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Nieman Reports

Nieman Reports is published by the Nieman Alumni Council: Malcolm C. Bauer, Portland, Ore.; Thomas H. Griffith, New York City; A. B. Guthrie, Jr., Lexington, Ky.; John L. Hulteng, Providence, R. I.; Weldon James, Louisville, Ky.; Francis P. Locke, Dayton, Ohio; Frederick W. Maguire, Columbus, Ohio; Harry T. Montgomery, New York City; Kenneth Stewart, New York City; Leon Svirsky, New York City; Walter H. Waggoner, Washington, D. C.; Lawrence G. Weiss, Washington, D. C.; Louis M. Lyons, Cambridge, Mass., Chairman.

Published quarterly from 44 Holyoke House, Cambridge 38, Mass. Subscription \$2 a year. Entered as second-class matter December 31, 1947, at the post office at Boston, Massachusetts, under the Act of March 3, 1879.

VOL. V, NO. 4

OCTOBER, 1951

Report On An Unsolved Problem

United States Mission to the United Nations

2 Park Avenue, New York 16, N. Y.

Murray Hill 3-6810

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE Press Release #1259
September 5, 1951

Joint Statement to the Press by Isador Lubin, United States Representative, and Walter M. Kotschnig, Deputy Representative in the 13th Session of the Economic and Social Council, Geneva.

The action of the Council in declining to convene a plenipotentiary conference to pass on the draft of the freedom of information convention is, we are convinced, for the best interests of freedom everywhere. This draft convention which was originally intended to enlarge freedom turned out in fact to be an instrument to restrict freedom.

It is important, however, to remember—and we feel that representatives of the free press and radio and movies, as well as many governments, will agree—that the demands for press restrictions voiced by certain governments in the United Nations are but the evidence of deep-rooted problems.

Their deep roots are embedded in conditions of under-development affecting two-thirds of the people of the globe. Among these people there is hunger for true and accurate information as well as for bread. There is at the same time an immense desire to be understood, to have their stories told to the world, but in their own words, not in the words of others.

The movement which we have seen here in the Council, aimed at limiting the freedom of the world-wide news media, springs from these and other conditions. As long as the conditions which underlie the movement to restrict freedom of information in free countries remain as they are, we would be deluding ourselves if we assumed that the vote of the Economic and Social Council has ended the demand for limitations on the free flow of news. We refer in this context not to the communist states which seek the suppression of all freedom; we refer to governments which in principle support freedom of information as essential to the development of all other freedoms.

During the debate in the Social Committee, the United States Delegation submitted a series of constructive proposals, general in nature, but designed to start a trend of thought toward positive ways of meeting some of these basic problems. To resolve these problems and to maintain and expand freedom of information, will require, among other things, discovering and developing concrete ways to increase the two-way flow of news, further exploring ways and means of meeting newsprint problems, expanding the use of expert missions to improve broadcasting facilities, giving support to the International Press Institute and other professional organizations, and broadening existing programs for the exchange of journalists.

In addition, we most strongly urge the free, private information media to examine afresh the world information problems threatening freedom everywhere, and to determine upon a course of action to meet them.

Nieman Reports is published by the Nieman Alumni Council, elected by former Nieman Fellows at Harvard University. It aims to provide a medium for discussion by newspapermen of problems common to their profession. Nine out of ten subscribers to Nieman Reports and very many of its contributors are not themselves former Nieman Fellows but share a belief in the purpose of the Nieman Foundation "to promote and elevate standards of journalism in the U. S."

"JUST NEWSPAPER TALK"

Do Scoops Serve the Reader?

by R. A. Farquharson

Before he became editor of Canada's Saturday Night, this summer, Mr. Farquharson was managing editor of the Toronto Globe and Mail. This was one of a series of talks for the Editorial Department Study Group on the Globe and Mail.

Throughout the newspaper world there is a growing tendency for self-criticism. The commission which investigated practices of the press in England failed to make any important recommendations. But newspapermen themselves have taken up the job of probing their own practices and there is more discussion of what is wrong with our business than ever before.

For the first time in the history of the press an international organization with headquarters in Switzerland is being set up with the hope of establishing an international code of ethics and also an international organization to provide protection for the freedom of information which is so vital to the world today.

In Canada the National Press Awards, launched by the Toronto Men's Press Club, are symptomatic of the feeling that we must raise the standards within our own profession. A new Press Club such as this Kent organization is one of the manifestations of the desire to improve our operations as individual reporters and editors.

The curtailment of newsprint is forcing all of us to examine much more carefully what we print. It is possible that the newsprint shortage may force not only an improvement in the readability of our papers but an improvement in the responsibility of the editing.

Probably because publicity is so eagerly sought, news writers are subjected to more compliments, more down-right flattery than is good for them or their papers. Advertising is expensive and there are far too many well-paid men in the business of cadging free advertising in our news columns. They are eager to make life easier, and pleasanter and the free drinks of the press cocktail party are becoming something of a menace.

I want to reverse the trend and talk almost entirely about the faults in the way we operate our business. Behind what I feel is a growing lack of confidence amongst our readers are three main factors:

- (a) The scoop system
- (b) Our headings
- (c) The rumor story

The scoop certainly adds to the enjoyment of life for the young reporter. There is great satisfaction to the whole office in getting an important or an interesting event into

print before anyone else knows about it. Scoops are amongst the best morale builders in the local rooms across the country.

But when we think of the morale of the reporters we should also think of the morale of the readers. Rushing stories into the newspaper in order to be first is one of the surest ways of getting stories into print that are wrong—at least in part. I know no better way of giving support to the saying: "Just newspaper talk."

Most of the emphasis on scoops is a professional emphasis. We get the satisfaction of making the city editor on the opposition paper mad, but our readers do not share this satisfaction. In most cases only the professionals know it was a scoop, and when the reader realizes we were wrong we have gained nothing from our extra speed, and have lost some readership confidence. The average subscriber would get more satisfaction from correct information in a later edition.

When we are caught with mistakes we point to the hectic pace of newspaper life, but we do not explain that a great deal of that hectic pace is purely professional—that it is something we have built up ourselves in the competition with the other fellow.

There are scoops and scoops, but the trend which has put the emphasis on being first, right or wrong, has been, I think, the most dangerous single road to irresponsible newspaper work.

I am not trying to argue that being first is not good for mass circulation, although I wonder whether it is as important as generations of newspapermen have believed. I am arguing that to put a story into circulation without the information being checked, when a delay of one edition or of a day would have ironed out the mistakes, is irresponsible and sometimes may be criminal.

To argue that all is fair as long as circulation goes up is to argue that it does not matter how you make money as long as you make it.

The mass circulation press is basically amoral whether it is in England, in the United States or in Canada. It is not sufficient that a newspaperman replace his conscience with the libel law.

With the urge to be first comes the urge to scream the news to the readers. The papers in the larger cities with the larger circulations are on the whole the biggest sinners, but many of the smaller papers are guilty in following along the same path—to no purpose. In the metropolitan centres there is at least the excuse of street sale, of the newsboy holding up the paper so the heading can be read at a distance. It is sad to see the small daily using the big type when not a single copy is sold on the street by a newsboy.

Getting out a daily paper we become followers of habit and we do not stop often enough to question whether our heading practices are of circulation value. On the *Globe and Mail* we have found that big headlines on non-sensational news are of no sale value. In the last few years, as we have progressively dropped the size of our main headline, our circulation has progressively gone up.

But size of type is, after all, just a matter of taste. What I complain about is headings in the urge to exaggerate an already exaggerated statement, the constant desire to strive for every inch of punch.

Headline writing is a difficult, technical job and because of the typographical limitations it is exceedingly easy to make mistakes. When the paper pushes a desk man for brighter and brighter headings the number of mistakes increase and it is not fair to blame the individual headline writer for what should be blamed on the paper's policy.

For years we have worshipped the action headline, but trying to put an action headline on a passive story is an almost impossible undertaking.

I think it is time that we revised our whole approach to headings. It is definitely not enough to see that the point of the heading is covered in the story. Sometimes I have seen desk men write into the story an extra phrase to support the exaggeration they had dreamed up. I do not think it is too much to ask that the headline should be a fair interpretation of what the story is about and, if this cannot be done in one style of heading, the heading style sheet should be flexible enough to provide type in which it can be done.

There is nothing wrong with the label heading and many times it tells the readers a great deal more about the story than the use of words full of sound, which so often signify nothing. In our search for action we quite often come up with a silly vagueness.

The rumor story is another way of trying to be first, of trying to tell all about something you know little about yourself. I differentiate sharply, however, between the rumor story, which is so often a way of making idle gossip sound official, and the story that is a reasoned study of a situation. The rumor story implies that someone has betrayed a trust and talked out of turn. The situational story that

wraps up the background can be very helpful without having any one single new fact in it. We take too much for granted—that everyone has read everything published on any development and the story which reviews the whole situation has a definite value to the reader and quite often to the reporter as well.

