More recent examples include the late writer Paul Jacobs's dispatches on Chile for *Newsday*. A third kind of investigative reporting might be called "analytic" (or "computer-assisted"). The work of reporters Donald L. Bartlett and James B. Steele at the *Philadelphia Inquirer* stands as a model of this type. Leonard Downie tells how the two men spent one whole autumn documenting their investigation of the near-criminal state of the criminal justice system in Philadelphia. Bartlett and Steele, he writes, "went through records of 10,000 criminal indictments, police complaints, warrants, arrest sheets, bail applications, and court hearings, 20,000 pages of courtroom testimony, and 1,000 miscellaneous psychiatric evaluations, probation reports, and hospital and prison data. Out of all this material, they culled the completed cases of 1,034 criminal defendants charged with murder, rape, robbery, or aggravated assault, and they methodically noted from these records, 42 different pieces of information about each defendant and his case. This information was then coded onto 9618 IBM cards and put into a computer.

"From the resulting 4,000 pages of computer printouts, plus their own visits to the criminal courtrooms



in city hall and lengthy interviews with defendants, crime victims, prosecutors, defense lawyers, judges, and other court personnel, the two reporters . . . fashioned a portrait of local criminal courts 'in far worse shape — practicing subtle, wide-ranging forms of discrimination and routinely dispensing unequal justice — than even their harshest critics would have guessed.' These findings were presented to readers of the *Philadelphia Inquirer* in February 1973 in a week-long 25,000 word series of articles, supplemented by graphic charts and tables drawn from the computer-analyzed data."

These three styles of investigative reporting are not pure types. Reporters may work with both their secret sources and the public archives. They may have a point of view, or a cause to advance, although most daily journalists are more interested in the process of competition — the scent, the chase, beating the opposition — than they are in substance ("getting" the Republicans, or Democrats).

To say that there are different kinds of investigative reporting is not to say that one is superior to the other. American journalism — and American society — needs all three kinds. Unhappily there is still much that has to be investigated, and exposed, and not all that many reporters on the assignment. Critics ought not be blinded by the financial success and folklore status of a relative handful of reporters. The high-quality investigative work done by *The New York Times* and the *Washington Post* is not typical of the national media. For that matter the work of Woodstein, Hersh, and Gage is not even typical of the work of the majority of the reporters on their own papers. Most of the rest of us harvest the daily news crop on a nine-to-five basis and then go home.

The commitment to investigative reporting tends to be in direct proportion to the depth of feeling about the inequalities and injustices of American society. Reporters can run with the hounds (their normal "objective" position) or hold with the hares. One day a year the prize committees of editors and publishers meet to honor those few reporters who regard their work as something more than ego or prestige or entertainment or business, who do take seriously the textbook talk about "the ramparts of freedom." Then these proprietors return home to their own offices, where too few of their decisions are aimed at creating the conditions for a truly vigorous, free press the other 364 days of the year.

Investigative journalism has never been, and is not now, a full-time preoccupation of the press. And it is still a

duty that the press treats with ambivalence. Early in 1976, Daniel Schorr, then of CBS News, arranged for the publication of a suppressed congressional report on illegal and excessive CIA activities. He gave the report to the *Village Voice* in New York; Schorr himself (rather than the suppressors of the report in the House of Representatives) became the target of criticism. The House Ethics Committee called Schorr to testify. Schorr, an aggressive, abrasive, and controversial journalist, became the center of attention rather than the CIA. "Killer Schorr," the ex-CIA director Richard Helms called him, adding what the bolder newspapers referred to as a "ten-letter vulgarity." Granted Schorr has an ego as wide as Pennsylvania Avenue, but there is nothing in the First Amendment that says journalists have to be honorable, decent, loyal, responsible, or kind or that they should possess any of the other Boy Scout virtues. We can be a ten-letter vulgarity. The courts, bless them, say we don't have to be likable — just free, and others are free to criticize and condemn us. Journalists don't even have to be young and good looking.

Equally important, there is nothing in the First Amendment saying that only *The New York Times* or one of the other national newspapers has the constitutional right to inform the public of government misdeeds. The *Washington Post*, in particular, became terribly stuffy in its news stories about Schorr's choice of a trendy "left-liberal" New York publication. With journalist friends like that, the First Amendment needs all the help it can get from the courts and from the public.

The courts and the public, for their part, need constantly to be reminded of the importance of the First Amendment. A press that is honorable, decent, responsible, honest — and free — would be an excellent reminder, and endorsement as well, of the founding fathers' wisdom. Critics, in their writings, teachings, and by their own example, ought to keep summoning the press, the courts, and the public to the cause of robust and responsible journalism. In that way the press watchers become part of the future of the press in America as well.

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# An Unlikely Journalist

By David DeJean

*A newspaper is a collection of half-injustices  
Which, bawled by boys from mile to mile,  
Spreads its curious opinion  
To a million merciful and sneering men,  
While families cuddle the joys of the fireside  
When spurred by tale of dire lone agony.  
A newspaper is a court  
Where every one is kindly and unfairly tried  
By a squalor of honest men.  
A newspaper is a market  
Where wisdom sells its freedom  
And melons are crowned by the crowd.  
A newspaper is a game  
Where his error scores the player victory  
While another's skill wins death.  
A newspaper is a symbol;  
It is feckless life's chronicle,  
A collection of loud tales  
Concentrating eternal stupidities,  
That in remote ages lived unaltered,  
Roaming through a fenceless world.*

S.C., 1899

Stephen Crane, according to the account of one of his contemporaries, was an unlikely journalist: "He hated to ask questions, got no glow of adventure in landing a news story, resented the importance of policemen, and was insulted at the ruthlessness of copy readers, who slew his words . . . His writing was painfully slow from a newspaper standpoint . . . In short, he had every quality that made reporting a misery."

Yet, during all his brief adult life, Stephen Crane reported for a living. He began in 1888 at age 16, working summers in Asbury Park, New Jersey, for a brother who was correspondent for New York papers. At 19 he was contributing pieces to the *New York Tribune* and other papers while writing *Maggie: A Girl of the Streets*.

That first novel, published in 1893, was ignored. The public wasn't ready for either its realistic style or its disturbing subject matter. The following year his next novel, *The Red Badge of Courage* did better when it first appeared as a syndicated newspaper serial.

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In 1895 *The Red Badge* was put between covers; Crane's first volume of poetry was published; and he traveled to Mexico for a newspaper syndicate. In 1896 he tried to get into Spanish Cuba as revolution brewed, but he got only as far as being shipwrecked off the coast of Florida, an experience he described in his most famous short story, "The Open Boat."

Next he attempted to get to Crete, and in 1897 arrived in the Mediterranean area in time to cover the war between Greece and Turkey for two papers — William Randolph Hearst's *New York Journal* and England's *Westminster Gazette*. Even though *The Red Badge* was a success, and Crane was something of a literary lion, his reporting from the front was less than distinguished.

The next year, finally in Cuba, he covered the Spanish-American War — first for the *New York Herald*, then again for Hearst. During this period he wrote some of his best fiction: the short novel *The Monster*, and the stories "The Blue Hotel" and "The Bride Comes to Yellow Sky."

Later, when Crane was living in England with his common-law wife, he was in poor health and in need of money. He wrote prodigiously and with mixed results, according to the critics. He turned out novels, stories, articles, and in 1899, another collection of poems, *War Is Kind*, was published. In 1900 he died of tuberculosis, at the age of 28.

In the way of many writers, he left a great deal of work behind. As perhaps only a newspaper-poet could, he left in particular the verse reproduced here from *War Is Kind*.

Stephen Crane's poetry is disillusioned and sardonic — a jeer at a deity who won't show itself and at puny people who presume to fill God's place in His absence. But the jeer was a mask for a romantic who always hoped and searched, even in the lowest places of the earth — the slums and the battlefields — to find something better in God and in humanity.

However, Crane is right in his poem about newspapers. Anybody who knows the press recognizes that the poet's catalog of its failings is far from complete. But behind his cynicism is something unspoken, as true for us now as it was 80 years ago for Stephen Crane: no matter that often our best efforts can turn out to be twisted, useless, and ugly — occasionally we manage to get things right. We can do good. There is hope.



# Uphill All The Way

By Alden Whitman

In the perspective of the last 50 years, newspaper work in the United States has changed profoundly. Some changes have been beneficial to reporters, photographers, deskmen, and editors in the practice of their profession; but some are of questionable merit and pose troublesome issues that transcend the newspaper business.

There are five areas in which, it seems to me, change has been most marked: the technology of newsgathering, writing and production of newspapers; the conditions of work and pay; the employment of women and minorities; the quality of coverage and writing; and the concentration of newspaper ownership into fewer and fewer hands. There are, of course, other areas of change that some may consider more significant: the proliferation of news magazines, and advent of photo-journalism; the inroads into newspaper reading habits made by radio and television. But as a newspaper cobbler, I will stick to my last.

**I** Having been introduced to newspaper work on a thriving paper that received its United States and world reports by Morse code — when the telegraphers actually used a Prince Albert tobacco tin for sound amplification as they typed copy on their Underwood No. Fives — I have never ceased to marvel at more advanced means of copy transmission.

Although teleprinters have supplanted telegraphers

and the wonderful sound of Morse is heard no more, the tap-tap-tap of typewriters persisted in city rooms across the country until a year or so ago. Now those machines are being phased out in favor of electronic gizmos, by means of which reporters and deskmen create and shape stories silently — and without paper. Apart from the hazards to eyesight inherent in these beasts, they strike me as portending the demise of classy newspaper writing.

I cannot conceive how it is possible to compose an intricate news or news-feature story without thought or reflection upon its structure and wording. There are the inevitable false starts, leads that improve with reworking, paragraphs that brighten with polishing. Traditionally, a story of any degree of complexity and class was the result of an almost mystical interaction between the writer, his typewriter, and a pile of copypaper. Now this harmony is on the way out.

Electronic writing accounts, I believe, for the decline of newspaper prose so evident in the country's newspapers. More and more stories are being written with one sentence per paragraph. Words are employed repetitiously, mindless adjectives are tossed like radishes garnishing a salad in which the lettuce is all iceberg. The anguish and pleasure is being taken out of writing.

Writing on a piece of paper in a typewriter somehow lends an illusion of permanence to one's prose. Writing noiselessly on a screen, on the other hand, reinforces the temporality of one's endeavors. Push the wrong button, God help you, and the words disappear forever.

In a city room, there are limits to the benefits of technology — assuming that reporters, deskmen, and editors are eager to produce stories both informative and literate. I have an awful feeling that electronic journalism encourages its practitioners, even the most idealistic, to settle for less and less.

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Perceived from the outside, the newspaper industry has become "a very unusual" business. A Wall Street analyst said this year, "It's principally two distinctly different businesses at opposite ends of the economy. You have newspapers where there are no real assets. There are just people. They go down in the elevator at five o'clock. Then you have this business with all these assets — the big paper-printing machines with a few chaps watching all the newsprint come out." If the Visigoths of electronic progress could only figure out how to do it, a newspaper would be put out without people — or with only a handful.

**II.** Over the last 50 years, the labor conditions and the wages of newspaper workers have improved enormously, although they still fall far short of what they ought to be. Consider: In 1928, the six-day, 72-hour work week was normal across the land; wages rarely exceeded \$25 a week; and the concept of job security was only an indistinct blur on the horizon.

The notably shorter hours and higher pay that are enjoyed today have resulted from the bold and selfless struggles of scores of newspaper workers acting through their own trade union, the American Newspaper Guild (now The Newspaper Guild). Every step forward was made in battles with publishers who cried out that unionization meant their economic doom.

Newspaper workers, often obliged to go on strike at considerable personal sacrifice, inevitably engaged in some soul-searching. Many felt demeaned to be classified as workers at all, which explains the choice of the word "guild" to describe their union. They considered themselves professional people, and thus somehow different from printers or pressmen, or those they sometimes disdainfully referred to as working on the "commercial" side of the paper.

Publishers were quick to exploit these false divisions in the ranks of newspaper workers by playing favorites among reporters and editors, and by picking off careerists with promises of bigger by-lines or extra freebies. Skillfully using such tactics, publishers were able to stall off for many years practices generally accepted in other industries such as the dues check-off and the union shop.

In all too many instances, the publishers have succeeded in weakening the Guild. The Guild itself has lost much of its earlier *elan* and its centrality in the lives of its members. For one thing, younger newspaper workers have lost touch with the struggles of the 30's and 40's;

and, for another, publishers have learned to operate a paternal system that rewards just enough workers to encourage the rest to believe that they, too, can catch an occasional brass ring.

Since World War II, workers entering the newspaper industry have a higher degree of college and university training than those of a previous era. And today, of course, virtually every newsperson has an academic degree, and many have even attended journalism "schools." Collectively, their presumptive level of learning and culture is at a record high. Less enviable, however, is their amount of sophistication. For every Seymour Hersh or Gloria Emerson, there appear to be a dozen placemen or careerists, men and women with value-free consciences.

This state of affairs has resulted in poor or fragmentary reportage of significant events or movements of our time — two instances occur to me. One involves the considerable sentiment against United States involvement in the nuclear arms race, which surfaced in conjunction with the United Nations special session on disarmament. Not only was this meeting disgracefully under-reported in newspapers across the country, but also neglected was the associated popular expression of concern over American nuclear arms policy. The material for stories was at hand, but where were the enterprising reporters to handle it? Equally poorly reported is the running story over nuclear power plants. When a major confrontation occurs, as one did at the Seabrook site in New Hampshire, the dramatic aspects of the story get covered. Yet when the issue is "quiet," it might just as well not exist.

There are scores of other examples, all egregious. The Pentagon gets the least coverage of any agency in Washington, yet it accounts for the largest single slice of Federal spending, and ranks with the CIA in terms of inefficiency and secrecy. Except for a few features now and then, stories on urban policy, Indian affairs, agriculture, the National Institute of Health, the Office of Education, minority problems, the Federal Reserve — continue to be indifferently reported.

Where is it written that editors alone decide what is worth covering? Where is it written that city hall or the White House are the best beats in town? Where is it written that reporters are creatures of their editors? Despite the prevalence of college degrees, reporters often fail to make the most of events around them; they are too often lazy and superficial; they are unwilling to be outsiders, to be tough, to work for their readers. In this respect not much has changed in 50 years. Yes, conditions of work are better, wages are higher, and professionalism as measured by formal education has increased — but good gut reporting remains a scarce commodity.

**III.** Although bleak ideological conformity is the uniform of most newspaper workers, great strides have been made during the last half century to change the sexist and lily-white composition of the work force. Until the last 10 or 15 years, the city room was a white male preserve, while off in the purdah of society and food news sat "the ladies of the press." And near the door, on some papers such as *The New York Times*, sat one black reporter.

Long overdue and at last, women and minorities have been admitted to the ranks of the field hands. Their exclusion in the first place was irrational, but feminism and other events of the 60's conspired to bring newspaper offices into the 20th century — at least part of the way. At the outset women were paid less than men for equal work, and black reporters were expected to cover black stories. Now, however, equal pay for equal work is the general rule, and news coverage is color-blind.

The victory for common sense, while estimable, is not yet a Waterloo for white male supremacy. That will have to wait until there are women as city editors, national editors, and foreign editors — and, yes, until there are women and black managing editors. Personally, I can't wait until a black woman supersedes Abe Rosenthal at *The New York Times*. Only then will I be convinced that justice shall have triumphed in small part.

**IV.** As measured by its literacy, wit, and insight, the quality of writing has improved over a half century, particularly in criticism on metropolitan papers. Theater and screen reviewing in New York, for example, is more informed and better expressed today than it used to be; it contains more analysis and more skeptical bite than critics of the 30's managed to muster.

For one thing, critics are better prepared educationally and intellectually for their function; and for another, newspaper readers are brighter about cultural matters than they once were. Also, newspaper critics have had to face up to the competition from reviewers in the so-called alternative press — *The Village Voice* in New York, for example — and in such general-circulation magazines as *The New Yorker* and *New York*. It is no longer possible to toss off a few sweeping statements and call them criticism.

Outside of New York, popular interest in culture — a sizzling phenomenon since World War II — has bred a corps of lively and informed critics in such once-barren

outposts of civilization as Toledo, Denver, and Milwaukee. Not only in the area of films and the theater, but also in music and art, the reviewers and critics tend to be of high quality. Their coverage is superior — light years away from what it was 50 years ago. At that time a happenstance Connecticut reporter named Whitman was sent out to review a Josef Hofmann concert or a Morris Carnovsky play on the unlikely supposition that a college man ought to know something about the arts.

Another branch of criticism, book reviewing, has been neglected. Except for canned blurbs put out by the syndicates, book reviews are nonexistent in all but the larger metropolitan centers. True, authors on promotion tours are often interviewed for a quickie feature — most frequently, I am told, by reporters who have not bothered to read the writer's book.

