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April, 1960

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Watching the Watchmen

By John Cogley

Just about a dozen years ago the Commission on the Freedom of the Press recommended that an independent body of citizens be organized to serve as public critics of the American press. The reasoning of the Commission was simple. All the institutions of society, it argued, were properly subject to criticism from the press; all benefited from it. But who watches the watchmen? Some responsible group of citizens, armed with no more authority than the prestige of their names, should assume the task.

The proposal laid an egg, most of all because the lords of the press did not take to the idea that a group of "outsiders" should be passing on their performance. The Commission was charged with trying to gag the American free press. Indeed, on more than one editorial page the impression was given that the Commission's report had encouraged government to determine what could and could not be published. This of course was simply not true.

The Commission on the Freedom of the Press was interested in enlarging freedom rather than in diminishing it. For instance, it pleaded for more criticism of the press by the press and for a greater proliferation of newspapers throughout the country. Time has borne out its concern. With few exceptions, it is almost the rule now that newspapers and magazines say nothing unkind about their competitors. And the number of newspapers published decreases steadily.

If entertainment were the prime purpose of the American press, the problem would not be so serious. But if one takes the traditional view, that the free press is supposed to play an essential role in the process by which we govern ourselves, then entertainment is seen as a frosting on the journalistic cake.

The important, the essential, role of the

nation's newspapers is twofold: through its news columns to inform the citizenry of what it ought to know, and on the editorial page to argue for those causes which, in the publisher's mind, best serve the commonweal. Because they held some such notion as this the Founding Fathers went to great lengths to guarantee the independence of the press from any form of governmental coercion or interference.

We could be doing much better by the Founding Fathers. And it is not all the people's fault, either, though some of it is. Our press is free, gloriously free. But is it serving the cause of freedom as well as it might? I think not, and I would attribute the failings of the press to two chief factors.

First, there is the inescapable fact that the world has grown fantastically complex. The average newspaperman is simply not qualified to report on domestic affairs and international developments with intelligence and understanding. The general reporter has to have at least a nodding acquaintance with a dozen different complex subjects. He has to be a kind of Renaissance universal man. But where can one find such people? Where, for instance, in the recent controversy about birth control could one find a reporter capable of stating the Catholic argument from natural law accurately? They seemed to be non-existent. The same is true in economics, sociology, science, medicine, military matters—all the manifold, complex aspects of modern living. Perhaps we are asking too much of our newspapermen, or maybe the schools of journalism are not asking enough. Be that as it may, the old "Front Page" model of a bawling, basically ignorant sharpie handling his assignment brilliantly is hopelessly outmoded. Time has passed by Hildy Johnson.

The second factor may have a direct connection with this. It is simply the trivialization of the news. For example, during our recurrent silly seasons the latest divorce of whichever movie star happens to be hot copy at the time takes precedence over the most momentous international happenings on the nation's front pages. I know the argument for this: names make news, and the name of Elizabeth Taylor, to take a recent case, has far more resonance than, say, that of Ngo Diem. But does Miss Taylor rate so high with the readers of the *New York Times*? Obviously not. In the *Times* her romances are relegated to the back pages where they belong. And the point is not that *Times* readers are queer; it is that the *Times* may have had a great deal to do with making Ngo Diem a name that makes news for its readers, while the tabloids have done more than their share in turning la Taylor's adventures into hot copy. Perhaps the public does not get what it wants so much as it wants what it gets.

To the Commission's suggestion of an independent critical body others have been added over the years—to cite two, that universities, acting through their journalism departments, be heard from regularly, as the legal profession hears from the law schools; that a professional body of newspapermen set standards and do for the press fraternity what the A.M.A. does for the medical profession.

There is room, it seems to me, for these and other avenues of public criticism. But none of them can work until newspapermen themselves give up their cry-baby complaints every time someone suggests that they too are fallible and just as subject to the effects of Original Sin as politicians, union officials, labor leaders, industrial tycoons, educators and statesmen.

—*The Commonweal*, Feb. 3

NiemanReports

VOL. XIV., NO. 2

APRIL 1960

Published quarterly from 44 Holyoke House, Cambridge 38, Mass. Subscription \$3 a year. Entered as second-class matter December 31, 1947, at the post office at Boston, Massachusetts, under the Act of March 3, 1879.

Straw Polls: Reporting in Breadth

By Ralph Otwell

Formal election polls were born a quarter century ago. Whether they have truly come of age will be put to a severe test in November.

Their last major test occurred in 1948, when they were still in the adolescent stage. Then the election returns transformed their crystal ball into an eightball and put the pollsters squarely behind it.

Their magnificent flop prompted former President Truman to chortle that his Cinderella victory had "set back the science of political forecasting for a full generation."

The public opinion experts probably were relieved just to hear Mr. Truman describe their activity as a "science." Other critics have compared the polls to astrological charts.

Even the harshest skeptics cannot deny, however, that the pollsters have sharpened their tools and refined their methods in the past 12 years. Out of the soul-searching and post mortems that followed the 1948 debacle has come a new skill, if not a science.

Since then, George Gallup, Elmo Roper and the others have worked hard to chart a safe course around the shoals that suddenly appeared for the first time during the Dewey-Truman contest.

But a crystal-ball preview of the 1960 campaign, still shrouded in pre-convention haze, indicates that some of the same problems which hexed the pollsters in 1948 may rise to haunt them again.

In the six Presidential elections for which nationwide opinion polling has been undertaken, the predicted winner was five times an overwhelming political personality. Three times he was Franklin D. Roosevelt and twice he was Dwight D. Eisenhower. But in 1948 there was no strong polarizing force. Likewise, in 1960, it is unlikely that either candidate will radiate the personal voltage that FDR and Ike generated.

There are other 1960 parallels to the 1948 campaign. Again the favorite probably will be a Republican, the underdog a Democrat—but with the incumbency positions reversed. Again there is the prospect of a Southern walk-out and the formation of a rump party.

There is also the likelihood that the farm and labor issues will play key roles. In the year before the 1948 race, Congress enacted the Taft-Hartley Act. In 1959, further restrictive labor legislation was passed.

In addition, the current "peace" and "prosperity" situations roughly correspond to the conditions existing at the

time of Truman's election. Also the party occupying the White House in 1960 does not control Congress. The same executive-legislative split existed in 1948, but with a reverse partisan twist.

All these factors, after one fashion or another, were instrumental in determining the outcome of the 1948 election in a way unforeseen by the pollsters. Their recurrence probably would give the political pulse-feelers pause for reflection, if not cause for concern.

But the reliance which Gov. Nelson A. Rockefeller and Sen. John F. Kennedy have placed on modernized polling techniques indicates that at least the politicians are confident of their current validity.

In this era of probability sampling and electronic masterminds, the granddaddy of the "scientific" polls still thrives on the American scene. As a political bellwether, the newspaper straw poll is more than 125 years old. Purely as a journalistic method, it still carries several advantages over the streamlined opinion polls cast in the image of the Gallup-type surveys.

Although scorned by many scientific-minded experts as a "shotgun" technique, the straw poll often comes closer to the target than the finely tooled instruments of the national polling organizations. The straw polls achieve this accuracy even though their purpose is broader than mere election forecasting.

Among the straw surveys, the polls of the New York *Daily News* and the Chicago *Sun-Times* are perhaps the best known. In a year when all opinion polls will occupy much attention, it might be interesting to examine one of the straw operations in detail, comparing it with the scientific polls and examining its record, especially in crisis-ridden 1948.

The *Sun-Times* straw poll, statewide in scope, has a batting average unmatched in Illinois by any polling organization. In the Presidential elections of 1932, 1936, 1940 and 1944, the *Sun-Times* poll was off less than 1 per cent from the actual vote. In the 1948 campaign it was the only poll to catch the magnitude of the 11th-hour swing to Truman.

In 1932, the poll predicted Roosevelt's victory in Cook County within 1 per cent. It forecast Roosevelt's Illinois vote within 0.02 per cent in 1936. In 1940 and 1944, the poll called FDR's total within 0.5 per cent.

In the 1952 election, the *Sun-Times* straw vote was among the most accurate of the nation's polls. It not only predicted the huge Republican margin in Illinois, but also foresaw the slim Democratic victory in the race for Cook County

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state's attorney. William G. Stratton's election as governor was forecast within 0.88 percentage points of his actual vote.

The *Sun-Times* poll predicted that Eisenhower would carry Illinois with 53.68 per cent of the vote in 1952. The actual returns gave him 55.18 per cent. The poll also showed that Stevenson would lose Cook County. The prediction was off only 0.08 per cent. And although more than 1,800,000 ballots were cast in Chicago, the poll came within 0.45 per cent of forecasting the Eisenhower city vote.

Four years ago, the poll came within 2.64 per cent of the actual Illinois vote in predicting Eisenhower's landslide victory. It not only called the turn in the other races, but hit the actual vote within 1 per cent in every case. Stratton's narrow victory was forecast with a variance of only 0.78 per cent.

Similar accuracy has been achieved in the mayoral elections. In 1939, Mayor Edward J. Kelly's re-election was predicted within 0.14 per cent. In 1947, the poll was off only 0.5 per cent in forecasting Martin H. Kennelly's election.

Perhaps the poll's most remarkable bull's-eye was scored in 1955, when it predicted the election of Richard J. Daley as mayor with an error of only 0.0257 per cent.

One of Daley's predecessors, the late Edward J. Kelly, was greatly impressed by the accuracy of the straw votes. In 1945, the *Times* conducted a poll on daylight savings time after Kelly solicited its help in determining how the people felt about returning the city to its pre-war Central Standard Time.

The mayor agreed in advance to be bound by the results of the poll. When it showed that a majority favored daylight time in the spring and summer, Kelly forced the necessary ordinance through the city council.

In 1948, the *Sun-Times* poll—like all the others—failed to predict Truman's upset victory. But it came closer than either Archibald Crossley or Ben Gaffin's Illinois Poll in predicting the statewide vote. Its error in forecasting Truman's vote was 4 per cent, the same as Gallup's margin in Illinois. Crossley showed a 7 per cent variance; the Gaffin survey was off 8 per cent; and Roper did not make a state forecast.

But while the *Sun-Times* was missing on Truman and calling the senatorial race a toss-up (Paul Douglas won with relative ease), the poll correctly predicted Stevenson's victory in the gubernatorial race and forecast the winner in the county race for state's attorney.

The latter-day newspaper straw polls have borrowed some of the precepts of the "scientific" samplers, but still rely largely on old-fashioned, journalistic common sense. In essence, they do not differ, except in scale, from the conventional newspaper "roundup" story.

The reportorial function of a political writer is multiplied

many times over, making the straw poll simply a massive sounding-out of both sides. As a sampling of a sample—since the voters who cast ballots are merely a "sample" of the whole electorate—the straw poll depends heavily on a large-scale cross-section. The emphasis of the national polls, of course, is more on a qualitative sample.

The *Sun-Times* poll, developed and directed by City Editor Karin Walsh, now collects straws from more than 60,000 qualified Illinois voters. The number taken in each ward, township and county is an exact proportion of the registered voters residing in each. The rule-of-thumb fraction most often used is 1 ½ per cent.

The cross-section is far more than just a precise numerical proportion, however. Intensive efforts are made to reflect the occupational, economic, ethnic, racial, religious and educational characteristics of each electoral district.

Before the election, a fact sheet is prepared on each electoral unit, showing these factors and detailing other pertinent data, such as the area's political history and the current registration.

The poll supervisors, always experienced newspaper reporters familiar with the areas surveyed, are also supplied with maps that pinpoint the electoral characteristics.

A newspaper poll, lacking the built-in checks of an elaborately planned opinion survey, does afford two or three vital advantages. For instance, the straw poll is usually more flexible than a survey based on a relatively small quota or probability sample.

When, as in 1948, it becomes obvious that a lot of voters are fence-straddling, it is possible to defer the collection of straws while attitudes crystallize.

The *Sun-Times* poll checks each ward in Chicago three times, ordinarily gathering two-fifths of the ward's quota on the first go-round, another two-fifths on the second trip around, and the final fifth during the last few days of the campaign.

However, if the first canvass shows that an above-average number of voters are undecided, the formula is revised. Only one-fifth of the straws are then collected on the second tour, so that two-fifths remain available for the last-minute check. That allows the canvassers to catch a higher percentage of the late-deciders.

Also the *Sun-Times* crews are active until the day before election. In contrast, the national organizations often have wound up their operations several days before the balloting.

In 1948, only one of the Big Three pollsters made any kind of survey within the last week before the election. Ironically, it was Elmo Roper, who two months earlier had said, "As of this Sept. 9, my whole inclination is to predict the election of Thomas E. Dewey by a heavy margin and devote my time and efforts to other things."

After the election, Gallup conceded that "the biggest error which we and other polls made was in not taking a last-minute poll." Crossley agreed: "We did not catch the late Truman upsurge because we assumed campaigns do not change many votes and stopped polling too early."

Several days before the 1948 election it had become obvious to the *Sun-Times* editors that an unusually large number of voters were still perched atop the fence. As a result, the first-round straws were omitted entirely when the final totals were averaged before the election.

As the election returns ultimately showed, it would have been even wiser—in 1948, at least—to omit also the middle-round figures. This is how the candidates stood after each round of the Chicago canvass:

President Truman — 49, 54 and 57 per cent. (His actual vote was 58 ½ per cent in the city.)

Thomas Dewey — 48, 43 and 41 per cent. (His actual vote was 41 per cent.)

In addition to the flexibility of timing, the large, imprecise sample of the straw poll also allows for some bonus features that break the monotony of tabular, district-by-district breakdowns. For instance, it is a tradition with the *Sun-Times* poll to conduct a Sunday canvass outside a group of representative churches and also an election-eve survey downtown.

In 1948, after Truman showed startling strength in this last-minute check of Chicago's Loop, *Sun-Times* readers were told that such an upsurge "could bear out Republican fears that the President may carry Illinois."

The churches used for the "poll within a poll" are chosen carefully to reflect the religious makeup of the city as a whole. The canvass has shown some remarkably accurate results. In 1948, the crisis year for pollsters, the churchgoers cast their straws in proportions only a tiny fraction away from the actual city vote:

	Straw Percentage	Actual Vote
PRESIDENT		
Truman	58.58	58.54
Dewey	40.35	41.21
SENATOR		
Douglas	64.34	63.21
Brooks	35.66	36.79
GOVERNOR		
Stevenson	65.15	65.09
Green	34.85	34.91

More important from a newspaper's standpoint, the straw poll is equipped with other advantages lacking in a straight probability or quota-type poll. They are the opportunities for localized and sustained news value.

If the sole purpose is to predict the outcome of an election,

an opinion poll based on a select sample is theoretically more reliable. Several newspapers have sponsored such "scientific" polls in recent years and have found them reasonably accurate. These surveys can be carried out with less expense and in a shorter time than can a comprehensive straw poll. The *Sun-Times* operation, for instance, requires three weeks of canvassing, 20 to 30 outside employees, and costs about \$10,000 for a Presidential campaign.

The probability sample ordinarily provides only the "big picture": it is a valid device for making forecasts for the city as a whole, the entire county, or the whole state. It cannot be applied to the component parts. For instance, a reliable sample of one Chicago ward, by itself, would need to be virtually as large as a sample for the entire city.

But the larger-scale straw survey offers far greater possibilities. The relatively big samples in each electoral unit provide separate snapshots of how the political winds are blowing in every geographical area.

It is possible for the *Sun-Times* to tell the readers what the apparent sentiment is in each ward of the city, each township of the county, and in each county of the state included in the poll. The voters in each sub-district are able to compare the indicated prospects in their neighborhood with those elsewhere.

In dealing separately with each part of the political jig-saw, the straw poll also is able to point up distinctions and similarities between the county and state, between township and county, and between ward and city.

All these possibilities provide a wealth of information for day-to-day features and stories that no miniature sample poll could safely offer.

Apart from the value of such localized news, the straw poll greatly widens the range of reader participation. Some 60,000 persons are given a rare chance to become a part of the news.

True, by marking a ballot, each becomes merely a statistic. But even that limited role is a rare experience for many who have waited vainly through the years for Mr. Gallup to come calling, or Mr. Hooper to ring their phones.

Also, wide-scale sampling often heightens interest in an election. By canvassing large numbers of persons and drawing attention to a coming election with its day-to-day, area-by-area poll coverage, a newspaper becomes a more effective force in promoting a bigger turnout.

If it has a consistent record of dependability, a straw poll can serve as a strong spur to election workers. The results, serving as a barometer of the political climate, even can be self-defeating. If storm clouds are gathering, the politicians often will redouble their efforts to provide themselves with added voter insurance.

Stepped-up activity, resulting in an abnormally high

interest, can significantly alter the indicated outcome. Conversely, of course, a "fair weather" reading might induce an all-is-well complacency.

Certainly, the persons who follow the *Sun-Times* poll the most avidly are the party precinct captains, ward committeemen and others who stand to lose or gain the most by what happens on election day. When their personal status with the party is at stake, if not their very livelihood, they cannot ignore the bellwethers.

Some would challenge any pulse-feeling that changes the complexion of the body politic as an interference with the "natural" electoral process. Such critics usually bemoan the "bandwagon" effects of opinion sampling, maintaining that the polls work to an unfair advantage for the early front-runners.

Yet, at the same time, another school of thought subscribes to the "underdog" effect, which is the reverse of the "bandwagon" factor. If nothing else, such conflicting views indicate that no one is really certain about the effects of

opinion sampling on the opinion which is ultimately registered.

In any event, a straw poll is primarily a reportorial device, not a forecasting instrument. As a statistical abstract of indicated political opinion, it should be presented—and viewed—only as a yardstick of some voters' *attitudes*. It cannot serve as a precise measure of all voters' *actions*.

When the rocking-chair methods of the straw poll prove superior to the slide-rule techniques of scientific forecasting, the element of sheer luck cannot be disregarded. On the other hand, neither can the straw poll's advantage of longer experience, nor its closer familiarity with a particular area, be overlooked.

Both schools of election polling will have to look closely to their recent laurels this year. The spectre of 1948 still looms large and the risks of 1960 could prove foreboding. The American voter remains capable of using his all-important "X" to mark one spot and to put the polls on another.

A Labor Editor on the Labor Press

By John Cooper

Every labor editor, I am sure, has many times criticized the public press for being anti-labor, for its editorial policies against labor, for doctoring the news to further its editorial policies. Such censorship we have condemned as contrary to our democratic ideals of a free press which we regard as essential in a democracy.

I have come to the conclusion that we, in an effort to get labor's side of the story to our readers and the public, have frequently employed tactics that are as reprehensible and even more restrictive than those employed by the public press. Too often policy positions are dictated by union authority, far removed from direct membership control, and the labor editor prints these positions and censors out any news items or membership comment that may challenge such ideas. Yet, I call to your attention the fact that in almost every daily paper in this country there is published a "Letters to the Editor" column where letters from readers are printed representing widely divergent opinion, often in conflict with the paper's editorial policy.