Every year in Canada we have a crop of budget forecasts. It is a criminal offence for anyone with budget information to divulge it. Yet budget forecasts, which are obviously no better than guesses, quite often get the main headlines in a newspaper.

The serious correspondent who works out from treasury statements and from other available sources of information the monetary needs of the country can build up a pre-budget story that is of value to the readers. But laziness is a besetting sin in newspaper offices as well as in other places. This type of story takes a lot of work and is very seldom done.

Editors who prod correspondents when someone else has written a rumor story keep reporters busy writing more rumor stories, with the result that men quite often are not given the time to do the serious research which is the only way to provide solid information pieces.

On the *Globe and Mail* we have been conscious lately of the need for finishing a story. For instance, when the Hope Commission dropped its monumental study of Ontario education for immediate publication, we decided we should not discuss it all in one day's reporting. We tried to deal with the main points the first day and then progressively dealt with the individual points in successive articles for a week. We found that readership interest lasted just as long as we provided new information.

We have also been trying to eliminate the trite phrase "informed sources." There is something completely phony about a reporter interviewing his typewriter and giving the result to the world as something derived from sources close to the cabinet. If the reporter is as close to the informed sources as he had implied there will be an integrity about his writing that does not require bolstering by phrases of this kind.

Canadian Press is not very often a serious offender in the rumor factory business, but there was an example a couple of weeks ago I would like to cite. CP carried a story from Lake Success reporting diplomatic excitement over a formula for ending the Korean war. The usual informed sources were cited and the CP byliner logically, point on point, set out to convince the reader that peace was in sight. We checked CP to find out what the authority for the story was. We found that the byliner had had a gossip session with a couple of lesser diplomats from one of the lesser countries and we have not been the least bit sorry that we immediately killed the story.

If the rumor story had been true CP would have had a

world scoop, but the chances of a story of that importance coming to a reporter in that way are not as great as any one of us has of winning the Irish Sweepstakes on a single ticket. We have every right to gamble our own money on a long shot, but when we gamble on the reliability of our news columns, long shots of that kind are only undermining the confidence in the responsibility of our work.

Rumor stories are exploded with unfailing regularity or are completely ignored. It is comparatively seldom that they are right and even the rumor story written with the connivance of an official as a means of testing public sentiment lowers the prestige of the press. If the public reaction is bad the reporter suffers the ignominy of having his forecast denied or ignored. All we are doing in this type of kite flying is using up newsprint and sabotaging our reputation.

I have been talking about the difficulties in our business. Let me turn for a moment to improvements. The soul searching that has been going on has, I think, led to better writing, to a keener appreciation of objectivity, to a greater integrity. More papers are emerging from the gee whizz school of journalism. Adolescent enthusiasm is maturing on many newspapers.

We have gone through the different techniques on improving readability. I do not believe that it is possible by word counts or systems to engineer good writing, but at least the attempts in that direction have focussed attention on the writing that was being done, and there has undoubtedly been improvement.

Radio, with its quick news flashes, has focussed newspaper attention on interpretive writing, with the result that newspapers are paying much more attention to the background abilities of the men and women they hire. The standard of education has gone up sharply and the opportunities the profession offers are going up. The impact of television has not yet been felt in Canada, but it is certain that improvements in other methods of communication will force newspapers to improve their product. Radio and television are dealing with the quick news breaks. The interpretive writing which makes news understandable and is the obvious answer to the new competition requires knowledge, balance and integrity on the part of the writer.

There is now greater need for the other and well-trained newspaperman. There is a need for specialization beyond anything we have visualized in the past. As qualifications are raised, the newspaper business offers a much more attractive future. It has always been an interesting life. It is beginning to rank with the less interesting professions in the income returns.

We will always have the hasty headline on late news breaks. We will always have to publish stories in advance of complete information. All I am asking is that we equip ourselves as well as we can to handle the news as it comes, with the responsibility to which our readers are entitled, and that we do not force the pace and publish stories that are within our power to hold back before we have taken reasonable precautions to ensure that we know the truth.

There are scoops and scoops, but the trend which has put the emphasis on being first, right or wrong, has been, I think, the most dangerous single road to irresponsible newspaper work.

**— R. A. Farquharson
Toronto Globe and Mail**

The Community Newspaper: Springboard Or Career?

by Charles T. Duncan

Young persons who start their journalistic career by taking a job on a community newspaper* commonly do so with one of two purposes in mind:

First, they plan some day to have a paper of their own and they are seeking the experience and know-how they will need to meet the requirements for being an editor and publisher—demands which are constantly becoming more challenging, more exacting, more difficult to fulfill. These, with respect to the smaller newspaper field, are the “career boys.”

Second, they haven't the slightest intention of remaining in the small town, but they realize that the weekly or small daily offers unparalleled opportunity to try their wings, to gain the experience and confidence they will need before they can “move on,” as the expression is.

In either case, the primary objective of these youngsters is the same: to get experience.

No one can quarrel with that motive nor gainsay its soundness. A yard-long roster could be compiled of successful men and women in journalism who scored their first triumphs on tank-town gazettes.

Yes, youth is served by the community newspaper. He arrives on the scene often green, unsure and timid but with the buds of promise sprouting unmistakably in the lines of his copy. Sometimes, of course, the beginner is quite the opposite. He blows in like a March wind, full of bluster and swollen with self-esteem. Either way, the tyro goes to work; confidence grows or the cockiness is chipped off, as the case may be, and he becomes a good hand. After a few years—maybe two, maybe six—opportunity beckons and he is gone. (Reference here, obviously, is to the “better” material. There is also the kind of beginner who doesn't leave soon enough, but that is another matter.)

This has become the pattern. It is so familiar that it is seldom questioned.

I propose that it's time to do some serious questioning of this pattern. Is it in the best interests of the individual and the profession alike that the community newspaper continue indefinitely to be regarded as a training ground, a stepping stone, for all but the relatively few who will one day be publishers?

It seems to me that there is one rather obvious loser in the pattern: the publisher of the paper that serves as the proving ground. He takes 'em, trains 'em—and loses 'em. Then he looks around for another to train and lose.

Prof. Duncan of the University of Oregon School of Journalism has contributed other articles to *Nieman Reports*.

I'm not suggesting that the publisher does this in a spirit of sacrifice and with humble resignation to his role as nursemaid. Nor do I imply that he has himself to thank for the situation and can thus take the consequences.

Small town publishers, generally, are of two distinct types in this respect. On the one hand are those who consciously and willingly offer their papers as test-flight bases—not as a noble sacrifice but strictly as a matter of operating policy. (Keeping the payroll down with a beginner-loaded staff is no community newspaper monopoly.) On the other hand are publishers who make every effort to hold their good men but who lose them just the same. They say goodbye with a hearty grip and a blessing but with regret heavy in their hearts.

Both kinds of publishers, and any in between, might well re-examine the potentialities of their newspaper properties and their communities with a view to seeing what might be done toward making some changes in the time-honored pattern.

We have the community newspaper serving as the laboratory for the apprentice who would become master, and that is good.

We have the community newspaper serving, secondly, as the finishing school for the promising youngster who yearns to make his debut in more glittering circles. That too is as it must and should be.

But must there be only these two alternatives? Can not the community newspaper serve also, and increasingly, as an end in itself—and that end short of outright ownership?

Look at it from the viewpoint of the beginner himself. Relative few journalism school students have their exact goal clearly in mind by the time they are graduated. Most of them have no fixed ambition at that time, only a desire to do as well as possible for themselves, often within rather broad limits of the whole field.

Many of the beginners go into the smaller town because that seems to be the best place to start. Sometimes it is the only place they *can* start. Frequently, and sometimes to their surprise, they find the work, the environment and the satisfactions of the job much to their liking. However, in more cases than not, there is a top limit beyond which they cannot rise. It is usually a modest limit and, if they're good, they reach it soon. Then, like the place or not, it's time to move on.

“You can't,” the saying is, “keep a good man down.”

*The term “Community Newspaper” as used here includes both weeklies and small dailies. There is need for a more exact nomenclature, one that would be generally understood and accepted.

Lest it seem that I am arguing against natural law in suggesting that more young journalists of superior ability ought to stay in the small towns, consider this question: "Does the community newspaper field have to be—must it be—'down'?"

"There's no better place to get your basic experience than on a newspaper in a small town," a visiting speaker from Portland advised a journalism class at the University of Oregon recently. "But," he warned, "don't stay there too long. You'll get in a rut."