Aside from the arts, I find the quality of news-writing across the country banal. In New York, my own bailiwick, only *The Wall Street Journal* contains consistently excellent writing. *The Daily News* is a string of clichés and *The Times*, which has the resources to be good, sparkles only with the likes of Israel Shenker, Craig Claiborne, and Mimi Sheraton. *The Times*, I believe, suffers from a lack of competition, provided by *The Herald Tribune* in its glory days of the 30's and 40's, when those master rewriters, Bob Peck and Inky Blackmen, made words dance.

I am not the first to remark on the poor quality of New York's local coverage, which should be an exemplar for the rest of the country. A conscientious reader of any of the three papers (or all of them) would be hard put to know what happened yesterday in Manhattan, seemingly a city without intellectual discourse of any kind. Clubs, if they exist, do not meet; lecturers, if they talk, are not heard; social events, if they take place, are held in obscurity; there is no life in the black and Hispanic communities. What is missing from the papers is the pulsebeat of city life, so admirably captured when New York had more newspapers.

If local coverage is poor in New York, it is dreadful elsewhere. I happen to live in an Edenic community — or so I am led to believe by my newspaper. It is a place where no one ever goes bankrupt, no one ever sues anybody for anything, no one is ever divorced, no one ever sells shoddy goods or fleeces the sheep. It is the land of Cockayne as envisioned by Peter Breughel the Elder. Yet the columns of my newspaper are always full.

As I read newspapers from across the land, I see junk food for the most part — lots of aroma, little substance. I am convinced that local coverage is in the hands of graduates of Dunkin' Donuts College, with postgraduate degrees from McDonald's.

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**V** The effects of absentee ownership have blighted newspaper people increasingly over the last 50 years. The Hearst chain-gang system that dominated the 20's and 30's has been considerably modified; more and more papers are coming under the ownership of fewer and fewer corporations. Within the Hearst system (like that of Scripps-Howard and others) each paper was a likeness, with minor modifications, of the flagship paper. In modern times, however, that practice has all but been abandoned in favor of local coloration and absentee bookkeeping.

In order to show a good profit, this has led to a noticeable tendency to do things on the cheap. The profit, not the product, is too often the owner's measure of his newspaper. When a paper in Florida has its owners in New York, the pages tend to run lean in news matter and heavy in the ads. With very few exceptions, such newspapers are not likely to be provocative in their coverage or in their editorial policies.

Growing with the shift in the ownership pattern of daily papers has been the suburban press, a weakling 50 years ago. The well-known flight of middle-class whites from cities has engendered boom times for suburban

papers. Increasingly, however, these are not independent, but links in some corporate chain. Thus, the papers in suburban Chicago, for example, are owned by just a few companies, and the same is true for New York.

What is truly worrisome about the concentration of press ownership in relatively few corporations is that this situation tends to put a lock on meaningful press freedom. In the days of the founders, it was relatively simple and inexpensive to start and sustain a paper; now, however, it is difficult and costly. How much more difficult and expensive it will be to buck an entrenched corporation remains to be seen. Monopolies are never easy to budge and I suspect that monopoly power, as exemplified in corporate control, does not bode well for press freedom.

If my views are more saturnine than roseate, it is because I would like to see the United States a land of feisty newspapers, written and edited by men and women of independent mind and skeptical spirit, to whom nothing is sacred except their responsibility to report their times forthrightly. After all, a reporter's ultimate employer is not the publisher of the newspaper, but rather its readers; they should be served with holy zeal. By doing so, every reporter will uphold the First Amendment. □

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## Beleaguered Bill Minor

By James S. Featherston

It is a lazy Saturday morning in Mississippi, and normally it would be a day of much needed rest for Bill Minor, but instead he is driving to his small newspaper shop in a deteriorating warehouse district of Jackson. The reason for coming to the office this day is that Minor is to have done to him what he has so often done to others — Minor is to be interviewed. It is something that has happened quite frequently in recent months because Minor, a dedicated, crusading newspaperman, is becoming rather famous, though not rich, in his chosen profession.

As Minor parks his car, his clear blue eyes sweep the exterior of his small brick building. The windows, three times the targets of flying bricks, are boarded up, and the bricks at one corner of the building are charred, the result

of a flaming cross. Minor, a trimly built man with salt-and-pepper hair, enters his cluttered office, takes his seat behind a desk that is buried under several inches of paper, and talks about his triumphs (some) and tribulations (many).

Wilson F. "Bill" Minor, who was the Mississippi correspondent for the *New Orleans Times-Picayune* for 29 years, has been for the past two years the full-time editor and publisher of the *Capital Reporter*, which, as he puts it, comes out "weekly but never weakly" in Jackson. A gaudy newspaper typographically, it features big, bold headlines and generous splashes of often lurid color. Usually the contents are just as sensational.

The 56-year-old Minor specializes in hard-hitting investigative reporting, and his brand of journalism has



doubled the newspaper's circulation, from 3,000 to 6,000 in the past two years. Wrong-doing "sacred cows" go through the wringer that is Minor's typewriter and come out looking like hamburger meat. Corrupt politicians, indiscreet businessmen, Ku Kluxers, underworld figures and assorted other miscreants are similarly treated.

Inevitably, Minor has accumulated powerful enemies, some of whom control advertising now denied him. Investigative journalism, Minor has found out the hard way, may be soul-satisfying, but it can also be physically dangerous and financially disastrous. Minor, however, has managed to survive despite threats, advertising boycotts, smashed windows, and the burning cross that damaged his shop and almost set it on fire.

Minor's work and woes have attracted national and even some international attention. Last March Minor received the Elijah Lovejoy Award for journalistic coverage from Southern Illinois University. This complements the Louis Lyons Award presented to him by the Nieman Fellows at Harvard in 1966 for "conscience and integrity" in covering the civil rights struggle. He has been featured in articles in *Time*, several other magazines, and a number of newspapers, including the *Manchester Guardian* in England. He and his newspaper also have been spotlighted on the NBC "Today" show and "NBC Nightly News."

"Mississippi is a better state and Jackson a better city because Wilson F. 'Bill' Minor has been socking it to fast-and-loose bankers, crooked politicians, the Ku Klux Klan and others," wrote syndicated columnist Carl T. Rowan. And Jack Anderson put it this way: "Thomas Jefferson had men like Bill Minor in mind when he declared that if he had to choose between a government without newspapers or newspapers without a government, he would take his morning paper."

Awards and praise, unfortunately, are like by-lines. They are nice to have, but they do not pay the overhead, and this is a nagging concern for Minor. He is steadily losing money.

His investigative articles have cost him lucrative advertising accounts. Mississippi Power & Light Company, for instance, which advertises in every other weekly in the state, stopped buying space in the *Capital Reporter* when Minor revealed that the utility company had entertained members of the regulatory Public Service Commission on a duck-hunting trip.

Minor lost the account of one leading bank when he linked its board chairman to a federal jury-fixing case that resulted in the indictment of a court clerk. He lost the advertising of another big bank, in a case that was covered up by authorities, when he revealed that police had confiscated several pounds of marijuana at the home of the

bank president. Other stories have drawn considerable heat, including one in which a state judge was forced to resign after Minor revealed that the official had been illegally practicing law on the side. Minor also wrote about the resurgence of the Ku Klux Klan in Jackson.

As a result of Minor's vigilant reporting, the windows

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of his building have been smashed three times in the past year. Because he cannot afford to replace them, he has simply boarded them up. During one of the brick-throwing incidents, a typesetter was stolen. The burning cross set up outside his building ignited some exterior wiring, and this cost Minor \$360 in repairs. If an off-duty fireman had not spotted the flames in passing, and reported the fire, the damage would have been extensive.

A child of the Depression, Minor grew up in a succession of small South Louisiana towns including Hammond, where he was born, and Bogalusa, where he finished high school. His father, a linotype operator, worked at various newspaper and printing shops, and was frequently unemployed.

"It was a struggle, a bad struggle," recalls Minor. "If it hadn't been for the WPA, we wouldn't have made it."

By the time Minor reached high school, journalism as a career was the farthest thing from his mind. Because of his father's difficulty in finding steady employment, Minor was disenchanted.

"I had really been turned off of newspapers by my father's experiences," he says. "For one thing, he had the curse of many printers — he was addicted to the bottle. And he was out of work an awful lot. But what did turn me on to journalism was an English teacher at Bogalusa High School named Eleanor Ott. She made the greatest impact on my life, professionally, of anyone."

After graduating from high school in 1939, Minor got his first newspaper job that summer as a cub reporter with the *Bogalusa Enterprise*.

"I covered my first assignments on a bicycle. Bogalusa is a hilly town and if I didn't develop anything else, I developed a good set of legs," he grins. "But I got some good experience. I learned how to cover political meetings and governmental bodies."

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Minor worked his way through Tulane University, which at that time had a journalism department. He first worked for the old *Item* as a night watchman and ad taker, and later became a part-time reporter for the *Times-Picayune*. He graduated from Tulane in 1943 and received a commission in the Navy. During some of the bloodiest battles of World War II, he served as gunnery officer on a destroyer.

After the war, in January 1946, Minor returned to the *Times-Picayune* as a full-time reporter, working nights off the city desk. In the summer of 1947, he was sent to Mississippi to man the newspaper's one-man bureau in Jackson. Soon Mississippi politicians and others discovered that Minor was not a gentle house cat but rather a fierce

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### **An underworld source once told him that a 'contract' was out on his life.**

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journalistic watchdog. One of the articles focused national attention on a secret police organization called the Mississippi Bureau of Investigation, and caused its demise. After Minor wrote a series about shocking conditions in the state's mental institutions, legislation was enacted to improve them. Another of Minor's articles revealed that a black man had been wrongly convicted of a crime.

"The man had already served three years of his prison term when I found out about it. I dug into the case and came up with evidence proving his innocence," Minor recalls. "The governor let the man out of the penitentiary, and the legislature even appropriated \$2,500 for the wrongful conviction. They had never done that before, and haven't since, as far as I know."

During the long, hot civil rights battles in Mississippi, Minor wrote many other stories of significance.

"I reported the small number of blacks who were registered to vote in Mississippi, and the way they were treated when they did attempt to register," he says. "I spent years collecting information on black registration, and I was able to compile a statewide figure which, incidentally, was used by the Justice Department, the Southern Regional Council, and others working on voter registration.

"I also did stories on the great disparity between the money allocated to black teachers as compared to white teachers," Minor adds. "The articles showed that whites were getting from four to one times the funds, and that in the distribution of funds for libraries, the ratio was something like 10 to one. These figures were later used in the passage of the 1964 Civil Rights Act."

As chairman of the Freedom of Information Committees of the Louisiana-Mississippi Associated Press Association and the Society of Professional Journalists — Sigma Delta Chi, Minor's efforts helped pass an open meetings law in Mississippi. "There is nothing to compare with the satisfaction of writing a story that has an impact on society and results in changes being made," he beams.

In 1973 Minor purchased the *Northside Reporter*, an ailing neighborhood newspaper with approximately 120 subscribers. He altered its direction and changed its name to the *Capital Reporter*.

"The idea was to develop this into a citywide newspaper, an alternative to the monopoly-run Jackson dailies," Minor says. (The Hederman family owns the only two dailies in the city.)

Minor hired others to run his newspaper for the first three years. Then, when the *Times-Picayune* closed its Jackson bureau in 1976, he elected to stay in the city and devote himself full-time to the *Capital Reporter*. Since then, he and his small staff have been coming up with sensational investigative articles weekly. On occasion Minor has rushed into print with poorly researched articles that have misfired, but he has been on target more often than not.

Minor is keeping his newspaper afloat with money he receives from his column, "Eyes on Mississippi" (see page 23 for sample column), which is syndicated to 16 newspapers, from a weekly commentary he writes for a television station, and for work he does as a stringer for *The New York Times* and *Newsweek*. His wife, Gloria, who went back to college after their three sons were grown, helps out with her salary as a researcher.

Financial assistance also comes from unexpected sources. A businessman in Defiance, Ohio, who said he did "not like to see anyone picked on," sent Minor \$1,000. "Friends of Bill Minor" raised about \$500 for him at a wine-and-cheese party. The staffs of two newspapers, one on the Mississippi Gulf Coast, and one in South Florida, collected money for him.

So, even though Minor has received numerous telephone threats, his home has occasionally been put under police surveillance, and an underworld source once told him that a "contract" was out on his life, he remains a true Mississippi muckraker, and continues to do what he has always done — print the truth as he sees it.

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# Getting Rid of Bad Officials Tough Job Here

By Wilson F. Minor

What can citizens in Mississippi stuck with a bad public official expect in the way of help from the state in getting rid of him? Very little, it seems.

That point was demonstrated once again the past week when Gov. Cliff Finch refused to suspend Pearl River County Tax Collector-Assessor Hal Breland from office because of a \$20,500 shortage in his accounts.

The request for suspending Breland had come jointly from Atty. Gen. A.F. Summer and State Auditor Hamp King under a provision of the 1890 constitution about defaulting tax collectors.

Finch's reason that "it had never been done before" by any governor in the 87 years existence of that power seems rather shallow. No president of the United States had ever resigned before under threat of impeachment until Richard M. Nixon stepped out of the most powerful office in the world in 1974.

## NO NEWCOMER

Breland is no newcomer to the art of discrepancies and shortages in office revealed by state audits. His record goes back to 1972 when he came up \$13,771.89 short. A cash count the next year showed him \$15,614 short. Again, in 1975, a \$24,953 shortage.

Yet with all of this information before them, the citizens of Pearl River County re-elected Breland in 1975, and although he was delayed for a while taking office, he went back into his job.

Finch's side-stepping of the re-

quest to put Breland on the shelf pending a further investigation of his accounts stems from the time-honored code in Mississippi that an official once elected cannot be removed no matter what he has done.

The biggest surprise of the Breland affair is that Summer and King stuck their necks out to the extent of seeking the suspension of a county official. For many years, they have treated county officials with so much deference that it has become a joke around the state.

(Some say Summer and King have been like the two skeletons in a closet ... one said to the other "if either of us had any guts, we would get out of here.")

King, who apparently is not running for re-election in 1979, has been trying to get a little tougher the past couple of years by sending his meager staff of field investigators into a few counties to mount information against miscreants in county offices. His policy has been to turn the information over to local district attorneys to prosecute.

## BARE OF CONVICTIONS

So far, the record has been bare of any convictions, the latest setback coming in Wayne County where an ex-supervisor and a wheeler-dealer culvert salesman went scot-free despite the impressive amount of evidence gathered by King's investigators.

The attorney general has the power to step into local prosecutions if he really wants to, but Summer has

consistently shied away from that. Strangely, the only time Summer has turned loose his big battery of assistants to prosecute a public official was in the case of former Highway Commissioner E.L. Boteler.

Citizens in Mississippi can't lay all the blame on their state officials for failing to help them get rid of malevolent public officials.

There is a remedy which they can use at home — a public officials recall law that was pushed through by Gov. J.P. Coleman with much fanfare back in 1956.

Coleman had staked his administration program on passage of the recall law, contending that the people had no protection locally against corrupt officials once they were elected.

## NEVER USED

The recall law says that the governor can remove from office any elective county official if petitioned by 30 percent of the qualified voters of the county demanding the official's removal. In the case of state or district officials, the petition must be signed by 51 percent of the qualified voters. A recall council would then be formed to determine if the official will be removed.

Those are pretty tough requirements to be met, but aroused citizens shouldn't find it insurmountable if they have courageous leadership.

But the great irony is that although the law has been in effect for more than 20 years, it has never been used successfully by any county or local district in the state.

# Teaching Journalism

By Melvin Mencher

The time is the mid-60's, the place the annual convention of college journalists in Washington, D.C. The speaker is the editor of one of the local newspapers, and the audience consists of students and some of their faculty advisers.

The editor finishes his talk and submits to questions. A student asks what he thinks of journalism school as preparation for a career with a newspaper such as his. A waste of time, the editor replies. Major in history, economics, political science. Not journalism. Then find a job with a small newspaper and work your way up. Why sit in a classroom and talk about journalism when the way to learn it is to do it?

The liberal arts majors applaud the speaker and their own sagacity. The journalism majors are distraught and look accusingly at their advisers: those who can, do; those who can't, teach.

Such scenes are unusual today. Journalism education is accepted by most editors, who find it more economical to hire a youngster already trained than to spend six months seasoning a history major. Properly trained, a journalism graduate can walk out of a classroom into a

meeting of the local board of education, understand that the plan under discussion could mean an increase in the mill levy, and fashion a lead about the possibility of property taxes going up.

Better training is available to journalism students now because of the infusion of experienced journalists into teaching. Without apologies to the academic purists, who talk about trade school education over there in the journalism building, newsroom veterans know that the game is words on paper, and they set their students about the task of reporting and writing.

Practitioners-turned-teachers are learning, along with their students. One of the first insights gained is that some students take hold quickly but most seem to trip over ideas and words. Nevertheless, many instructors put their students into the newsroom situation as best they can in an academic setting. After all, this is the way they themselves learned. They wrote, and often their copy was tossed back, or rewritten on the desk. They learned from their failures and from their few successes. Those who didn't learn disappeared. They watched the pros carefully. Osmosis. Thus, one reasons, the classroom that comes closest to the newsroom experience provides the optimum journalism education for young people who want to practice journalism.