During World II, despite the absolute military authority and right of censorship in wartime, the *Stars and Stripes* published its famous feature, "The Beef Bag," in which the GI frequently lambasted army brass. Our military authority recognized what we seem to ignore—the importance of permitting gripes and criticism in the building of morale. I can testify from personal experience that this feature insured first, avid reader interest in the *Stars and Stripes*

and second, that it was a tremendous boost to soldier morale in the European theatre.

It seems to me a sad commentary that one of the most reliable sources of objective news regarding both labor and management in America today is to be found in the *Wall Street Journal*.

If censorship is reprehensible and violates principles of democracy, how can it be an honorable or effective weapon for us to use in our fight against anti-labor censorship?

Can two wrongs ever make a right?

I do not wish to be misunderstood; I believe firmly in the responsibility of leadership to lead. I recognize the validity of honest propaganda when it is effectively employed. My concern is that we are not employing consultative democratic techniques, without which leadership cannot attain maximum effectiveness.

I think we must recognize that the directed union policies we rigidly publish in our labor press, and the censorship that is employed to try and win adherents to our cause, are having the exact opposite effect.

More and more I have come to believe in the moral principles stressed by Gandhi and Nehru that wrong means never attain a good end.

It has also been my experience that the use of deceptive and misleading statements of issues are recognized as such by members who resent being underrated. You will recall our resentment when the words "right to work" were em-

ployed by adherents of the "open shop." We accused the leaders of this movement as being intellectually and morally dishonest for using words that had cherished meanings to most Americans to describe a proposal which would guarantee no right to work. Yet, how many times have we been guilty of this same technique of the use of a word title that we hope will give popular appeal to labor issues or programs we support when the words we use do not honestly describe our proposals.

One recent example was our effort to term "boycott picketing" as "organizational picketing" in the recent campaign against the Landrum-Griffin Bill.

We can certainly justify "boycott picketing" under many conditions as being in the highest American tradition, a weapon effectively employed in the historic Boston Tea Party. However, it seems to me and to most people, I believe, that the use of the word "organizing" means the persuasion of workers to join a union voluntarily.

I do not believe we were wise or that it was proper or effective to try and imply that picketing of unorganized workers to force them to join a union by economic pressure constitutes "organizing" in a sense that this word has meaning to most people.

Our experience in the Los Angeles Joint Board has taught us that most people resist direction on how they should think—on any question—or how they should vote. Yet these same individuals when given the full facts and an opportunity to participate in a free discussion and vote on their union's policies and endorsements, will generally vote by overwhelming majorities to endorse the same candidates and policies their officials would have chosen if left to them alone and, more importantly, they will follow through with real support to vindicate the decisions they have reached.

Last year we were proud to have won two of the coveted awards of the International Labor Press for our *Quarterly Review*. One, for best editorial, was an experiment of honest criticism of past union mistakes entitled "Don't Push Him Around." Its theme was that too often some unions have relied on the compulsion of the union shop as a short-cut "business efficiency" substitute for true voluntary organization. We cited statistics showing that nine months before the "Right to Work" election in California last year, a majority of the public and thirty to thirty-five per cent of union members favored "right to work" legislation—that nationally only forty per cent of the union members had bothered to register to vote.

We admitted the clear evidence that the majority of union members voted against the labor-endorsed candidate for President in the last Presidential election.

We stated that this was an understandable reflection of membership resentment to being pushed around, in being told how to think and how to vote. We concluded by stating

"friendly persuasion wins more friends than all the force in the world."

You may be interested in the reactions to this article. We found most union officials resentful and suspicious; on the other hand, we found overwhelming membership appreciation of this frank self-criticism. It seemed to hit a responsive note with many members, obviously expressing many of their past personal experience and attitudes.

I firmly believe that it was due to this type of membership approach by our unions and many other unions in California, of truly involving union members in the campaign and of convincing them that this was their fight, that we won a majority vote which defeated "right to work" in California last November.

One final observation, if you will permit me. I am not sure that the leadership of many of our unions has not stood still in a changing world, not realizing that the hopes, aspirations and needs of yesterday, which were met by a resurgent labor movement during the days of the New Deal under Franklin D. Roosevelt, have changed for many younger American workers of today.

I have wondered these last few years when I read of workers in some plants and industries voting in National Labor Relations Board elections for no union, if many of us have not made the mistake of assuming that the slogans and appeals of yesteryear, which had so much meaning for us, should be as appealing to today's younger worker who, in many ways, lives in a different world than we remember.

I believe we must learn the new moral issues—the important present landmarks that younger American workers seek in their search to meet their unfulfilled hopes and answers to present day world pressures which have caused deep personal insecurities, often not related to fears of unemployment. We must make these problems a major concern of the labor movement if it is to be the instrument through which mankind achieves a happier and more meaningful life in the years ahead.

This is the direction we are trying to achieve in our work in the Los Angeles Joint Board. The results so far are convincing proof that we are on the right track.

We have learned to have the highest respect for the intelligence, honesty and good judgment of union members. I have found, when they are approached with fairness, courtesy and dignity, their response justifies my highest faith in the nobility of man and that he is truly made in the image of God.

John Cooper is president of the Los Angeles Joint Board of Hotel and Restaurant Employees, and editor of their *Quarterly Review*. This is from a talk to the convention of the International Labor Press in San Francisco Sept. 16, 1959.

The Press as History's First Draftsman

By Douglass Cater

As one who likes to fancy himself a fortnightly historian, I am often awestruck over the post-mortem powers displayed by historians of the more authentic variety. They know how to recreate complicated events occurring a hundred years or more ago with clarity and detail. I, on the other hand, find it difficult to achieve the same clarity and detail in recapturing an event which took place last week.

Take, for example, so mundane a matter as the weather. It is the rare history book which does not recount of a noteworthy day: "The dawn broke fine and clear but toward afternoon black storm clouds scudded across the sky giving promise of rain by evening." How, beyond the scanty details kept on file by the U. S. Weather Bureau, am I to reconstruct what sort of day it was in the nation's capital last Saturday? If I go to those first drafts of history, the daily newspapers, I am stymied. The newspaper tells us what sort of day is expected tomorrow. But—unless the weather proved cataclysmic—we are rarely told how yesterday really was.

The example, though perhaps trivial, is symptomatic of a problem. I am concerned about how well we are performing the first drafting of history. It is not an altogether new problem. Writing about the America of the 1830's, DeTocqueville complained that:

The only historical remains in the United States are the newspapers; if a number be wanting, the chain of time is broken and the present is severed from the past. I am convinced that in 50 years it will be more difficult to collect authentic documents concerning the social condition of the Americans at the present day than it is to find remains of the administration of France during the Middle Ages; and if the United States were ever invaded by barbarians, it would be necessary to have recourse to the history of other nations in order to learn anything of the people who now inhabit them.

We are more history-minded today. We have developed truly marvelous technical devices for recording events as they happen. The President's press conference, for instance, is now being taped, filmed, and, as an absolute precaution, taken down by a stenotypist. When a political candidate goes on tour nowadays, he is attended by re-

porters carrying not merely the traditional notebooks and pencils but transistorized gadgets capable of storing a record that cannot be repudiated. Science has perfected instruments for eavesdropping which make no conversation sacred. The huddled street corner conference may be overheard by a microphone several hundred yards distant.

Step by step with the growth of technology, there has been growth in the corps of history's first draftsmen. In Washington alone, we estimate that there are twelve to fourteen hundred accredited correspondents for press, radio and television. (We are so numerous that no one has ever taken a more precise head count.) We clog the conference chambers and monitor all the listening posts where the noise of government may be heard. We have reporters in surplus supply for the big stories. When Soviet Premier Khrushchev toured the country, three hundred pursued him every mile of the way.

Men and machines offer a wonderful potential for capturing history while it is hot. When we witness a well done television documentary, we can marvel at the prospects offered by this new medium. What if inquiring reporters had been able to record interviews with the Constitution makers as they emerged each day from their deliberations in Philadelphia? Suppose historians had available a videotape of Lincoln's address at Gettysburg. Compared to the fragmentary relics of the past, a rich lore is being left on file for the future historian who is trying to figure out what happened in mid-twentieth century America.

Yet I do not envy him his job. For I believe that the problem of sorting out the essential truth has become in some ways more complicated today than it was in the past. Along with the magic of communication technology there has also come a witchcraft. When one looks closely, the first drafts of history are frequently being tampered with.

Consider as a case in point the future historian's attempt to take the measure of our current crop of Presidential candidates. To judge by the public record, he will find them all wise, witty, versatile and amazingly prolific men. They are capable of delivering major speeches at the rate of several a day and, unlike the oldtime politician who could re-use his texts, each speech appears fresh and newly written. They produce with little apparent effort magazine articles, learned essays and even occasional books.

How little we learn about a modern politician from his words! Authorship has become a disintegrated business. The hard discipline of committing to paper what one wishes to say in a literary style of one's own has vanished like the goose quill pen. The ghost, who once held a rather inti-

Douglass Cater is Washington correspondent of *The Reporter Magazine* and author of *The Fourth Branch of Government*. This was an address to the American Historical Association at their end-of-the-year meetings in Chicago.

mate relationship with his boss, has found his trade rationalized much like that of the industrial assembly line. Less affluent politicians farm out the preparation of an important speech as piece work among the cottage craftsmen around Washington.

How can we be sure any more what is bonafide thought from a public leader's own mind? After a decade as a reporter in Washington, during which I have had to try to probe the thinking of a great many politicians, I have grown skeptical. When the Secretary of Treasury delivers an address to the National Cathedral Association written in blank verse, I am inclined to give him the benefit of the doubt. No ghost, as far as I am aware, has set up business in the poetry field. But for the most part I am convinced that the historical record being compiled from the pronouncements of our statesmen has long since been divorced from the fact. In a day when rigged television shows are viewed with grave foreboding, nobody seems much concerned about the rigging of the political dialogue of our nation.

The tampering with history does not end with the deceptions on the part of history's movers and shakers. There has grown up a profession of middlemen in the communications business who have a shrewd understanding of how the first drafts of history get written. Within the government in Washington alone, it is estimated, these middlemen are twice as numerous as the members of the press corps. Others representing the various sub-governments of America, public and private, swell the ranks still further. They are constantly on call. They crowd around the bar at the National Press Club and make themselves available.

Their concept of their job has been clearly stated in a learned article written by two of them: "Every channel of communication must contain a flow of information, whether fact or fancy, whether oral, written or visual. Those who guide and control this flow must either reach out for information and shape it to their needs or accept communications already satisfactorily shaped. Here is where the skill of the professional public relations men comes in."*

These men know better than most that the first drafts of history are not being laboriously copied out by scribes living in monastic seclusion from the world's deadlines. News today is a fast moving, ever moving stream engaging the efforts of a large and highly competitive group of bucket boys. That stream must be fed—the news industry demands it. If history moves too slowly to satisfy that demand history must be jostled.

And so the middlemen set about to help fill the consumptive needs of the communicators. They are skilled in

the staging of an event, in the timing of news developments, in planning the systematic build-up. They know, in other words, how to shape communications so that it can be made to serve a particular purpose.

Now I do not mean to imply that all this is bad. There is no turning back to the pony express days of communication. The responsible public relations man has an important role to play in the nerve system of the body politic. The politicians whom he serves have obligations more urgent than to the history book. They cannot afford to ignore the imperatives of the news business.

Even a President must accommodate himself to these imperatives. His job as chief publicity agent of the government and the nation has become one of his more important obligations in a time of world unrest. Neither can those on lesser levels be expected to ignore the formative role that publicity plays in determining the priorities of public attention and, consequently, the possibilities of public policy.

But there are ethical problems raised in this business of managing the news or tinkering with the first drafts of history. Where can the line be drawn between the legitimate spotlighting of public attention on a figure or an event and the calculated distortion? When do the instruments of publicity cease being servants of the public's right to know and become destructive meddlers in history's right to happen?

We have developed such swift, such sensitive, such powerful instruments of communication. The man who gains access to the loudspeaker system in Washington is heard almost instantaneously in the farthest reaches of the country. With the diligent help of the public opinion pollsters, the voice of the people is heard back in Washington almost as rapidly. It has helped to create a magnificent obsession in America. Our nation of one hundred and eighty million has become like a Greek market place in which the demos can witness the daily events of government and cast its ballots.

The trouble, from history's point of view, is that the electronics of this communications system are far from perfect. There is, for example, no sure way to determine whether those who get to the microphones have anything important to say. The awful power and swiftness of transmission incur built-in distortions which the word engineers seem helpless to eliminate. Communication in the age of the mass media has grown more rather than less fragmentary. The principal art form imposed on the politician has shifted from the three hour stump speech to radio's half hour fireside chat to television's twenty second jingle. The first compulsion on the statesman with something to say nowadays is "Don't dawdle, make it snappy."

I am not at all convinced that the pollsters' techniques

*Thomas D. Yutzy and Simon Williams, *Harvard Business Review*, May-June 1955.

for gathering the feedback of public reaction to the events of government are any more foolproof. Too much that is solemnly reported in the guise of public opinion is nothing more than public curiosity, artificially stimulated, uninformed and unimportant to the pages of history.

There has ever been skepticism among thoughtful men over the relentless advance of communications. A hundred years ago Henry David Thoreau wrote, "We are in a great haste to construct a magnetic telegraph from Maine to Texas; but Maine and Texas, it may be, have nothing important to communicate. . . . We are eager to tunnel under the Atlantic and bring the old world some weeks nearer to the new; but perchance the first news which will leak through into the broad, flapping American ear will be that the Princess Adelaide has the whooping cough."

I do not go all the way with Thoreau. We do have important matters to communicate. But I deplore the malfunctioning of the communication system that keeps us preoccupied with Princess Adelaide's whooping cough when the important events of history are being ignored. I am disturbed when Senator Joseph McCarthy's whooping cough can so engage the nation's attention that communication itself becomes a disease carrier infecting the body politic.

The McCarthy era poses an interesting problem for the authentic historian trying to differentiate shadow from substance in the life of America. McCarthy represented something quite new in the history of the American demagogue. He was an artistic genius in the modern school of publicity. His skill lay in his capacity to stage a single issue so as to dominate the channels of mass communication and to distract a national audience. Yet despite the publicity brouhaha he created, how real was his political impact? What really happened during this nightmarish period of American history to cause our leaders to behave as if they were knaves or cowards or both?

McCarthy was finally felled by his own weapons. But his period of ascendancy recalls Winston Churchill's warning that "A modern dictator with the resources of science at his disposal can easily lead the public on from day to day, destroying all persistency of thought and aim, so that memory is blurred by the multiplicity of daily news and judgment baffled by its perversion." In this country we have not had to contend with a dictator, but we have more than our share of blurrers of memory and bafflers of judgment engaged in the creation of our daily news.

There is an additional dilemma for history's first draftsmen in modern times. Protracted competition with the Soviets has created cold war conditions in a wide area of government where the reporter conducts his intelligence operations. Much of the news made available to him is of the cloaked variety. He gets it by what is known

as the leak. He is told the inside story on the condition that he report it without revealing his source. He must engage in that peculiar practice known as compulsory plagiarism.

Now there are reasons for this. Again the imperatives of government override the imperatives of the tidy historian. When there is crisis abroad, it may be useful for the Secretary of State to communicate without being identified as the communicator. When warfare breaks out among the rival sub-governments of Washington, the propaganda campaigns require similar techniques. Cloaked news allows for the various shadings of authenticity which may serve the protagonist's purpose.

This is to admit that in conducting his intelligence operations the reporter frequently finds himself a victim of counterintelligence. He is being used by those who have more immediate objectives in mind than helping with a clear draft of history. To what is his loyalty? In this, as in much that concerns his profession, the absolutist position has little relevancy to the reporter's workaday world. He cannot narrowly demarcate his sphere of operations. He is caught and intimately involved in this ceaseless battle of intelligence versus counterintelligence.

What all this indicates is that the reporter differs from the historian in one essential way: he is, whether he likes it or not, involved in the battle. Not that he should be committed to one camp or another, but he is moving over terrain where the fighting still rages and where words are weapons. He can remove himself from the battlefield only at the risk of negating his role as a reporter.

Yet the press deals lightly with its responsibility to history when it leaves its job there. As important as filing the hot battlefield account is the task of coming along later, while memories are still fresh and less choked with passion, to get a more consequential account of what actually did happen. There is need for reportorial enterprise after the protagonists have come out from behind their barricades and have a legitimate interest in setting the record straight.

Yet it is surprising to me how few reporter manhours are devoted to the post-mortem. With our abundant numbers and our amazing gadgets, we have become preoccupied with moving ahead of the event rather than at a respectful distance behind it. Senator Taft used to complain—and I agree with him—that reporters in Washington as so busy trying to find out what is going to happen ton are so busy trying to find out what is going to happen already happened.

There is maldistribution of the press in space as well as time. Too many are covering a Khrushchev visit; too few are assigned to the far off places where much of history is being made. Too many ride along on the Eisenhower glory

plane through South Asia telegraphing their dispatches about the "impact" of the visit long before any genuine impact can be felt. Yet pitifully few reporters are regularly assigned to measure the stirrings of Asia.

The trouble is that the press has not adequate rectifiers to compensate for the phantasmagoria that is its natural affliction. The news magazine, accepted by many millions as an adequate digestion of the week's news, has merely truncated the true function of reporting. Its reporters—artisans on an assembly line—dig out the primary components necessary to give factual shape and color to the world's events. Other components—style, polish, "meaning"—are added further along the assembly line in the skyscraper workshops of New York. Cloaked in anonymity, lacking a real voice in the final decisions on the "slant" of his stories, the reporter denies and abdicates responsibility for the product.

It is sad that the news magazine, with its mass audience, should not have developed more rather than less

responsible standards of journalism. The very power of these establishments gives added danger to their practice. For millions, the processed facts represent the main contact with important national and international events. Despite the high abilities of many of the reporters, what comes out is often a deliberately doctored narrative, the more sinister because it is subtle.

There are, I am afraid, no easy improvements to be made in the first drafting of history. A helpful approach would be to create closer working relationships between the reporter and the authentic historian. Each has needs of the talents and disciplines of the other to fill in the blank spaces and erase the smudges while events are still recordable. Both are, or should be, pledged to the pursuit of truth. The function of truth, Walter Lippmann has written, is "to bring to light the hidden facts, to set them into relation with each other, and to make a picture of reality on which men can act." This is a worthy purpose—one in which history's various draftsmen should find common cause.

Nieman Fellowship Committee

Harvard University announced the appointment of two newspapermen to serve on the Selecting Committee for Nieman Fellowships for 1960-61.

They are Lenoir Chambers, editor of the *Norfolk Virginian-Pilot*, and William German, news editor of the *San Francisco Chronicle*. Mr. German was a Nieman Fellow in 1949-50. Mr. Chambers is the author of a new two-volume biography, *Stonewall Jackson*.