I would not quarrel with the man who gives that standard advice and warning. Let's pick a quarrel, rather, with the situation which makes this advice well-founded.

If the weekly or small daily *is* a rut—and for those who cannot aspire to ownership it often is—does it *have* to be a rut?

Upon those who think it does not rests the burden of proof.

The first step is to realize that the question as it affects the newspaper is but part of a much larger problem, a problem as broad as the whole United States and almost as old. The city has ever fed off the country, figuratively as well as literally. The old ditty "How Ya Gonna Keep 'Em Down on the Farm?" points up a situation that is no joking matter—sociologically, politically and economically.

The second step is to consider what can be done about making the small town more than a way station for young persons of talent and ambition. That's a tough one. The lure of the bright lights is far-reaching, the urges of youth deep-lying and universal. Yet for a generation or more powerful forces, cultural as well as technical, have been at work bringing the real and imagined advantages of the city to the country. The small town should get over its inferiority complex (and the way to start is to take stock of itself in the light of these twentieth century changes).

Narrowing the problem to the community newspaper itself, it becomes entirely an individual matter. It would be foolish to say that no small town newspaper has achieved its full potential, that every one of them can offer its younger staff members more than what is now in sight. And it would be just as foolish to hold the opposite view.

Each publisher will have to analyze and assess his own situation. This will be a waste of time, however, unless he

goes about it with an approach that is at once imaginative and mercilessly candid.

"Am I running a *good newspaper*, and constantly seeking to improve it?" he might ask himself, "Or am I content with 'good enough'?"

There is no good reason why standards of craftsmanship, as well as ethical standards, should not be as high on a small paper as on a large one. High standards make for good staff morale. Good morale makes for stability.

"Am I—honestly now—offering everything that can be reasonably expected in the way of material reward?"

This is touchy. Costs are high and are going higher. The question must be faced, however, if the community press is going to attract, and hold, the calibre of key staff members that its readers deserve. Editorial side pay scales on the small newspaper have gone up sharply in recent years; at the beginner's level they are often equal to or higher than in the cities. Yet is is a sad fact that service stations in Eugene, Oregon, are offering nearly as much for beginner attendants (college education not required) as most of the state university's journalism graduates receive as starting salary. And be it noted that pay scales on Oregon newspapers are probably above national average. The average starting salary offered University of Oregon journalism graduates this spring is close to \$275 a month.

Much of the color and flavor, the vigor and proud spirit which have contributed to the rich tradition of journalism in America stem from the fact that American journalism's origins were so simple as to give rise, and some credence, to the familiar "young man with a shirt-tail full of type" legend. The young man thus equipped—if he ever really existed—vanished long ago. He faded first from the metropolitan scene. He is now, to all practical purposes, gone from the countryside.

His disappearance need not rob journalism of its vigor and spirit, yet some way must be found to compensate for the loss of the conditions which once made it relatively easy to start or to buy a small newspaper.

To provide more lifetime careers in both the editorial and business phases, careers short of ownership itself, to open a third road between the one leading to the publisher's desk and the one leading yonder and away—that is certainly one of the great challenges confronting the community newspaper today.

"The Cult of Secrecy"

by James S. Pope

Mr. Pope, managing editor of the Louisville Courier-Journal, is chairman of the Committee on Freedom of Information of the American Society of Newspaper Editors. He discussed this problem in the Kappa Tau Alpha Lecture at Urbana, Ill., August 27, which is given here in part.

I doubt whether we have more than begun to learn how to make newspapers good enough to meet their challenge, which probably means we are just beginning to learn how to teach newspapering. And it means we have to find a way to educate more citizens in how to read and understand newspapers. In short, I would like to think of this process of education in journalism as including the consumer, so that the true function of a newspaper can gradually be realized. What manufacturer ever put out the simplest product—much less one as infinitely complex as ours—without making some effort to explain its use to the purchaser? If you think people know how to use a newspaper, just question a few of them on what they read an hour or so after they have put the paper down. Their confusion is in part chargeable to us, because clarity is not easy to find in the rush of events, especially when so many of the men who contrive the events do not want them to be clear. There is room for education on both sides, but the reader's task and his responsibility, in a democratic society, is not a simple one. Perhaps the best reason for his learning to fathom the true quality and message of newspapers is that they would immediately have to become much better newspapers.

The facets of this education in journalism are infinite. We have neglected some of them in a costly way while emphasizing others. For example, we have hammered for two centuries on the primary theme that the press must be free, that any and every citizen has the right to express his opinion of his government. But of what value are these opinions if they are based on ignorance or on partial truths? Lately we have discovered that while we were expounding on freedom of the press, freedom of information was being lost on a major scale by default. The governments, especially the National Government, have become so enormous and their powers of news-control so diverse and insidious, that the basic facts required for sound judgment have become harder and harder to identify and to capture.

It has fallen to my lot, as chairman of the Committee on Freedom of Information of the American Society of Newspaper Editors, to direct temporarily the education in this vital field. First I had to educate myself and my com-

mittee. I must confess I was appalled to learn from what a relatively small area of official activity we were being permitted to mine the precious ore of public knowledge. It is my conviction that what we see—and what our reporters, hopelessly outnumbered and eternally short of time, grapple with—is no more than what a gigantic iceberg shows above the water.

Now a great deal of what is submerged is, of course, dull and immaterial. But a great deal is of crucial importance in the bearing it has upon the whole substance of government. We knock ourselves out covering the Capitol and the White House, and a few news-obvious departments like State and Defense. But we know little or nothing of all the vast organisms that surround and influence the conduct of our affairs and the expenditure of billions upon billions of our money. We are just beginning to probe deeper; and if it is necessary in order to fathom the depths and dimensions and true character of the iceberg, we are going to have to train some deep-sea divers of an order never before employed in the realm of journalism.

Our committee has found instance after instance in which the people's right to know has been circumscribed or wiped out by "regulation." Almost all the administrative news of our Government is so controlled. Departmental records have been put into a "privileged, quasi-confidential status under which there is no press or public inspection as a matter of right, such inspection as exists being essentially a matter of grace on the part of the Secretary of the department in the exercise of a discretion not subject to judicial review."

My own information about this regulation came through Harold L. Cross, the advisor and the creator of legal beach-heads for our committee. He says: "When Congress gave the departments power to make regulations not inconsistent with law concerning the custody, preservation and use of records, etc., and the courts upheld the power as sacred, the situation ran hog-wild." When a careful lawyer says the situation is hog-wild, you may assume it is wilder than any hogs known to natural science.

If you doubt this, I can quote a single opinion of an Attorney General in the San Francisco-Talbott Williams

case, saying: "The records of your Department (Commerce and Labor) are executive documents acquired by the Government for the purpose of administering *its own affairs* . . . and are quasi-confidential and privileged."

It is with a feeling of progress and discovery that my committee is able to report, thanks to Harold Cross, that the statute which is at the root of all these regulations and opinions is "5 U.S.C.A. 22." It has been there all the time, and has doubtless been cited before. But to my committee, searching blindly for the fountainhead of secrecy, it is a new and enlightening clue. Our feelings about it are not unlike those of a doctor who has been observing the ravages of some disease, and finally identifies the germ. It may well be that "5 U.S.C.A. 22" in some form has to exist. That seems to be a basic law of life, applying to bacteria as well as to news. But we can never cease to fight for its qualification and modification. It is our job to make sure that in protecting their records, the departments of government do not find their massive powers convenient for protecting themselves. The public's right to know what is in those records has to be protected too.

In an article on news-suppression in the July *Atlantic*, I said that many men now in public office actually embrace a creed "which holds that it is dangerous for news of government to leak out in any natural, unprocessed form." Some people were shocked and sceptical that any such totalitarian notion should infect our public servants.

It not only infects them, but so complacent has the press become in recent years that these officials think nothing of proclaiming their creed from the housetops. We have to go back only a few days to find a perfect example.

When the Department of Agriculture fired a \$10,000 official named Jack Cowart on unspecified but apparently grave charges involving his conduct in office, Secretary Brannan naturally was asked to define the charges and explain the dismissal. He replied blandly that his was a big department with a big turnover, and that "it is traditional with us not to give the reasons."

This statement was made last Aug. 24, not in the Dark Ages. It was made in Washington, not behind the Soviet Iron Curtain. And it was the utter, unvarnished truth. It is the tradition in more and more departments of government for the heads of departments to decide for themselves how much of the public's business the public should know. And they are not even secret about their policy of secrecy. Whose fault could this be but ours, the newspapers? Either they have lost respect for our staying powers, or they simply have not been reminded of an older and deeper tradition in American government—the tradition that government belongs to the people and they must know all that it does.