But it doesn't work too well. While trying to guide these awkward sophomores and juniors toward an understanding of journalism, new instructors come upon a shattering realization: doing and teaching are distinct

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arts. They must cast about for some generalizations, some ideas that will explain to their charges what they have somehow — perhaps instinctively — learned. Here are a couple of suggestions, focused on the reporting process, to help the practitioners trying their hand at teaching.

Reporting always begins with an idea. No reporter goes out on an assignment as a blank slate, an empty receptacle for the source to fill up.

Told to interview a candidate for local office, the reporter consults the clips for the candidate's previous statements, and for the opponent's statements. The reporter recalls hearing someone at city hall say that the candidate has been talking about cutting taxes by a third, a local response to the tax-cutting movement. What specific services will be cut back, the reporter plans to ask.

The reporter dispatched to cover a massive traffic tie-up on the freeway will check the weather that morning, and further, will check to see whether the location is trouble-prone. The reporter sent to cover a fire that has burned out a dozen families speculates about arson, and intends to ask the fire marshall about suspicious fires in the area, since the building is in a ghetto where numerous fires have been reported.

These ideas, these concepts, direct the reporter's observations on the scene; they guide questioning; they lend control to the situation. Without this beginning, this control, the event can be chaotic, or, just as bad, source-directed. Reporters need to maintain their independence as much as possible.

On the scene, reporters test their ideas against the reality of the event. The political reporter interviewing the candidate asks about the rumor that the candidate favors a tax cut. Yes, is the reply. But the candidate has no idea by how much.

By a third? Impossible, replies the candidate, the city would have to close down. That idea disproved, the reporter asks about a statement that appeared in the earlier clips, something about bridges in need of repair. Yes, the candidate says, here is a statement on that, and the reporter is handed a release drawn up by the candidate's publicity person. The reporter asks a few questions on the subject and learns that the candidate is interested in considerable improvements in the city's infrastructure — bridges, streets, parkways. But how will this be financed if the city is already saddled with a debt that approaches the danger point? The candidate admits to having no plan for that.

As they continue to talk, the reporter asks about reforms in city services. The candidate recalls asking the "think tank" behind the campaign to look into the possibility of placing in the hands of the police the business of keeping tabs on known bad actors in their

precincts. The reporter then openly questions the plausability — in terms of legality and police resources — of the candidate's idea.

In this give-and-take we see the reporting process at work. The reporter moves onto the scene with his or her own theory, sets it against the reality of the event, and uses it or discards it. During the event, a topic develops. In this case, the reporter decides to use the material that the source — the police angle — provides.

A few essential teaching points emerge from this simplified description of the reporting process. First, it is necessary for the reporter to conceptualize. In fact, one of the differences between the adequate and the excellent reporter may well lie in this conceptualizing ability. The reporter who has a variety of ideas going into an event is able to observe more, ask more pointed questions, and, as noted, take control of the situation, which as often as not is chaotic. But the ability to conceptualize is not easily developed. It has its roots in a reporter's experience on the beat, his or her awareness of events in the community (or state, or county, etc.), and general knowledge. Much of it comes from wide reading, as does another reportorial necessity, the ability to link or pattern seemingly unrelated events.

Reporters always look for facts that relate to each other. Alone, a fact may have minimal significance. Put together with another fact, there is a story. A president accepts money from the milk lobby. The administration later sets higher prices for dairy products. Putting the two together indicates a causal relationship. Alfred North Whitehead described this capacity as an "eye for the whole chessboard, for the bearing of one set of ideas on another." Reporters, good reporters, do this all the time, but to some it seems a unique gift. It isn't, as the philosopher Isaiah Berlin indicates: "To comprehend and contrast and classify and arrange, to see in patterns of greater or lesser complexity is not a peculiar kind of thinking; it is thinking itself."

The journalism instructor must communicate these basic reporting concepts, and therein lies a problem. Teaching of this sort would work in the ideal situation where the teacher is one-to-one with a bright student. But classes are large, too large, and many students enter college near-cretinized by the 15,000 hours of television they have logged since childhood. Many have seven-minute minds, an attention span attuned to the time between commercials. They have been acted upon for so long they have lost the ability to undertake what John Dewey calls the "painful, toilsome labor of understanding and of control."

All this television supposedly has brought the world into the living room. Actually, as most journalism teachers

quickly learn, students are provincial. They are hard put to explain much beyond what is of direct concern to their age group. How then can they conceptualize, much less find the dissimilar facts, ideas, events that when joined by the journalist's insight or intuition make a superior piece of copy?

The journalism teacher will have to find ways to go beyond the usual reporting tips: Verify facts. Maintain eye contact. Anticipate readers' questions. People in power will lie to you. Learn to take notes standing up.

One device I used at the University of Kansas was the Periodical Report. Students were required to read at least one copy of 10 different magazines during the semester from a list that included such magazines as *The Nation*, *Harper's*, *The Atlantic Monthly*, *Commonweal*, *Commentary*, *The New Republic*, *Modern Age*. The students were required to select one article from each publication and told to summarize it in two takes and then to comment on it in at least one page of copy. This served, I hoped, to acquaint them with the world around them and required them to develop ideas about what they read.

The concept of patterning can be developed through classroom exercises. Students can be given simple roundups requiring them to link, say, the actions of several suburban boards of education or the fatalities in a county during the July Fourth weekend.

Practitioners-turned-teachers can use their newsroom experiences to mold beginners into reporters. But the teacher cannot simply make students write in the hope that the ultimate instructor, trial and error, will work its magic. It will, in the same infinitude of time it takes typing monkeys to peck out *Hamlet*.

The journalism teacher must make it clear just what journalists do when they report and write, and this should be the basis of the students' practical work in the classroom. I don't want to imply that this is easy. Finding out how journalists write and what they do when they are on a story is more difficult than performing the actual tasks, especially for the journalist-become-teacher.

Journalists are creative people, giving form to ideas and observations through an act of disciplined intelligence and insight. Creative people usually cannot explain how they do what they do. Henri Matisse remarked, "A painter's best spokesman is his work." Paul Klee warned, "Don't talk, painter. Paint."

Commenting on these remarks, Harold Rosenberg, the late art critic of *The New Yorker*, spoke of an element in art "inaccessible to words." So the painters show their work, and journalist teachers mark up copy and tell the students, "This is what it should look like."

But the teachers must do more, whether they are in the studio, the classroom, or on the football field. When

Bob Tucker left the New York Giants to play for the Minnesota Vikings, he said the Giants were losing games because of bad coaching.

"They aren't technicians," Tucker said of the former coaches. "They can't teach. They don't have the technical knowledge, the ability, the creativity or the ingenuity, to implement what they want done."

"They don't instruct. They command. When they tell you to do something and you don't know how, that's as far as it goes."

How does a coach teach an end to make the moves that will free him from a defensive back? How does an art teacher express the elements in art that enable a student to sketch a pectoral muscle? However they do it, we know that it is done, for some coaches regularly have winning teams, and some teachers of the arts are sought out by the gifted. These people not only know how to communicate, but they also have a firm grasp of the principles that underlie the material they are teaching. Here, journalism teachers are at a disadvantage. They have little mooring for most of their instruction and draw from knowledge gained through practice. Most of what they know has been achieved through — and here one can only use words like instinct, common sense, and street smarts.

Unlike their academic colleagues in journalism — who can call upon traditional disciplines such as history, psychology, sociology, and statistics for their courses in journalism history, mass communications and the like — the teachers of the practical courses have scant system, methodology or research to refer to. True, there is a vast storehouse of information about writing to fall back on. Poets, novelists, playwrights, and journalists have described their terror on confronting a blank page and their agony in setting words on it. This may be why so much attention is paid in textbook and classroom to journalistic writing and so little to the underpinning of journalism: reporting.

Obviously, the way to become a reporter is to act like one. The teacher's job is to find out just how reporters behave by breaking down the reporting and writing process. The ideas suggested here are a few I have developed during the writing of a textbook, *News Reporting and Writing*. I have been impressed by the similarity of the scientific method to the process of reporting, and some of these ideas have antecedents in my skimming of books and articles about the philosophy of science. I set these down as tentative concepts and hope that my colleagues will develop them further. We need some generalizations about what reporters do to go along with our insistence that students learn by reporting, writing, and rewriting. □

# The Press Reign in Spain is Mainly — Salacious

By James Jackson

**Spain had become newspaper heaven; the only place in the world  
where newspapers were being born instead of being killed off.**

MADRID -- After Gen. Francisco Franco died in 1975, one of the first and most important moves in the long-awaited dismemberment of his regime was to give Spain freedom of the press.

Censorship was effectively abolished, the watchdog offices of the old Ministry of Information were closed, and for the first time in 40 years journalists were able to report the news. And report they did, with an explosion of pent-up vigor. They attacked the retreating remnants of dictatorship, hailed the new democracy and wore out their platens telling Spain what had been happening during four decades of rigid censorship.

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It was splendid. Circulation soared. Newsrooms fairly quivered with excitement. New publications rushed to the newsstands, and almost anybody with a typewriter and a few thousand pesetas could found a new magazine. Old, established publications that had languished for years as official parrots suddenly sprang to life. New papers raced to overtake them, and some succeeded. The daily *El Pais*, only a gleam in a publisher's eye when Franco died, ran off its first edition in May, 1976, and within a few months became the largest and most respected newspaper in the country. Madrid, a city of only four million, supported no fewer than 13 daily newspapers.

Spain had become newspaper heaven; the only place in the world where newspapers were being born instead of being killed off.

Some heaven it turned out to be. Today, barely more than two years since the old dictator died, the Spanish



press is in a state of confusion and disarray. The only thing dropping faster than circulation is morale.

Many of the best young journalists, the ones who kept the faith in the dark, final years of Franco's rule despite imprisonment and frustration, have abandoned their typewriters. These journalists are going into government service or political work, and may never return to the press.

Those who remain are disgusted and demoralized as they see their beloved journals either struggle to survive or, worse, turn to sex and sensation to stay alive. Many of the vigorous new publications have folded, and some of the solid old dailies are in trouble. In some ways, the Spanish press is in a deeper crisis today than in the worst days of Franco's rule. Then, at least, there was hope.

"Part of the problem is simply competition," said Carlos Mendo, deputy editor of *ABC*, one of Madrid's leading dailies. "We've got 13 daily newspapers in Madrid, and that's just too many. Costs are going up, but we can only raise our price so much before people won't buy the paper any more." Mendo paused, shook his head, and corrected himself. "I was wrong — there are only 12 daily papers now. One of them folded yesterday."

Mendo, a veteran journalist and former head of the Spanish National News Agency, also blamed the newspapers' preoccupation with politics for their troubles. "They're all so damned somber," he said. "It's all politics, politics, politics, and the people have had it up to here. They need a little human interest. There was a story today about an organist who wanted to marry his organ. That's what should be on the front page, not politics."

But the problem may go far deeper than that, and the most conscientious of Spain's young journalists are deeply worried about their profession. Jose Antonio Martinez-

thing. As a result, there's sensationalism, pornography, irresponsibility, and the press is losing its credibility."

Martinez-Soler, who was prosecuted repeatedly under the Franco regime and once was kidnapped and beaten by right-wing thugs, has reluctantly joined the exodus from journalism by taking a job as an adviser in the Ministry of Communications with the liberal-minded Secretary of State, Jose Luis Leal. Martinez-Soler said he did not plan to make a career in government, but he was uncertain about returning to journalism. "Morale is very, very low," he stated. "Everybody expected an explosion of creativity, not only in journalism but everywhere, after Franco died. We thought we would have great poems, great films, brilliant books, and great newspapers."

"But after all, it was the same people before he died as afterwards. Everybody had blamed the dictatorship — they said, 'It's because of the regime that I can't do great things.' But then the regime came to an end, and now we're very disappointed and demoralized to find that we aren't doing anything."

Martinez-Soler said the Spanish press — like the rest of the country — is discovering that it is not easy to undertake the burdensome responsibilities that go with political freedom. It is a learning process, he explained, and mastering the techniques of writing to inform will take a great deal of time. Spanish journalists were specialists in writing to confound the censor, but with no censor to confound they find they have to start all over again with the basics of their craft.

The removal of censorship has had another result, one which almost nobody in Spain would have dreamed possible. It has produced some of the most appalling obscenity imaginable, an orgy of porn that would give a Danish sailor the dizzy faints. To the dismay of journalists like Martinez-Soler, some of the most imaginative of the new Spanish publications have turned to sex and sensation to weather the threat of falling circulation and rising costs.

Interviú magazine, for example, began life as a witty and lively political weekly and quickly rose to become one of Spain's biggest sellers. But when circulation began to drop, publisher Antonio Alvarez decided to add sex to the appeal. "First it was just 'T and A,'" a foreign newsman said. "Then it moved to female genitalia, and now they're getting into freaks and naked corpses and really bloody violence."

The magazine has become a bizarre mishmash of intellectual commentary, political satire, mindless cartoons, and sex. A recent issue featured, for example, a sharply satirical article on Santiago Carrillo of the Spanish Communist Party, a young woman gamboling naked on a beach, and a picture spread showing a half-dozen deformed fetuses. Others have featured photographs of

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### **The magazine has become a bizarre mishmash of intellectual commentary, political satire, mindless cartoons, and sex.**

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Soler, a former foreign editor of *El Pais* and an Associate Nieman Fellow in 1976-77, said Spanish journalists simply do not know how to work in a free atmosphere.

"Under Franco, we learned to write between the lines," he said. "It was a fight, and every conviction for violating the censorship laws was like a medal for bravery, an award for good, honest work. It was a fight, and we loved it. Now," he continued, "there's nobody to fight against. We can say what we want, and nobody will do a



the naked corpses of female suicide victims. "And this," the foreign journalist said, "is in a family magazine. You should see the racy stuff."

The "racy stuff" still can be subject to prosecution, and a half-dozen publishers have been fined as much as \$50,000 for material judged objectionable on moral grounds. "The line seems to be drawn at showing intercourse in detail," an American visitor said. "It's like the rape laws — actual penetration constitutes an offense."

Death, violence and freaks apparently are immune, although one Spanish magazine was fined for publishing photographs of a young man mutilating himself with needles and a razor blade, and allowing the blood to spill on the waxen face of a child's doll.

Interviú magazine publisher Alvarez Solis, asked by a friend about his publishing philosophy, replied, "We don't really have one — we're just looking around to find out what sells."

"But," his friend said, "some of the things you publish are really in very bad taste."

"Yes," Alvarez Solis replied cheerfully. "Bad taste sells, I guess."

Although nearly all the barriers of sex and taste have fallen, there remain some significant political limitations on the freedom of the Spanish press.

"There are three areas where the press must be extremely careful," a Spanish journalist said. "They are the king, the army, and national unity."

Those areas of caution rule out a considerable amount of critical reporting. Although the majority of Spaniards respect and admire the young King Juan Carlos, there are many ardent republicans in the country who oppose the institution of monarchy itself. But to state that opinion in print is to risk prosecution.

The army, too, is a formidable journalistic target because of laws — on the books since long before the Franco era — giving the army the right to prosecute its critics in military tribunals. It was under those laws that a mime troupe, Els Joglars, was sentenced to prison for a skit that was deemed to ridicule the armed forces.

"National unity" is the grayest of the prohibited areas because it covers the touchy subject of separatism for regions such as Catalonia and the Basque country. Although the new regime is sympathetic to regional aspirations for autonomy within a federal-style Spain, the press dare not go too far in the direction of such strongly separatist movements as the violence-prone Basque ETA.

Yet even accepting those limitations, the Spanish press has vast room for maneuver in comparison with that of many other countries. Newspapers are virtually libel-proof because during the Franco era censorship was so

strict that nobody ever thought it necessary to develop a comprehensive body of libel law.

Journalists can, and do, attack any politician from Premier Adolfo Suarez on down, and they often do it with a degree of malice that an American editor would consider to be far beyond the pale of good taste, fairness or truth.

Examples of such attacks can be found everywhere, but nowhere more easily than in Alvarez Solis' Interviú which recently depicted the Minister of Economics, Fernando Abril Martorell, defecating into a chamber pot

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**Journalists can, and do attack any politician ... with a degree of malice that an American editor would consider to be far beyond the pale of good taste, fairness or truth.**

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held by a young adviser, Federico Ysart. Ysart could accept the slur with a shrug, but significantly he himself is a disillusioned newsman who left journalism for government service.

Other journals have published sensational accusations that turned out to be totally false — cries of "wolf" that are destroying the public's trust of the press, perhaps one reason that circulation is falling. To the dismay of conscientious journalists, the one newspaper which has thrived in the current atmosphere is the extreme right-wing daily *El Alcazar*, published by the National Veteran's Organization. Its circulation rocketed from 14,000 in 1976 to 110,000 today. This total includes a healthy percentage of home deliveries that signifies a permanent and committed readership.