They will serve with three members of the University: Franklin L. Ford, professor of history; William M. Pinkerton, Harvard news officer; and Louis M. Lyons, curator of the Nieman Foundation.

Twelve fellowships will be awarded to working newspapermen for a college year of resident study at Harvard on leave of absence from their jobs.

The deadline for applications to the Nieman Foundation at Harvard is April 15. Awards will be announced early in June. Applicants must have at least three years of news experience and be under 40 years of age. Their studies are in fields of their own choice as background for news work.

The Fellows selected for 1960-61 will be the 23rd annual group of Nieman Fellows at Harvard since the program was started in 1938 by a bequest from Agnes Wahl Nieman in memory of her husband, Lucius W. Nieman, founder of the *Milwaukee Journal*.

Confused Cuba: Printers Who Edit—Government by Television

By Marvin Alisky

In January 1960, a little more than one year after Fidel Castro ousted General Batista's iron-fisted censorship (and covert press bribery), a new type of newspaper "guidance" descended on Cuba.

Printers began to wield the editor's pencil instead of sticking to their linotype machines.

During the third week in January, three front-page editorials of the Havana daily *Diario de la Marina* had notes added from pro-Castro printers: "The contents do not conform to truth nor to the most elemental journalistic ethics."

The authors of the comment never spent a single day as a reporter or editor, nor gave any previous evidence of mastering anything but their mechanical trade. Yet they began to pontificate as to journalistic good practice.

And the editorials the revolutionary printers condemned were merely protestations against press censorship, editorials in the finest professional tradition of freedom-loving newsmen.

Revolutions are supposed to be fought by insurgents; yet here is a fight by insertions. Typographical workers are hired to reproduce the content of the editorial staff, not to insert their own opinions in news or editorial columns. Yet a fantastic battle of asides to the reader from pro-Castro union printers has been jarring readers from reportorial unity.

The printers were only taking their cue from certain newsmen partisans of the Castro regime. The Union of Newspapermen of the Provinces adopted a resolution to have newspapers condemn themselves. The union acknowledged the right of publishers to run any wire or cable stories they wish. But the resolution calls on the workers (including printers) to amend certain stories with a note saying the material is "untrue" or "unethical."

Avance, Havana daily, promptly condemned this resolution, and the union replied that all Cubans must be for the Revolution or else they are enemies. Any neutral (i. e. objective) position becomes counter-revolutionary and "subversive."

After that, Jorge Zayas, *Avance* publisher, received threats

Marvin Alisky has written for *Nieman Reports* on violations of press freedom in Cuba under Batista. Now the wheel has turned and he reports Castro's press controls. He is chairman of the Mass Communications Department at Arizona State University.

on his life plus a variety of harassments. On January 20, Zayas fled to exile in Florida for daring to criticize followers of Castro. Immediately the Ministry for Recovery of Stolen Property confiscated the newspaper and all other Zayas properties despite the lack of any evidence that Zayas had in any way illegally owned *Avance*.

Zayas had purchased an interest in *Avance* and had poured his savings and salary back into the paper. From whom had he stolen it? How could it be classified as stolen property.

What was Zayas' crime? Writing editorials such as this one:

"There exists freedom of the press so exaggeratedly ample that the Cuban government not only tolerates but even aids economically in the revolution (the newspapers) *Diario Libre*, *Combate*, *Hoy*, *Surco*, *Sierra Maestra*, *Liberación*, and *Revolución*. . . .

"What is more, there is absolute liberty of expression, as can be proved by reading all the insults, offenses and affronts hurled in unison by the official newspaper chain against those who dare dissent.

"Besides, there is absolute freedom of action. . . . Look how small groups . . . burn Cuban and foreign periodicals without the Provincial Newspapermen's Association, or the prime minister or local authorities doing anything to interfere with that human right. . . .

"We also have freedom of thought, unlike totalitarian countries where there is only one way of thinking. In Cuba you can think like the leader of the revolution or you can be labeled a counter-revolutionary, unquestionably, a great step forward."

When Batista was securely in power, he used to hand out subsidies and bribes. The overcrowded Havana newspaper market included those newsmen near starvation, who grasped the money and reported only favorably about the regime. After Castro's revolutionary forces began to pick up popular momentum, bribery was not enough for Batista. Full-scale press censorship and torture of truthful editors and reporters put a curtain around Cuba.

When New Year's Day of 1959 swept Castro into power, press censorship ended. News flowed again freely, through the island and to the world.

Age-old ills were attacked with revolutionary fervor. Social and political forces were put in motion by seekers of justice whose ideas antedated the Marxist doctrines, ideals

of freedom which were originally nurtured by the United States' own Founding Fathers.

But in a global struggle between communistic and democratic forces, naturally Red agents rush in to entwine themselves with surging nationalism wherever the have-nots are confused enough to allow such infiltration.

Some well-meaning but uninformed foreign observers misunderstood the island's struggle as did confused Cubans themselves.

The inevitable resulted: hostile reporting in the United States nurtured by inaccurate charges of the oligarchy of Cuba who had just lost out. But Castro proved to be his own worst enemy in the field of public relations. Rash, emotional, his sensitivity to criticism of any kind blurred his vision.

For awhile, Castro held his hotheaded cohorts in check. When one member of the higher command tried to force newspapers to charge one dollar for each mention on a society page, the prime minister canceled the plan as silly. The idea would have been to "lessen the differences between upper and lower classes by putting a monetary premium on society page propaganda" in the words of one of the neo-Reds advocating the plan.

At first Castro condemned the subsidized press that Batista had spawned. But now Castro too finances *Revolución* and a dozen other newspapers which accomplish the journalistically criminal: as far as the regime is concerned, they see no evil, hear no evil, speak no evil.

Now any new revolutionary regime can be expected to protect itself. And any government in any country of the world must have the right to combat those who would destroy it; otherwise, legitimacy of government would be a phantom on the political horizon in a sea of chaos.

Patriotism is one thing. Hyper-sensitive suspicion is something else. No official censor sits at an editor's desk in Cuba at the time of this writing (February 1). But coercion narrows the reporter's range. Pro-Castro printers can insert footnotes disagreeing with professionally-prepared news stories and carefully-researched editorials.

As for radio and television broadcasting, regular programming may be interrupted at any time by an hours-long harangue.

Sometimes the television-radio commentator is Castro himself. Sometimes it is Captain Antonio Nuñez Jiménez, director of the National Institute of Agrarian Reform. Or Commandant Julio Camacho Aguilera, minister of transportation. Or any number of other bearded young military commanders. On occasion, even the puppet president of the republic, Dr. Osvaldo Dorticós, reads the script.

Not every Castro telecast packs the surprise of the one in which he forced Manuel Urrutia to resign as president of the republic, after the latter issued a strong anti-com-

munist statement. This video coup certainly was the most pivotal of the many government-by-television actions of Castro. Even the more recent argument with the Spanish ambassador cannot match the Urrutia dismissal on the air. Quipsters called Fidel the Cuban Arthur Godfrey, referring to the various firings on the air of Godfrey staffers.

Only one year ago, on April 17, 1959, Castro came to Washington, D.C., and spoke to the American Society of Newspaper Editors. He denounced dictators and lauded a free press.

In that year, United States-Cuban relations have worsened, as have governmental-newspaper relations inside Cuba. More and more, the Cuban press must speak praise of the regime or remain silent.

Down through the centuries, no matter how benevolent or well meaning a government, none has been perfect. And only where mistakes are admitted can they ever be corrected.

Yet today the Castro regime opposes any reporting in depth of the agrarian reform program, so basic in Cuba's economic and political life. Is it progress or runaway Robin Hoodism? The Cuban press finds it more and more difficult to find out, to chronicle the details out of which true perspective emerges.

Any Ideas in the Paper?

By John Hulteng

Alan Barth of the *Washington Post* once wrote that "newspapers were started by men with something to say. Now they are run by men with something to sell."

I believe that this indictment is much too sweeping. But I also believe that in a good many individual instances it is in fact a true bill.

To the extent that the indictment does apply—whether we are talking of Oregon newspapers or of the American newspaper press in general—the conclusions it suggests are dismaying.

To be sure, the primary justification for the American newspaper has been and continues to be its function as a disseminator of news and information, uncolored by the editor's or reporter's biases.

But partially embedded in this function, and partially separate from it, is a secondary and in some respects just as vital reason for being—the dissemination of ideas. The editor still ought to have something to say, as well as something to sell.

Most Americans, once they have made good their escape from the formal classroom, come into contact with new facts and new ideas chiefly through the various media of mass communications. During the 19th century and the first part of the present century, the newspaper had a near-

monopoly in the field of mass communications and thus in the dissemination of facts and ideas. But what is the situation now? The newspaper still reaches a greater number of Americans, and reaches them more often and more regularly, than do the other media. But does the average American look to the newspaper, and rely on it, for new facts and new ideas?

Let me give you a couple of findings from a survey conducted for a magazine publisher by an independent, professional research firm, Barnard, Inc. About 2400 persons were asked the question: "Which of the listed sources give you the most complete and well-rounded picture of life in the U. S. and the world on a regular, continuing basis?"

Only 10 per cent of the respondents said that their local newspaper gave them the most complete and well-rounded picture of national and world events. Another 12 per cent gave their vote to a regional newspaper. But 25 per cent picked *Life* magazine as their most thorough source, 15 per cent picked *Time* and 14 per cent picked *U. S. News & World Report*.

In another question, the researchers asked: "It seems that man's next great adventure will probably be space travel. From which of the news sources listed would you expect to get the most understandable presentation of this subject in the year ahead?" Again, *Life*, *Time* and *U. S. News* won a vote of confidence from 49 per cent of the respondents, and the local and regional newspapers together were cited by only 15 per cent.

A third, and even more painful response came to the question: "If, at the time of Stalin's death, conflicting accounts of the circumstances of his death had come out in the news sources listed, which would you have believed most?"

A magazine once more made the best showing. Twenty-three per cent of those responding said that they would believe *U. S. News & World Report* above all the other sources listed; another 16 per cent said they would rely on a regional newspaper; 14 per cent cited *Time*; and only 11 per cent said they regarded their local newspaper as the most trustworthy source of news.

There were other findings, and not all of them were so hard on newspapers. When the respondents were asked to identify the most responsible news medium, for example, they gave the newspapers a strong vote—31 per cent picking either the regional or the local newspaper as the source having greatest regard for the public interest.

But even after noting this crumb of comfort, and even after making allowance for the fact that the survey was conducted for a magazine and thus very likely was designed to put the magazine in the most favorable light,

the overall tone of the responses ought to give any newspaperman a pretty severe case of backbone chills.

Very obviously, our readers aren't looking to us for new ideas. And if this is the case, whose fault is it?

In part, of course, the causes are outside the control of the newspaper editor. The rise of competing media has inevitably diluted the 19th century allegiance of the reader.

But some of the blame does belong on the editor's doorstep. How hard are newspaper editors trying to function as a source of new ideas for their readers? How many of them instead are content to serve as hygienic, seamless pipelines for the transmission of hard facts? How many of them feel the responsibility to dig for ideas and develop them as subjects for discussion in their newspapers?

Now, of course, anyone who has had anything to do with the job knows that the editor has precious little time for such digging and developing. But a strong argument can be made that somehow the time *has* to be found.

Until about three decades ago, the intellectual leadership in this country was largely supplied by its newspapers, and there were a great many of them. If today's editors cannot exert such leadership, whether for lack of time or inclination, the alternative is to abdicate the field of ideas to the syndicated columnists and the news magazines—a narrowing of the channels that no believer in the democratic philosophy of government could accept without consternation.

There is also a third possibility, one explored by that Baltimore editor and brilliantly acid commentator on the press, Gerald Johnson, in his book *Peril and Promise*. In effect, Mr. Johnson predicts a return to the pamphleteering practices of an older era. He writes:

"The next generation, I believe, will see in all the larger cities of this country a multitude of small, cheaply-printed sheets published daily and devoted to comment and interpretation with a sharply local tinge. Then the typical citizen will read a newspaper to learn what is happening, but will turn to one of these small sheets to learn what it means from the conservative, or liberal or other point of view. That is to say, the two functions of journalism, the dissemination of information and the dissemination of opinion, will be separated."

This would complete the job begun by the encroachment of the news magazines on the newspaper's functions. I can't believe that it is a prospect very many editors would welcome.

Assuming, then, that the newspapers ought to try to stay in the business of supplying ideas as well as facts to their readers, where are the ideas going to come from?

Dr. Russell Kirk, a philosopher and author who spoke before the National Conference of Editorial Writers in 1955, asked that question and also answered it:

"Where, after all, does the editor get his ideas? Some editors are men of genius; they don't have to get their ideas anywhere but from their own minds; but those men, in any occupation, necessarily are very few. The great bulk of editors, at the height of the serious newspaper influence in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, got their ideas from two chief sources: the reading of a few serious books—good books and important books; and the reading of the serious journals, quarterly or monthly journals which then abounded and had their opinion reflected in the popular press."

If this was how the editor of the last generation developed the ideas he passed on to his readers, how is his successor doing the job? What books and magazines are American newspaper editors reading today?

I don't know about American editors in general, but I can tell you a little about what some Oregon editors are reading. About a third of the editors of this state responded several weeks ago to a brief questionnaire asking about their magazine and book reading habits. Here is how the answers ran:

Thirty-eight editors responded to a question asking them to list the magazines they read regularly. The magazines which appeared most often on the editors' lists were *Life*, with 20 mentions, and *Time*, with 19. *Saturday Evening Post* and *Reader's Digest* came next with 18 mentions apiece. Then came *U. S. News* with 17 and *Newsweek* with 14. *Sunset* and *Harper's* had 11, and *The New Yorker* and *The Reporter* had 8 apiece. *Editor & Publisher*, *Better Homes and Gardens* and *Changing Times* were grouped at five mentions on the regularly-read list. The others, including *Atlantic*, *Christian Century*, *Commonweal*, *Saturday Review* and *Scientific American*, trailed off down to a single mention apiece for a number of specialty magazines.

It was interesting, to me at least, to note that four publications which represent extremes of opinion on the Left and the Right—*Nation*, *New Republic*, *Human Events* and *National Review*—were not included in the "regularly-read" list by a single one of the responding editors. A few said they saw such magazines occasionally.

Of the 38 editors, six reported that they try to read a book a week on the average. Fourteen others said they try for a book a month, 12 others said three or four a year, and six indicated that they seldom, if ever, read a book. Three novels,

Advise and Consent, *Lolita* and *Lady Chatterly's Lover*, and the *Reader's Digest* condensed books showed up most often on the editors' lists of recently-read books.

These responses prove little about anything, to be sure. But some of the individual patterns of reading indicated by the questionnaire do suggest conclusions. For example, is an editor who regularly reads only *Fortune*, *Sunset* and *Time* in a position to pass on a balanced range of ideas to his readers? Or one whose steady magazine diet consists of *Newsweek*, *Reader's Digest*, *Saturday Evening Post*, *Sunset* and *U. S. News*? These two lists are typical of a good many responses from the editors.

Gerald Johnson once observed that soap and ideas aren't much alike except in one respect—that honest competition drives out the unfit in each.

Anyone who makes it his vocation to develop ideas and hand them on to others ought to be particularly careful, it seems to me, to leave the door open for such honest competition.

And the dissemination of ideas still is and ought to be part of the newspaper editor's vocation. We have not returned as yet to the days of wide open pamphleteering. And we cannot afford to move in the opposite direction by giving over the traffic in ideas to the great monoliths of the magazine field.

Listen once more to Dr. Kirk:

"I think that throughout the entire Age of Discussion we have experienced for more than a century, the editorial writer has had a great role in keeping us out of . . . chaos. I think this is because he has been, by and large, a liberally educated man; and I think that if the editorial writer ceases to be a liberally educated man, a man with some leisure and with some appreciation of history and literature and the wisdom of our ancestors, then, indeed, we shall pass out of the Age of Discussion into the Age of Conditioned Responses."

I for one, hope never to witness that melancholy transition.

John Hulteng left the editorial page of the *Providence Journal* a few years ago to join the journalism faculty at the University of Oregon. He was a Nieman Fellow in 1950, when he was one of the authors of "Reading, Writing and Newspapers."

French Newspaper Life

By Calvin Mayne

My assignment in Rennes came out of a trip made there last fall by a Rochester delegation which included Paul Miller. Rennes is a university and governmental city of some 130,000 population in the heart of the dark and lovely region of Brittany. The city has been "twinning" with Rochester for about three years. This is one of those relationships, arranged with the blessings of the State Department, which are supposed to promote people-to-people friendship, and an understanding of each other's customs and cultures and points of view.

Last fall, it was in return of an earlier visit by a Rennes delegation that Paul Miller; Sol Linowitz, president of the Rochester Chamber of Commerce; President de Kiewiet of the University of Rochester, their wives, and the bachelor mayor of Rochester, Peter Barry, went to Rennes where they were wined and dined and toured by the leaders of the French city.

It was at the end of a long and trying day of such conviviality that the Rochester delegation ended up in the offices of *West-France*, the daily newspaper of Rennes. Paul Miller was in conversation, with the assistance of an interpreter, with Paul Hutin-Desgrées, a man whose face looks like something you'd see on Mt. Rushmore and whose thoughts are just as lofty. Monsieur Hutin-Desgrées is the director-general of *West-France*. He and Paul Miller agreed to an exchange of journalists, which was later started through my selection to make the visit in June.

* * *

After six months of a crash course in French, a language in which I achieved passable fluency during my stay in France, I sailed on the *Liberté* and found myself in due course in Rennes.

Working conditions on *West-France*, which is a morning paper, are a little rough on the American journalist. I would start my day around 10 a.m., usually with a tour of some point of interest in Rennes like the art museum or the new sewage plant, knock off at noon for a three-hour lunch of too much food and too much wine, put in another four or five hours of work, eat a two-hour dinner, with

Calvin Mayne has been on the staff of the Rochester *Times-Union* since 1950, except for a year out, 1953, as a Nieman Fellow. He took off from his editorial page assignment for a month on the staff of *West-France* last year. This account is from "Editorially Speaking," office magazine of the Gannett newspapers.

more wine, stumble back to the paper, adjourn to a café for beer and small talk and finally stagger home in the small hours. The newspapermen of *West-France* go through this routine with no apparent difficulty six days a week, but then their livers get accustomed to it from birth. For my part, I found out quickly why the French drink such strong coffee and eat practically no breakfast.

Two weeks of my stay were in Rennes. Then I spent another couple of weeks touring the circulation zone of *West-France*, mostly in Normandy and Brittany, in a car rented for me by *West-France*, with a side trip to the newspaper's Paris bureau for the 14th of July, the French national holiday. During that time, I sent back a number of articles and pictures for the *Times-Union* and wrote other stories for the Rennes paper.