I do not know whether Mr. Cowart is being unjustly discharged or whether the Secretary of Agriculture is

hiding some embarrassing data on his department. None of us knows anything about it except that the secrecy itself is outrageous and unacceptable.

As many of you know, Harold Cross has been retained by our Society to make a comprehensive study of the statutes, customs, regulations and decisions which tend to draw a veil at any level of government over public information. He will make a full report shortly, and it is my committee's hope that this can be published and made available to a varied audience. It should be valuable not only to newspapermen and newspaper lawyers, whose researches into the problem of access to public records are rare, but to journalism schools.

We even hope a few members of Congress will look it over. Some of the information it contains already appears in other works, but we do not know of a detailed study of the type Mr. Cross has projected. In his words, "My report is going to deal with the subject of access to public proceedings and records as declared in States, court decisions, official regulations having the force and effect of law, and attorney-general opinions in effect binding on the officials to whom rendered. It will hit records, judicial and non-judicial, and proceedings, judicial, legislative, and administrative."

Freedom of information does not mean another attack on personal privacy. In our concept, it applies only to the actions and the records of those actions by employed, elected, or appointed laborers in the field of public, tax-supported service.

We recognize that certain activities and plans and decisions within the government should not be made public at a time when knowledge of them would clearly damage the public welfare—such as changes of policy by the Federal Reserve Board affecting the stock market; military information affecting the national security; diplomatic affairs linked to this security. But it is inevitable that secrecy breeds secrecy; that for every piece of information justifiably concealed, tens and hundreds are submerged in the system. And it is a fact that whereas our national government swarms with officials empowered to hold back and channel and shape information, there is literally no authority with the simple job of probing around and forcing open all the wells of information that should be available to us. Every employe of government can build his own little dam, but nobody is employed to destroy them.

The cult of secrecy is not, of course, restricted to Washington. Our committee files are filled with cases—and I have handled several important ones in recent weeks—of news-suppression by State and local officials. It is heartening to discover two things about these new cases, since they indicate that our campaign of education is bearing fruit: 1) small-paper editors are fighting back promptly; and, 2) small-time dictators are retreating promptly.

In Maysville, Kentucky, the other day a county clerk got miffed with the editor of a local daily, Mrs. Martha Comer, and told her his records on civil suits would be closed to the *Daily Independent*. She called me, and I advised a front-page story on the clerk's action, having learned that the front-page treatment is more effective than law suits. By the time our committee's wire of protest reached him, he was about ready to retract his order, and he did, immediately thereafter. Such a victory, well-reported around the State, is a general one. It serves not only to check other county officials from brash undertakings, but encourages other editors to stand on their rights.

In New Bedford, Massachusetts, the *Standard-Times*

won a two-year campaign for the right to cover school board sessions. In Indianapolis, the State Insurance Commissioner refused to give the *News* the names of agents handling State policies; but after reading about it for a day or two on the front page, and talking to the Governor, he decided he'd better release that information after all.

Most of you probably noticed the effective counter-attack of the *News-Herald*, of Borger, Texas, when some obscure collaboration between a naval officer and a sheriff resulted in a picture of a plane crash on a public highway. The paper ran a blank space where a three-column cut should have appeared, and the picture was quickly returned.

How Can Newspapers Meet Competition of Radio and Television?

by John S. Hayes

*President, WTOP (Washington Post Radio Station), to
American Society of Newspaper Editors*

The challenge of television to the newspaper is one which newspapermen cannot take lightly, and one which you must consider, as radio is having to do. What you face, and for that matter what radio faces, is an intense new competition for the free time of the American public. Time to read newspapers. Time to listen to the radio. Time to watch a television set.

What is important, is that each of the media makes certain that it has its proper share of this free time. The challenge, then, which television and radio toss at you is this: *that you so conduct your newspaper press that you are able successfully to compete with radio and television for your equitable share of the over-all time to be given to reading and listening and watching.*

If you do not consider carefully what you can do *better* than radio or television, and emphasize that part of your operation, you will find yourselves in a losing battle for time, and you will find the public will drift from you to the other media.

It seems to me that if I were a newspaper editor, I would be more concerned, in view of television reporting, with seeing to it that my coverage of those events which were also televised, would henceforth put as much emphasis on background and analysis as on cold reporting.

The newspaper enjoys a certain advantage in mobility. The two legs of a reporter can carry your newspaper into places not easily reached by the cumbersome cameras of a television crew. What did Mr. Costello say after the

hearings? What about his family? What is the history of Mr. Costello's life? What is the background to the appointment of Senator Kefauver's Committee? These are matters which the television camera cannot easily cover, but these are topics to which your men may easily be assigned.

It also seems to me that if I were a newspaper editor, I would make sure that my journal gave more attention in the future to so-called minor events which might not be televised. The television camera can be in only one place at a time. It can broadcast only one fire during one hour. It can program only one parade in one program segment. But you can be everywhere, and at the same time. If the television camera is at a fire downtown, your men can be at the same fire, and at the same moment be at police headquarters on the other side of town.

I think you must now consider in your daily news budgets where the television camera has been before you. And you must not be so dazzled by the importance of an event that you forget many of your readers have already witnessed the event in their living room. You must be sure that you give coverage to other events which have occurred that day—events, which to you, in the classic tradition of editing, may not seem as important. Unless you do this, you will find the American public looking upon their newspapers as a secondary medium of information where once you had enjoyed some primacy in that field.

Journalism Accrediting at the End of Five Years

by Norval Neil Luxon

The accrediting program of the American Council on Education for Journalism, authorized in 1945 by the American Association of Schools and Departments of Journalism was put into operation in January 1946 with the election of four educator members of the Accrediting Committee at the twenty-fifth convention of the AASDJ. Data from sixty-six schools applying for accreditation have been examined by the committee to date.

Fifty institutions have been visited, of which forty are now on the accredited list and eligible for membership in the Association of Accredited Schools and Departments of Journalism, lineal descendant of the old American Association of Schools and Departments of Journalism, founded in 1917.

Parenthetically, forty-one schools have been accredited, but the total has been reduced by one by the desire of the School of Journalism and the Department of Agricultural Journalism at the University of Wisconsin to be regarded as a unit, rather than as separate entities.

I have been asked to review briefly the activities of the Accrediting Committee of the ASEJ and to outline the principles and the policies which guide committee members in arriving at their decisions.

The Statement of Policy, published July 1, 1948, and reprinted July 1, 1950, is the Bible of the Accrediting Committee. The ACEJ has distributed these pamphlets to every daily newspaper and to each school or department of journalism in the country. My office at Ohio State University will be glad to mail one on request.

I should like to quote the first paragraph under the heading "Bases of Accrediting."

"A school or department will be judged for accreditation on the basis of the objective of the institution of which it is a part. Wide variations will appear in programs and in objectives. The objective of a school or department in a small traditional arts college may be far removed from that of one in a large state university or a well-endowed private institution."

In other words, if a school has as its objective the training of weekly and small-city daily newspapermen and women the committee will examine that school and attempt to determine how well it is preparing its students for work on small newspapers and how well its graduates are performing on such newspapers.

If, however, a school establishes curricula in several fields of communications and advertises these curricula in its official bulletins, the committee examines carefully the courses in each of the curricula and attempts to determine exactly what differentiates one curriculum from another

and to what extent the courses in each provide adequate preparation for a graduate entering that particular field.

The committee never dictates the content or the description of a course or a curriculum. A check of the fourteen different sequences in accredited schools will attest to the accuracy of the first sentence under the heading "Institutional Individuality" which reads

"The American Council on Education for Journalism expressly denies any desire to standardize schools and departments of journalism."

And permit me to quote the final sentence of this section in the Statement of Policy:

"The stated objective of the school or department is given proper consideration in determining if that school or department is fulfilling the function it has assumed for itself."

It may be of interest to take a look at the make-up of the Accrediting Committee which studies applications for accreditation, chooses the visitation committees, and arrives at its decisions after carefully examining and studying in detail the reports of the visitation committees.

In 1951, the three newspaper members are the editor of a morning newspaper in Connecticut, the editor of an afternoon newspaper in Ohio's largest city, and the vice president on the business side of the newspapers in Minneapolis. Two of these men attended traditional arts colleges; the third is a graduate of a school of journalism.

The four educators are the dean of the oldest professional school of journalism, the head of a medium-sized technical school in a land-grant college, the head of a small department in an arts college in a privately-supported Southern institution, and myself. I come from a medium-sized school of thirty-seven years standing in one of the largest of the state universities.

Geographically, the committee covers territory from New England to Louisiana and through the Middle West to Minnesota. Educationally, committee members represent arts colleges, state colleges, and state universities. Their newspaper and teaching experience has been such that the combined judgment they bring to the consideration of the problems involved in accreditation is about as varied as could be expected in any group of three newspapermen and four educators.