"*El Alcazar* plays upon the feeling of many people that things are getting worse after Franco," Carlos Mendo said. "They see crime statistics rising, and pornography, and economic troubles, so they are eager to be told that the new system is the reason for it."

Martinez-Soler said the right-wing press may also be benefiting from its new status as outside opposition, which injects a sense of mission and purpose in its staff. "They probably feel the way we did when we were fighting the old regime," he said. "They now have to fight and attack from the outside, and it warms their blood."

The greatest danger in Spain's journalistic crisis is that an impatient government — with the support of a disappointed and scandalized public — will reimpose a measure of censorship with the hope of correcting the worst ills of the press. That, Martinez-Soler commented, would be tragic. □

# It's Not A Myth — They're Immortal

By Emily Vermeule

The Red Sox did not fail, they became immortal. The classic tale of their summer, and autumn, could not have matched the great dramatic literature of the past had it ended any other way.

They were worthy of the Sophoclean stage, actors in traditional and poignant myth, in the long conflict between the larger-than-life hero and inexorable time, native brilliance and predestined ruin, the flukiness of luck, *tyche*, set against the hardest striving of the individual. It was life in miniature, and not so small at that.

Following the purest form of individual and collective tragedy, that is, a traditional tale with a tough unforgettable ending, the Red Sox passed through the ancient cycle of *olbos*, *koros*, *hubris* and *ate*, and then some.

*Olbos*: the initial state of happiness and prosperity, in which a man seems blessed to himself and his fellows; so Remy, Torrez and Eckersley were bought for us with fine gold, at the cost of characters we loved on the mound, in the field

*Emily Vermeule, Red Sox fan, is also Zemurray-Stone-Radcliffe Professor of Classics and Fine Arts at Harvard University.*



and in the office, and life looked good.

*Koros*: Too much of a good thing, almost, when a man feels superior to destiny; Tiant and Lee were pitching marvelously, Yaz had drunk of the Fountain of Youth; Scott, Burleson, Lynn and Evans were fielding better than ever if that were possible, and we had three catchers uninjured.

*Hubris*: A kind of dangerous physical and spiritual arrogance; did we suffer that phase? Of course, and *The Globe* warned against it early, in the editorial of July 26, "Thinking of the Unthinkable in Boston," when we were 14 games ahead of Them. In this stage of physical euphoria

we ripped legs stealing second, hurtled down enemy dugouts, gave our hands to be spiked and our heads to be beaned, and challenged the metal stands with our slender ribs. We lived in pain and wondered about our new stepparents, who sold Carbo myopically for mean cash. Recognition of truth inevitably followed.

*Ate*: A mix of blind fumbling against destiny and distorted perception, leading to ruin; Bob Bailey looking at a called third strike over his belly. *Ate* leads the hero along a dubious path and leaves him in a desolate place, but has the classic function of confirming him as hero, the proud soul with head erect,

as all the darts of dark fate are thrown against him.

Every ballplayer is alone on stage as he faces Fate on the mound. He is totally exposed. It is amazing, and could happen in no other sport, that from the first greening of the willows to the reddening and dropping of the leaves, and the most exciting, despairing game of many seasons on Monday [one-game playoff with the Yankees]<sup>1</sup> in Fenway Park, nothing was decided until the last out of the last of the ninth.

Then the hero took his proper stance, which is loss and immortality. Astronomers wept, judges blinked hard, truck-drivers sped around town trying to change the radio news, children crept under the bed; but they were wrong. Our hearts were with the Trojans in that war, and with the Sox in this. The hero must go under at last, after prodigious deeds, to be remembered and immortal and to have poets sing his tale.

That so few gallant, striving men on the brilliant green stage of Fenway stirred so many souls for so long, and lost by such a small inevitable twist at the last second, made the Red Sox a theme of song for a century to come.

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# Regional Fellowship Programs for Journalists

By Arthur Musgrave

In recent years American universities have developed a variety of fellowship programs for journalists as a result of foundation grants, endowments, and gifts. Six major examples are:

1) the non-degree program for an academic year of study at either the University of Michigan or at Stanford, financed by the National Endowment for the Humanities;

2) the degree program for journalism-law fellowships at Yale, financed by the Ford Foundation;

3) the one-year, non-degree program in economic journalism at Princeton, financed by the Sloan Foundation Fellowships;

4) the one-year, non-degree Bagehot fellowships in economic journalism at Columbia, financed in part by a grant from Exxon;

5) the six-month, non-degree Urban Journalism Fellowships at the University of Chicago, financed by the Markle and the Ford Foundations;

6) the Cowles Fellows who will, in the next year or so, attend the University of Minnesota as part of a program — to include short courses and workshops — made possible by a gift last year from the Cowles family.

This article describes another type of academic

fellowship, a unique regional program developed during the 1960's for journalists in New England and one that could be carried out in all sections of the country. Unlike other academic fellowship programs, the New England Fellowship program was financed by the press itself — as journalism fellowships must be in all parts of the United States if they are to reach a large proportion of the journalists whose work and lives could be improved by mid-career study, and if journalism in America is to become identified as a business which has a professional concern for the on-going education of its staff and, hence, with improving the quality of its services to society. Although the effect of national fellowship programs may not lend itself to empirical measurement, the programs plainly make a valuable contribution. The problem is that they reach such a small proportion of print and electronic journalists.

President Conant's idea at Harvard University, some 40 years ago, of using the Nieman bequest for journalism fellowships has been fruitful in many ways. Indeed, the regional fellowships program was partly an offshoot. But no more than about 75 academic-year fellowships for university study within the United States have been available in any one year, in addition to a comparable number of shorter fellowships, such as the business journalism fellowships at Missouri (four weeks), the University of Hawaii fellowships for Pacific area studies (16 weeks), and the gift-financed fellowships provided by the Washington Journalism Center (16 weeks).

The New England Fellowship program, started by the University of Massachusetts in 1964, was created with the

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*Dr. Musgrave, Nieman Fellow '43, has been Professor of Journalistic Studies at the University of Massachusetts in Amherst since 1946. This article supplements his piece in the previous issue of NR.*

assistance and cooperation of the New England Society of Newspaper Editors (NESNE). From 1964 to 1972, when an experiment was begun in offering non-credit seminars and workshops, about 10 journalists a year were enrolled. Their tuition and expenses were paid for by their newspapers; the University provided teachers for three graduate courses.

The Fellows came to the town of Amherst for three-hour seminars on Friday nights and again on Saturday mornings, with an occasional afternoon session. The weekend course was unusual, however, in that it was conducted over a nine-month period. The Fellows came to the campus for a total of 54 class hours spread over nine weekends, concentrated in the fall and spring, with the winter months being used to complete a research project.

The first course was concerned with freedom of the press — its history, key cases that have defined it in Anglo-American law, and current issues. Readings ranged from the classic statement of the social responsibility theory of the press, *A Free and Responsible Press*, to Milton's *Areopagitica* and Donald Gillmor's and Jerome Barron's textbook, *Mass Communications Law*. Other readings included books by scholars in journalism, such as Wilbur Schramm and J. Edward Gerald.

The second course was an intensive three-week study plan given as part of the University's summer school. Built on the first course, it examined such problems as the nature of professions, the relationship of professions to the state in a free society, and how journalism might be professionalized. The classes, which met five mornings weekly, were concerned with criticism of journalism by journalists and scholars. These classes were supplemented by 14 afternoon seminars led by publishers, newspaper attorneys, editors, and business executives. The speakers for the latter were provided by the New England Society of Newspaper Editors.

The third course in journalistic studies was another three-credit course that met on nine weekends between September and May. This was concerned with research studies about journalism and communication theory; that is, theory in the sense of generalizations related to research. The Fellows read research studies, such as those listed in *News Research for Better Newspapers* (published by the American Newspaper Publishers Association) in order to become more sophisticated about information, research design, and the use of statistics. This course reflected the program director's view that the best way to improve standards of journalists for the evaluation of information is through the study of statistics.

As might be expected, the journalists who had been away from college for some years were more dedicated to studies than those who had only recently been defining

college study as "work." Almost all the Fellows, however, gave time to reading and writing projects well above the requirements of a three-credit graduate course. They chose research projects related to their particular interests; for example, the director of training on the *Boston Globe* studied training programs on major newspapers in various parts of the country. George Krinsky, a New England Fellow who was subsequently, as an AP correspondent, expelled from Russia for his reports on dissidents, also gave attention to problems of freedom and civil rights.

Students who completed the nine-credit program over the two-year period were awarded certificates as New England Newspaper Fellows. The program could be taken for graduate or undergraduate credit and also on a pass-fail basis. The summer course was open to selected seniors. Occasionally, a University senior was also admitted to the first nine-month reading course. Usually these were liberal arts majors participating in the extra-curricular tutorial-internship type of vocational journalism program. Developed as a superior substitute for a vocational journalism curriculum, this system was described in the previous issue of Nieman Reports [Autumn 1978], "A Journalism Program to Strengthen Liberal Education."

In 1972, when the University of Massachusetts decided to experiment with non-credit short courses for journalists, the fellowship program was moved from the Graduate School to a newly-created Continuing Education Division. For example, a three-weekend course on practical aspects of covering local government was provided by a group of journalists and supplemented by seminars with political scientists. Another three-weekend course was devoted to journalistic writing. (The workshop type of seminar has been discontinued, and the Education Committee of NESNE has asked the University if it would reestablish the fellowships as an academic program. This experience suggests that practical seminars for journalists are better conducted by societies of editors or publishers rather than by universities.)

The fellowship program was developed to supplement the extracurricular tutorial-internship program for students who wanted to test their journalistic aptitude. The liberal arts majors in this "straightening out" program who chose to become journalists had no difficulty in persuading members of NESNE, who had hired them, to enroll the support of their newspapers and editors in the two-year graduate program. Three reasons should be noted.

The first is that this program was in a cost category known as "peanuts." The tuition was low — the University charged in-state rates to Fellows from the New



# Associate Nieman Fellows, 1978-1979

Ten journalists from abroad have been appointed to join the 11 American Nieman Fellows whose names were announced last June. The eight Associate Nieman Fellows and two Visiting Nieman Fellows, who are funded by non-Harvard sources, are members of the 41st Nieman class to study at Harvard. The Nieman endowment is ordinarily restricted to citizens of the United States.

The newest Fellows are:

**GRAEME H. BEATON**, 28, reporter and business and financial columnist, News Limited of Australia, New York City Bureau. Mr. Beaton has been a journalist in England and West Australia prior to his current post. He plans to study international economics, and English literature and history.

**KHEN V. CHIN**, 41, news editor, Business Times, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. Mr. Chin has previously worked for New Nation, *Singapore Herald*, *Straights Times* and Radio Malaysia. At Harvard he will concentrate on the Chinese language, Chinese history, Japanese and Korean history, and the American political system. His Fellowship is supported by the Asia Foundation and by the Robert Waldo Ruhl fund.

**TOMAS O. DILLEN**, 33, executive producer and director, Swedish Broadcasting Corporation, Stockholm. He is a graduate of the University of Stockholm. He will focus on comparative economic history, American and European political history and sociology. Mr. Dillen is the sixth recipient of a German Marshall Fund Fellow-

ship for broadcast journalists from Europe within the Nieman program.

**DOMINIQUE FERRY**, 34, president, Hachette Publications, Neuilly-sur-Seine, France. Mr. Ferry attended Ecole Nationale Supérieure des Mines de Paris, and at Harvard will engage in a special research project on computers as transmitters for the media under the Program on Information Resources Policy. He will hold a Visiting Nieman Fellowship.

**MICHAEL H.C. McDOWELL**, 26, education correspondent, *Belfast Telegraph*, Northern Ireland. Mr. McDowell holds a bachelor's degree from Trinity College, Dublin, and plans to study the politics, history and literature of the United States as well as constitutional law, particularly as it relates to the media. His appointment is supported by the Ford Foundation.

**MICHAEL McIVOR**, 33, producer of radio current affairs, Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, Toronto, Ontario. Mr. McIvor attended the Universities of Toronto and of London, England, and at Harvard he will concentrate on international economics, methods of government financing, comparison between growth and no-growth philosophies, and modern American history and government.

**JOHN S. MOJAPELO**, 35, deputy news editor, *Rand Daily Mail*, Johannesburg, South Africa. Mr. Mojapelo received his bachelor's degree from the University of South Africa. He plans to concentrate on the study of race, particularly in regard to South Africa, the American political system,

and African affairs. His appointment is funded by the United States - South Africa Leader Exchange Program, Inc.

**SABAM P. SIAGIAN**, 46, deputy chief editor, *Sinar Harapan Daily*, Jakarta, Indonesia. Mr. Siagian attended the University of Indonesia. His study plan at Harvard will include political problems in developing countries, international economics, disarmament and nuclear balance, the international role of China, and modern American theology, art and literature. His Fellowship is partially supported by the Ford Foundation.

**DONALD J. WOODS**, 44, former editor, *Daily Dispatch*, East London, South Africa. Mr. Woods attended the University of Cape Town. At present banned by the South African government because of his open criticism of its apartheid policies, he will be a Visiting Nieman Fellow at Harvard, and under this specially arranged Fellowship, he will continue to travel and write. Mr. Woods' appointment, announced earlier this year, is funded in part by the Rockefeller Foundation.

**ROYSTON J.A. WRIGHT**, 37, assistant editor, Sierra Leone Broadcasting Service, Freetown. Mr. Wright attended the Milton Margai Teachers College, and is former editor of the government-owned *Daily Mail*. He proposes to study politics and international affairs and economics, in particular the relationships among the United States, the European Community, the Soviet Union and China, also the role of Africa. Mr. Wright's Fellowship is supported by the Ford Foundation.

England area. The cost of overnight visits to the campus was spread over nine months. Books used by Fellows were purchased for the newspaper's library. For the starting reporters — unlike the experienced journalists in the program — the three-week summer course included the reporter's vacation period.

In short, for a modest investment, editors and publishers could achieve two personnel aims that newspapers share with other businesses and with universities that grant sabbaticals for these purposes: increased competency by staff members, and better staff morale. Regional fellowships for journalists also make newspaper work in the region more attractive to the sorts of journalists newspapers need; namely, journalists concerned with further education and growing on the job.

Many modern business corporations, of course, have long supported college study for their employees. For instance, General Electric years ago employed an Administrator of Educational Support Programs, and paid tuition for graduate courses related to the employee's possible future, as well as present, duties. Ten years ago the Rockwell Company was advertising in magazines such as *Time* its program for sending employees "back to the college campus on educational sabbaticals for undergraduate and advanced degrees." Partly because of their educational programs, recruiters for insurance and industrial companies have consistently been able to persuade talented University of Massachusetts seniors, who had been offered newspaper jobs, to join their publication, marketing, advertising, or other divisions.

The second reason for the support which editors, particularly from small newspapers, gave to this two-year program is that it aided them both to recruit talented college graduates and, when these reporters left to move on to higher paying jobs, to replace them with other talented June graduates seeking employment. Two years is about the length of time many starting reporters stay with their initial jobs; hence, this sort of program has the benefit of giving small-city newspaper editors more of a programmed turnover for certain general reporting jobs.

At the same time, this sort of program is of value to starting reporters. Those who leave at the end of two years have the advantage of a good beginning on a journalism or journalism-related career, such as public relations — a better start, in fact, than if they had chosen to spend a year's time and several thousand dollars in a graduate journalism school, practicing journalistic techniques, as many liberal arts college graduates do each year. (Approximately 1700 graduate degrees in journalism were given in 1977.) In some of these graduate schools the basic courses are similar to the how-to-do-it reporting and copy-

editing courses for undergraduate credit in professional majors — or vocational majors, if "profession" is used in a narrow sense to designate those occupations, such as medicine and law, based on theoretical knowledge and highly specialized skills which require some years of graduate training after completion of a liberal arts degree.

The idea that a "programmed turnover" for some starting reporter jobs would serve interests both of small-city newspaper editors and of talented college graduates seeking journalism jobs was submitted at a convention of the New England Society of Newspaper Editors in 1961 by Editor William Plante of the Newburyport *Daily News*. When the program began in 1964, Plante helped to prove his point by hiring a promising Harvard graduate, also a member of the first group of New England Fellows, and now an editor of a Massachusetts daily. (Some degree of planned turnover is not a concern of editors of large newspapers, of course. They hire journalists trained by smaller newspapers.)

The third reason some editors supported this type of program was that courses concerned with journalism scholarship meet the needs of reporters on both small and large newspapers. Most of the Fellows were experienced and the group included editorial writers, state house reporters, and news editors — although the percentage of starting reporters in the program increased each year.

The importance of having journalism identified as a business with a serious professional concern about the continuing education of its staff, and the value of having newspapers and universities cooperate in ways appropriate to the purposes of a university, were stressed by the president of NESNE, Editor Leslie Moore of the Worcester newspapers. When the program was being worked out, his initiative played a vital role.