* * *

West-France is the only newspaper of Rennes, but its position of great strength—the justification for its accurate claim of being the number one French daily outside Paris—comes from its pre-eminence in a region perhaps one-third as large as New York State, with a population of some six million. Its daily average circulation has been growing steadily since the war and is now more than 600,000.

West-France employs about 150 full-time journalists, of whom some 75 work in Rennes, about 1,000 total full-time employees in all departments, and about 2,400 part-time correspondents. There is an abundance of manpower, perhaps two or even three deep for most positions where we have but one man. But because of the difference in salary scales, the total payroll is probably no larger than on the *Times-Union* with far fewer employees.

West-France publishes six mornings a week—no Sunday edition—and normally runs 16 pages, with occasionally an extra, special section printed in advance. Because of the small type and smaller amount of advertising, they can pack a whale of a lot of news in those 16 pages.

Only about 30,000 of the 600,000 *West-France* circulation is in the city of Rennes. The rest is out in the region. Although *West-France* has published as many as 44 editions daily, it normally published about 35. Each consists of two or three special pages for a number of communities in one area based on a large city. There are also separate pages for regional, agriculture and maritime news and frequent changes in sports pages and Page One. Regional advertisements change from edition to edition.

Handling this operation are 32 regional bureaus, each

manned by up to six journalists, an elaborate telephone and teletype communications system with the central office in Rennes, those 2,400 correspondents, and a large staff of regional editors in Rennes. This editorial operation is beautifully organized, as is the complex job of printing and distributing so many editions.

A key factor, of course, is the small size of the paper. *West-France* has three big presses which run off three or four different editions at the same time. If the paper were any larger than 16 pages, however, there would simply not be enough time in the day to print so many editions.

Page One looks to an American journalist's eye like the work of a drunken copy boy throwing type at a page form. The French readers go for this, however, or so the French journalists claim. Inside, the make-up is a little less jumbled, but not much.

West-France goes in heavily for the stodgy group pictures, excruciatingly detailed stories of dull meetings and syrupy congratulatory accounts of retirements and wedding anniversaries that we like to think disappeared from alert American newspapers decades ago.

But the journalists of *West-France* claim to know what they're doing. They say that each one of those 25 men whose almost unrecognizable faces appear in a picture of the annual reunion of Cherbourg chapter of the Society of Verdun is liable to buy two or three copies of the paper; and the French love to argue politics, they say, and so they have to have the raw material of exhaustive political coverage.

All of this is not my cup of tea, but if it has helped obtain those 600,000 readers, who am I to argue with success? Chacun á son gout, as the French say.

But there is also much that is bright and readable, much of enterprise and imagination in *West-France*. And so I would like to sum up by reviewing the things that reinforced my pride in our own newspaper product and then those things wherein we might profit by observing the French way of doing things:

On our credit side, I returned with new pride in the objectivity of American journalism and its imaginative coverage.

More often than not, my attempt to find some explanation for French politics and policies ended up in my having to endure a long harangue in defense of this or that action of the government. French newspapermen seem constitutionally unable to look upon any government action, national or local, with objectivity and dispassionate analysis. And the news columns show it, often as not.

Then there are many phases of French life that are not covered in the depth we bring to them. Business and labor developments, personalities of public officials, fashions of living, social questions, foibles of government administra-

tion—these are often neglected or, perhaps worse, are written only for the intelligentsia among the readers.

There is a prevailing opinion among the French that we Americans are generally uninformed and uninterested in foreign affairs. But I found that the average large Gannett newspaper carries more information and more representative information about France than *West-France* carries about America. While in Rennes, I was quite well-informed on Marilyn Monroe's operation and a couple of bloody American murders, but I found precious little news about America's domestic politics, economy and manner of normal living in the U. S. We carry a lot of news—and pictures—of Brigitte Bardot, but we tell something about how de Gaulle licked inflation too.

I missed the local editorial mightily in *West-France*. The only editorials are Olympian thunderbolts by Hutin-Desgrées or another editor who writes almost as stratospherically. The paper misses much by leaving out local editorials—or letters to the editor too, strangely enough. The inevitable consequence is that a good deal of local editorializing slips into the local news stories, where it definitely does not belong.

But what are the strengths of *West-France* compared with our way of doing things?

For one thing, they have a regional strength that should be the envy of any American publisher. Although there are individual dailies which surpass them in various cities of their zone, they are supreme in the heavily-populated rural area and throughout the region as a whole. This gives them a circulation, a political influence, a stability and prosperity that is unmatched even by the Paris papers. The Rochester *Times-Union's* new suburban editions are a move in this direction, and there is nothing but advantage there, I think.

The abundant manpower of *West-France* enables them to give blanket coverage to those events which are important to their readers, or to release a man for five or six weeks to give real coverage in depth on selected subjects.

Then too, those tiresome group pictures and assorted paragraphs about obscure people in obscure little villages are part of *West-France's* policy of getting as many names and pictures in the paper as possible. Their less sophisticated readers swear by the paper for this, and since there are more unsophisticated people than sophisticated ones in every country, including our own, this is a sort of bread-and-butter type of journalism that any newspaper can neglect only at its peril.

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West-France newsmen could teach American journalists a few things about writing, too. Many of the papers' wire stories are rewritten to give them an extra flavor and snap that Agence France Presse, just as the Associated Press,

often neglects to impart. And *West-France* frequently takes a different approach to its stories—for example, a suspenseful chronological account of an accident—that is refreshing in comparison with our slavish type of the inverted pyramid.

Perhaps the most inspiring thing I found in Rennes was the devotion of *West-France's* journalists to their profession and to their newspaper.

To me, the newsmen's pay of *West-France* is appallingly low—perhaps \$45 a week for an experienced reporter, \$100 a week for the equivalent of a managing editor. But the salaries are not badly out of line with pay for comparable professional jobs in France. And at *West-France* there are fringe benefits in medical treatment, housing assistance, summer camps for children, personal loans and especially a deep interest in the welfare, personal and professional, of every employee that binds *West-France's* management and staff in a true family feeling.

Then too there is a strong loyalty to the paper itself, the same sort of feeling that you can sense in the newsroom of the *New York Times*, a feeling that is unhappily rather uncommon on American newspapers. Although the fact that the French journalists' unions take little or no interest

in hours of employment is no doubt a contributing factor, there is also the pride of putting out a good product, a zest in working for *West-France* and its alert editors, a comradeship in a common worthwhile enterprise that impels some journalists of *West-France* to work six and even seven days a week for up to 12 hours a day without overtime, just to be sure that each day's paper is the best they can produce. I don't say that there are no laggards, no cynics and no clock-watchers on *West-France*, but I did find a team spirit born of a sure knowledge of the quality of their product that seems to me to be sadly lacking in a very large number of reporters I find in America, reporters who seem to think that the paper is nothing more than an employer, and a not very good one at that.

Next year, *West-France* will send a journalist to Rochester for a tour of duty here to complete the exchange, or so Monsieur Hutin-Desgrées assured me when I left. We will be hard put to match the hospitality and courtesy and friendship shown to me in France, but I hope that everyone will try so that our colleague from Rennes may return to his country as enthusiastic about his stay in America as I am about my stay in France.

The Daily Newspaper Faces A Changing World

By George V. Ferguson

One hundred years ago two Toronto newspapermen, William Buckingham, lately of the Globe and William Caldwell who had been a reporter on the Leader, arrived in Fort Garry by oxcart to found the first newspaper on the Canadian Prairies. The first issue of their fortnightly The Nor-wester appeared on December 28, 1859.

In commemoration of this landmark in Western Canadian history, the Manitoba Historical Society gave a dinner

which was addressed by George V. Ferguson, editor-in-chief of the Montreal Star, and himself a former Winnipeg newspaperman. Mr. Ferguson dealt principally with the changing environment of the daily press and the manner in which newspapers have adapted themselves to maintain their position as the leading medium of mass communication. The text of Mr. Ferguson's address, slightly abridged, is given below.

My years in the newspaper business have coincided with the growth of the newspaper's first really serious competitors in the field of mass communication—radio and television. They scared the hell out of the newspaper publishers. Looking back at it, it all looks a bit ludicrous, but, after all, I was never in the position of having a million or two invested in a newspaper plant.

Many people came rapidly to the conclusion in the 1920's that radio was not here to stay. . . . It was not really until the 1940's that they got around, en masse, to believing that they had to get along with radio. And, at that point, they all began, or a lot of them, to buy radio stations themselves. The reason they gave, of course, was that, because they were newspaper publishers, they had special knowledge about

how to operate a radio station—on examination, a phoney argument, but which, like many phoneys, lingers stubbornly on.

The radio crisis was, of course, succeeded by another—the television crisis, and the inroads of this somewhat competitive medium upon the advertising dollar. . . . Events repeated themselves. There was a publishers' rush for TV licenses, with the simple objective that if one had to lose on the swings, there was much to be said for winning something on the merry-go-rounds. There has not been, however, anything like the degree of the radio panic. The fact is that the newspaper business is, generally speaking, in a pretty healthy state.

It has, however, completely changed from the days when

Caldwell and Buckingham founded *The Nor'Wester*, and the change was epitomized in the course of a CBC TV interview with Roy Thomson a few months ago.

Mr. Thomson came back to Canada shortly after his purchase of the Kemsley Press in England. He was asked what he considered to be his major contribution to the development of the press. He replied that he thought he had performed a public service in putting his newspapers on a sound business basis. There had been, he said, far too little attention paid in the past to the business end of the operation. Editors used to own their newspapers. He had, he said, the highest regard for them, but they were not, in fact, very good business men.

He bought newspapers and made them solvent and he left their editors as much independence as he could. If they took a news and editorial line that was bad for business, then perhaps something had to be done about it. He would certainly ask questions. But he preferred, on the whole, to leave them alone; they knew their own business best, and he certainly did not want them to do anything because it might suit his business interests to advocate them. He could, he said, look after himself.

This point of view has two great merits. The first is candor. The other is honesty. . . .

Roy Thomson has, in my mind, still another good mark. At the time when most of his colleagues in the trade were trying to buy radio stations in order to give them an anchor to the windward, he sold his radio stations and bought newspapers. . . . At a time when newspaper publishers were beginning to think they had better buy radio stations or perish miserably, Roy Thomson was selling his radio stations, and buying newspapers.

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Don't think, from all this, that I do not regret the brave old days of Caldwell and Buckingham, or Nicholas Flood Davin in Regina, or Frank Oliver in Edmonton. They were great old days when men threw their caps over the windmill and to hell with the consequences. But I am realist enough to know that dreaming about the brave old days won't bring them back and, as a matter of fact, the brave old days had many flaws. They were days when newspapers were often insolvent, and the result was terribly poor wages and terribly long hours for the working staff. They were days too when, by our standards, reporting was terribly partisan, and what got into the news columns was very often a mere reflection of what the politically-minded editor wanted to see there.

There was, indeed, no golden age in the business of journalism. The brave old days had their flaws and mighty big ones. . . .

Here is the point that matters about the newspaper to-

day. . . . What service is it performing, and what value has it? That value, or so it seems to me, becomes in the face of competition, greater and not less. The newspaper is entering on a new era in which its value to a democracy is increased, and not diminished by the competition of the last 30 years.

To understand this fully, it is worth examining, to begin with, the nature of the society the newspaper serves. That society is one filled with uneasiness, with fear, with instability and insecurity. In saying so I am not talking mainly about the cold war and nuclear weapons. These are relatively minor manifestations of what I mean.

The real causes lie far deeper. Far more important in the creation of these basic conditions of weakness is the continuing industrial and technical revolution, the impact of incessant change upon societies ill-adapted to face it.

The change in human environment in the last 250 years has been greater than it was in the 25,000 years that preceded the modern age. . . .

These facts—and they are fundamental to what I want to say—contribute mightily to the kind of newspapers we have, the kind of radio we have, the kind of television we most enjoy, and to the kind of effect our mass communications have upon those who read, who listen and who view.

Because I believe that most of these facts are ineluctable, I am driven to a major conclusion—that, by the nature of the society in which we live, certainly in that society's present stage of development, the media of mass communication cannot be very different from what they now are.

We are in what we call the objective era of reporting; and we regard this rightly as a vast improvement over the old days when no editor consciously ever gave a political opponent a break. They were usually consciously unfair—which would insult a modern newspaper reader. The modern trend has been toward far greater objectivity in the reporting of hard news.

But, at the same time, more and more space has been given not to serious news but to entertainment, comics, features, sports and the like.

There has been, if you like, a balancing process which has been better and more informative in some ways, far more trivial in others. . . .

But if a certain type of newspaper specializes in trivia, what is to be said for its competitors in the mass communication field? The question only has to be asked to be answered.

The fact is that in retrospect, it can be seen that if radio and television were, certainly, competitors for the advertising dollar, they were never competitors for the goods which the newspaper traditionally provided. In spite of

all the frills and sidelines published in a newspaper, its backbone has been news, interpretation of the news and comment on the news.

Radio and television affected newspaper techniques. They killed stone dead the excitement of Extras. . . . But, as time went on, it became obvious that radio had its sharp limitations. It could produce spot news and add to it, but the sad fact was discovered that the ear of the listener was not as acute as the eye of the reader.

I found this out early in my reporting career! The degree of concentration required to take facts in by the ear alone was more than I could keep up for long—and you doubtless have shared this humiliating experience. Besides that, there were distractions. A movement in the room, perhaps even a low buzz of conversation competed with the ear desperately tuned to the radio. Long before I got into my head the effect of these difficulties on the future of my own trade, I realized that, if I wanted to be sure of my facts, I had to read them, not see them or listen to them. . . .

What is true of radio is even more true of television, even though television appeals to two senses instead of one. Malcolm Muggeridge had something to say about this recently:

"The thought has occasionally occurred to me that, if the present obsession with television continues, the written word may become unnecessary, irrelevant and therefore obsolete. Mankind may develop square eyes, or at any rate, a single square eye in the middle of the forehead." But he added:

"It might force journalism to return to an earlier, better tradition by, as it were, syphoning off the excrescences—the cheesecake, the gossip, the overplaying of news stories, to make a more dramatic effect—simply because of the happy chance that, in this field television is unbeatable. I often think to myself that if the Christian gospels had first been presented to mankind on television, the founder of the Christian religion might well have become a television personality—but there would have been no Christianity. For that, the written gospels were necessary."

Malcolm Muggeridge is right. We have seen enough of radio and television to know that now. The press, with all its tendencies to simplification, to exaggeration and to triviality, has become by long odds the most responsible medium of communication that society has.

The newspaper, such as it is, has become the solid backbone of democratic communication. The newspaper represents the only permanent record that now exists. The world of radio or television passes like a vision or like a bad dream. We await the newspaper to see what it was that somebody actually said or did.

The other media are too fast. They outstrip us. We get, if we are lucky, the salient fact. Then we are assailed by doubts. Did we hear aright? Did we see and hear aright? Our slow-witted minds turn with relief when they hear the clump of the newspaper on the front stoop: we can, from that moment on, take in the facts at our leisure; and, when we have read them once, we can read them a second, a third, a fourth or a fifth time, depending on our interest. It is there, a permanent matter of record.

The newspaper, if it ever did, no longer has to stand on the defensive. It is the most reliable, the most enduring record of events which modern society possesses. Before it had time to cast off its faults, it assumed this position, and it is possible to assume that the limitations and the excesses of its two rivals will drive it into greater and greater respectability.

The newspaper, indeed, has achieved in its several centuries of growth, certain standards of performance from which it relatively seldom departs. It is a private enterprise, dominated as it must be by the need both of solvency and profit—and neither I may add in parenthesis is a sin—but it has developed certain standards of conduct and behavior. These may not suit you, but they are there, and they are growing stronger.

Newspapers in many quarters are considered irresponsible organs. The term is relative. In comparison with their competitors they are as responsible as the Christian Church. I do not mean by this that journalists are dedicated clergymen. They are not. But I do mean that, by comparison with the directors of radio and television, they behave with a greater sense of responsibility and respectability than their younger competitors. There are certain things they refuse to do. There are other things they do in full knowledge of the fact that what they are doing will not be widely read and that, if they are, they will not be popular.

They do this because, over the years, they have been affected, in the American legal phrase, by a public interest. The standards of their competitors are much more uncertain.

I do not mean by this that newspapers are approaching perfection or anything like it. All that I mean is that they are the best purveyors of information we have, and—because their competitors are worse—they are likely to become still better. We no longer have the same incentive to behave badly. Our competitors can behave badly so much better!

And since it is important socially and politically for a democracy to have some reasonably reliable medium of communication, I am personally well pleased that I have been able to earn my living as I have done.

Television, the FCC and the Public Interest

By Frank K. Kelly

Perhaps the most significant change which could be made in the present atmosphere of broadcasting would be positive recognition of the fact that broadcasters do not own the channels they use. The American people have only the vaguest conception of this fact.

In my view, the FCC could and should issue a policy directive to all stations, requiring them to emphasize in their dealings with the public that they are using a public facility under a renewable license granted by the United States government. Stations should be required to make public announcements of the dates when their licenses expire, and should be required to publicize the summaries of program schedules submitted to the FCC with applications for renewals. Audiences should be informed that printed copies of these program schedules would be made available to any listener without charge.

It is essential that the public recognize the role of the broadcasters as that of trustees, not as owners of the broadcasting air. Such understanding would, I believe, do much to strengthen the FCC's hand in dealing with the powerful forces that seek proprietary control of the airwaves.

If the broadcasting spectrum happened to be a relatively unlimited natural resource, the dominant American tradition would place it in the area of almost complete private development with a minimum of government intervention.

But the spectrum is not unlimited. It has definite boundaries. As a limited natural resource, belonging to all the people, and capable of earning a fair return for those who are licensed to use it, it comes under the American tradition of government regulation for the benefit of the public. Congress and the FCC have shown some confusion on this question over the years since the passage of the Radio Communications Act in 1927. But generally the broadcasters have been encouraged to behave as though the licensed channels were the private properties of the operators.

The attitude of the broadcasters has been made evident in many instances. A recent speech by Robert W. Sarnoff, Chairman of the Board of NBC, contained this revealing sentence: "*We should consider the most effective methods*

of using our own facilities to create wider understanding of *our medium* and how it functions in everyone's interest." The sense of proprietorship came through in every line.

It is perhaps natural that the broadcasters regard the air as their private medium. But it is not natural, or healthy, for the FCC to regard itself as simply a service agency for the broadcasters. In this context, the public is regarded simply as a collection of spectators—people who have no rights except that their dominating tastes must be satisfied in order to keep the broadcasters in business.

The broadcasters insist that there is no conflict between commercial broadcasting and the public interest—and therefore neither need nor justification for regulation beyond the allocations of channels. Here is Mr. Sarnoff on this subject, in what I believe to be a fair summary of the position of the industry as a whole:

(1) "Broadcasting, as a mass medium, best serves the public interest through programming which meets the desires and interests of the majority of the people.