In no way can the Accrediting Committee be listed as representing a single educational philosophy. In fact, the diversity of background and of opinions among its members is a guarantee that its decisions are representative of many varying viewpoints. I can assure you that these decisions are arrived at only after the most thorough thresh-

ing-out of opinions on the facts presented to the Committee members for consideration.

It has been my privilege to have had the responsibility of serving as chairman of this committee for six years. On one question we are united. We all firmly believe in the need for accreditation of professional schools of journalism. We are convinced that the schools which have been accredited meet the standards of professional education for journalism. We do not express an opinion on the quality of programs in the schools which have not applied for accreditation because we have no data upon which to make an intelligent decision.

The committee consistently refuses to rate the accredited schools in order of quality or performance. To the many such requests from newspaper executives and prospective students which come to my office, I send the list of accredited schools and suggest that the inquirer arrive at his own opinion on the basis of the character of the institution and the type of program as described in its bulletin.

When students or parents ask me about schools of journalism I naturally advise attendance at an accredited school because the Accrediting Committee has in its files evidence that those schools—now numbering forty—do an adequate job. In so acting, I believe that I am on sound ground in recommending known standards against ones which have not come under the purview of the committee.

Three of the seven purposes of accrediting are: 1) to guide students in the selection of schools which give proper preparation for the profession; 2) to inform newspapers, magazines, radio stations, and advertising executives as to which schools have acceptable programs; and 3) to assist guidance personnel in schools and colleges in advising prospective journalism students intelligently.

Through the close relationship which has been brought about in association on the Council itself and on the Accrediting and Visitation Committees between educators and practicing newspapermen and advertising and radio men, the educators have been able to fulfill another purpose of accrediting, that of anticipating the needs of the various branches of the communications field and adjusting their programs to meet those needs.

One of the most valuable and yet the least-known of the purposes of accreditation and one that surely will gain increasing recognition is

"To provide accredited schools and departments with detailed information as to the success of their graduates in the various fields in which they serve."

Dr. Earl English deserves wide recognition for developing the Employee Appraisal Plan under which the work of journalism graduates is evaluated by the immediate supervisors six months after the graduates take their jobs. As these data are accumulated over the years the results will become one of the significant measuring sticks by which the performance of any given school can be evaluated.

Even now it is interesting to note the consistently high ratings received by graduates of certain schools from their immediate supervisors. Dr. English in devising this rating form has provided journalism schools with a means of checking on the performance of their graduates which no other professional school, to my knowledge, possesses at this time.

And now a brief word about revisitation of schools already accredited. From the inception of the idea of accreditation, it was agreed that one of the principles upon which any new plan was to be based was that accreditation must be a continuing process.

The fifth purpose of accrediting is

"To stimulate the constant improvement of education for journalism through continuing application of the principles of accreditation."

The Council in its official statement goes on to say that it recognizes "... that a continuing program of evaluation and visitations ... must be projected to make effective the policies of the Accrediting Committee."

To carry out this policy, the Accrediting Committee recommended and the Council at its April 22, 1951, meeting approved a plan to start revisitations of accredited schools in the 1952-1953 academic year.

This revisitation schedule, which calls for visits every five years, or more frequently if the institution requests it or conditions warrant it, will provide an incentive to schools to maintain continuously high standards to insure their retention on the accredited list.

In making reports from time to time to such groups as the ACEJ, the AASDJ, the American Society of Newspaper Editors, and the directors of the American Newspaper Publishers Association, I have paid my respects to the newspapermen who have given so generously of their time and energy to take part in the half hundred visitations made to date.

A fine spirit of cooperation has been in evidence in these visitations which are working parties and not pleasure junkets. Accompanying the educators on a typical visitation are a newspaperman from the Accrediting Committee or a person designated by him and a regional newspaper representative. If accreditation of advertising or radio sequences is sought, an advertising man and a radio station executive participate also. In the past four years visitation committees have been made up entirely from members of the Accrediting Committee with the exception of the regional representatives and the representatives of special fields, if any.

As I have twice told ASNE members at their annual conventions, in my opinion this mingling of active newspapermen and journalism teachers in the intimate working conditions of these campus visitations is of great value to both the newspapermen and the professors. Each comes to understand better the problems of the other. The editor

sees at first hand the fine work done in the truly professional schools of journalism and he learns by sitting in classrooms what is being taught to his prospective staff members.

The educator also learns; at least, I hope that he does. He hears first hand what this editor and that thinks should be done in the way of preparation for a career in journalism. These editors are quick to spot inadequately-outlined courses, poorly-presented lectures, and carelessly-guided conference-type classes. They are quick to point out that students should be acquainted with modern newsroom methods and procedures and not be told in droning lectures of practices which prevailed in the 'teens or twenties when the professor was a reporter, copyreader, or even an editor, on the Blank Daily News.

I have found the dozen or so visitations in which I have taken part the most stimulating educational experiences in which I have had the good fortune to participate in twenty-

three years of university work. To spend two or three days—and well into the nights—with such keen intellects as A. H. Kirchhofer, *Buffalo Evening News*; Stephen C. Noland, formerly of the *Indianapolis News*; N. R. Howard, *Cleveland News*; Herbert Brucker, *Hartford Courant*; Joyce A. Swan, *Minneapolis Star and Tribune*, and Charles F. McCahill, *Cleveland News*, to mention past and present Accrediting Committee newspaper members, the brilliant stars they draft as regional representatives, and a colleague from the teaching profession, is worth more to a man in journalism education than any journalism seminar any institution can schedule.

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Prof. Luxon of Ohio State University is chairman of the Accrediting Committee of the American Council on Education for Journalism. He made this report to the national convention of the Association for Education in Journalism at Urbana, Ill., August 29.

How Best Prepare for Newspaper Work?

Twelve Nieman Fellows Answer the Question

by Edward A. Walsh

Instructor in Journalism, Fordham University

Educators in the field of journalism need to take a "new look" at their objective. That was one of the many interesting comments from the Nieman Fellows of 1950-51, polled by the writer to get their ideas on what is the best education for journalism.

The Nieman Fellows were selected for the poll because they are all members of the working press, on leave of absence while pursuing studies in their fields of interest. It was felt that because they had newspaper experience and must have had outstanding ability to be named Fellows, their reactions would be of special interest.

Briefly, the questions asked were: Do you think a liberal arts education is the best preparation for journalism? Liberal arts education with electives in journalism in junior and senior years? A four year course at an accredited school of journalism? A college degree supplemented by a year of graduate study such as the Graduate School of Journalism at Columbia University? What do you think of such a plan as Fordham's where a Master of Fine Arts degree is given for 18 hours of graduate work in a special field such as Psychology, Sociology, Labor Relations, etc. and 12 hours of journalism or creative writing?

The questionnaire said the questions were in the nature of suggestions and the Fellows could, if they liked, write a general letter giving their views and experiences, some of the pitfalls they met, what they have found to be valuable or useless in their training.

Some of the replies have been condensed, others are in full. Care has been taken to give the salient points.

The writer, a former newspaperman, has often been troubled by the question of what is the best education for journalism. He took up teaching to give students the benefit of his twenty-odd years of experience, and found many students who would not take journalism because editors or other teachers told them the straight liberal arts course was the best preparation. He found many newspapermen in his own experience who felt the same.

Newspapermen, of course, are not cast from any single mold. Some excellent men never went to college. Some have done graduate work in journalism and others have not. Some cannot be put in any specific category so far as education is concerned. The question is absorbing, and, the writer feels, still unsettled, especially in view of the impact of the social sciences on journalism education. The views of the Nieman Fellows were interesting to him, and he thought others might find them as thought-provoking as he did. The comments follow:

Roy M. Fisher

Chicago Daily News

... I feel educators in the field of journalism need to take a new look at their objective.

I do not mean that journalism schools should be abandoned, a belief that is held by a number of my colleagues. There is, I think, considerable value in maintaining the

journalism schools as the administrative framework covering those students who intend to make journalism their life work. It gives them an opportunity to rub shoulders with those of similar ambitions, to meet faculty members who often are experienced newspapermen, to attend seminars which enable them to meet face-to-face with the leading newspapermen of the day, and to work effectively on school publications. Those are benefits that I believe can be best administered through the organization of a school of journalism.

Beyond that, however, I think much of the present journalism curriculum is a waste of time. At least, it does not represent the maximum use of time. Men who intend to work on newspapers the rest of their lives should make full use of their short college years to acquire a knowledge of history, government, economics, science, and the other subjects upon which they later will be expected to hold a working knowledge. Not that I believe the courses in journalism subjects should be completely forsaken. I think they should be telescoped into less space. It is enough if they give the student a general idea of what working on a newspaper means in terms of the hour-to-hour routine. He can refine the skills later.