Indeed, editors made important contributions to both the development and the operation of this plan. These fellowships had their origin in a different, although related, educational format that was discussed by a University representative at a 1961 NESNE convention. This plan, which would strengthen liberal education while serving needs of students, and which could be developed in many universities, might be described as a work-study graduate program. In brief, it proposed that liberal arts graduates be hired as reporters for only a year by one of the more than a dozen dailies published within two hours' drive of the campus in Amherst — or by other news organizations, such as weeklies or news departments of radio and television stations. While working, these graduates would earn three credits a semester by means of a directed studies project or by a seminar at the University or at some other school within commuting distance.

At the end of the year, these graduates would be replaced, and would make one of several choices: to undertake further graduate study at the University or some other school, such as a law school, with a view to continuing a journalism career or entering some other field; to provide for themselves education in the social sciences, such as economics, political science, sociology, or communication studies; to move on to another newspaper after having had a year's experience; or to take a job requiring communication skills.

The one-year plan was suggested by two circumstances: the liberal arts majors who had participated in the University's extracurricular tutorial-internship program had no trouble obtaining newspaper jobs; and those who started on small-city dailies, or even on larger newspapers, tended to move on after a year or two.

Early in 1962, President Moore arrived at the University of Massachusetts campus to propose that a joint committee of NESNE and the faculty review the plan, along with other possibilities of cooperation between the University and newspapers. A faculty committee consisting of the heads of the English and the political science departments, the dean of the Graduate School, and the director of the extracurricular journalism program agreed to meet with representatives of NESNE. One result was this regional newspaper-financed fellowship program.

Editors made other contributions. As part of this program for giving college graduates a good start on journalism careers, the University published a training manual designed particularly for use on small-city newspapers. Written by Alvin Oickle, the managing editor of the *Greenfield Recorder* and a tutor in the extracurricular internship journalism program, the manual has two parts — a 78-page booklet for the training supervisor, and a 48-page booklet for the trainee. Several hundred copies were sold after the manual was mentioned in Editor and Publisher.

Editor Oickle also conducted, as part of the first nine-month course, several Saturday morning sessions devoted to a critique of the newspapers on which each Fellow worked. Prior to the second weekend of classes, the Fellows exchanged newspapers for one week. Fellows then reported to the seminar on the nature of their newspaper's community, staff organization, and editorial policies. Following each presentation, the Fellows contributed criticism, using examples from the newspaper under review. Faculty members attended these sessions to suggest research project possibilities, such as a content analysis on the type and amount of news on state or local government in the different newspapers.

Knowledge of journalism as an academic discipline —

i.e., communications research — is not essential to being a successful journalist. The emerging social and behavioral science designated as Journalistic Studies or Communication Studies, however, provides some of the background knowledge and research skills reporters should have. Moreover, perhaps one of the most neglected and important areas in American universities is scholarship about the public information system and the way it has been organized in our society — a subject of much value to journalists, whether starting reporters or weathered veterans.

Scholarship about journalism is also an appropriate way for universities to serve interests of the newspaper business and of society, unlike the providing of technical programs that deprive students of a liberal arts major because these students think — many mistakenly — that they want to be journalists. What interests of the newspaper business or of publishers or editors who handle hiring and personnel problems are consistent with the purposes of universities? Here is a question which needs much more published analysis than it has received. Scholarly examination might result in better use of some millions of dollars being spent annually on teaching how-to-do-it courses in about 200 colleges — institutions which keep adding to the surplus of journalism job seekers and which continue to use limited educational funds to teach writing and editing techniques, ordinarily learned on the job by most journalists.

Some who do recruit and hire on newspapers, particularly small ones that pay relatively low wages, want colleges to develop journalism majors in order to increase the surplus of job applicants. Some believe employee relations on their newspapers are better if they can hire applicants who have been beating the bushes for a job and are "a little bit hungry."

Editors and publishers who promote what they call professional journalism majors know, as do university administrators, that if a college has a group of former journalists on its faculty to provide a journalism major, these teachers and their colleagues will be motivated by self-interest in matters of promotions, salary increases, recruitment of students for the major and, hence, for the army of journalism job seekers. These publishers and editors also know that they are unwilling to follow a policy of hiring journalism majors rather than liberal arts majors! They simply want a larger pool of applicants from which to choose — a surplus paid for largely out of public funds for higher education.

Indeed, promotion of journalism majors by editors and publishers has been a major factor in the creation of vocational journalism majors in American universities. The country's first School of Journalism was started at the

University of Missouri at the urging of a state press association made up of small newspapers. Its leader became the first dean of the School. University administrators, of course, have also been involved.

Still another factor has been that some journalistic writing teachers have been associated with English departments. Typically, they believe that a separate journalism program will serve their self-interest. In some universities, English department administrators and teachers have also — out of self-interest — supported the creation of separate journalism programs.

Social norms about responsibility would suggest that editors who promote journalism majors should at least hire only from the surplus of these majors, and that the number of journalism majors in every college should be limited. Administrators and faculty members responsible for these majors should make discrete decisions with boundary lines so that graduates will have a reasonable chance of obtaining the jobs for which the majors have purported to be training them.

This type of regional fellowship program, it should be noted, serves all of the following interests: 1) interests of editors who handle hiring of starting reporters and personnel problems with experienced journalists, 2) interests of all types of working journalists, 3) interests of society in improving the quality of its journalism, and 4) interests of universities that are consistent with both interests of publishers and of society. Certainly the improvement of the public information system of any free society is a proper concern of its universities.

Regional fellowship programs could be developed in all parts of this country, given the availability of modern highway systems. One basic need is simply a university that can be conveniently reached on a Friday evening by about 10 journalists annually. There are scores of such universities, including some who have scholars in journalism. And any seminar with 10 or more journalists is likely to be lively, stimulating, and enriching for students and faculty.

It is not essential that the university with a regional fellowship program provide courses concerned with scholarship about journalism, although teachers concerned with journalism research are likely to be the most interested in teaching journalists. Any university with strong academic departments, particularly in the social sciences, can provide courses relevant to the interests of reporters. Almost any political science department, for example, will have a teacher trained in political theory who can conduct a seminar on freedom of the press and how it is being redefined by current issues of importance to the press and to our society. Economists can provide seminars on public policy issues of concern to journalists.

Sociologists and teachers of literature, philosophy, or history can do the same.

An interdepartmental faculty committee makes a logical administrative group to conduct a graduate fellowship program, or a one-year work-study graduate program, or other types of programs for journalists that could be developed by universities in cooperation with editors. An interdepartmental committee was used at the University of Massachusetts. The Education Committee of NESNE served in an advisory function, which reflected a University policy of making no basic changes in the program without an advisory vote by the Education Committee. This policy was adopted at the outset of the cooperative program, and served it well.

A second essential is a society of editors. Fortunately, these exist along with the necessary universities in all parts of the country, too. Within them, as within the New England society, are editors who want universities to serve only those interests of journalism as a business that are consistent with the moral purposes of higher education. These do not want universities to follow policies that recruit a surplus of students for specific businesses, including their own.

The relations of American journalism to liberal education and to journalism majors have been caught for decades in a rut of unenlightened self-interest among both editors and university teachers or administrators who have taken an active interest in education for journalism. Too few scholars have given attention to these relations and their possibilities. A useful approach is reflected by Michael Maccoby in these comments published in the Newsletter of the Harvard Graduate Society in October, 1977:

*Almost 20 years ago, David Riesman and I wrote an essay, "The American Crisis," in which we speculated that the idealism in our country could best be expressed in the task of reorganizing the workplace to stimulate intellectual and emotional development.*

Newspapers are foremost among businesses with an enlightened self-interest and a desire to develop professionalism among as many journalists as possible. Representatives of state or regional journalism associations and representatives of the faculty in various universities, could work out a variety of types of regional fellowship programs with credit or non-credit courses, one or two or three-year programs of study — and, in so doing, make a significant contribution to the improvement of both higher education and American journalism. □



# Back in the Land of the Unfree

## *Suspicion and Mistrust Now Rule the Roost*

By Obed Kunene

South Africans must now be all too familiar with, and probably bored stiff, if not offended, by accounts of how others see them and the country they live in. Especially if the commentators are from outside.

Yet there will always be something worth reporting or commenting on, as long as it remains possible to do so without any undue duress. Also as long as the existing Afrikaner Nationalist regime continues with its blundering ways.

I don't know how the average white, who finds himself in the midst of overseas experts, critics and observers, reacts to the outright condemnation and rejection of this country's internal policies. One can only take a guess.

But I do know of at least one very prominent citizen, a medical man, who made a sorry spectacle of himself when he tried to defend the system in the United States of America not so long ago.

### UGANDA

His tortuous, convoluted arguments, peppered with angry interjections of: "Why pick on South Africa? What about Uganda or Chile?" simply failed to impress his audience. I'll explain why later.

For the black South African, unless he is a government stooge or apologist, there is the irresistible urge to want to gloat over South Africa's misfortunes. And why not? After all, blacks here have hardly ever been given cause to feel truly and genuinely patriotic about their country. The white hegemony has turned many into bitter, hate-filled opponents. The racial goodwill that once was a redeeming feature must be at a dangerously low ebb.

I speak from the personal experience of a year's stay and study as an Associate Nieman Fellow at Harvard University in America.

### EXPERIENCE

Coming from South Africa, my experience abroad, while it lasted, could be likened to that of someone who'd just switched places from the ridiculous to the sublime. I'd been overseas a few times before, but this was the longest I'd had to stay.

I can only sum it up thus: it was just great to feel free. Free to read any book, magazine or newspaper that I fancied, free to eat, play, worship, sleep or go anywhere I liked without having to glance back over my shoulder.

As a matter of fact, the only time I'd always feel "unfree" was whenever I allowed the paranoia about the South African situation to get the better of me. I guess it's pretty hard to escape from the spectre of apartheid. It bugs you. It haunts you. It is omnipresent. It forces you constantly to draw parallels. And the exercise tends to have a debilitating effect.

At times it all felt like an unbelievable dream. Now, of course, it has ended. I must now re-adjust to the reality of being back in the old country. Regrettably, the old country has become a land of fear, suspicion, mistrust and a lot more worse. It has become a land where submissiveness, conformity and kow-towing are preferred to the spoken truth. I must now remember that I am black and that my place is carefully defined and circumscribed for me somewhere out there in the back of beyond.

The civilised world, of which South Africa claims to be a part, looks with disdain upon a country or system that induces such feelings. And it is precisely because of that claim to being civilised and Christian that the Western world will not allow this country or its government to get away with what they are doing.

### TRAMPLING

The references by government propagandists to Uganda or Chile or any other regime that rules by suppressing the will of the majority, or shamelessly trampling underfoot the legitimate demands of the masses, are no longer valid. Knowledgeable observers are

quick to point out that South Africa must be the only country in the whole wide world where discriminatory laws are passed on the basis of the colour of a man's skin.

The evils of apartheid, that 30-year curse which has been the bane of our existence, are disturbing enough viewed from within. They assume a new, almost bizarre dimension once seen at a distance.

The inexcusable Steve Biko affair and the senseless crackdown of last October 19 — they shot a heavy lump up one's throat. When sympathetic Americans cried indignantly: "They've got to be crazy, they are driving the country to perdition," one could not help but concur.

It dawned then, as it had never done before, that when a government starts to close down newspapers and silence or detain editors, it usually signifies the beginning of the end for democracy and the cherished principle of free speech. History has numerous examples to offer.

## VANTAGE

This, then, is how it looked from the vantage point of Cambridge, Massachusetts. South Africa came out not looking good at all. It is fair to conclude that the international heat presently being turned on the country, with no immediate signs of letting up, stems largely from these sad and tragic developments.

Against this background, one must examine closely the responses by the Nationalist Government and by all those who feel threatened and besieged all round by hostile forces. A lot of fuss is being made of the "changes" introduced internally in the past few months.

I see, for instance, that we no longer talk of "Bantu," but of "plurals."

Black and white soccerites now chase the same football around various stadiums, including those in black areas.

Blacks (those who can afford it) are now free to patronise "international" hotels, restaurants and theatres.

Presumably, more "petty apartheid" signs have been pulled down, although I notice in some areas of Durban they still remain defiant as ever and large as life.

## COMPARISONS

I see that comparisons are still being made between the "better off" blacks here and their "worse off" brothers elsewhere in Africa — as though the issue, from the black viewpoint, was ever between the locals and those outside.

I see also that Soweto, according to those who prescribe without consulting, is on to a good thing under

the new community councils. Self-rule and full autonomy, they say, is to be the name of the game in that vast spread of glorified "pondokies." [shacks]

The Vendas are next in line for their slice of the Bantustan independence loaf. Obviously, it must warm the cockles of the hearts of Pretoria's homeland planners to receive yet another endorsement of their policy, world-wide rejection of same notwithstanding.

## MILITARISM

As far as the whites are concerned, it is common knowledge now that the majority, as evidenced by the results of last November's general elections, would rather stick fast with "savior" Vorster than give in to world pressure for change.

Since returning, one detects a growing sense of white militarism. The war psychosis seems to be playing havoc with many.

Where will it all end? Are the much-publicised "changes" making any positive impression, both locally and abroad? Or will South Africa's lesson, like poor, embattled Rhodesia's, be one of "too little, too late?"

## WATCHERS

It should come as no surprise that the latter view is held by most Southern Africa-watchers in the United States. It is also shared by numerous others whom I met in Britain and in parts of central Europe that I visited on the way back home.

I believe I'm interpreting it correctly when I say that what the West wants to see in our country is not what is popularly termed "cosmetic" changes. It wants the "real thing" for those whom it believes are fully justified in their struggle for justice and liberation.

## PRINCIPLE

And the "real thing" is the total, not partial, eradication of apartheid, a perceptible move towards power-sharing or majority rule, the granting and protection of human and individual rights, the restoration of the black man's dignity, an end to bannings and detention without trial and a return of the principle of *habeas corpus*, and an end to the disquieting spate of deaths of detainees while in police custody.

But, above all, I believe the West wants to see real peace and racial harmony reigning supreme in our part of the continent. It is in the interests of us all that it should be so. It is, therefore, absurd to believe, as some do, that what is sought is nothing but the wholesale destruction of the minority whites. □

# A Decade of APC Rule

By Royston J.A. Wright

**The following report is excerpted from a special brochure published last year by the Sierra Leone Broadcasting Service on the occasion of the tenth anniversary of the APC government.**

The demonstration of popular support and goodwill which swept the All Peoples Congress (APC) to power in April 1968 was unprecedented in the political history of Sierra Leone. The resulting euphoria was a complex amalgam of national relief from the traumas of the previous government; and the satisfaction that at last a repository for the nation's aspirations had been found.

The lavish display of goodwill for the APC was due to the sense of responsibility the party had displayed in its opposition years (1962-67), and out of respect for the party leader, President Stevens. During the difficult years, Mr. Stevens was the *enfant terrible* of Sierra Leone politics, watched warily and harassed regularly by the leadership of the Sierra Leone Peoples Party (SLPP). Step by step he built himself and the APC into a viable alternative political machine destined one day to assume leadership of the government of Sierra Leone. The APC was at the threshold of power and an enviable mention in modern African history as the first political party in independent

Africa to oust another through the democratic process of the ballot box.

The rank and file of the SLPP sensed the collapse of their government. The panic within the leadership prior to the general elections of March, 1967, clearly showed in their efforts to salvage a battered prestige. These attempts ranged from one-party Republican proposals to a master plan for cheating at the polls. The APC rose to the challenge; the battles that ensued were fought doggedly inside the chambers of the House and outside on the political hustings. The length and breadth of the nation felt the resultant reverberations of the political crackers that were being unleashed with democratic gusto and relish. Change would not be smooth. The SLPP leadership came to the conclusion that if they lost the election, they would have to turn to the power of the army. Indeed, they lost at the polls and Mr. Siaka Stevens of the APC was duly sworn in as Prime Minister of Sierra Leone. This small but vital democratic ceremony came to an abrupt end, however, when the head of the army, Brigadier David Lansana, ordered the arrest of the Governor-General, the Prime Minister, and all those who had gone to the State House for the swearing-in, and declared martial law.

The arrests and the declaration of martial law were the last cards in the SLPP pack. The democratic process in Sierra Leone was brought to a halt. But the senior army

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*Mr. Wright, Associate Nieman Fellow in the current class, is assistant editor of the Sierra Leone Broadcasting Service, Freetown. Sierra Leone is a republic between Liberia and Guinea on the west coast of Africa.*

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officers were not unaware of the reasons behind the declaration of martial law. It was soon clear to them that Lansana had acted, not in the interest of the nation, but to

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**From the outset, the national government looked destined for a breakup because of the conflicting interests inherent in its composition.**

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save SLPP leadership from the repercussions of their disastrous performance while in office.

On March 23, 1967, two days after Lansana's broadcast, the senior officers of the army struck and seized power for its own sake and for themselves. Lansana was arrested and the National Reformation Council (NRC) emerged as the supreme body responsible for the administration of the country.