(2) "Broadcasting assumes a secondary function of programming for minority tastes and interests, and by doing so, offers the majority continuing opportunity to absorb new interests.

(3) "Broadcasting's responsibility to the public is harmonious with its responsibility to advertisers, for the more effectively it serves the public, the greater value it offers advertisers.

(4) "Broadcasting depends on public acceptance of its programs in competition with all other forms of entertainment and information, and can best serve the public through the free play of competition, and with a minimum of Government regulation.

(5) "Broadcasting, as the nation's greatest unifying communications force in peace or war, is entitled to the standing and privileges of other free communication media."

In attempting to reach these five goals, broadcasters rely on audience-rating systems to discover "the desires and interests of the majority of the people." Our study shows that whole categories of programs tend to vanish from the air when the ratings are low. Other types flourish in great numbers when the ratings are high. Room for shows with less than the widest audience-appeal can be found only in marginal time periods.

Industry spokesmen contend that broadcasting's responsi-

Frank Kelly is vice president of the Fund for the Republic. This is from his testimony before the FCC Jan. 12, based on studies by the Fund the past two years on television and its regulation by the FCC. Kelly was a Nieman Fellow in 1943.

bility to the public is harmonious with its responsibility to the advertisers. The assumption in such a statement is that the broadcasters are adequately serving the public by renting their channels at prime viewing hours to those who have enough money to buy time. This assumption underlies all of the industry's pronouncements. Under this policy, the largest possible audience has to be assembled for every program upon which the broadcaster relies for revenue—because advertising rates are based on costs per thousand viewers. In practice the "secondary function" of programming for minority tastes loses priority and often all but disappears.

In terms of freedom of expression, broadcasting is certainly entitled to equal standing with the other media. But there is a notable difference between broadcasting and the press: in the print-media, advertisers do not as a matter of settled policy hold control of the placing and presentation of non-advertising matter. The press, with all its faults, inherently has far more independence of commercial forces, and a more direct responsibility to the mass of paying customers who are its audience. This fundamental economic difference between the media puts broadcasting in a significantly different category from that of the printed press.

Life and *Look* are media appealing to national audiences comparable to those claimed by network television. But the operating premise of the proprietors of these periodicals is that they are in business to sell magazines, not goods. The assumption is that if they sell enough magazines, advertisers will buy space to reach the audience attracted by the editorial policies controlled by the proprietors; a column rule separates the space in which an advertiser makes his pitch and that in which the magazines' editors set forth their own picture of the world; if the column rules are not always inviolate they are still there, and nothing comparable exists in television.

The Accountability of Broadcasters

In a controlling, economic sense broadcasters are totally and finally accountable to advertisers. There is no offset in circulation revenue, and no provable measurement of audience of the sort by which the printed media guarantee circulation on the reasonable assumption that those who pay for a copy of a publication are almost certainly going to read it. No proprietor of a newspaper or magazine will admit that his advertisers dominate his editorial policy and dictate the non-advertising content of his publication—even when there is a reasonable suspicion that this is true. On the other hand, no broadcaster will deny—except in the special instance of news and commentary—that advertisers can, and frequently do, dictate program content. In both radio and television the practice of turning over

the entire production of major programs to advertising agencies has been common. The present talk among some broadcasters of adopting the "magazine concept" of programming is an admission that such a concept does not now exist. A reading of the broadcasting trade journals will demonstrate that this notion has already been flatly rejected by the advertisers—and I know of no one who seriously believes that of its own volition the industry is capable of denying the advertisers the last word on program content.

In its studies over the past two years the Fund for the Republic has turned up a variety of proposals for providing effective redress to this direct commercial domination of the public air. Many of these have already been recommended to this body. Without necessarily endorsing any, I would like to mention those I believe to be the most significant.

It was proposed by a participant in one of our discussions that the FCC require that all stations carry educational and informational programs several hours each week in "prime evening time"—the hours between 7 and 10:30 p. m. This is closely related to a suggestion made by John Fischer, editor of *Harper's*, who urged that broadcasters, in return for financial rewards of commercial broadcasting, underwrite such public service programs. Edward R. Murrow, one of television's best-known commentators, urged the largest advertisers to buy time for programs which would tell "what is really going on in America." In their reaction to the TV scandals some of the networks are doing something like this voluntarily—and this has been hailed, primarily by apologists for the industry, as a heartening sign of a new trend in broadcasting. Even so, such notable prime time contributions as the excellent CBS and NBC documentaries on President Eisenhower's recent foreign tour still account for only a fraction of the pay-off hours and stand out in naked contrast to the standardized entertainment fare that surrounds them. These departures from the norm are patently public relations devices, and cannot be taken as reflecting permanent policy decisions. One does not need to be a cynic, only a student of the record, to assume that programs of this caliber will inexorably find their way back to the Sunday afternoon "intellectual gulch" once the public relations experts conclude that the public reaction to the quiz scandals has subsided to a safe level, and that there is no clear and present danger of fall-out in terms of FCC regulation or Congressional action.

Another proposal made at one of our conferences called for a sizable expansion in the FCC's staff to make possible closer checking on the services rendered by the broadcasters; and another participant recommended that Congress should give the FCC the funds to resume open hear-

ings in communities across the country, with the people being invited to give their opinions of the mass media in their area. These proposals were designed to give the FCC the means to determine whether stations were actually living up to the public service plans described in their applications for license. It has been proposed also that licenses for broadcasters should come up for renewal every year or every six months, rather than every three years. Under this plan, probationary licenses would be issued to stations with poor records—the stations to be required to improve their community services before gaining full reinstatement.

Another proposal offered at one of our conferences was that the FCC should be transformed into a Federal Communications Court, separating the judicial functions of the FCC from the purely administrative functions.

Dean Louis Mayo of George Washington University Law School made two suggestions: (1) community audits of the services performed by the mass media, the audits to be supervised by the FCC and reported to the FCC; and (2) continuous analysis and evaluation of the mass media by an independent, privately-financed group of leading citizens.

There were also several more sweeping proposals discussed at some of our meetings—proposals which would change the fundamental structure of broadcasting.

The Drastic Alternatives

What we now have is a privately-owned broadcasting system, theoretically controlled by a few proprietors and managers but dominated by a few advertisers, and nominally regulated by a federal agency.

In theory, there are two drastic alternatives to this system—to turn everything over to private enterprise, freed of any form of government regulation—or to establish a broadcasting network financed and operated by the government.

Advocates of the first idea feel that the remedy for the problems in the present system might be found in taking all government regulatory powers out of the picture. With the total withdrawal of regulation, there might be a "healthy scramble." All commercial broadcasting would be moved to the Ultra-High-Frequency band and free competition would determine what kind of service would be supplied to the public. This apparently is technically possible, but the burden of our findings are in accord with those of the "Bowles Report" to the Senate Interstate and Foreign Commerce—mixed in detail but generally pessimistic.

The general feeling seems to be that the re-establishment of unrestricted competition in TV broadcasting has become practically impossible. Broadcasting now is largely confined to the limited VHF band—and the public has a

multi-billion dollar investment in VHF receivers that freezes it there.

The other drastic alternative considered in theory was the establishment of a governmental broadcasting system. The BBC and the Canadian systems have been suggested as models which the people of the United States might consider. The basic objective would be to develop a broadcasting system of high quality with adequate arrangements to satisfy the intellectual and cultural needs of minorities. An independent government broadcasting system, operated by a public authority after the fashion of TVA, has been suggested by Walter Lippmann and others as a yardstick by which to measure commercial programming as well as a source of information and education.

Questions were raised at our meetings on whether the establishment of such a network would be regarded as a violation of the First Amendment. Precedents were cited for government operation of broadcasting facilities, and the consensus was that such a network could be organized on a constitutional basis.

However, most of the participants in our discussions were strongly opposed to government intervention of this type. Many expressed the belief that the function of the government would be limited to protecting the individual's freedom of speech without entering directly into the operation of the mass media. The usual fears of the danger of converting a public system into an official propaganda medium were also voiced.

Another Possibility: Pay TV

The question of pay television arose persistently at our meetings—as it certainly will confront the FCC again. While skeptical of the extravagant claims made by advocates of subscription television, some of the participants in our discussions felt that some system of pay television should be made available to the public.

Perhaps the most revealing aspect of the long controversy over pay TV has been the clear revelation of the proprietary attitude of the commercial broadcasters, and of the amount of pressure they can and do bring upon Congress and upon the FCC when their profits seem to be threatened. Despite all the talk of the public interest, and the massive campaign designed to convince the public that it might lose the "free" programs available under the present system, the basic position of the existing broadcasters emerged simply as a demand that the government protect them against competition. Here the insistence was for regulation, and when FCC showed signs of wavering the broadcasters took their case to Congress. The end result was an allocation of test licenses for pay TV so limited that none has yet gone on the air on a scale broad

enough to prove or disprove any of the claims made by the contesting parties.

The most interesting suggestions that emerged from our discussions in this area dealt with the possibilities of pay TV, not as a direct commercial competitor for general audiences (as it was usually presented to the FCC by sponsors and opponents alike) but as a device to make possible self-sustaining broadcasting operations dealing primarily in education, information, and culture. This concept recognizes the obvious fact that the commercial broadcasters, despite their distinguished but limited contributions in other fields, are primarily in the entertainment business—and must be so long as their income is derived wholly from advertising revenue which can be justified only if they reach a large share of the mass audience.

In a memorandum prepared for the Fund, Thomas Whiteside of the *New Yorker* analyzed the potentialities of a pay television service that might be provided by converting an existing commercial channel to essentially educational purposes, and urged that this be tried in New York. Mr. Whiteside felt that such programming could derive important revenue from quite specialized services for limited audiences—for example, special training or refresher courses could be offered to physicians to bring them up-to-date on research projects and other advances in their particular fields. In the larger metropolitan area, Mr. Whiteside felt that there would also be many adult educational groups of a more general nature which would be interested enough to provide substantial revenue from specialized programming on a pay TV basis.

A somewhat similar proposal has been brought forward by former Senator William Benton. Mr. Benton contends that, under its existing authority, the FCC could immediately grant to the present educational TV stations the right to obtain income through the several possible variations of the subscription system. At the same time, Mr. Benton thinks the FCC should remove the requirement that educational TV be operated wholly on a non-profit basis—thus making possible practical working relationships between commercial enterprises and educational institutions of the kind that have proved successful in other areas of communications. By this means, he believes, a network of existing stations might be brought into being which would be devoted to education, culture, and information—free of the direct commercial pressures that shape the product of the existing “popular” broadcasters, but still able to sustain itself without public or private subsidy, which has proved to be inadequate in the case of educational TV.

Out of his considerable experience in advertising and broadcasting, Mr. Benton argues that such a development would actually be in the practical interest of the commercial broadcasters: “It would take public pressure off the back

of the industry for ‘prime time’ and for greater investment in educational services on their own part.”

SUMMARY

All of these proposals, and others that will doubtless be brought before the FCC, deserve serious examination. They come from responsible and concerned citizens. The FCC alone can determine whether they are practicable by permitting them to be tried.

No one contends that the FCC does not have the power of regulations, although the broadcasters, as their vested interest in the medium has increased, have come to add always the modifying “minimum.” It seems to me to be quite clear that the public’s definition of “minimum” regulation does not coincide with that of the industry. For example, Mr. Sarnoff’s statement of policy, which I have quoted, stresses the fact that broadcasting “assumes a secondary function of programming for minority tastes and interest.” The testimony the FCC has heard makes it abundantly clear that that function is not being adequately fulfilled. It follows, then, that broadcasting does not always “serve the public through the free play of competition”—for the very good reason that by its nature there is no full and free competition in broadcasting. Millions of Americans have access to only one TV station; those who have access to more than one channel usually find a slavish imitation of program content among the three networks during the prime viewing time—and a preponderant diet of old films during most of the rest. Finally, Mr. Sarnoff’s claim that broadcasting is inherently entitled to the “standing and privilege of other free communications media” simply flies in the face of the facts. Each broadcasting station is licensed by the FCC. That license gives the station a monopoly over a valuable part of the radio spectrum; the limitations of the spectrum make it certain in most instances that mere possession of a license will guarantee a substantial profit even when there are competing stations; indeed, the granting of licenses is arbitrarily limited if it can be shown that competition would prevent the earning of a fair return. By these elementary tests, then, broadcasting has many of the characteristics of a public utility.

Certainly I am not suggesting any form of censorship or of direct control over program content by this or any other public agency. I recognize that at some point regulation could come into collision with the First Amendment, whose guarantees of free speech and a free press certainly apply to broadcasting as well as to the printed media. At that point I would stand for freedom.

But I submit that the proposals discussed here stop well short of that critical point. They *do not* call upon the FCC to assume jurisdiction over program content. They *do* call

upon the FCC to set certain standards of performance as a measurement by which it may determine whether a broadcaster is entitled to a valuable public grant in return for a contractual guarantee to serve the public interest. Moreover, it should be noted that the most important of these proposals point away from excessive federal regulation and in the direction of greater diversity of broadcasting and genuine competition for the attention and the dollars of the public—our historic device for protecting the public good with a minimum of official interference.

It is the FCC that has divided the radio spectrum, granted the licenses, and placed broadcasting in the hands of its present proprietors. If there is to be a change in the present pattern—which by public test has proved inadequate in important respects—only this agency on its own motion, or by Congressional direction, can bring it about. Given greater diversity and real competition, I believe many of the present ills would disappear, and others could be left to private ministration.

To that end I would call attention to the recommendation of Senator Benton and others for the creation of an independent citizens' commission to carry on a continuous review and appraisal of the mass media. Whether this be done by Presidential appointment or other official act, as Mr. Benton has proposed, or be created and supported by purely private means, it should be made up of interested, informed and concerned citizens completely independent of the industry. Having no regulatory or coercive powers, such a commission would encounter no conflict with the First Amendment. It could perform a critical function in regard to program content properly denied to the FCC—but clearly needed by a developing industry which has demonstrated that it cannot sustain its own declared standards of responsibility and taste in the face of the commercial pressures which dominate it.

Such a commission might cause pain to some of those who now control broadcasting. But if it succeeded in mobilizing public opinion it would also free the medium of the tyranny which forces it to base most programming on the

The government has an obligation to see to it that there is a fair field for broadcasting. Private citizens—educators, philanthropists, and ordinary viewers and listeners—have an obligation to see to it that the field is occupied by the bold as well as the bland. At the end of the first decade of TV it is obvious that neither obligation has been met.

for Science Writers

programs on television and radio as well as the mounting number of science articles in magazines.

Even more dramatic, if possible, were the answers that came when the interviewers asked if the respondents would like to have more science items printed. Forty-two per cent said they wanted more medical news published; 28 per cent said that they wanted more non-medical science news. Incidentally, the percentage of those wanting more medical news was the highest of any of the categories and those included, among other things, national politics, crime, comics, and human interest stories about people in the news.

Since the first Sputnik just a little less than two years ago, American newspaper editors have responded in spectacular fashion to this desire for more science information. A poll of several hundred newspaper editors a year ago, on the first anniversary of Sputnik I, showed that three editors out of every four reported their dailies were giving at least half again as much space to science developments as before the Russians launched their first satellite. Almost half of this group indicated that their papers were using twice as much space. Not a single editor reported that his daily was using less space for science news during the first year of the Space Age.

Here are some recent statistics that show that this trend has been accelerated. When the Soviet rocket hit the moon, The New York *Times* used between three and four full pages to tell about this event in the Monday morning paper of September 14. The actual measurement was 619 inches. This contrasted with 332 inches used to tell about the first Soviet Sputnik launching. The New York *Herald Tribune* printed 346 inches of news and illustrations about the successful Soviet moon shot. This contrasted with 129 inches for the first Soviet satellite launching. Some of this difference, of course, may be explained away by the fact that Sputnik I broke with dramatic suddenness at 6:30 p.m., only a few hours before press time, while the moon shot rocket was publicized during most of its 35 hours en route. But the essential fact remains that both papers came near to doubling the amount of space for the recent story.

All of these statistics add up to the conclusions that science news is important, science news is getting space and air time, and science news is getting more and more attention by media. If that were the full story, science writers could take their bows, cash in their profits, and spend happy vacations in the south or north, depending on the season of the year.

But that is not the whole story, as any science writer

dation, dramatically demonstrated this recently. This survey of 1,919 American adults, conducted by the Survey Research Center at the University of Michigan in the spring of 1957, showed that 37 per cent of the respondents read *all* of the newspaper items dealing with medical news and 28 per cent read *all* of the non-medical science stories. This is an overall average of one out of every three adults reading *all* the science news that gets into print. Let me stress that important word "all."

These figures spotlight a tremendous readership of the science news now being printed and an ardent desire for even more. Although the survey did not establish the point, there is no question that the same enthusiasm for science information applies to other media. Look at the science

Professor Krieghbaum is chairman of New York University Department of Journalism. This is from a talk at the last Howard Blakeslee Awards, for science writers, of the American Heart Assn.

knows and many scientists are only too happy to corroborate.

The same survey that told about the public's desire for more science writing also yielded some results about the public's dissatisfaction with the way the contemporary reporting job was being done.

A sizeable minority of the public found science news difficult to understand, inaccurate, incomplete, or dull. For instance, nearly a quarter of the newspaper readers and radio listeners had a gnawing suspicion the stories they read or listened to were incomplete. Also, one out of every five newspaper readers complained about the difficulty in understanding what science stories were really all about. Complaints were made about how all four major media covered science.

It was clear that the public, the ultimate consumer for the science information being distributed, was not especially pleased.

What is to be done?

A better translating job needs to be undertaken. It may be more difficult to discuss atomic fallout than to explain the temper tantrums of Mr. Khrushchev. Both of them, conceivably, can have lethal implications for the American people. It is incredible that the story of atomic fallout should not be told just because it is difficult. Somehow science reporters have to do the job. And it can be done best if the efforts are made through all four of the major media—newspapers, magazines, radio and television.

Possibly the old journalistic conventions of an inverted pyramid story and the 5-W lead will have to be thrown out. New techniques may require even better reporters.

If the public wants stories and shows that are easier to understand, possibly the remedy is to tell them more understandably—that is, in a more dramatic and possibly a chronological fashion. Certainly, more stories can be told in terms of human interest and human achievement. Scientists, in spite of all the myths, are people.

Probably science reporters have to give even more background. They may have to become the high school science teachers to the adult population in order to make their articles and their scripts more understandable and more complete.

Despite the complexities of translating science information and communicating it in attractive form, the science writers face other boobytraps which can, on occasion, be even more difficult to overcome.

When I wrote last year to United States Nobel Prize laureates asking comments about science reporting, one of the answers I received was from Dr. Fritz Lipmann. He said there was, generally, rather good coverage of science events but he pointed out that many reports appear about rather superficial work. He continued, "These are

brought to the attention of the press by publicity-minded scientists who, unfortunately, are often not the best ones. I feel that a good science reporter should be able to learn to discriminate between the real and the phony reports." This Nobel Prize winner thus exposed one of the skeletons in the closet of science.