* * * *

Edwin Guthman
Seattle Times

I have mixed feelings about the value of journalism schools. For my money, the most effective would offer a limited number of journalism courses for upper classmen.

It is essential, I believe, to have a small, experienced journalism faculty to advise promising newspapermen and to weed out the ill-fitted and also to serve as liaison with the newspapers of the area and to assist students in finding employment. All journalism students should be urged to work on the college paper—one that is entirely free of faculty guidance or control. I believe the journalism faculty should offer courses in newswriting with heavy emphasis on a critical analysis of present newswriting standards. Courses in the history of American journalism, libel, freedom of the press, the mechanical processes of getting out a paper, and the responsibilities of a free press are other musts.

Journalism students should not be required to take a prescribed list of courses, but should be urged to get the broadest type of education possible. They should be on their own to follow their interests wherever they lead. A deep understanding of American history is the most important, I believe, but I attach equal importance to literature, English, politics and the problems of local, state and federal government.

The most important thing to attempt to instill is a realization that newspaper work requires continued reading and study *after* graduation. It is all right if newspapermen doze in this respect occasionally, but if they ever fall asleep,

they're through as understanding, balanced reporters or editors.

* * * *

Malcolm Bauer
Portland Oregonian

Basically, in my view, the best possible liberal arts education should precede any specialization in journalism techniques. My experience (at journalism school) two decades ago was that classes in trade subjects (proof reading, printing, copy reading) took up much of the time that should have been devoted to study in literature, languages, social sciences or other subjects in the general arts and sciences curriculum. This overemphasis of training in the trade makes for a serious limitation in the study of basic subjects that seem to me to be indispensable to the proper understanding and interpretation of the day's news.

If time and resources of the individual permit, I should strongly advise that the liberal arts education be pursued through a master's degree level at least. It is not necessary, of course, that a minimum amount of technical training be excluded from study, but emphasis should not be placed upon that which is purely preparation for the newspaper trade.

An indispensable supplement to the liberal arts course, in my view, should be active preparation on a publication of the school or community. In most cases, such activity will take the place of any technical training that might be offered in less practical form in the classroom. It is difficult to conceive how anyone really drawn to journalism could refrain from active participation on the school publication. Should he so refrain that would seem ample proof that journalism is not for him . . . full and responsible participation on the staff of the school paper is not only training, but the degree of success achieved will be a dependable measure of the success that can be expected in that field after completion of formal education.

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Angus McLean Thuermer
AP Chicago

By choice, I am not a graduate of a school of journalism. I still am to be convinced of their value. I subscribe to the proposition that a broad general liberal arts education is the best training for newspapermen. The more education a man can get of course, the better. I think that the more graduate work that is done the better. I cannot see what good the technical courses in writing news stories, learning how to count heads, and page makeup, are when stacked up against other courses that could be taken in the time spent on these subjects. When you come into a newspaper office, you have to learn how to write news style and you have to learn how to count heads, etc., etc., and if you don't pick that up in a couple of weeks under a good city editor, you better go back and sell bonds.

A young man planning on entering newspaper work should, I feel, soak himself in American history, economics and political science. I am particularly hep on the idea that broad cultural study courses of other civilizations should be taken . . . I daresay my views on schools of journalism are not popular with employees of same. More and more good men are coming from schools of journalism, it is true, but I weep to think of all the broad courses that could be taken in place of copyreading. Though far from a scholastic shark, I passed five hours of journalism proficiency tests without cracking a textbook just by working on the old college daily and listening as hard as I could in the composing room.

* * * *

Sylvan H. Meyer
Gainesville (Ga.) *Daily Times*

Your request for comments on journalism education calls for a book, to my mind. . . . Journalism courses are simple as pie to anyone with the aptitude for news writing and they are simply impossible for people without that aptitude. Courses in libel, history, etc., are important. Grammar, which is as important as everything else put together, is generally neglected. Even the professors know little grammar these days.

I guess a liberal arts course with some journalism electives plus some practical experience would be best. I think the college daily on which student writers, editors and managers have a maximum opportunity to learn by trial and error and to get the "cuteness" out of their systems offers the best field for training in newspaper work. This was the way I learned so I admit possible bias.

Reading newspapers is good training. I'm repeatedly amazed by newspapermen who never read anything except what they write themselves. Small wonder they never improve. On my small daily I insist that everyone on the staff read every word in the paper. . . .

My two pet theories are: (1) journalism schools overlook training in newspaper finances and management; (2) journalism schools overlook the fact that eighty per cent of the newspapers in this country are under 25,000 circulation and that these papers require all-round people who have curiosity, which can make local stories from apparently insignificant information, who are versatile and can handle, in one day, an editorial, a book review, a political story, a legal story, the press wire, headlines, layout, and, in the meantime, peddle a couple of ads.

* * * *

Wellington Wales
Auburn (N. Y.) *Citizen-Advertiser*

I can only speak from my own experience. I went to a liberal arts college (Dartmouth) where there was little or no instruction in journalism, and followed that with a year at Columbia University, *after* I had worked two or three years. Columbia at the time seemed ineffectual, but the

longer I am away from the place the more I appreciate what it had to offer.

In any case, to my way of thinking, the best means of acquiring journalistic proficiency is to supplement school with work on a *small* paper where one has a chance to do all sorts of news work, cover all sorts of assignments. This suggests a sort of work-instruction program of the sort they have at Bennington College for women and a few other places.

Your system at Fordham sounds excellent; I hope you give your undergraduates plenty of instruction in the intricacies of the composing room.

* * * *

Dana Adams Schmidt
New York *Times*

For my money the best preparation for journalism is a four-year liberal arts course followed by a post-graduate year at a school of journalism such as the one at Columbia. Or such a plan as you have at Fordham would serve the purpose equally well. I do not believe in four years, or even two years undergraduate journalism courses. Journalism is not a body of knowledge like law or medicine, it is primarily a technique. And one year should be plenty of time to master the technique in so far as it can be mastered at school.

My observation is that good newspapermen are usually men with good general education. But very good newspapermen are usually men who have in addition developed a specialty about which they know a lot. Developing a specialty is a very personal thing. It ought to start in college if not earlier. A school of journalism cannot be expected to help much in that respect, except in so far as you have provided for it at Fordham. Sounds like a very good idea.

* * * *

Hugh Morris
Louisville *Courier-Journal*

Is a liberal arts education the best preparation for journalism? I can only answer this question by confessing that my technical education in high school and college left me seriously one-sided and handicapped in my news job. This is the principal reason why I sought a Nieman Fellowship—to have an opportunity to study courses I missed earlier such as history, government, economics, social sciences, etc.

I don't want to convey the notion that engineering training was wasted on me. I find it particularly valuable in covering State government. It helps me plow through statistics and uncover "cover-up" techniques so often used by public officials. Also I feel that my scientific-mathematical background tailored my thinking along logical lines: how to approach a problem and how to reason through to a solution.

I believe that a solid grounding in English fundamentals

is a serious need in present-day journalism. . . . To my way of thinking every reporter should know and understand the principles underlying the development of Basic English if his own writing is to be understood by this "average reader" which surveys tell us has only a 7th grade education. . . . Most colleges have operated on the assumption that an entering undergraduate who passes entrance examinations has sufficient grounding in English. I believe this assumption is fallacious, especially if the undergraduate intends to go into journalism. Undoubtedly my own experience leads me to lay such stress on *mastery* of the techniques of using the language.

* * * *

Simeon S. Booker, Jr.

Cleveland *Call-Post*

I believe that a well-rounded liberal arts course in college is the best background for a prospective newspaperman especially on the editorial side. After the college degree, he may want to take a year, getting a Master's at a journalism school. I would think that any course in journalism would be a combination of practical experience (working on a newspaper, preferably a live one) and real down to earth theory.

I think journalism schools, as yet, have made no great impact on the American newspaper game. Their biggest duty will come in improvement of typography, editorial writing and such, but their work has yet to be done on a sizeable basis. . . . Journalism schools will never change the American journalism field at the top brass level, but by producing young men who have vision and character and ideals they will infect the field with new fresh blood and vim. And we may grow stronger and healthier in journalism morally. . . . I make two points: (a) future journalists should have strong, all around college backgrounds, and (b) journalism courses should include a certain apprenticeship program with work on live newspapers.

* * * *

Bob Eddy

St. Paul *Pioneer Press*

The "ideal preparation for a career in journalism" that you mention would seem to me to be a four-year program in an accredited school of journalism where a good liberal arts background is required and is available, and where practical experience on a good college daily is offered. But, wait, that's not all. After this minimum preparation our "ideal" would include at least three class hours a week, either in special projects in journalism or in arts or science courses related to our student's work (we are assuming he got a job after his four years' course). This classroom-and-workshop would continue until he died or got too rich and fat to work; the former eventuality is more probable in journalism. In other words, I don't think a journalist is ever completely "prepared" in the sense that his background is perfect for each new task he faces. . . .