Military rule had been forced on a people without their consent. They watched this intrusion with disbelief and disgust, and almost burst at the seams with inevitable wrath. The NRC did not go down well with the people; it was not part of the bargain struck at the polls in March 1967. The people were spoken to from a farcical cocoon of security, much as Caesar spoke to the cheering crowds, and the leaders strode across the country like emperors whose peccadilloes could be cast aside with a shrug of the shoulder.

For a year, the nation bore the imposed rule. Then in the early hours of April 18, 1968, the lower ranks of the army struck and removed the National Reformation Council from power. The senior army and police officers who had been members of the NRC and those who had given support to it morally were soon safely tucked away at the Pademba Road Prisons. A new council replacing the NRC was formed and named the Anti-Corruption Revolutionary Movement (ACRM). The task of this council was to return the country to civilian rule.

Eventually the National Interim Committee replaced the ACRM. Through the acting Governor-General, the committee invited all the candidates who had been successful in the March elections of the previous year to the State House for consultations. After a couple of hours of deliberation, Mr. Siaka Stevens was appointed Prime Minister of the national government and sworn in for a second time.

The aspirations of the people of Sierra Leone had been met. Siaka Probyn Stevens, former policeman, stenographer, trade unionist, and leader of the APC, replaced Albert Margai, the fallen regent. Siaka Stevens

had become the conscience of the nation, and the reception he received when he rode through the capital that April afternoon reflected the immense popularity he had gathered on his undulating path to power.

**T**he first and most important task of Prime Minister Stevens was to put together a cabinet that would reflect the structure of the national government agreed on at the State House consultations. Apart from the one party issue and the Republican constitution, financial mismanagement and corruption were high on the list that represented the platform on which the General Election was contested. One of the very first acts by the government was to announce a cut in the salaries of the Prime Minister and of his newly appointed Cabinet Ministers. Stevens slashed his by Le 1,000 annually and that of his Ministers by Le 500. [Le = \$1]

Such an act by the government was in keeping with the promises made during the pre-election campaigns. The crowd approved. Any rapport between the APC and the people that developed from this point, and that was essential for its own survival as a national party, faced serious obstacles. From the outset, the national government looked destined for a breakup because of the conflicting interests inherent in its composition. The strains became evident on June 5, 1968, the day the third Parliament met. The Prime Minister and Mr. Jusu-Sheriff, Minister of Health, clashed during felicitations to the newly elected speaker, Sir Emile. The events of that day clearly pointed to a parting of the ways in the near future.

On May 30, a little over a month after taking office, the government began investigating the army and police takeover of the previous year. In less than a month, on June 21, nine men and a woman went on trial charged with treason and misprision of treason. Never before had the nation been witness to such acts of political brigandry, consequently the proceedings of the treason trial generated unprecedented interest. The courtroom was always filled to capacity. The stories that were told were incredulous to the man in the street. The defendants were booed and abused with venomous regularity to and from their way to court. The national opinion made itself felt.

**W**hile this legal drama was being played out in the nation's courtrooms, the government was faced with growing violence in the Southern and Eastern Provinces. Disturbing rumours of plots to



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overthrow the government ran amok. The APC was visibly shaken by the continuing violence, and the left-wing became more and more vocal in its denunciation of all subversive activities.

On July 1, the Premier went on the air and told the nation of a new plot to seize power with the help of mercenaries. He even mentioned a very reliable London source which gave an air of credibility to the plot; but he assured the nation that all the necessary security measures had been taken. The government and the APC were faced with their first test of survival. Mr. Stevens' leadership was being called into question, not by the electorate who put him in power, but by the SLLP faithfuls inside the country and the affluent and powerful leadership in exile. They nurtured a concept that the APC as a party could not rule, and furthermore, could not survive the hazards thrown in its path. The dominant belief among SLLP leaders was that Mr. Siaka Stevens was the only figure of consequence in the APC and that without him, the new men he helped bring to power were weak and inexperienced. The SLLP was proved wrong. The new men Mr. Stevens brought with him to power were a dedicated and determined lot, not trained by the conservatism and fraternalism that characterised the SLLP. Stevens' men grew up in the heady turbulence of the postwar years, and were conditioned to rise to the challenges that lay ahead.

The election petitions resulting from corrupt practices during the March 1967 elections caused many SLLP seats to be declared vacant. The campaign for the scheduled bye-election (a special election not held at the time of a general election, to fill a vacancy in Parliament) presented an opportunity for the unleashing of violence in the South and East. Arson, murder, and intimidation were the hallmarks of the political campaign. Persuasion to one's "viewpoint" never had a place.

The degree of violence escalated, forcing the Prime Minister's Office to issue a statement denouncing it, and warning of the consequences that would follow if the government was forced to act. The statement went unheeded. Mr. Stevens' authority was being called into question; the restless left-wing of the APC concluded that action was necessary. The Prime Minister bowed to the pressure, and on the night of November 19, he declared a nationwide state of public emergency.

Inside the House, Mr. Stevens and his front bench fought to make clear that the APC had been entrusted with the responsibility of running the affairs of the nation. In

one of his characteristic replies to those who criticised him about civil service appointments, he said, "Our detractors who ran this government for over 10 years and landed this country into such a terrible mess now expect us to change Sierra Leone into Canaan within five months."

**T**he first year of the Stevens' government was dominated by politics rather than by economics. Little time was devoted to bringing stability to an economy so terribly battered by the government of the fallen regent. Early in the new year, the government found the time to concentrate on the sagging economy. After some negotiations, the government signed an agreement with five oil companies operating in the country on the running of the oil refinery.

Yet the diamond industry dominated the economic scene in 1969. The government felt strong enough to reach a revised agreement with the Diamond Corporation on the marketing of rough and uncut diamonds for which Sierra Leone exported about Le 53,000,000. In addition, the government received Le 330,000 from the Corporation as part of its annual donation.

The British Government gave Sierra Leone a loan of Le 3,600,000 to finance a road development program. The economic sector began to receive the attention it deserved. The Stevens government at last won recognition from the international money markets.

With the immense reservoir of goodwill and popularity at home, the Prime Minister now felt confident enough to make diplomatic forays abroad. He went to

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### **Arson, murder, and intimidation were the hallmarks of the political campaign.**

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Guinea for talks with President Toure, and to Liberia, where President Tolbert had just succeeded the late Dr. Tubman. The visits to Liberia and Guinea struck the chord of good neighbourliness so essential in foreign policy, and lay the foundations for future areas of cooperation.

In Washington, D.C., Mr. Stevens talked with President Nixon and explored ways by which the United States could help Sierra Leone's development. The Prime Minister returned home to a warm welcome. He had given the APC and the government a new lease on life and hope for the future.

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**I**n Parliament, later that year, Stevens moved a motion designed to tap public opinion on the question of whether or not Sierra Leone should become a Republic. The Prime Minister believed that his popularity was enough of a yardstick to judge the national

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### **Overnight, the man on the street became a constitutional expert.**

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attitude. The left wing of the APC picked up the vogue that was sweeping the continent. The left was confident that the tide of support on which the party rode to power could achieve for it anything it demanded.

The nation soon got the message. The pros and cons of the Republican issue were discussed everywhere, from the universities to the pubs. Overnight, the man on the street became a constitutional expert. The interest was good for the body politic of the nation.

The success story of 1969 spilled over into the following year. The year started with encouraging economic news. At the annual Bank of Sierra Leone dinner, the Governor, Mr. Nicol-Cole, told his audience that "the net foreign assets of the banking system increased sharply from Le 15.8 million to Le 25 million at the end of 1969."

On February 2, 1970, the government, in keeping with another of its election promises, launched a program to acquire majority shares in major economic concerns. Negotiations began between the government and the Sierra Leone Selection Trust. The aim was to acquire 51 percent of SLST's operations. The government was also able to keep another of its many promises to the people when on February 20, 1970, the Non-Citizens Trade and Business Act came into being. This Act was amended in part later but did mark a sincere first step in helping Sierra Leoneans gain a foothold in the country's economy.

**N**ational consciousness was diverted from the economy once more by the municipal elections for the Freetown City Council scheduled for April 3, 1970. Although there was a handful of independents, it was a straight fight between the APC and the SLLP. The All Peoples Congress had been controlling the Council since 1964 when Prime Minister Stevens was mayor of the municipality. It was difficult to see how the Sierra Leone's

Peoples Party, following such a disastrous performance in national government, could oust the popular APC from office.

The emotional outburst unleashed on both sides led the otherwise well-fought campaign to violence and bloodshed, particularly in Ginger Hall in Freetown's East End, and Dworzak Farm in the West. Once more the Prime Minister's Office was forced to hand down a statement denouncing all forms of violence. A meeting called by the opposition SLLP did not concentrate on the political issues of the municipality, but rather embarked on an unwarranted tirade against Mr. Stevens and his government. The campaign eventually reached the point where both parties had to issue statements condemning violence and calling for a fair election free of hooliganism.

A threat by the SLLP to withdraw from the race did not materialise. The party would have arranged its own demise had it done so, and would have lost all credibility as an effective opposition party. It went to the polls, lost all 24 seats and bagged only 12.4 percent of the total votes cast. The APC now controlled the largest metropolis in the country as well as the national government, and was well on its way to dispatching the SLLP to the sidelines. With its superiority now assured by the victory in the municipal elections, the APC geared itself for the third Annual Delegates Conference. In just a little over two years in office, the rank and file of the party had developed a high degree of confidence and assurance that only by their own efforts could they hold on to power.

Delegates from all over the country stormed the capital in a show of pride and success. For three days the APC deliberated the problems facing it and mapped out a strategy for the future. The party resolved to support the government in a comprehensive effort to reach the following objectives:

1. To increase the national wealth.
2. To build for the future and for our children.
3. To create a society based on social justice.

The faithfuls dispersed with their heads high and took with them, together with gratifying declarations of loyalty to the party, the message that a new era had dawned.

**M**r. Siaka Stevens emerged from this party convention with an image larger than life. Through it all he played the man of the people, preferring the staunch common sense of the masses to the

ineffectual posturings of the intellectuals. After the euphoria of the convention died down, the Prime Minister went once more on a diplomatic offensive. This time he visited Gambia, West Germany, Jamaica, and joined the non-aligned meeting in Lusaka, Zambia. Mr. Stevens was forced to cut short his stay in Lusaka to return home to deal with a serious threat that faced the APC.

In the absence of the Prime Minister, five party stalwarts had resigned. On his return, Stevens said, "The government will not stand for anything that will disrupt the peace and stability of this country." On September 12, the five were expelled from the party. At the time of their expulsion, a new political party, the National Democratic Party (it later became the United Democratic Party or UDP) was forming. Into this new party walked the five expelled men. The new UDP was uncompromising in its attack on the government of Mr. Stevens.

On September 14, the Prime Minister once again had cause to clamp down a state of emergency on the nation. In a nationwide broadcast he said, "There are clear indications that a small group of people who want to get into power by any means possible or who have lost positions of authority, are doing their utmost to disrupt the peace and government of this country." This was an obvious reference to those who left the APC for the UDP. Mr. Stevens also blamed "foreign interests" for the political unrest brought on by the formation of the UDP. The declaration of a state of emergency was not enough to suppress the UDP. Something stricter and more direct was required. On October 8 the United Democratic Party was banned, and with it went its cyclostyled mouthpiece "Probe."

The government once again demonstrated its ability to meet challenges. Delegations of support converged on the Prime Minister's Office to offer their thanks and appreciation for a job well done. A menace had been eliminated once and for always.

The economy was not doing badly despite the threat to national stability. Sierra Leone had a trade surplus of about Le 35,000,000 in her commerce with Britain. Mostly diamonds, oil seeds, kernels, and some other agricultural products were sold, and in turn the money bought petroleum, machinery, equipment, and manufactured goods.

The mining group of Bayer Preussag began rutile [a common mineral used to coat welding rods] mining in the Southern Province where large deposits lay virtually untapped. The confidence of the government was on the upswing. It issued its first Development Loan Stock, and

Barclays and Standard Banks expressed their willingness to offer 25 percent of their shares to the public.

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**"I do declare solemnly today that I would rather die for my country than accept government by brute force."**

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**T**he year 1971 was another of agony for Stevens and his party. In March, a small faction of the army attempted a coup. The attack on the Prime Minister's life took place a little after midday on March 23, and was led by a handful of disgruntled soldiers who didn't even have the heart to carry out their plan with a modicum of military efficiency. Their task was all the more difficult because of the presence of Guinean soldiers who formed part of the Prime Minister's security squad. The plotters also lacked the support of a broad section of the army. The coup attempt was certain to fail, and did.

The government was determined to fight back and bring an end once and for all to the attempts being made on its legitimacy. In a broadcast on the issue of coups, Stevens said, "I do declare solemnly today that I would rather die for my country than accept government by brute force."

On March 17, a week before the abortive coup, the Prime Minister had gone to Guinea for what was then described as "routine consultations" with President Toure. The visit was a follow-up to a government resolution to initiate a defence agreement with Liberia and Guinea. It was not until March 28 that the Prime Minister disclosed to the nation that he had signed a defence pact with Guinea. "The government can now meet force with force," he warned. "So let no one venture." No one did for some time.

The party faithfuls were shouting and pleading for a change to a Republic for Sierra Leone; circumstances of the previous weeks made the possibility more of a probability. The actions of the government indicated that sooner rather than later, Sierra Leone would be a Republic. In fact, rumours forecasting a proclamation to that effect on April 27 persisted, forcing the government to issue the following statement: "The government wishes to state that whilst evidence is not lacking that it is the wish of many Sierra Leoneans that Sierra Leone should

become a Republic in the near future, no decision one way or the other has actually been taken on this matter."

This statement did not dampen the rumours of the changeover to a Republic. On April 19, 1971, a Republican bill was introduced in Parliament and passed. Mr. Stevens became the Republic's first Executive President, and Mr. Koroma became Vice President and Prime Minister. Sierra Leone had at last cast aside its monarchical form of government. A period of agonising transition and constant pressure for Siaka Stevens and his All Peoples Congress was over. Few political parties have ever been subjected to the kinds of harassment the APC endured.

One of President Stevens' first uses of his executive privilege was to grant amnesty to 17 persons accused in the treason trial. The releases were part of Stevens' overall strategy in bridging the cleavage brought about by the endless attempts by opposition groups to dislodge the government and by the attempts on the part of the APC to assert its authority.

The first step in economic cooperation with the Republic of Liberia was taken in 1971 when a joint committee met to study and coordinate trade activities. Sierra Leone agreed to export flour, cigarettes, furniture, metal doors and windows, cattle feed, confectioneries, nails, tin trunks, candles, and suitcases. Liberian exports included tyres and tubes, cartridges, batteries, and explosives. This mutual exchange turned out to be "one giant step" in regional cooperation. It led to the signing of the Mano River Union Declaration two years later.

The government was given a generous pat on the back when the World Bank expressed satisfaction over the measures taken to promote sound budgetary management. The World Bank signed a Le 4.7 million agreement with the government of Sierra Leone for the Bo-Kenema Road. Soon after, West Germany agreed to finance the Makeni-Matotoka Road. Sierra Leone was now utilising all the facets necessary for an accelerated economic development and on the hard road to a demanding future.

The year 1973 opened with the installation of President Stevens as Chancellor of the University of Sierra Leone. Stevens, after all the long years in the dangerous and intricate world of politics, had at last obtained the highest job in the land; now he was to become the symbol of the country's highest seat of learning. He promised at this historic moment in his life "to give maximum support to the concept of academic freedom."

The former United States Defence Secretary, Mr. Robert McNamara, President of the World Bank, visited Sierra Leone for talks with the government. President Stevens made it plain to him that the government's priority areas were "agriculture, education, and the construction of government offices."

The year 1973 was an election year, but much government time was devoted to the economy. A new rutile agreement with Bayer Preussag was made; the first phase of a project that ultimately would provide cheap electricity was completed; digging was begun on a 30-mile long artificial lake for irrigation and fishing; and West Germany agreed to loan Sierra Leone the finances necessary for the construction of the Congo Bridge.

In order to provide overall direction in the objectives, priorities and strategies of the economy, an 11-person National Planning Council was set up in March with President Stevens as chairperson. During the first four years of APC rule, the country's national income rose by 30 percent — a clear sign of economic progress. Also, foreign trade went up by more than 50 percent, and exports rose by more than 60 percent.

Despite its preoccupation with the economy, the government had its eye on the upcoming general elections. It was going to be the first major election since the party came to power in 1963. Parliament was, accordingly, dissolved on the 18th of April, and Nomination Day scheduled for the 24th.

The election was held under a state of emergency, and by Nomination Day it was clear that the All Peoples Congress was back in power. APC candidates were returned unopposed in all but four constituencies — two in the Western area, and two in the Southern Province. May 11, election day, the APC coasted home to a total victory. The new Parliament had become a *de facto* one party.