Another Nobel Prize laureate, who asked that I not use his name, said that almost weekly he read of some "important new 'cure'" for this or that disease. His counsel was: "The press might well learn to soft-pedal some of the high-powered releases handed out by well-intentioned public relations representatives."

Scientists are not only human, some of them are actually publicity seekers. Reporters generally know how to handle publicity seekers; science reporters should utilize the same techniques as their colleagues. One that they might use more is checking with other news sources when they smell the possibility of over-zealous publicity-seeking.

On some occasions the matter of good intention has been seriously questioned. After the United States launched its talking Atlas satellite last December, two reputable newspaper sources criticized how this news was released to the public.

Peter Edson in a Scripps-Howard column on December 29, 1958, included this comment: "No one denies this was a successful and important launching. But in trying to build it up into the greatest thing since the original appearance of the Star of Bethlehem, a lot of claims were made that simply weren't so."

Further, an editorial in the *Washington Post and Times Herald* of December 23, 1958, included these statements: "It is now pretty clear, however, that the project was principally a publicity stunt. This newspaper sensed deception and declined to be a party to it. But the Administration helped to create the impression elsewhere that the Atlas is the biggest satellite ever launched. This is untrue except in one narrow sense: The second-stage rocket and the payload were designed to remain together.

"The worst part of the whole business is that the Administration information policy made the press generally an unwitting accomplice in the propaganda. . . . From all evidence this misinformation was deliberately cultivated."

Whether these charges are true or not, this speaker has no personal knowledge. But there certainly are authenticated cases when the press has been deliberately misinformed so that individuals or institutions could gain special advantages from the publicity.

Science writing offers challenge enough to satisfy any one.

One might say to science writers as they move into the 1960's: "Congratulations! Good Luck! Don't be too smug! There's plenty of work yet to be done."

The Lesson of Kerala

By V. V. Eswaran

Now that the elections in Kerala, where Communism vs democracy was at issue, are over it is but appropriate to sit back and analyze the significance of these crucial elections to India in particular and the world in general.

It must be remembered that Kerala was the only significant government ever to be controlled by the Communists in fair democratic elections. This happened in 1957 when the Communists won 60 seats in the Legislative Assembly of 126, and with the support of five independents, formed a government. India thus had its first experiment with co-existence of Communist and non-Communist governments for 28 months from April 5, 1957 to July 31, 1959.

Communist administration during this period soon proved that this co-existence was to be neither peaceful nor long-lasting. Though the Communists might claim that their rule of the State was moderate by their standards, the effect of their administration was gradually to create communal and caste differences. The opposition to the Communist regime slowly increased and people finally resorted to civil disobedience instead of waiting for the full term of five years for electoral remedy to overthrow the government. Ultimately, to the great relief of the people of Kerala, the national government dismissed the Communist State Government and ordered fresh elections.

So, when the campaign for the fresh elections was on, people in Kerala did not speculate any more about who was going to win. The speculation was about what would happen after the anti-Communist United Democratic Front had won.

It would be no exaggeration to say that even the Communists had resigned themselves to a defeat. This was obvious from the one argument on which they relied in their election campaign—that the Democratic Front would not be able to give Kerala a stable government.

Let me now recount some of the factors which led to the transformation of the electoral picture of Kerala since 1957, when the Communists narrowly captured power. The first is that the fresh elections held on February 1, 1960 were fought on the straight issue of Communism vs democracy. In 1957, the Democratic vote was split up in many constituencies by two or more candidates opposing a Communist candidate.

The second factor is the changed role of Mannath Padmanabhan, leader of the Nair community. In 1957 he had supported all Nair candidates, irrespective of their political leanings. This time, Padmanabhan's was the clearest voice against Communism, not excluding that of the Catholic Church.

The third factor is the rallying of the Moslem vote against the Communists through the adherence of the Moslem League to the Democratic Front. Though the Moslems are a minority in the state and are concentrated in one or two districts, the influence of their close-knit well-organized party reached many other regions in which the Moslem vote was of a more than marginal importance. In the 1957 elections, the Moslem League had given no firm lead to the voters where a party candidate was not contesting. Now, there was a firm lead and that in support of the Democratic Front.

On the top of all this, the one thing that went against the Communists was the record of their 28-month rule. In the recent elections, the Democratic Front only helped in that it offered the voter a clear anti-Communist choice, unlike in 1957. This, in itself, would not have ensured a dent in the size of the Communist vote had the work not been made so much easier by the antipathies the Communists created in large sections of the population during the time they held office.

As was expected, the Communists met with a smashing defeat. Of the former Communist Ministry, four ministers were defeated. And, if the former Chief Minister, Mr. E. M. S. Namboodiripad—one of India's leading Communists—was re-elected with a handsome margin, it was for the reason that he assiduously nursed his new constituency which he selected as safer than his last. Further, he undertook no engagement outside it to help his colleagues. Such single-minded concern for keeping his own seat in a party leader did not suggest a superfluity of confidence in the outcome of the elections.

Much has been made of the fact that the Communists and Communist-supported Independents increased their share of the total vote in Kerala from 35 per cent in 1957 to approximately 42.5 per cent despite a heavy loss in Assembly seats. This is understandable for the Communists have shown solid backing in the areas where the Ezhavas (backward classes) are in a majority. It has also to be conceded that on the whole the Communist supporter takes his politics seriously. In at least nine cases out of 10, he may be counted upon to exercise his vote. The Democratic Front supporter is more an easy-going animal, though he was aroused this time as never before. Everything, therefore, depended on the size of the poll. The bigger the poll, the greater was the margin of the Democratic Front victory.

The results of the elections have shown a landslide in favor of the anti-Communist alliance. But the Communist warning that no party except their own can give Kerala

stable administration has enough justification even today. Though the Communist Party has been reduced to a minority of 27 in an Assembly of 126, within the Democratic Front, India's ruling Congress Party has won only 63 seats, one short of an absolute majority. This has necessitated the Congress to form a government in alliance with the People's Socialist Party.

A glance at past history does not give this arrangement a sense of complacency. Between 1952 and 1957, with a mid-term election intervening, six separate ministries held office in Kerala. No government during this period was strong, efficient and free from corruption and these were the years of Communist opportunity. They used it well and from a party which no one took very seriously as a factor in the political situation in 1952, it became in 1957 a party which won enough support to be in a position to form a government.

Examining more carefully the increased percentage of votes that the Communists obtained, it seems clear that the Chinese threat was not an issue which greatly exercised the Kerala people. The upsurge against the Communist misrule, for all its intensity, was confined to only certain sections of the community. There is no doubt that whatever the sins of the Communists in the 28 months that they held in power, they were able to give the common man a sense of belonging, a feeling that he counted, a confidence that he could hold his head high in dealings with the police and the government functionary. The Communist rule was efficient and free from corruption, at any rate, at the level of the common man's conduct with the machinery of administration. Therefore, the people who voted for the Communists in 1957 remained anchored to the Communist Party. It has also to be borne in mind that the Communist Party's cadre organization and agitational methods make support of the people on such a scale a formidable instrument of political action whether the party is in power or in opposition. This will remain one of the most persistent threats to governmental stability in Kerala so long as the Communists are not associated with it.

The other threats to stability are latent in the kind of alliance that has been forged to keep the Communists out of power. In an abnormal situation, such as Kerala has had in recent months, the purely negative program of anti-Communism was good enough to win the elections. But it will most certainly not be enough to retain the confidence of the electorate on a long-term basis.

The problem is not even one of making the present coalition Government durable, but one of providing the answer to the malaise which has made Kerala such a prolific breeding ground for the Communist Party. Kerala is India's smallest State, but it is also the most over-populated, and has the highest literacy rate in the country. Thus,

the Kerala malaise is the classic one of resources at their traditional level of exploitation having long overrun the growth of population. The opportunities for employment outside have shrunk during the years of independence, partly because of the strengthening of regional loyalties everywhere, and partly because the introduction of the National Language and regional languages in educational institutions, etc., have shut out opportunities for which at one time a knowledge of English alone served as an adequate qualification. The result is an alarming growth of educated unemployed.

There is no short-term remedy for this problem, but Kerala's problem is unique and a remedy has to be found. There is no prospect of bringing more land under cultivation as almost all productive land is already under cultivation and there is no chance of increasing the yield either, as farming methods are reasonably efficient. There is a better chance for increasing the yields on plantations, particularly rubber, but this again will not show quick results. Till recently no attempt had been made to process Kerala's rubber in Kerala itself. A tire factory has now been proposed and is expected to go into production in 1961.

One resource that can perhaps be made to give immediate returns is fishing. The Norwegian project men working in Kerala refer to the Malabar Coast as one of the richest fishing grounds in the world. Kerala has no equipment to haul in more than a minute percentage of this rich store, and outside the Norwegian project, there are no facilities to market what is hauled in. Refrigeration facilities on trains and canning can bring the fish of Kerala to markets all over India.

Both the Planning Commission and the National Government seem to have neglected Kerala in another vital respect. The decision now taken to locate the second shipyard at Cochin was unnecessarily delayed. The shipyard is the kind of major undertaking which will stimulate a great deal of ancillary activity around it. With the advantage of shipping, much more can be done in Kerala, particularly in export production.

The election results are good in so far as they led to the defeat of the Communists, but the Communists have not been vanquished. There is thus no justification for complacency. A great deal of good work will have to be done if Kerala is to be saved for democracy.

Kerala has, however, taught a lesson for the rest of India. It will now be well nigh impossible for Communists to win in any other State, for the people now know that they can take care of the Communist danger if the democratic parties can be united.

V. V. Eswaran, parliamentary correspondent of the *Hindustan Times*, is now on a Nieman Fellowship.

The Enigma of W. J. Cash

By Tom Dearmore

THE MIND OF THE SOUTH. By W. J. Cash. Vintage Books, New York. 440 pp. (paperback), \$1.45.

February brought publication, for the third time, of *The Mind of the South*, and the enigma of its author is resurrected again.

William Joseph Cash spent about five years in the actual writing of his widely-acclaimed book, but, counting the time spent for its conception, it probably represents the work and thought of the last ten years of his life.

The original publication was in February, 1941, by Alfred A. Knopf, Inc. It was later produced in paperback by Doubleday Anchor Books, and is now on the racks in a new paperback edition published by Vintage Books.

The Mind of the South has been accorded monumental stature by students of the social-historical factors shaping Southern life, but the writer himself has been largely enveloped in mystery. The years—almost two decades of them—have closed around the memory of Cash, but he deserves to be remembered.

This book was a labor of passion, but also of laborious study, of reflection, of commonplace experience which stamped itself into a sensitive mind. His is the restless spirit of cramped liberalism, bursting for expression, determined at all cost to puncture the illusions and pomposity of its time.

Cash, contemplating his native area with rare perspicacity, laid bare the greatness and anguish, the delusions and realities, of the pre-World War II South. His text rolls with a unique and exquisite fluency.

In any library catalog the researcher will find only one volume listed under the name of this author. Who was this W. J. Cash, whose book is being republished twenty years after it was written and who is being quoted by eminent historians?

Why did his productivity end abruptly in 1941 with the publication of this one, vibrant testimonial which the *Atlantic Monthly* called "a literary and moral miracle?"

Cash's biography is a story of brilliance, of depression, and finally, of tragedy. His life ended in suicide on July 2, 1941, six months after the first edition of *The Mind of the South* came off the presses. The forty-year-old author received a Guggenheim Fellowship in March, to write a novel with a Mexican setting, and ended his life in Mexico City.

He was born on May 2, 1901, at Gaffney, where the last ramparts of the Blue Ridge dip down into South Carolina, and not far from the Catawba River country of which Thomas Wolfe wrote with affection. In fact, Cash's career spanned almost exactly the same period of time as Wolfe's.

The best available insight into the nature of W. J. Cash is furnished by the short autobiographical sketches he wrote for his publisher, Alfred A. Knopf, in April, 1936, and April, 1940. Knopf provides mimeographed forms on green paper for use by authors in setting down a few pertinent facts about themselves. In 1936, the form did not prove large enough for Cash. He seemed compelled to tell about his innermost thoughts, his habits and his philosophical ideas. The sketch spilled over and covered the back of the form as well as the ruled section on the front.

One fact seems obvious—that Cash had every earmark of the romanticist he described in his book as being typical of the South. But this quality was under-shot with something else—a high-voltage curiosity—a searching after something which led him to many excursions of the mind and to travels in France, England, Germany, Italy and Switzerland.

Into eighteen years, from 1923 to 1941, he packed an exceptional number of activities. During that period he was a student, a teacher of languages, a foreign traveler, a reporter, an editor, a free-lance writer and an author. His life's story is one of movement which seemed to belie some of his own estimates of himself.

His family left South Carolina and most of his "growing up" years were spent in the village of Boiling Springs,

just across the line in Cleveland county, North Carolina. He learned to read at the age of five, was immediately captivated by books, and recalled being absorbed in literature at the age of six as his mother called him "to bring in stove wood."

"After that I read everything I could get my hands on," he wrote, "Alger, Henty, Mayne Reid, Clark, Russell, Scott, Dickens, Hugo, Milton, Bunyan . . . with impartiality. At fourteen I discovered the girls and so abandoned the Harvard Classics somewhere in the middle, spent the next fifteen years contemplating them—the girls, not the classics—, often painfully."

At college, Cash said he read sporadically, edited the college paper, won a short story prize, but "mainly sat on the benches under the magnolias and thought about the girls."

His efforts at college football, he wrote, "failed ignominiously," the college newspaper always came out late and sometimes not at all, and he "was always in hot water with the authorities" at the college.

He paints a picture of inconsistency in scholarship, but nevertheless his cherished reading list covers virtually the whole range of the classics. In 1918-19 he attended Wofford College at Spartanburg, S. C., and received his A.B. degree from Wake Forest College in 1922. After attending the Law School at Wake Forest during the 1922-23 term, he accepted a post as English instructor in 1923 at Georgetown (Ky.) College. During 1924-25 he taught English and French at the Blue Ridge School for Boys, Hendersonville, N. C.

For a brief period in 1923 he served on the staff of the Charlotte (N.C.) *Observer*, and in 1924 he traveled to Chicago for a reporting job on the old *Post*. In 1925 he was a free-lance writer in Chicago; then he returned to Charlotte for a position on the *News* staff in 1926 and 1927. In the latter year he traveled in Europe, then edited a weekly newspaper, the *Cleveland Press*, in Shelby, N. C., in 1928. He was listed as a free-lance writer from

1929 to 1937, contributing to the *American Mercury* when it was edited by H. L. Mencken. He served as associate editor of the *Charlotte News* from 1937 to 1941.

During World War I he was unable to enlist in the Navy but got into civilian work at an Army cantonment by "fudging" on his age. Summer employment as a youth included working on his grandfather's farm, driving a truck to haul lumber and brick and working in a hosiery mill headed by his father (twelve hours a night in the latter).

Collection of books and phonograph records "a good deal faster than I can afford" was one of his obsessions, with the accent always on the classics. He read "heavy old books almost exclusively" and thought "Beethoven's C Minor Symphony is still the greatest music ever written." The only sport he ever liked was golf and the happiest time he spent was while riding a bicycle across Europe, with hikes in the Pyrenees, the Swiss Alps and along the Riviera.

Cash termed himself a shy fellow, yet he liked to talk better than anything else, he said, and drank beer with old friends until the late hours.

He stated that his family and forebears were "never rich or aristocratic" but were "good upcountry farmers" with property in proportion to most of the neighbors. As a young man, he said, he had the attitudes connected with the Old South, and he stated that people "often wonder at my sympathy for any Southern underdog at all." At twenty he was "a thorough Bourbon" in his outlook, but "then a newspaper sent me to cover a strike—and after that I began to look around me."

If there is any doubt that he was a Southerner to the core, this paragraph from his personal sketch should dispel it:

"Reared an intense sentimentalist to the South, my favorite dream as a boy was the fighting over again of the Civil War, and myself leading the charge on the cannon's mouth with the Confederate battle flag. My blood still leaps to the band's playing of 'Dixie,' and to such flourishing phrases as 'the sword of Lee.' And before militantly sentimental ladies

who don't like my opinions, I am sheepish and dumb."

Disliking both intolerance and affection intensely, he said, he quite often indulged himself in both. Five years before, he wrote in 1936, he was "a complete neurosthenic" but had since largely cured himself.

About his views of the mysteries of life, he wrote:

"I have developed a great interest in the sciences, though in college I hated a laboratory so much that I rarely ever went—and so was in constant difficulties with the authorities. Yet, for all my belief and confidence here, the universe seems to me to be ultimately an impenetrable mystery. And though I have no time for creeds or theological constructions of any kind, I sympathize fully with the awe which is perhaps the primary source of religion." He was interested in anthropology. And he added:

"I think La Rochefoucauld and not Karl Marx laid his hand on the true primary key to human action—that vanity and not economic interest prevails. But even that is only a half-truth." Illness had given him insights into some things, he noted.

His indictment of himself was brief:

"I am hopelessly lazy, and, efforts to convince myself that it is really a virtue having proved unavailing, I am constantly depressed by the knowledge of it."

His ambition, still more brief, is summarized in the final sentence:

"And I want above everything to be a novelist."

No one, it seems, and Cash least of all, suspected that in the magnolia-scented breezes of South Carolina, in the city room above downtown Chicago, in the thin air of the Pyrenees, in various Southern newspaper offices, a book of near-classic proportions was taking shape. His varied life was moving toward an achievement which would assure him lasting renown among the writers of the twentieth century.

There can be little doubt that he was greatly influenced by the emerging progressive colleges of his area—Duke and the University of North Carolina in particular—and by Mencken and Southern scholars such as Howard W. Odum.

There was much pioneering in sociology at the University during Cash's collegiate years, and he later wrote one incisive article for the *American Mercury* about Duke's success in preserving academic independence.

It was at Mencken's suggestion that he started work on *The Mind of the South*. Cash's iconoclastic articles undoubtedly appealed to the old master of satire.

Cash, in the early 1930's, saw a deadening vacuity in the life of his region, and in the April, 1933, issue of the *American Mercury* he delivered a scalding indictment against the city of Charlotte.

He called it "an old Tory town, a citadel of bigotry and obscurantism . . . a Gargantuan blue-nose posed on the face of North Carolina." The flow of civilization in that great state, he wrote, could be charted by the device of conceiving it "as a thundering field of battle whereon the justly famous state university at Chapel Hill gallantly defends the standards of intellectual integrity against the ferocious assaults . . . almost wholly, of this very town of Charlotte." Cash called the city, to which he was to return later in an editorial position, "the chief enemy of civilization in the Near South."