Hoke M. Norris

Winston-Salem *Journal*

Certainly one should be taught the mechanics of journalism if he's going to be a newspaperman. He should know the framework of a news story, an editorial and a feature story, as well as something about staff organization, type and composition, covering a beat, rewrite, and, perhaps, the business management and financing of a newspaper. However, I believe these subjects can be covered in a very short time—perhaps in a single course of half year. The major emphasis should not be, I think, on how to write, but on what to write, lest the prospective reporter become like an empty flask, all form no content. . . . I do think the liberal arts education is the best preparation for journalism. Journalism electives in junior and senior years might be just what I have in mind, except they should be brief courses, as brief as possible. . . . I certainly wouldn't devote an entire four-year college course to journalism. When an editor hires a reporter, it is assumed that he can write. Writing aptitude can be sharpened by schooling, but if the basic talent is lacking, nothing in the world can make a newspaperman of one. A man who has the talent doesn't need to learn how—he needs to learn what. . . . The best school of journalism in my opinion is the city room. Why not let the student go to work in one?

* * * *

Louis M. Lyons, curator of the Nieman Foundation, gave his views, which the writer felt were of particular interest. He said, in part:

"In general, I am for providing the maximum chance for studies of a general nature, history, literature, economics, sociology, etc., and a minimum time on techniques of journalism. But just what that minimum should be I would not attempt to prescribe for varying conditions. If you ask, a minimum for what: I should say a minimum for getting a job; for I am sure that techniques are best learned, and most rapidly, on the job under most conditions. If a student has a good general education, as for example, in the case of one already having completed a liberal arts program, then I see no objection and some advantage in concentrating on techniques as in a graduate year like Columbia's.

"My impression is that journalism programs are tending toward a greater concern for educational background and a lesser time for techniques, and that this is, in most instances, good. But I can imagine situations in which an able team of technicians might put up a better educational experience for the student than the general education curriculum, and I have a friend teaching journalism who insists that his journalism course is the strong thread that ties together all the content courses of his students because he makes them read and write so as to report on what they are learning, and turn it all into good journalism. That is splendid, but, I suspect, exceptional. . . ."

The Gulf Between the Generations

by Thornton Wilder

This is the Commencement address at Harvard of the Charles Eliot Norton professor of poetry at Harvard for 1950-51.

I have been an intermittent teacher all my life and when, as this year, I return to a university community, I find myself continually drawing comparisons, not comparisons between institutions but comparisons between something far more striking and instructive, comparisons between attitudes, tacit assumptions, the thought-world of students that I have known throughout the decades of my teachings; attitudes that we held in 1917, 1918, 1919 and 1920, attitudes that my students in the University of Chicago held in the '30s, and the attitudes which I see in the students around me this year. What a difference! What a difference!

Now the students today have been told sufficiently that they are living in an age which has variously been called by Professor Toynbee, Mr. Auden and others, the Age of Upheaval and the Age of Anxiety. And indeed it seems so to the seniors whom we graduated this morning, who were 12 years old at the time of the attack on Pearl Harbor. They have spent their lives then in our view in stormy or in threatening weather. They never knew, as we who were born about the turn of the century, they never knew that evenly-running world to which one of our Presidents gave the name of Normalcy.

When I go about my occupation of drawing comparisons, I become aware that those who live in troubled weather build or discover resources that we in 1920 felt no need to call upon. Like species among the order of the animal kingdom, they develop adaptations. These resources, of course, are not of their manufacture but they find what they need from the currents of thought and literature that are about us all, and it is how they assimilate it that is interesting to us. I am talking about tacit assumptions, basic attitudes of so deep a level that they themselves are often not aware. But what they are aware of is that many of the concepts to which we older persons clung are to them irrelevant,—irrelevant and irritating.

The twentieth century is shifting its foundations and it is altering its emphases with striking rapidity. The scientists and the poets and the writers have described this new mentality which is moving into place. The man on the street is beginning to be aware of it. But to teach the young today is to put one's self in the way of learning from the superior student the new description of man in his relations. And that is what supports and sustains those who have only known troubled weather.

I teach literature. I teach the consecrated classics but I am attentive also to the masters of modern literature and if I were not so my students would have waked up to them. About five years ago a professor who was a friend of mine in a university far from here once said to me, "You know, when a student in my classes has written a brilliant paper on the *Scarlet Letter* or on *Tom Jones*, I invite him into my office to compliment him and to make his acquaintance, and we talk for a while. Often, too often, the young man or woman on leaving my office turns and says to me, 'Well, Professor X, of course, we like these books we read for you, but what we are really interested in is T. S. Eliot, James Joyce, Franz Kafka, Gertrude Stein, Ezra Pound.'"

And the professor said to me, "Now, what's the matter? I spent my life studying great literature. These books are purportedly in the English language, yet I cannot read five pages of them with any pleasure, to say nothing of intelligibility. I have no choice but to think that my most gifted students are either hypocrites, imitative snobs, or else just incult barbarians who don't know beauty and clarity when they see it."

Well, that is the gulf between the generations and it is up to us to be very attentive to it. Now, freshmen and sophomores stop me on the street and visit me in my room to ask me about these very writers. And that shows us that these writers are fulfilling a profound need for those who live in stormy weather. And I find three tacit assumptions within their work that are reflected in the best young twentieth century minds, assumptions that we could not have grasped in 1920. First, the young person today in the light of science sees himself not as one of many hundred thousands, not as one of many millions, but as one of billions. Secondly, a whole new tacit assumption in relation to responsibility. And, thirdly, a realization that the things that separate men from one another are less important than the things that they have in common. Now, the multiplicity of the human creation. Kierkegaard, the great Dane, the greatest of the Danes, wrote in his journal in 1844 that he had an anthropologist tell him that 34 billion men and women were living or had lived and died, men and women above the level of the aborigine. He put it in his journal and his reflection follows: "I carried that to an anthropologist friend of mine and he said, 'How childish! How childish! Three and four times that many fully responsible human beings have lived and died.'"

Now it is a matter of fact that we have learned to count. Anybody can make figures, but since archaeologists, his-

torians, scientists, physicists have poured numerals and numerals across us, this generation does not theoretically think in large numbers. The power of the mind to grasp ever larger quantities of units is a thing which the young have and we in middle age still do not have and really cannot have to the same degree. And one thing that follows from that is that they realize this multiplicity of the souls that have lived and the presumable billions and billions yet to live and die.

Now I see that we of the twentieth century, of the Class of 1920, were appallingly provincial and parochial. We were one of lots of Americans and across certain oceans were lots of other people, and that lots was a vague term with no resonance of any kind.

French literature is a very glorious and splendid treasury, but really it is about 60 million Frenchmen, isn't it? The masters of modern literature are engaged in describing multitudinous man, and at once we see a violent shift of values taking place. In one sense the individual shrinks in that vast cousinage and in another sense his assertion of his validity takes on a new urgency and seeks a new authority.

When we now say, "I love," "I believe," "I suffer," or "I mean to be a success," and hear it fall into the human universe of billions, it is, of course, threatened with absurdity. And yet the young know this to the very marrow of their bones in a way we did not use to know it. It arouses anxiety when one feels one is only one example among so many, but it is a new kind of anxiety. It is a metaphysical unsease; it is not a nervousness. And it drives them to find a new basis for that individual assertion. And can't you see how easily bored they would be with many consolations which we older ones found sustaining? No wonder that Shelley is unfashionable to them and Carlyle unreadable. They are full of this kind of assertion and the assertion to them is on the wrong ground.

The second tacit assumption is this matter of responsibility. The young of today are not haunted by the notion of a Golden Age. We who were born about 1900 remember that span of security. We who lived through the late '20s and early '30s, the liberal movements, were filled with a notion that if we strained and strained and strained we would pretty soon usher in a Utopia. These young have not that impatience. They have not that regret. It is not a matter of disillusion nor does it mean that they are indifferent to social betterment. It is that for them it is self-evident that human beings contain large elements of cruelty and of ignorance, themselves included. Think what they have lived through and think what they have not lived through! We in the '20s would never quite have grasped that. We mistook our good intentions for good

performances. And we mistook the good intentions of Christian civilization for irreversible achievement.

Now the modern student is all alive to the complexity of man in himself and others. He is profoundly interested not only in good but in evil, and he assumes that life is difficult, morally difficult.