One event towards the end of 1975 transcended the national frontiers and overshadowed all other events. This was the signing of the Mano River Union Declaration in November by the Presidents of the Republics of Liberia and Sierra Leone. The Declaration provided for, among other things, the gradual progression of both countries towards an economic union.

President Stevens' foreign ventures in 1973 took him to Ethiopia to return Emperor Haile Selassie's 1971 visit. From Addis Ababa, the President went on to the Commonwealth Leaders Conference in Ottawa, Canada. Later in the year, President Stevens went to Peking where he met Chairman



Mao and signed a supplementary protocol to an agreement on economic and technical cooperation between Sierra Leone and China.

Sierra Leone had recognised the Peoples Republic of China in 1971, following the Communique signed in Peking between the two countries in July of that year. A Chinese economic team came to Sierra Leone the next year for talks with the government, and toured the provinces. In March, 1973, 15 Chinese doctors arrived and a month later an engineering team came to work out detailed designs for the construction of bridges in Kambia and Mange Bureh. The Chinese government also agreed to construct a sports stadium at Brookfields which is now in progress. In July, 1973, China donated two defence naval patrol boats to Sierra Leone. President Stevens said these would be used to check foreign intruders in territorial waters.

Between 1973 and the present, more than a hundred self-help projects sprung up throughout the country. The President showed his acceptance of the nation's gratitude when he opened the extensions of the Port Loko Hospital built by the people of Maforki. He said then, "No matter what we might have received or may be still receiving from outside, the development of our country will ultimately depend on our own efforts as Sierra Leoneans. Our independence will be meaningless unless we are able to shoulder the burden of development."

"Let all progressive and industrious citizens involve themselves in the task of nation building by self-help and united actions." This was the clarion call the President made in June of 1973, and the nation picked up the echoes with unprecedented enthusiasm. In a few months, the President's call was being turned into practical efforts. From Pujehun to Kabala, from Kono to York, schools, clinics, roads, hospitals, health centres, and community centres were being constructed. For the first time, communities felt they belonged to the efforts of development. A sense of pride was being instilled in a people whose tradition was grounded in the concept that the government provided everything society required.

**D**uring the formative years of the All Peoples Congress, the party always considered its women an integral part of the struggle for social justice in Sierra Leone. The APC's Women's Congress emerged as a powerful political force whose influence extended to all corners of the country. The interest women have shown

in politics has brought results. Women are now APC branch executives and members of the central committee of the party.

The peace of 1974 was shattered when news broke out on July 27 that the Prime Minister, Mr. Kamara-Taylor,

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**"Already the country's reserves have suffered a drastic depletion. A jab now taken gamely on the chin will spare us the indignity of a knockout punch in the next round."**

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had narrowly escaped an assassination attempt that morning. Dr. Forna, Ibrahim Taqi, David Lansana, and 12 others were named in the plot to kill not only the Prime Minister, but also the Vice President and the Force Commander. Once again the country was faced with the agonising experience of another treason trial. The trial lasted until July, 1975, when Dr. Forna and his fellow plotters were sentenced to death and executed.

Apart from the assassination attempt, and the effect the 1973 Middle East War had on the economy of the country, things weren't all that bad. Early in the year the Bank of Sierra Leone launched a scheme to support developing businesses. Under this plan, loans were guaranteed for those engaged in agriculture, animal husbandry, fishing, transport, mining, and manufacture.

At the annual Bank of Sierra Leone dinner, both the Governor of the Bank, and the Finance Minister described the state of the nation's finances. "Stricter measures of foreign control have been taken by the government to conserve and consolidate our revenue reserves in view of the adverse conditions of world trade that have confronted Sierra Leone," the Minister explained. The Governor followed by saying, "Already the country's reserves have suffered a drastic depletion. A jab now taken gamely on the chin will spare us the indignity of a knockout punch in the next round."

The profit of the National Commercial Bank almost trebled in 1975, a clear indication of the progress being made in the banking sector of the economy. But the economy was in for a rude shock that same year when the Sierra Leone Development Company (DELCO) gave notice that it would have to discontinue its operations at the end of October, after more than 40 years in Sierra Leone. The demise of DELCO cut off a sizeable chunk of the country's revenue earning. The government was forced to look for

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foreign companies to take on where DELCO left off. Bethlehem Steel ranked high on the list of companies being courted.

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**The circumstances of present-day Africa encourage the personality cult. The idea of a father figure personifying the nation has great mass appeal.**

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**O**ne dominant issue in the political life of Sierra Leone was the one-party question. Since 1971, when the people of Lower Bambara Chiefdom made the first public call for a one-party system, there had been endless calls for a changeover. The contagion spread from the political hustings to the Chamber of the House where the "Motion of Destiny" was moved for the conversion of the system from a multi-party to a one-party democracy. The motion passed the House with hardly a voice dissenting.

The year 1976 opened with President Stevens contemplating retirement. This sent shockwaves through the nation, but by the time his inauguration drew near, he had been convinced of the need to be around for some time, at least. Delegations from every nook and corner came to Freetown to ask him to change his mind. He did, for obvious reasons. The circumstances of present-day Africa encourage the personality cult. The idea of a father figure personifying the nation has great mass appeal. Since the palmy years of the APC, Stevens had come to be regarded as the modern version of the Chief of Council, and a leader among equals. So when the inauguration took place in April, the question of his retirement was a thing of the past; once more he took an oath that put him on the highest pedestal of power.

Inauguration year saw President Stevens launching a new teaching programme at Bunumbu designed to provide primary schools with rural teachers. UNESCO and other United Nations agencies financed the programme. At the ceremony, Stevens said "The importance of teacher education is being brought sharply into focus now more than ever before, as a result of an acute awareness of the vital role which teachers can and should play in national development."

**A** period of student unrest ushered in 1977, but with skillful handling, the President was able to diffuse a situation that could have been tragic and disastrous. Again it was election year, and a victory at the polls confirmed once more the position of the APC in national ratings.

The centrepiece of Sierra Leone's foreign policy in 1977 was its successful mediation effort between Ethiopia and Sudan, which brought an end to the intense hatred that had characterised the relationship between Khartoum and Addis Ababa.

With the confirmation of APC power once again, the stage looks set for a strong economic take-off. The Sierra Leone Produce Marketing Board, a dying institution in the days of the SLLP, has now become a prosperous organisation able to make a Le 75 million turnover in one year. The APC began paying farmers in cash for their products instead of "paying cheats," the method used in previous regimes.

**L**ooking back on the decade, it seemed that the APC could not have survived all the dark episodes that beset its path. The poisons had not been enough, however, to overwhelm the good blood circulating in the body of the party. In a country noted for its passionate interest in politics, President Stevens has been able to cut through all obstacles to restore order and establish a truly National Party.

The outcome of his efforts will depend on a number of factors: the stature of the President himself; the unquestioned loyalty of the army and the police; the loyalty and cooperation of civil servants; the conduct of the Trade Unions; and, above all, the service of the people who form the vanguard of the tide of rising expectations. The last 10 years have been agonising for the APC in many ways. The party's struggle to find national unity and stability has been a herculean one, although there are those outside its ranks who find cynical pleasure in being destructively critical.

As the seal is fixed on the first decade of the All Peoples Congress' activities in office, and we stand on the threshold of the second decade, let the nation look confidently to a period of peace, stability, and progress in all spheres of national life. □

# Nieman Fellowships for Journalists, 1979-1980

## HARVARD UNIVERSITY

Every year approximately 12 journalists from the United States are awarded Lucius W. Nieman Fellowships at Harvard University. The purpose of the program is to provide a mid-career opportunity for men and women in the media to study and to broaden their intellectual horizons. *Application is made by the individual journalist.*

Fellowships are granted for the academic year (September to June), and Fellows are free to enroll in graduate and undergraduate courses of the University's several schools and departments. The typical Nieman plan combines general education with concentration in one or two fields. In an extracurricular program, the Fellows meet with distinguished figures from journalism, public service, and universities to discuss contemporary issues.

Journalists, including photographers, who work full-time for newspapers, magazines of general interest, press services, or radio or television news departments are eligible to apply if they have had at least three years of professional experience. They must obtain their employer's consent for a leave of absence for the academic year, and agree to return upon completion of their studies. They must also agree to refrain from professional work during their stay at Harvard, and remain in the Cambridge area during term time.

The Fellowships include a weekly stipend and tuition. From time to time funding for specialists in labor reporting is available from the Louis Stark Memorial Fund administered by the Nieman Foundation. Occasionally funds from outside sources are awarded to specialists in other areas.

*The deadline for completed applications for the 1979-1980 academic year is February 1, 1979. No extension of this deadline can be granted. To avoid last-minute complications, early applications are advised. Selections are announced in early May.*

Further information and application forms may be obtained from:

The Executive Director  
Nieman Foundation for Journalism  
Harvard University  
One Francis Avenue  
Cambridge, Massachusetts 02138

# How do I love thee ... so. E.J. Thribb

By Bernard Nossiter

LONDON -- The prestigious *Times Literary Supplement* has just hailed E.J. Thribb as a master of "minimalist clarity and compression ... one of the most promising young poets at present writing in South London."

Listeners to BBC Radio's weekly celebration of the arts, "Kaleidoscope," heard that Thribb's repeated use of the word "so" is "like the tolling of a great bell."

*The Sunday Times*, the most important weekend paper here, devoted no less than four pages of its color magazine to examples of Thribb's work, a sketch and a critique of the artist. In a boldface introduction to "So. Farewell Then...", a collection of Thribb's work, and "a major literary event," the poet, who almost always signs himself E.J. Thribb (17), was even said to be "a front-runner for the Oxford poetry professorship."

*The New Statesman*, a weekly distinguished for its literary criticism as well as its socialist politics, praised the poet's ability to convey large areas of embarrassing information "in that superficially laconic style which is Thribb's imprimatur."

His complete oeuvre, 48 poems of which 36 begin with the famous "So," have been published by Hamish Hamilton. This noted house has also printed the works of Edna St. Vincent Millay and Rod McKuen.

The whole affair, of course, is a quintessentially British gag that has run its course through wide sections of the literary establishment here. E.J. Thribb (17) is the creation of Barry Fantoni (38) and Richard Ingrams (41).

Ingrams edits and Fantoni is his chief deputy at *Private Eye*, a satirical fortnightly that specializes in spoofs of writers and politicians.

A vintage Thribb, faintly reminiscent of e.e. cummings, goes like this:

So.  
Farewell then.  
Chairman Mao.  
You are the  
Last of the  
Great revolutionary  
figures. You  
And I  
Had little in  
Common  
Except that  
Like me  
You were a poet  
Though how you  
Found time  
To write poems  
In addition to  
Running a country of  
800 million people  
Is baffling  
Frankly.

In the land of Lewis Carroll and Edward Lear, a taste for nonsense verse is hardly surprising. What is remarkable is that some of the most important publications in the country have gleefully joined in legitimizing the joke.

Fantoni, the *Private Eye* parodist, has scored a considerable success "standing in" for an invariably stricken Thribb at poetry readings to mostly delighted audiences in Chelsea, Hampstead and other London haunts of the *literati*. Fantoni claims to have packed a house at the Chelsea Arts Club where 100 persons paid three pounds each to hear "So" poems for Maraji Desai, W. Somerset Maugham and Anna Ford, a lovely brunette who reads the 10 p.m. television news.

There have been only a handful of objectors. An elderly man at one Fantoni reading walked out, snorting "Rubbish."

*The Sunday Times* printed a letter from a man in Ashton-under-Lyne complaining that Thribb "was a joke ... in questionable taste." Another, from southwest London, called the stuff "unutterable drivel."

But *Private Eye* readers, who have been enjoying Thribb (17) for six years, and many other Britons think that satirizing pretentious poets and critics is good fun. Why has Thribb tickled the national risibility?

Fantoni says: "I will tell you the truth simply. We do not have Jewish comedians."

And, "I think everybody enjoys a laugh in that business, the business of literary criticism. It's pretty dull stuff."

Thribb is due to appear again this week in *Private Eye* with a poem on the death of the Pope. It begins characteristically:

So.  
Farewell then  
Pope John Paul

But the future of South London's most promising young poet is in doubt. On the BBC's "Kaleidoscope," editor Ingrams said that Thribb is dying. Fantoni is depressed at the thought and hopes to keep his creation alive, but editors have the last word here as elsewhere.

Ingrams did offer BBC listeners one consolation. Thribb, he said, has written his own obituary. It begins:

So,  
Farewell then  
E.J. Thribb.

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Mr. Nossiter, *Nieman Fellow '63*, is the London correspondent for the Washington Post.



# Books

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## A Publisher's Bible of Deadly Sins

### National Lampoon Sunday Newspaper Parody

Four news sections, plus "Pomade" and "Sunday Week" magazines, color comics and Swillmart advertising supplement.

(National Lampoon Magazine. \$4.95)

America's Sunday newspapers get it right in their corpulent guts from the gang at National Lampoon with this on-target parody of flabby newspapers.

The Dacron *Republican-Democrat*, with its stirring motto, "One of America's Newspapers," is a publisher's bible of deadly sins.

The paper shamelessly boosts Dacron's three industries: mobile homes, asphalt and the newspaper-owned power company. The "Armchair Investor" finds (surprise!) that asphalt and trailers are "portfolio virtuosos." The Silage County Board of Supervisors is congratulated on the editorial page for using mobile homes for jails and salt storage, not to mention its plan to reclaim strip-mined land by paving it.

Newspapers aren't just characterized as dishonest, they're also timid, trivial and dumb.

For *Rep-Dem* editors, there's no such thing as overplaying the local angle. While the banner headline screams, "Powder Room Prowler Strikes Anew," a small story informs us Japan was destroyed by a volcano, helpfully including a one-column drawing of the Eastern hemisphere, "where Japan was formerly located."

Always most concerned about Dacronites, the disaster is told in terms of two local women traveling in the Orient who may now be missing.

Readers aren't spared a detailed breakdown of their travel expenses or their bon voyage photograph.

Dacronites almost never read a discouraging word. Bob Trout and Carl Bugbaum, the paper's investigative reporters, find the Hackleweeze nursing home chain provides an excellent environment for Dacron's elderly people after all. "They're well lit and have lots of beds and aren't nearly as dirty as you'd expect (what with all the messy old people that they have in them)," one of the duo's two-paragraph "investigations" reports.

Like a good civic soldier, the *Rep-Dem* presents earnest pieces on its community, such as "Negroes, the Problem that Won't Go Away," a headline quite descriptive of the level of analysis in some newspapers.

This is one newspaper that accurately reflects its surroundings: Dacron's citizens are Babbitts living in Peyton Place. The city's leading Jews are invited to the country club dinner, but must sit by themselves, the newspaper tells us, at the "kosher" table. Humor like this carries the parody beyond juvenile gags.

In a jab at how the press caters to America's narcissism, the index consists solely of entries such as "Life and Leisure, Living and Life, Leisure Living, Life and Home, Home Leisure."

The women's pages are a dustpan

full of pop psychology, fads and bad advice. The Lampoonists have captured the annoying, helpful tone of the "how-to" writers in articles such as "Le Home Decor" (how to give your home that new motel room look) and "Is Your Child a Dip?" (Does your son willingly wear snowpants? Enjoy kissing his aunts?) For vital news, turn to a report on Housecoat 78, a showing by the world's top housecoat, slipper and hairnet designers. ("Even better than Apron Expo," the reviewer raves.)

Previously, the Lampoon dissected such magazines as *Time*, *Sports Illustrated*, *Cosmopolitan* and a 1964 high school yearbook, also based in the fictional Dacron, Ohio. The humorists spent two years on the newspaper project, leaving no rescue squad log, stock quotation or birth announcement untouched.

Many people may not be willing to wade through the grocery ads and classifieds to get all the cross-referenced jokes, and some might not want to pay \$4.95 for the privilege. But as a tool of what not to write, it's a better textbook than any I had in journalism school.

The parody is executed with such style that even those who are intimate friends (or perhaps employees) of the victim will agree: the American newspaper had it coming.

--Margaret Engel

"All the News  
Not Fit to Print"

# Not The New York Times

Strike Parody  
Weather: Mostly present  
today, still there tomorrow  
Saturday: yes Details, page 22

VOL. I... No. 1

Copyright © 1978 Not The New York Times

NEW YORK, MONDAY, OCTOBER 16, 1978

85 cents beyond 15,000 mile delivery zone  
Higher on other worlds.

ONE DOLLAR

## A Times Warp

If the great New York newspaper strike of 1978 is to be remembered for anything, it is to be remembered for having spawned one of the best journalistic parodies since Paddy Chayefsky's "Network" or Evelyn Waugh's *Scoop*.

*Not The New York Times*, the combined work of a number of people who love the grey lady well enough to laugh at her, is a brilliantly done, if somewhat abbreviated and occasionally tasteless, spoof of the *Times* that stays on the money long enough to invite anyone's scrutiny, even Abe Rosenthal's.

"I'm rather delighted with it," the (real) *Times* executive editor was quoted as saying when the 24-page pretender hit the stands in *Times*-starved towns on the East Coast and promptly sold out. Rosenthal did let it be known, however, that he didn't think the parody as good as some of the funny stuff he put out when he was a young collegiate editor at City College of New York.