He was not entirely unkind to the city, however, and he acknowledged that others in the state, including Greensboro, had changed. And the cities of Raleigh and Wilmington were passive. "In them," he wrote, "is a great defeatism. The Goth, they know, is upon the Flaminian way. The Hun swings southward from the infidel universities of the North and makes himself at ease within the tarheel gates." But these towns "cultivate serenity" and thank "an inscrutable God that the day of wrath is at least not yet."

It is difficult to believe that his final, desperate decision in 1941 could have been due to anticipated criticism in his home sector. For he had been lobbying salvos in that direction for too many years to have been much affected by adverse comment there, and his book was much less caustic than his magazine articles of almost a decade earlier.

The book came out during a boomtime for publishers, during a time when the thoughts of Americans were in Europe.

Russia was reeling under the strokes of the German army that summer, and an avalanche of both novels and non-fiction about the war was pouring into book stores.

The nation was swept up in a world-wide drama, but seldom, if ever, has a book about the American scene received such enthusiastic reviews as did *The Mind of the South*. The accolade came in a groundswell from newspapers and literary journals.

It won quick recognition from the *New York Times Book Review*, which stated that "certainly no one else has succeeded in writing the ideological and social history of the South from colonial times to the present in such a philosophical and illuminating manner. . . . In fact it would seem that there is no important ideological or social factor affecting the life of the South which Mr. Cash has overlooked. . . . He has brought to his task a deep knowledge of economics, genealogy, institutional history, psychology and law, and something else without which his book would have been a dull performance—a constructive, historical imagination and a gift for fresh and lively phraseology."

The New Yorker said that it was "probably the most readable and penetrating general treatment of the subject we've ever had." The *American History Review* stated: "Mr. Cash has written a brave and critical book about the South which deserves a wide circle of readers, including the effective political and social leaders of the South today."

Time magazine declared that "Cash is honest, temperate, eloquent and kind, and he is definitely in command of his subject," and concluded: "Anything written about the South henceforth must start where he leaves off."

Although the book does not deal with recent events, its pertinence is far from being lost as the 1960's begin. In fact, Cash's rare perspective is probably being utilized as never before in this period when the South is, to the amazement of many, exhuming ancient arguments and remembering long-dormant bitterness.

Roosevelt's war-time FEPC and the series of civil rights decrees, which started with outlawing of the white primary in 1944 and reached high water mark with

the school desegregation ruling ten years later, were still in the future when Cash was writing. As the regional mores came under judiciary and legislative assault from Washington the South reacted, and why it reacted as it did is better understood after reading *The Mind of the South*.

But Cash sensed that a time of trial was coming, as he wrote of the South in his final paragraph:

"In the coming days, and probably soon, it is likely to have to prove its capacity for adjustment far beyond what has been true in the past. And in that time I shall hope, as its loyal son, that its virtues will tower over and conquer its faults and have the making of the Southern world to come. But of the future I shall venture no definite prophecies. It would be a brave man who would venture them in any case."

No one, reading the book, can escape the impression that Cash was motivated by a consuming love for his section. True, he assailed the Cavalier aristocracy legend as none other before him, describing the "Proto-Dorian pride" it helped produce, and pointing to a "savage ideal" which gripped the area after the Civil War. The hedonistic "hell of a fellow" was a dominant personality, he said, in a sector where the frontier lasted longer than anywhere else, and there was deprecation of authority and processes of law. He told of racist demagogues with their continued "appeals to such vague shibboleths as states' rights, and heroic gasconade of every sort." He said that there was a "core of tragedy" in the fact that "intellectual leaderships are by themselves always helpless."

But the better nature of the South is there, too, the "sweepingly splendid fellows . . . a kindly courtesy, a level-eyed pride, an easy quietness, a barely perceptible flourish." Some, in the early days, went even "beyond the kindness of the old back country" to set "an impeccable example of conduct and sentiment."

It was "the conflict with the Yankee," he concludes, which really moulded the mind of the South in the way he pictures it, and he said: "The mind of the section . . . is continuous with the past." He calls the South "a tree with many age rings, with its limbs and trunk bent and

twisted by all the winds of the years, but with its tap root in the Old South."

So it was in 1940. Who can say how nearly the Southland approximates that description twenty years later, when the winds of a new storm are whistling through it?

His summary is full of feeling:

"Proud, brave, honorable by its lights, courteous, personally generous, loyal, swift to act, often too swift, but signally effective, sometimes terrible, in its action—such was the South at its best. And such at its best it remains today, despite the great falling away in some of its virtues. Violence, intolerance, aversion and suspicion toward new ideas, an incapacity for analysis, an inclination to act from feeling rather than from thought, an exaggerated individualism and a too narrow concept of social responsibility, attachment to fictions and false values, above all too great attachment to racial values and a tendency to justify cruelty and injustice in the name of those values, sentimentality and a lack of realism—these have been its characteristic vices in the past. And, despite changes for the better, they remain its characteristic vices today."

So reasoned a man who wrote briefly and brilliantly, vanishing in his moment of triumph. Strangely enough, this admonition appears in his book as he writes of his fellow Southerners: ". . . the South must not be too much weaned away from its ancient leisureliness—the assumption that the first end of life is living itself—which, as they rightly contend, is surely one of its greatest virtues."

Our Reviewers

Book reviews in this issue are by three current Nieman Fellows:

Jack Samson, Associated Press, Albuquerque; Edmund J. Rooney, Jr., Chicago *Daily News*; and Tom Dearmore, *Baxter Bulletin*, Arkansas.

Army Newsmen

By Edmund J. Rooney, Jr.

CIVILIANS UNDER ARMS. Edited, with an introduction, by Herbert Mitgang. Pennington Press, Cleveland. 218 pp. \$3.95.

Many former writers for the Army's newspaper, *Stars and Stripes*, are now pounding typewriters for civilian publications.

One of them is Herbert Mitgang of the New York *Times* Sunday magazine staff. He is also editor of this *Stripes* anthology from four U.S. wars—Civil to Korean.

The writing here is remarkably good, considering that most of it was done hurriedly in combat areas.

Newsmen-soldiers represented include Alexander Woollcott, Harold Ross, Jimmy Cannon, Irwin Shaw, Grantland Rice, and Klaus Mann.

An anonymous correspondent on March 11, 1863, echoed the historic cry of noble soldiers:

"Who loves peace more than the soldier far from home, its comforts and its joys? When no sunlight comes to cheer our pathway or make glad our hearts, we will close firmer and closer around the old flag and like the 'Old Guard' at the Battle of Waterloo, we can die for its defense, but never! no never! aid in its dishonor!"

The unpredictable Sgt. Woollcott personalized the front-lines action of late September, 1918, with:

"And now the doughboy, on the stroke of five, rose out of his hated, water-soaked trench and went roaring over the top.

"The Infantry swept across to No Man's Land, across the trenches the Boches had been widening and deepening for four years, past dugouts whose none too hopeful occupants were still in hiding as a result of the artillery preparation."

Editor Mitgang has included several poems. Some of them read now (and possibly did on original publication, too) as trivia and nonsense. The best were writ-

ten by Sgt. Joyce Kilmer and Captain Franklin P. Adams.

In an excellent introduction, Mitgang offers:

"For the GI poetry was the Greek chorus of his conscience, emerging in language of humor, protest and beauty. That America's armed civilians should have chosen this form for expression is their own finest tribute."

Thirty different editions of *Stripes* were published across the world during the second war. The combined readership went into the millions.

The Mediterranean editions were the most independent of all Army newspapers—ever published, anywhere. Staffers defied the usual constrictions of military discipline and ritual because they were encouraged to do so by their boss, Colonel Robert Neville.

The tall, kindly Neville, a longtime *Time-Life* correspondent, admonished his charges to be "newspapermen first, above everything." They were, too. They worked hard but lived and ate well—usually better than many officers.

Neville and his tireless crew pulled off a most memorable feat on the day Rome was freed. *Stripes* men dashed into the *Il Messaggero* plant and put out an edition, headlined "WE'RE IN ROME," that was handed to some infantrymen as they entered the city.

This high morale and aggressiveness were fostered, in part, with the official blessings and sanctions of Generals George Marshall and Dwight D. Eisenhower.

It was in England, in 1942, that this message from Marshall was printed:

"The *Stars and Stripes* always was entirely for and by the soldier, and this policy is to govern the conduct of the new publication."

Mitgang suggests that one Douglas MacArthur did not encourage this freedom of the press out in the Far East. It is held that the Pacific editions were loaded with canned features and outside wire service stuff. Original writing and front-line correspondence were sacrificed. Indeed, there

was very little of the soldiers' gripes, complaints and thinking, compared to the European editions.

Mitgang was a managing editor in the Mediterranean zone. He gives considerable praise and recognition to his buddies for their perseverance and ingenuity while combatting meddlesome Army brass.

Stripes men often had to defy Army rules to get the paper out on time. Their spirit was always more civilian than military.

The chronic bickering and squabbling with high officials by enlisted men on the European editions is legendary. Most memorable is the shouting match that Sgt. Bill Mauldin, a cartoonist, had with the late General George S. Patton. The reason: Mauldin's unmerciful nagging of arrogant Army officers in a series of caustic cartoons.

The boys on the Paris edition had their troubles with that general who wanted every news story to end with the line:

"Have you killed your German today?"

Mitgang tosses a few brickbats to the South Pacific with:

"The Pacific *Stars and Stripes* never really had the guts and representative opinion of the service men. It started late in the war and was ineffectual as an organ of expression.

"That carried over to the Korean War. . . the *Stars and Stripes* in Tokyo was officer-dominated to an unhealthy degree."

This should bring a rebuttal, in some form, from alumni of the Pacific *Stripes*.

The complete history of *Stars and Stripes*, all editions, has yet to be written. Historians will have to evaluate the total results of General John Pershing's mandate to *Stripes* men that:

"The paper . . . should speak the thoughts of the new American Army and the American people from whom the Army has been drawn. It is your paper."

The value of Mitgang's work, aided by more than 100 contributors, is that it stands today as a very considerable contribution to the meager literature about Army newsmen.

Writing—in focus

By Jack Samson

MORE THAN MEETS THE EYE. By Carl Mydans. Harper & Brothers, New York. 310 pages. \$4.00.

Carl Mydans is an improbable man—a veteran photographer who writes with a talent that rivals the best in the field. There is a leanness of style which resembles some of the best of his photographs—an almost uncanny ability to pick out the center of interest. And that center appears sharp and clear.

More Than Meets the Eye is a picture book without photographs. It is a book of war but it makes no attempts to judge, simply to report. Perhaps the major difference between Mydans and some of his contemporaries is that he not only tells what happened but also makes the reader feel "this is what it was like."

Mydans missed precious few theaters of war over a 15-year-plus period. A veteran of *Life* Magazine in the strictest sense of the word (he joined the staff when the magazine was born in 1936), Mydans began covering wars with the Finnish-Russian battles of 1939. Later he was assigned to photograph the Japanese-Chinese war and was based in Chungking. After that came the coverage of the Second World War starting with the Japanese victories in the Philippines shortly after Pearl Harbor.

The massive overrunning of the Philippines caught Mydans and his wife Shelley (a *Time-Life* writer) in Manila with no means of escape open. They were interned there at Santo Tomas prison camp until—by some quirk of Nippon military paperwork—they were transferred to Shanghai and again interned. Eventually they were exchanged for some Japanese prisoners and sent home aboard the *Gripsholm*.

While his wife remained in the United States to write a book, Mydans left for the European theater of operations. He was in on the victories in Italy—moving up "The Boot" with the infantry to the capture of Rome. He later went on with the troops to southern France.

Through all the battles he witnessed,

the death of uncounted soldiers, the degradation of prison camp life and the suffering of civilians caught in the mess of war, some glimmering of Mydans' philosophy comes through in his sparse style. It appears to be that men of good will must stand in the ranks with the scoundrels; the strong must put up with the stupid and the weak, and that no one can do much about a war after it has started but to make the best of it. Some readers also may sense Mydans is saying mostly that it is a time and a place and the impact of what happens to people that causes them to react as they do.

Understanding that Mydans wanted to be in on the liberation of the Philippines, *Life* had him transferred there from Europe as soon as the first landings took place. Some of the most moving chapters of the book are concerned with the return of U. S. forces to prisoner-of-war camps there. Some were abandoned—only the rotting fences and grave mounds left as a reminder of the many Americans who had died in them. Mydans was one of the first few men to enter his old camp of Santo Tomas near Manila. There he found many old friends still alive though so weak and ill many were unable to walk.

For the most part the book consists of brief episodes. Chapters—if they can be called that—may run as short as one page. Some are so brief, and yet clearly etched, that they are simply accounts of events

which took only seconds to happen. Mydans apparently never forgot anything of consequence in his years of war. Like a photographic plate, his mind retained the image of the beggar woman in Chungking in 1940 who had taught her infant child to play dead so that she could hold it up by one leg and beg money from shocked foreigners.

Another scene—touching in its understatement—is the conversation with an old friend when Santo Tomas prison camp was liberated. The friend never moved from his cot all during the night when the Americans and Japanese were engaged in a fire fight in the darkness. The reason, he told Mydans, was that he had hoped for it so often he couldn't believe it had really happened.

Then there was the execution of a handful of frightened French boys, who in the last few seconds of their lives drew themselves up proudly when about to be photographed.

Mydans went on to Japan following the atom bomb blasts at Hiroshima and Nagasaki—photographing the shattered and scorched devastation of the Japanese homeland.

And later there was the war in Indo-China and Korea—both photographed by Mydans.

Many readers, by the time they have reached the end of the book, may find themselves asking the same question: why did Mydans wait so long to start writing?

Go to Harvard and Cash Checks

On a tour of the southwest, Phil Kerby, editor of *Frontier* magazine, stopped overnight at the Grand Canyon, where he decided, for obviously practical reasons, to cash a check.

"Got any identification?" the hotel manager asked.

Fumbling through his wallet, Kerby came across an outdated Harvard Library card, souvenir of a fleeting flirtation with knowledge.

"Here's my Harvard library card," he said, trying to break through the invisible shield of guardall between him and the

inn keeper, "but that won't do me any good. Wait, my driver's license is here somewhere."

"You a Harvard man?" the manager asked.

"Well . . . no," Kerby answered, resisting the temptation (none of us is impervious to *all* status symbols) to say yes, "but I went there a year under a special grant."

The manager fingered the knot in his conservative, solid-grey tie. "Don't bother about the license. I'll cash your check."

And he did, too.

From Carl Rowan

To the Editor:

In that ever-losing struggle to get my reading up to date, I have just got to the *Nieman Reports* for July, 1959. I find a statement in an article in this issue that does such an injustice to the editors of the news pages of the Minneapolis *Tribune* that I must write you, even at this late date.

In an otherwise excellent article, "Whatever Happened to the Country Press?" John C. Obert refers to a series of articles that I wrote on Minnesota's small towns and says it "kicked loose an outburst of denial and protest which was to leave the conscientious Rowan bereft of even his own editors' support." In an era of journalism where most readers and many journalists seem to take with a huge grain of salt the assertions of publishers that their views are confined to the editorial columns, this is a conclusion that Mr. Obert and others might reasonably have reached, for the Minneapolis *Tribune* did carry an editorial that quarreled with the title of the series ("Grow or Die") and stated that my conclusions and interpretations were my own—and that in some instances the editorial pages differed with the emphasis I placed on the facts reported.

The fact is, nevertheless, that I had the complete backing of my editors—that is, the executive, assistant executive and managing editors who control the news pages of the Minneapolis *Tribune*. Some of my proudest moments as a newspaperman were those in which I watched these editors stand unflinchingly in the face of complaints from some rather powerful sources. Had they not reacted with what I consider laudable courage and integrity, the full series probably never would have been printed, for the storm that broke after the first article appeared was enough to send more timid editors scurrying to the wastebasket with the more provocative articles that were to follow. Not only did my editors not run for cover—but as the series drew to a close they gave me the second largest raise that I have received during my eleven years at the Minneapolis *Tribune*.

I think all this points up a fundamental lesson of journalism: it is a good feeling

for a reporter to conduct a study, to write his articles, and then have his editorial page say "Amen"; it is a far better feeling—and it is the essence of honest, responsible journalism—for a reporter to wade into an area of deep controversy confident that the things he emphasizes and the conclusions he draws can be his own—that they do not have to fit a mold fashioned in advance by the publisher, the advertising department or the editorial pages.

I am sure that readers of the *Nieman Reports* will understand this distinction. I am happy to be able to say that nothing that happened during the furor over "Grow or Die" or subsequently has given me reason to believe that we have ceased to honor this principle at the Minneapolis *Tribune*.

CARL T. ROWAN
The Minneapolis *Tribune*

In Reply

I am writing to apologize for an apparent injustice I did Carl Rowan's editors at the Minneapolis *Tribune* in my July *Nieman Reports* article, "Whatever Happened to the Country Press?"

After reading a copy of Carl's letter to you, I realize that the phrase to which he takes exception should have read "bereft of his own newspaper's editorial support" rather than "editors' support." I'm sorry I made such a presumptuous mistake. It could have been avoided had I taken the simple precaution of phoning Carl before I wrote that part of the article.

For my admittedly lame defense, I can only say that in my narrow world of provincial journalism editors and editorials are presumed to be one and the same thing.

I've written Carl to apologize, and in my apology I conceded that I wrote that passage of the "Country Press" article while I was still piqued over the *Tribune's* editorial "backtracking." Some of the readers of my newspaper were quick to seize upon the *Tribune's* editorials to rebut our editorials in support of Carl's "Grow or Die" series.

I am a great admirer of the Minneapolis *Tribune*. As a matter of fact, it was the *Tribune's* wide angle perception and

depth of comprehension which first called my attention to the myopia which afflicts too many of the country newspapers in our state.

My admiration and respect for Carl Rowan was apparent in my "Country Press" article. I hold the same admiration and respect for *Tribune* staffers John C. McDonald, Sam Romer, Dick Kleeman, Graham Hovey and a number of others.

JOHN C. OBERT
Alexandria, Minn.

Books and Weeklies

To the Editor:

People of our republic have never really appreciated the prime significance of the 8000 or so weeklies, more particularly those where there is no competition. In many places, I suggest, the weekly is the cultural center of the community. Hence, have any of your readers any ideas as to how the book publishers can arrange an economic marriage with the weeklies?

As you no doubt know, although the sale of books is increasing, the book publishers have been uniquely successful in destroying their own outlets by violating, in appreciation at least, the spirit of the Robinson-Patman Act to build up the book clubs. This is accomplished by leasing plates instead of selling books to the clubs. To be sure, book clubs have induced further reading of volumes. However, with the outlets decimated I have suggested to publishing clients for years, and to foundations, that the publisher of a weekly might have a bookshelf with books on consignment from various publishers with selective titles which might meet with favor in each particular community. To market books on this basis of one-by-one is a costly process; but possibly state or regional associations of weeklies might be interested in developing this adjunct for the weekly publishers to their economic benefit and to the cultural benefit of the thousands of towns that have no book stores at all.