Well, come off it, Abe. I went to City College too. And I put out parody issues of the school paper too. And I'll bet you a buck right now that nothing you or I did was as good as this. (In fact, make that two bucks. And a beer.)

What makes *Not The New York Times* work is its canny familiarity with its subject: the paper that still

regards itself as the "world's greatest newspaper," no matter what may have been printed under the old *Chicago Tribune* masthead.

But besides poking fun at the foibles of a paper that takes itself far too seriously on everything from politics to *pate*, the bogus *Times* also includes a healthily jaundiced view of: trendiness, Jimmy Carter, windy columnists (of the type who people the *Times* Op-Ed page) and those hardy perennials, the Holy Father and the Mother Church.

Tiptoeing through the agate on a purported scoop on the Vatican's holdings, for example, we find that the Vatican investment portfolio reflects total ownership of the St. Louis Cardinals (Get it? Cardinals.), Ortho contraceptives, Plato's Retreat — and William F. Buckley.

By now, everybody who doesn't move their lips when they read probably has seen the "*Times*" lead story on the death of the new Pope: "Pope Dies Yet Again/Reign is Briefest Yet/Cardinals Return from Airport."

"He served as Pope for 19 minutes, the briefest reign in the history of the church," R.W. Papple Jr. wrote of the late Pope John Paul John Paul I, the successor to John Paul I, who could only make it a month.

"His last words, which were also his

first as spiritual head of the world's 49 million Roman Catholics were ... 'In Nomine Patri ... '"

There are other macabre bits in the paper as well: a "Sprouts Monday" (sic) piece on how wunderkind jockey Steve Cauthen had to be shot at Belmont after falling from his mount and breaking a leg. (The start of the next race was delayed almost five minutes.)

Then there's a marvelously antic piece on how Rudolf Hess staged a one-man riot in Spandau prison and held himself hostage for three hours until guards in riot gear showed up. "The hostage released himself and the prisoner was quickly rounded up."

And who among us has ever waded through the *Times* Op-Ed page or one of those interminable week-old thumb-suckers from Tierra del Fuego and not suspected what *Not The New York Times* says boldly in eight-point type: that the purpose of these articles is to fill space. Period.

It's not surprising that the people who put out *Not-NYT* include some well-known writers and satirists. It's also not surprising that most are not connected with the real *New York Times*. (Often the best parody and satire must be written at arm's length from the subject.)

The publishers were Josh Feingebaum, a New York music producer,

and Larry Durocher Jr., a publishing consultant. Their writing stable included George Plimpton, Terry Southern (author of *Candy*) and former *New York Post* reporter and author Nora Ephron (*Crazy Salad; Scribble, Scribble*). The fine hand of the National Lampoon is also apparent in the persons of present and former 'Poonies' Michael Arlen, Tony Hendra, Christopher Cerf and Rick Meyerowitz.

The initial press run for the one-shot parody was 150,000, but those went so fast when they hit the stands in Boston, New York and Washington that a second run of 100,000 was quickly ordered.

The new run was identical to the original — except for the fact that the "one dollar" price was missing from the top of page one.

To be sure, not everything in *Not The New York Times* is a howl. A front page piece written entirely in clichés and government jargon makes its point in the first graf, but goes on for another six.

And an Op-Ed piece on a national health program, by Henry (sic) Youngman, is a poor excuse to recycle Henny Youngman's night club act. And a report on a talk by anthropologist Margaret Mud on ethnic humor degenerates into a collection of (old) Polish jokes.

Still, there is enough original and clever stuff in the issue to make it worth a buck:

--A piece on a fire at New York's Studio 54 in which 190 were killed and injured because the owner of the posh disco would not admit firefighters beyond the velvet rope.

--A marvelous spoof, in the "Having" section, about a collection of chichi New Yorkers gutting their townhouses to achieve the High-Tech elegance of a midtown loft. (Mr. and Mrs. Tom Hoving, we also are informed, "have done their Dakota loft in Chinese food.")

Besides being a cleverly written parody, *Not-NYT* is also a virtual double of the real thing — even the by-line type looks the same.

And the ads — from quarter-page polemics to "Mr. Jimmy Carter," to ritzy spreads peddling the Annie Hall look (for men) at Nonwit Teller (sic) — ring hilariously true.

One such ad, a goof on Van Cleef and Arpels-type snobbery, provides the issue with one of its more obscure bits. Beneath a photo of a stunning diamond necklace and earrings is the legend: "Schlomo Tal of New York/International Jewelry for more than One One-Hundredth of a Century."

Check the clips on the murders of orthodox Jewish diamond merchants a while back and see where friend Schlomo fits in.

Good satire, like good sex, takes some working at and it's obvious that the folks who put out *Not-NYT* enjoyed their work. More often than not, their humor is deft and clever, rather than heavy and dull.

Consider how many times you've had to suffer through someone else's impression of what the news business is like — much less someone else's attempt to parody same — and you'll understand why *Not The New York Times* is such a gem.

When I finished reading the issue, I couldn't help but recall what may be the worst movie ever made about a newspaper, Jack Webb's "-30-", a flick so unconsciously camp as to be hilarious.

It included, among other things, a crusty old lady on rewrite who stuck to her typewriter even after learning her son had just died; David Nelson (of Ozzie and Harriet fame) singing the "Copyboy Song" (no, I am not making this up); and an entire cityroom applauding, backslapping and sighing with relief when a kid is pulled to safety from a drainage ditch.

Now, when I was running copy for the *Herald Tribune*, I don't remember having much time to go to the men's room, much less bang a bongo drum and sing the Copyboy Song. And later, when I worked nightside at the *New York Post*, all I saw in the cityroom when some kid was rescued was a lot of money changing hands.

Which all gets back to the point that if you're going to write about something — particularly if you're going to poke fun at it — you had better know the territory.

Obviously the *Not-NYT* crew did. And I must admit that to a *Daily News* guy like myself, it was fun to see the grey lady take a few well-aimed shots in the kishkas.

Frankly, I don't think I'll ever be really comfortable with a paper that wants to share with me The Talk of Tegucigalpa. The Talk of the Bronx, or of Washington, will do nicely, thanks.

It's hard to ignore the *Times*, I admit, and it's hard not to miss it when it's gone. And, in the midst of a tragic newspaper strike in the city of my birth, I missed the *Times* a lot — almost as much as I missed *The Daily News*.

So it felt good, not to say miraculous, a few weeks back to see the grey lady sitting folded on a hardback chair in Lippmann House — as if she had never left. My brain told me it was impossible for the *Times* to be publishing — just minutes before I'd been on the phone to my own paper for my latest dose of dismal strike news. But there it was — *The New York Times*.

In that brief instant, I wistfully thought: if the *Times* is here can The Nation's Largest Daily be far behind?

Shortly, though, I knew I'd been had; I realized the paper looked too thin. And besides, *The New York Times* rarely laughs — and never at herself — at least not in public.

--Frank Van Riper

# Journalism: Active and Passive

## On Press

by Tom Wicker  
(Viking, N.Y. 260 pp. \$10.95)

## On Reporting the News

by William E. Burrows  
(N.Y.U. Press. 327 pp. \$12.95)

These two books, besides sharing the first word of their titles, are essentially textbooks on journalism. Mr. Wicker's effort is directed at what could be called the mass audience which lately has had an itch to know about the folks who bring the news.

Mr. Burrows' work has been designed for college students taking journalism. Few other subjects in the colleges today are subjected to the seriousness, even pomposity found in traditional journalism textbooks. They are generally an arid batch, painting a false picture of what is at best a trade, and at worst a business.

Mr. Burrows has done journalism teachers everywhere a great favor: he has written a textbook with wit and insight, and many truths about the news business. Many of these truths are not flattering, but they are not misleading. Courses in journalism, of all subjects, should be honest.

Mr. Wicker's book is a sort of textbook, one written in a fine, flowing style which mixes subjective experience with the inherent problems of the American press.

In a chapter called "Who Elected The Press?" Wicker recounts that:

"Russell Baker, one of the best reporters before he became the *Time's* resident satirist, once devised the ideal journalism school. It would have, Baker decreed, but one course: a student would be required to stand in front of a closed door for six hours, at

the end of which the door would open, an official spokesman would look out, and speak two words — 'No comment.'

"Whereupon the door would close and the students would be required to go to the typewriter and turn out 600 words against a deadline."

Every newsperson recognizes the situation; most of the public would not understand the dilemma.

Mr. Wicker is essentially a positive writer, one whose column in *The New York Times* seeks to find the positive way to human advancement. His book, however, is not that positive about the condition of the press. Its theme is taken from the screaming hatred that Wicker witnessed in 1964 at the Republican Convention when former President Eisenhower knocked reporters and columnists, and the audience took up the shout.

Mr. Wicker at that time was a political correspondent for the *Times*. He had advanced in the ranks of journalism, from a small weekly in North Carolina, to a small daily in Winston-Salem, and eventually to Washington and the *Times*.

Mr. Wicker doesn't allude to it directly, but there is an unfortunate vertical caste system in American journalism. Mr. Wicker made the span, from the lowly weekly to the middling sized daily (where, from his account, he learned the most and had very good times) to the Brahmin status of Washington reporter for the *Times*. This caste system is unfortunate, because as Mr. Wicker notes, most Americans don't read the *Times*, or the *Washington Post*. They read their local dailies, or weeklies. Moreover, it is much more difficult for a small daily or weekly to go against the local establishment than it is for the *Times* or the *Post* to tackle the White House or the Pentagon.

In what Mr. Wicker calls his rules of journalism learned in the trenches, he notes that newspapers are the establishment, and that what has been called objective news gathering and writing usually protects the status quo.

In other words, it is tougher to be a small weekly editor, dependent on local good will and advertising, to go up against the local political establishment for wrongdoing, than to be a congressional reporter for a major media outlet who is fed some report of government bumbling. In the small town the reaction to crusading is likely to come through the front door, often brandishing a literal or figurative axe handle.

After writing about this gritty, little-analyzed part of the newspaper business, Mr. Wicker devotes the major share of his book to his experiences in Washington, mostly in the velvet trap of the White House beat.

It's hard to realize today that only 80 years ago the White House press corps numbered about enough men (no women) to put together a poker game. The "Imperial Presidency" hadn't been invented. Now scores of men and women, who have no more immediate access to the President or his advisers than you or I, spend their hours trying to make page one mountains from molehills of information.

In a section replete with tales of the Pentagon Papers and other sensations, Mr. Wicker comes to the sane conclusion that the government of the people, by the people and for the people, has become the Government of the Top Secret Stamp, run by the Anointed, and operated by the Officious whose main task seems to befuddle the organs of information.

Altogether, not a positive, happy picture.



Mr. Burrows, on the other hand, has decided to write a journalism text with wit in the mixture. A journalism professor at New York University, Mr. Burrows takes a hard-headed approach to the trade. For example:

"All investigative stories start in one of two ways: either through a reporter's initiative (reading court testimony or an annual report and realizing that  $2 + 2 = 3\frac{1}{2}$ ) or because of the so-called 'tip.' The latter probably occurs more frequently by a factor of 10. Thinking, after all, is very hard work."

In an early warning to students, Mr. Burrows writes: "If you think that genes are pants, that quid pro quo is an Italian sea food dish, that a peccadillo is an armor-plated mammal, that falsetto is a Shakespearean character, that Mach 2 is a men's deodorant, and that photosynthesis is made by Kodak, you are going to have trouble reporting effectively."

In his segment on obituaries, Mr. Burrows writes: "If you use 'departed,' be prepared to give a track number . . ."

All in all a good, hard-headed approach, a book worthy of students' and journalism teachers' shelves.

--Edward C. Norton

## Notes on Book Reviewers

Margaret Engel, Nieman Fellow in the current class, is a government reporter for the *Des Moines Register*.

Frank Van Riper, Nieman Fellow in the current class, is a Washington bureau correspondent for the *New York Daily News*.

Edward C. Norton, Nieman Fellow '73, was until August a reporter with the *New York Daily News*.

# Letters

## Applause from the West Coast

To the Editors:

Here is a fan letter for your Autumn 1978 issue of Nieman Reports. To have Jerry Cohen's, Johnny Oakes', and Edward Norton's excellent pieces all in one issue is quite a feat, and I enjoyed all three enormously.

Congratulations on a superb forum of opinion.

*Edith S. Coliver, Director  
Social Action & Communication  
Asia Foundation  
San Francisco*

## . . . and from the East

To the Editors:

Like just about everybody, I scan Nieman Reports when it arrives in the mail, and fasten on one or two articles that strike me at the time. It has been quite a while since I have thumbed through a stack of magazines and realized the fact that NR has become quite a powerful and important publication — lots of things worth reading.

Among the recent unexpected bonuses was the report on John Finley's conversation with the Nieman Fellows (NR, Summer 1978). I dropped every-

thing else just to absorb that fascinating and unique view of our contemporary problems.

Thank you for these articles.

*Louis Banks  
Nieman Research Fellow '70  
Sloan School of Management  
Massachusetts Institute of Technology*

## Filling the Gaps

To the Editors:

Nieman Reports fills the gap between TV news, the so-called weekly "news" magazines and the daily newspapers. The breadth and scope of the lucidly written articles provide background and analysis of topical subjects.

This publication is not afraid to present both sides of controversial issues and give space to unpopular views. I refer in particular to the recent article by Louis Louw on South Africa, and to Edward Norton's response to Solzhenitsyn's Harvard Commencement speech.

I recommend Nieman Reports to anyone interested in contemporary thought and action.

*Matthew Pratt  
Marshfield, Mass.*

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

# The Walter Lippmann Memorial Fund



*Photo by Christopher Morrow*

## LIPPMANN HOUSE Cambridge, Massachusetts

The Frank E. Gannett Newspaper Foundation of Rochester, N.Y. has granted \$25,000 to Harvard University's Nieman Foundation for Journalism to complete the renovation of the new Nieman headquarters, Walter Lippmann House.

According to James C. Thomson Jr., Nieman Curator, the Gannett Foundation's gift brings to \$331,000 the total amount raised in the Walter Lippmann Memorial Fund drive, which began in September, 1977.

The drive's goal is \$500,000 — \$400,000 in endowment and the rest for current renovation. An initial \$100,000 from Lippmann's own bequest to Harvard was released last autumn as a challenge grant by President Derek C. Bok. Walter Lippmann, a 1910 Harvard graduate, was a newspaper columnist and political theorist of international reputation. He died in December, 1974.

In announcing the Gannett Foundation contribution,

Mr. Thomson said, "We are delighted by the warm and generous response we have received throughout the nation, and we hope to reach our goal in the next few months." He noted that most of the renovation of Lippmann House, an 1836 Cambridge landmark at One Francis Avenue, has already been accomplished, and that the Nieman program moved into these new quarters last January. "For the first time," Thomson added, "we have adequate seminar and reception rooms, study and library facilities and archival storage space for our Fellowship program."

As of September, the Lippmann Fund has received major contributions or pledges from the following organizations: The Baltimore Sun, The Boston Globe, The Boston Herald American, Call-Chronicle Newspapers, Inc. (Allentown, Pa.), Capital Cities Communications, Des Moines Register, Dow Jones and Company, Field Enterprises (Chicago), Harte-Hanks Newspapers, Inc., Knight Foundation, Lee Enterprises, Inc., Louisville Times and Courier-Journal, Milwaukee Journal, Minneapolis Star and Tribune, Ottaway Newspapers, Inc., Pittsburgh Post-Gazette, The Providence (R.I.) Journal Company, The (Hackensack, N.J.) Record, St. Louis Post-Dispatch,

St. Petersburg Times, Sentinel-Star (Orlando, Fla.) Thomson Newspapers, Inc., Times Mirror Foundation (Los Angeles), Toledo Blade, the John Hay Whitney Trust, The Vancouver Sun and the Worcester (Mass.) Telegram & Gazette. In addition, more than 100 individuals, including Nieman alumni/ae, have participated in the fund drive to date.

The Nieman Fellowships were established in 1938 at Harvard University by a bequest of the late Agnes Wahl Nieman in memory of her husband, Lucius W. Nieman, founder of the Milwaukee Journal. The bequest was made "to promote and elevate the standards of journalism in the United States and to educate persons deemed specially qualified for journalism." Each year 10 to 12 American journalists and approximately six newspeople from abroad are awarded Nieman Fellowships to come to Harvard University for a mid-career sabbatical. Last September the 41st class of Nieman Fellows entered the University, and more than 600 Nieman alumni/ae are now scattered throughout the world.

Readers who wish to participate in this memorial to Walter Lippmann are invited to fill out the form below.

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

I enclose a gift of \$.....

I prefer to make a pledge of \$.....  
(Pledges may be extended over a three-to-five-year period.)

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City, State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

*Please make checks payable to:  
Nieman Foundation — Walter Lippmann Memorial Fund  
Your contribution is tax deductible. Thank you.*