I will be happy to work with any interested groups, and would hope that some foundation might be willing to underwrite an exploration in this direction.

Morris L. Ernst,
New York City.

NIEMAN NOTES

1939

On February 5, the St. Louis *Post-Dispatch* announced the retirement of Irving Dilliard. An editorial, entitled with his initials "I. D.," noted that in 30 years he had done some 10,000 editorials for the *P-D*. It carried also his last editorial, calling attention to the cases of three men in prison for contempt "for asserting their supposed rights under the First Amendment." The three are Chandler Davis, Lloyd Barenblatt and Williard Uphaus.

Dilliard concluded his editorial:

"There are 36 other defendants awaiting final disposition of cases involving similar charges. Can it be that all will go to prison? If so, the First Amendment does not mean what it says."

Dilliard is on the faculty of the Salzburg seminars for the spring term. Then he has books to write, starting with a history of the Supreme Court, whose work he has followed closely throughout his professional career.

1942

Don Burke, from the Athens office of *Life International*, reports finishing an article on democracy in Greece just in time to pick up Billy Graham's African tour in Rhodesia. His Middle East beat the past year has reached from the China-India border trouble to covering bull fights in Spain and several months in the Central African Federation.

Neil Davis' *Lee County Bulletin* received the National Editorial Association's Herrick Editorial Award, given "to recognize the best editorials published to show the most outstanding and unusual efforts made by a newspaper to explain democracy to the people." The *Bulletin* had recently won four first place awards in Alabama Press Association contests.

1943

Working harder than he ever did in his life and having more fun, Erwin Kieckhefer is executive editor of the *Daily Plainsman* in Huron, S.D. "about 13,000 circulation now, we expect to hit

I.D.

Thirty years is a long time to be writing editorials. We figure that the initials I.D. must have been appended to at least 10,000 pieces which appeared on this page since Irving Dilliard joined its staff in 1930. How far 10,000 editorials laid end to end would reach does not matter. What matters is that I.D.'s retirement today will leave a very large gap on this page, of which all of us on the staff are acutely aware. I.D. wrote on a broad range of subjects, from Ozarks folklore to international power politics, from Illinois graft to presidential campaigns, from place names to Ellen Knauff, from the Centuria mine disaster to the Missouri governorship steal. But in no field shall we miss him so much as in that of constitutional law and civil liberties. He made himself an authority on the Bill of Rights and the Supreme Court, and the scope of his knowledge has long stood this page in good stead. Now I.D. is doing what many newspapermen dream of—retiring at an early enough age to do some writing of his own. We wish him many happy years, and much success.

St. Louis *Post-Dispatch*, Feb. 5.

15,000 before the year is out." He's supporting Hubert Humphrey, whose brother still runs the family drug store there, has bought an old house in walking distance of the office, "and we've raised a little hell in town and got some things done—improved fire safety at some of the schools for example.

The thing you probably would be most interested in is our campaign to develop a daily feature on the editorial page which is a round-up of a subject in which we try for reporting in depth. We attempted when I came here to get the UPI to do this for us. The UPI decided they couldn't do it because they didn't have the men qualified to do it. So we, being presumptuous, have gone ahead and taken a fling at it ourselves. We cover "culture" on Sundays, foreign news on Mondays, national news on Tuesdays, farm economics and politics

on Wednesdays, S. D. news on Thursdays (this thru the UPI Pierre bureau plus our own tailgate), national sports on Fridays. I write the national, international and farm columns myself in addition to the edits. This, of course, requires my spending just about all my evenings in reading the papers and mags to which we subscribe and digesting the stuff.

We were encouraged last week by the item in *Printer's Ink's* Media Notes column which said this is the best bet for news coverage in the future and would be the most significant change in concept of news in this media.

1945

Houghton Mifflin Company brought out in February a collection of 13 short stories by A. B. Guthrie, Jr., *The Big It, And Other Stories*. Reviewing it, Oliver La Farge discovers that Guthrie has "humor of the authentic Western frontier style." He compares Guthrie's stories with Owen Wister's. They deal with the same basic subject—the true character of the old West—and possess the same quality of relish. . . . Like Wister, he conveys the feeling that he is telling of the real thing, and his reproduction of the Western manner of speech is unusually fine."

1946

Leon Svirsky is now vice president of Basic Books, Inc., as well as science editor. "We're publishing a book, April 7, on *Fallout and Nuclear War*, with a foreword by Adlai Stevenson. I love the book business."

1947

Frank Carey, AP science writer in Washington, looks forward to a June wedding of his daughter Barbara, to Arthur Hull Hayes, Jr., of Old Greenwich, Conn. He is a medical student at Georgetown University, where Barbara will be graduated in nursing in June.

Turning homeward, Ernest Linford, editorial chief of the Salt Lake *Tribune*, went back to Laramie, Wyoming, in February to speak at the annual community

service award banquet, a project he launched in 1944 when he was editor of the Laramie *Boomerang*.

1949

Through January and February, the *Christian Science Monitor* ran a series of full page articles by **R. R. Brunn**, American news editor, on the political situation in Asian countries that he visited at the end of last year. The series included Burma, Thailand, Formosa and Pakistan.

1950

Max Hall's work as editorial director of the New York Metropolitan Region Study has led to a dual appointment at Harvard. Starting July 1, he will join the Harvard University Press as editor of books in the social sciences, and will also serve the Center for International Affairs as editor of their publications. The Harvard Press has been publisher of the metropolitan studies Max has edited.

Mel Wax, city hall reporter for the San Francisco *Chronicle*, went with Mayor George Christopher on a two-week visit to Russia, at the end of February. The mayor was returning Khrushchev's visit to San Francisco.

1951

Hoke Norris, book editor of the Chicago *Sun-Times*, has been awarded a Ford Foundation fellowship for a year's study in American literature.

Wellington Wales is news director of the new Virgin Islands television station, VI-TV.

1952

Lawrence K. Nakatsuka was appointed Secretary of Labor for the State of Hawaii by Governor Quinn in January. The appointment was still held up in the State Senate in February, reportedly blocked by opposition of the ILWU. The Honolulu *Advertiser* (George Chaplin '41 editor) was insisting editorially that the appointment be confirmed. Nakatsuka's newspaper work included reporting the often

bitter labor disputes in Hawaii before he became secretary to the former territorial governor.

1953

Keyes Beech covered Eisenhower's visit to India, and then the Korean election, from his Tokyo base. He is looking forward to home leave after a seven year stretch in the Far East for the Chicago *Daily News*. His son, born in Cambridge, is now seven. His wife, Linda, has become a television star in Japan.

Prof. Melvin Mencher of the University of Kansas school of journalism is executive secretary of a faculty group organized to increase understanding between the United States and Costa Rica. The group will spend this summer and next in Costa Rica, to study its language and culture, and will return to conduct seminars for Kansas students.

1957

Fred Pillsbury is back in newspapering, after a year out for free-lance writing. He writes that he is very happy reporting for the Philadelphia *Bulletin* under the managing editorship of **William B. Dickinson** (1940) and with life as a Philadelphia suburbanite. Address: 751 Millbrook Lane, Haverford, Pa.

William Worthy, correspondent of the Baltimore *Afro-American*, was cited for outstanding performance in journalism at the 12th Headliner banquet of Lincoln University department of journalism, March 30.

1958

Peter Kumpa, in Moscow for the Baltimore *Sun*, writes:

I find Moscow a tougher beat than Washington, or even the crazy, mixed-up Middle East. So much of the reporting is like trying to figure out how some mysterious machine is functioning when you can't see the inside and have only the shape of the covering to go by. Or again you find yourself resorting to the fine old Russian art of reading tea-leaves. Now all of this can be fascinating and usually is, but it isn't fun. This is a great ulcer town. You have to

fret first on getting the story and then fret about getting it out.

My closest association with another old Nieman **Henry Shapiro** (1955) (U.P.I.) usually comes on Sunday night poker games. Now the games have been suspended until Henry returns.

My wife and three girls have settled comfortably down here. The oldest, Liz, just 4, has started at the Anglo-American nursery school. The youngest, 15 months, babbles bilingually, although all our girls do better in Russian than we do. We are set for another two and a half years in Moscow.

L. M. Wright, Jr., has been made assistant city editor of the Charlotte *Observer*, which he joined as a reporter last year.

Tom Wicker joined the Washington bureau of the New York *Times* in February. He had been associate editor of the Nashville *Tennessean*.

1959

After serving in the governorship campaign of Mayor Morrison of New Orleans, **Phil Johnson** joined the news staff of the Chicago *Sun-Times* in February.

The Virginia Press Association first prize for editorial writing in 1959 went to **Perry Morgan**, editor of the Norfolk *Ledger-Star*.

From the New York *Post* comes announcement of a second son, Daniel Stephen, born February 24 to Gloria and **Mitchel R. Levitas**.

T. V. Parasuram, United Nations correspondent of the Press Trust of India spent two weeks in West Germany in February, with four other UN correspondents, on a tour arranged by the West German government that included visits to Bonn, Berlin, Hamburg and Dusseldorf.

The Journalistic Craft

By Alistair Cooke

There is a very odd, and enduring contradiction between the prejudice of the intelligentsia that today's journalism is a debased form of literature and history, and the steady belief of historians that yesterday's journalism is one of the most authentic of documentary sources. Shrapnel on a mouse race, Tynan on a bad play, Gerard Fay on a first glimpse of Moscow delight the breakfast reader and give him a sharp sense of a part of contemporary life, focused and arrested for keeps, that may remain memorable long after passages in his own private life are faded and forgotten. Yet the sensitive hacks scraping a living between the definitive biography or the Big novel keep on telling us that journalism is one of the enemies of promise and that nothing dissipates the mobilizing of one's best energies so much as the thousand-word dispatch, the five-hundred-word review, the fifteen-minute broadcast. Meanwhile, the historians (who privately share this contempt for journalists alive and kicking) go on salvaging, as precious artefacts of dead cultures, Defoe's account of fish-curing at Bideford, W. H. Russell's dispatches from the American Civil War, Pepys on almost everything from the taste of an indifferent dinner to the glance of a pretty girl in church.

There is a strong strain of snobbery in this, a distaste for admiring something here and now that may be thought mediocre tomorrow: it is a protective reflex as strong as that of the three internationally famous museum curators who, faced with a disputed Van Gogh, brought in an "on the one hand, on the other hand" verdict and left it to the Federal Bureau of Investigation's chemists to prove the painting's authenticity. Pepys and Defoe, after all, were hardly literature in their day. One was a fussy gossip, the other a time-serving pamphleteer, a hind let loose. Yet, like all good journalists, they kept their eyes on the object, and today no synthetic historical account of the Great Plague, put together from no matter how many contemporary docu-

ments, can compete in dreadful accuracy with Defoe's jottings in his journal about a teen-age girl moaning in an alley-way or a desperate father scrawling the fateful cross on his front door. It is possible that we are moved by these fragments today far more than we should have been if we had been alive at the time and seen the raw material of the journal all around us. My argument against the Enemies of Promise mourners must be, then, that either they cannot recognize one species of literature on the wing but must wait for it to be pinned and classified and preserved in amber; or that they are ignorant of the peculiar and demanding craft of journalism, in an age which is, above all preceding others, the age of the journalist.

Casual piece

Big and little tomes, of varying pretentiousness, are written every year to measure the forces that, say, pushed Franklin Roosevelt into the Presidency. And innumerable other tomes are written to gauge the effect of the Freudian doctrine on the sexual behavior of a college-trained generation. Yet the best account of the one, the most vivid, informed, and judicial, is H. L. Mencken's report to the Baltimore "Sunpapers" of the nomination of Roosevelt, written on a steaming, sticky night in 1932; and the immortal assessment of the sex mores of the people who study the virility ads in liberal-intellectual weeklies is contained in a casual piece of Westbrook Pegler's called "Ah! Sweet Mystery of Love." My point is simply that the time to say so is now, not in 1990, when applicants for a Ph.D. in the social sciences will diligently discover that Mencken in his day was Bryce with all his senses bristling, or that Pegler had a feel for our peculiarly humorless view of sex that escaped the attested contemporary experts, both Kinsey and Riesman, to say nothing of Freud and, so help us, the writhing D. H. Lawrence.

It may be that we should leave the excavation of the *Guardian's* daily de-

posits to a later generation; and it is pretty safe to say that Harvard and the London School of Economics between them will, in a few decades or so, make the dispatches of James Morris and Michael Adams compulsory reading for any student of the Suez debacle. But since the impulse to bottle these pieces occurred to the publisher while the juice was still in them, let us use them to honor, as Mr. Auden puts it, "the vertical man," the writer who must say what is on his mind against the twilight's deadline, the professional scribbler who stands or falls by his ability to see clearly and write fast, and who must learn to overcome the nagging self-conceit of the "serious" full-time writer, whose "craven scruple of thinking too precisely on the event" is too often rationalized as an itch for perfection. The truth is (and it is as true of Hemingway or Reinhold Niebuhr as of James Reston or Red Smith) that all the pieces cannot be good. Once the journalist understands this and, while straining his pump to the limit, resigns himself to the fact that some pieces flow while others fizzle, he can feed his secret ambition to write the perfect report, the flawless piece, so long as life and curiosity are in him.

There is less difference than the intelligentsia would have us believe between the daily grind of the "serious" novelist or biographer in his cloister and the reporter filing his daily dispatch, sometimes with the wind of the world in his face. They are both writing "pieces." The monkish pro. has a scene to finish or a chapter to defeat; the secular pro. has an event to trap, a flavor to identify. They are, whatever the theoretical conditions of their freedom to pause and polish, both working in spurts and against a measured mile. The disparity between the quality of their stuff is still no more or less than that between two men of different talent; it has very little to do with the accidental binding of one man's pieces into a book and the scattering of the other man's pieces into a hundred issues of his paper. Consider two professional writers, one a novelist, the

(The task of filling in the names I would rather leave to you.) One of them groans and labors in his locked study for a year and at the end of it resumes the duties of other a reporter, of absolutely equal gifts, parenthood and friendship. His work is scrupulously assessed for gold and he may count on a studious review in the *Times Literary Supplement*. The other man labors and groans about as hard, but a little faster, in the dress rooms of hotels, on the tablecloths of \$100-a-plate dinners, on the edge of crowds. His stuff is in print next morning, and the professional literary critic, if they ever mention him, grant him a certain talent but one crippled by the forced labor attendant on a deadline.

Judicial restraint

Justice Holmes learned about this prejudice in his first years on the Supreme Court. He was in the habit of studying the opposing briefs as soon as they were argued. He would brood on them for a day or two at most and write and deliver his opinion. This habit, which was natural to his temperament, alarmed his colleagues and spread the rumor that he was a glib and off-hand fellow. He accordingly changed his routine while staying true to his bent. He wrote his opinion as before but aged it in a desk drawer for a month or two and then uncorked it for his brethren. He thereby, he later disclosed, acquired that reputation for mellow judgment and judicial restraint which guaranteed his later transfer to Olympus.

Of course, I have overstated the case and seem to be implying that one good reporter is worth a school of novelists. It is true that most journalism is dead the moment it hits the page and that only the dignity of print makes it appear impressive to people whose own private correspondence is at least as memorable. The so-called tabloids, in England far more than in America, have since the second war reached a nadir of cliché and egotism rarely plumbed in English periodical literature; so that the *New York Daily News*, as the best example, stands out across 3,000 miles as a monument to expert popular journalism. My main point is that journalism is good and bad;

it is not bad because it is journalism but because it is abominably written; that is to say, its material is tritely observed, crudely felt, and foggily communicated. The same may be said of a great many medical papers, historical monographs, and nearly all sociological treatises. In truth, the journalist is merely the scapegoat of all professionals who put pen to paper. By now, I hope the reasons have been sufficiently rehearsed why so many otherwise intelligent people condemn him to the literary ghetto.

The first *Bedside Guardian* was an attempt to cast off this stigma and to preserve some contemporary examples of the journalistic craft at the time of its practice. Mr. Ivor Brown, who edited the first four volumes, was not trying to immortalize fugitive writing but to convey, in an annual round-up of daily pieces, the worth of putting into a permanent record the reports and reflections of a group of journalists who enjoy the privileges of a strong and rare tradition: which was, so far as I know, only once enunciated, in a comment of C. P. Scott on the function of editor as employer: "Take time to pick your man and then give him his head." No staff members of a daily paper that I have heard of, on either side of the Atlantic, are so free from instruction or the subtler menace of editorial "guidance." The foreign correspondents, especially, are on their own entirely and the editor never knows, from day to day, whether he will be getting a piece on anti-Semitism in Western Germany or on the centenary of the frankfurter; on a midnight debate in the French Assembly or an account of new archaeological diggings in Normandy; on a Southern rebellion in the Senate or on the funeral of W. C. Handy.

A personal anecdote will illustrate the merits of this liberty. In the spring of 1949, I prepared to execute a plot I had been hatching ever since I got interested in the history of California. I wrote to the editor, the late but immortal A. P. Wadsworth, and mentioned that I would like to go to California in the spring and celebrate, in a series of six articles, the centenary of the Gold Rush. There was the constant snag in those days, before the excellent Max Freedman came along to take over the Washington correspond-

ence, that a debate in the Senate, an appropriations row in the House, would squash any plans I might have for regional or other special pieces. In the spring of 1949 a big battle was brewing in the Senate over the size—not to say the sense—of European aid. I reminded the editor that while my California pieces ought to be date-lined from such historic spots as Jackson, Coloma, and Chinese Diggings, there was probably a prior duty to follow the Senate debate. He simply cabled me: "Go California why do we employ Reuters." He was, in short, a convinced disciple of Scott and believed that foreign correspondents are special correspondents, that in any conflict between "hard news" and a personal hobby, the correspondent would write better if he followed his own interest.

In this sense, practically all the reporters on the *Guardian* are special correspondents. This anthology does not reflect the sustained daily coverage of the political crises that have haunted us in the last year. For one thing, it would swell the book to the size of an encyclopaedia. For another, books, too, have deadlines—far in advance of the writing they will put between covers—and many dispatches, and nearly all editorials, are written as judgments on events of the preceding 48 hours. Issues which were burning bright when this book went to press have gone to ashes by the time it appears. So, inevitably, the *Bedside Guardian* cannot and does not hope to give its readers a running survey of the year's news and comments. It is a collection of pieces by a band of journalists who have no more leisure than other reporters to say what is on their minds, but who have a pride in their trade and, what is better, the freedom to practice it as they choose. We hope this eighth volume maintains the standard of the other seven; and that, being the first to be published in the United States as well as in Britain, it will not be thought unworthy of a place on American bed-tables alongside the "Kleenex," the alarm clock, and the bottle of seconal.

The Manchester *Guardian* published this article by its American correspondent, from his foreword to a new edition of *The Bedside Guardian*, a British book.

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