In the '20s we used to talk about our expectation of happiness. You can't imagine how seldom you hear the word "happiness" today, except colored by derision, and with this has come a whole shift in the concept of responsibility. His last responsibility is to himself and not to systems. He is engaged in responsibly exploring himself as we never were. I am astonished, for example, at the rapidity with which the terminology of the new psychology is heard in all the classes of my students. And no wonder. No wonder the masters of modern literature speak to them as they do not to my friend, Professor X—Kafka about the sense of guilt; T. S. Eliot about the sources of conviction and authority. James Joyce has given two extended portraits of a young man's relation to his parents and cultural history in their terms.

Thirdly, science has made one more contribution to the 20th century thought-world. It has broken down the barriers between race and color and environment and cultural background. To the great surgeon with the patient on the operating table it is of secondary importance whether it is a cousin of his wife or the sister of an Oriental potentate or the derelict found by the police the night before. To the engineer in telegraphy it is a matter of indifference who sends that cable which goes half about the world in a few seconds. To the historian of culture, the myths of the creation of the Eskimos or the Tahitians are now side by side with those of the Book of Genesis.

Those things which all men hold in common are beginning to outweigh enormously those things which separate them. That was not new to Goethe or Pascal or Burke; but in this sense it is astonishingly new to many of my generation. My young friends in Cambridge have shown me over and over again that to them it is as simple as breathing that all societies are but variants of one another, that somehow all wars from now on are civil wars and the human adventure is much the same in all times and all places.

Now, my friends, it is disturbing to have lost the feeling of belonging to one reassuring community, to New England or the United States, or to Western civilization, to be sustained and supported by one of these localizations. But they are gone, they are going and they are gone in that sense of being a psychic nest, and the scientist and poet took them away.

Yes, when T. S. Eliot juxtaposes a line from Dante with a cry from the Sanskrit epic poems, it annoys my friend, Professor X. But the students understand very

well that what he means is that all literature is one expression of one human life experience. And when James Joyce plays upon 24 languages as upon a clavier they don't find it preposterous. All the languages in the world are but local differentiations of one planetary tongue. These concepts are very full of something frightening but they are also full of promise. Oh, it is a lonely and alarming

business to feel one's self one in the creation of billions and billions, and especially lonely if your parents seem never to have felt that sensation at all, but it is exciting and inspiring to be among the first to hail and accept the only fraternal community that finally can be valid,—that emerging, painfully emerging unity of those who live on the one inhabited star.

CHURCH NEWS

The Press Programs of Selected Religious Institutions of Greater Chicago

by Chaplain (1st Lt.) James W. Carty, Jr.

San Marcos Air Force Base, Texas

Newspapers should publish more interpretative religious articles and fewer items which merely list sermon titles and surface information about a congregation's weekly worship service in the view of Irvin E. Deer, administrative secretary for the Church Federation of Chicago.

Deer was among the 26 persons interviewed in a study of press programs of 18 churches and eight other religious institutions of greater Chicago. Individuals who handle publicity for the selected group were questioned about the method and frequency of press releases for secular and denominational publications, preparation of the organization's official publication, and their editorial background and philosophy of religious journalism. The project was conducted by the writer while at Northwestern University, under the direction of Dr. Charles Allen, research director and assistant dean of the Medill School of Journalism.

"Church reporters should background Protestant seasonal events so as to explain their significance," contended Deer. He commended Jewish clergymen who appear more interested in having the press do interpretative studies of such festive occasions as the "Festival of the Lights" than of glorifying themselves through frequent publication of their own activities. Other church publicity personnel agree with Deer about the need for increased interpretative reporting, but would stress other occasions and activities.

Viewpoints of lay and clerical church leaders on controversial socio-economic and political issues should be emphasized in articles, according to Dr. Clinton C. Cox. Pastor of Drexel Park Presbyterian Church, he is widely quoted not only by Chicago newspapers but also by periodicals throughout the world.

Bev Dean, editorial secretary of the Chicago Congregational Union, believes articles should reflect a congregation's activities as part of its denominational mission. Many of his releases about CCU and its 88-member churches

show Congregationalism at work in communities of greater Chicago.

The ways a church makes an impact on its community should be projected through journalism, declared Miss Marion Q. Wiegman, executive director of the Episcopal News Bureau. Miss Joan Kohn affirmed that national and state religious conferences and conventions should be covered and their significance explained increasingly. As publicity director of the Chicago office of the National Conference of Christians and Jews, her primary function is to interpret brotherhood week.

Papers should publish follow-through activities of one church or institution in order to show its growth and true vitality, in the opinion of Herb W. Hugo. Because Central Presbyterian Church for which he handles publicity became interracial in nature, many newspapers thought this unusual enough to write feature stories. No papers, however, since have shown the stresses and strains of the struggling congregation. The first feature stories served as sort of an editorial pat on the back, Hugo observed, but other articles now could help win the church some community moral and financial support.

Although desiring publication of more interpretative articles, church editorial personnel realistically realizes that church reporters are interested mostly in surface news events. So the majority of press releases are built around organizational meetings, personnel changes, building expansion, anniversaries, sermon titles, statements on public issues, and listing of worship programs for seasonal celebrations.

Miss Edith Wharton, editorial volunteer for First Congregational Church of Chicago, for example, is motivated to submit releases by holiday events, special programs, and the development of unusual clubs or organizations within the church. Special events dictate the nature of releases

written by Dr. Rolland W. Schloerb, pastor, about the diversified activities of Hyde Park Baptist Church.

Three clergymen whose sermon titles are listed periodically in Chicago newspapers are Dr. Cox, Dr. Harold Bosley, pastor of Evanston's First Methodist Church, and Dr. Preston Bradley, pastor of Peoples Church. Dr. Bradley prepares his own releases, but Mrs. Eleanor Wallace, editorial secretary at First Methodist, takes care of Dr. Bosley's announcements. Dr. Cox, who conceives arresting titles, sends church reporters a bare release listing the sermon theme.

The Rev. Kenneth Hildebrand, pastor of undenominational Central Church, prefers not to flood church editors with trivial items. He submits releases infrequently. One recent occasion was the loop church's 75th anniversary. Other occasions have been the scheduling of special speakers.

Sixteen of the study's 18 churches send releases to all four of Chicago's metropolitan dailies. One sends its releases to only one daily, and the other to none. All eight other institutions from the NCCJ to the Chicago Baptist Union send releases to all dailies.

Ten churches and five other religious institutions submit releases weekly, and the others send them infrequently. Church editors evidently prefer using items about widely-known churches which keep their names before readers. Church reporters expect and depend upon releases from the systematic church publicists.

All 26 church publicists prepare releases in general news style, which features a catchy lead sentence and interesting paragraphs which move along smoothly. None try to prepare individual releases which cater to the style of particular publications. All said church reporters of the metropolitan dailies rewrite released material, but editors of community newspapers usually only edit copy and trim items.

Within the church or other institution, most publicists obtain information by phoning key personnel or visiting meetings and activities. In First Methodist Church, every organization has a press chairman who periodically informs Mrs. Wallace of events. Each chairman undergoes a one-night instruction clinic, and also is given a press manual which was prepared by Dr. Roland E. Wolseley, professor of journalism at Syracuse University and author of many books and articles.

Most church publicists feel that denominational publications are cramped by space limitations, and can use only a few items from individual congregations. So they send accounts of unusual or rare activities, as production of a three-act play or organization of a teen age club.

Even though their churches have full-time, part-time or volunteer editorial secretaries, a few clergymen prefer to

do their own denominational articles. Unfortunately, ministers in six cases do a poorer, less systematic job in handling denominational releases, than their editorial assistants do for secular newspapers. Thus, a coordinated release system, handled entirely by a church publicist, seems more advisable than split assignments.

Nine of the 26 church publicists have read no books or articles about journalism. Lemuel Peterson, associate director for the central department of public relations of the NCCC's division of education, has written articles in the area of religious journalism.

Sixteen of the 26 church publicists have worked on a school or commercial publication. In illustration, N. F. Elliott of First Baptist Church, Evanston, has worked for the United Press and several newspapers. The Rev. Mr. Hildebrand has edited the College of Emporia's "College Life," which was printed in the offices of the *Emporia Gazette*. Mrs. Robert Jones, church secretary at the Chicago Temple, has been a society reporter for the *Urbana* (Ill.) *Courier*. Miss Wharton has worked on the Sterling (Ill.) Township high school newspaper.

Ten of the 26 have taken courses in journalism. Hugo has a bachelor of journalism degree from Northwestern University. The Rev. William Faulds, assistant pastor for Fourth Presbyterian Church, was a journalism major at Hanover College. Miss Weigman completed journalism courses at the University of Illinois. Peterson received a journalism degree from the University of Minnesota, and even taught in the field at the Junior College of Commerce of New Haven, Conn.

The majority of persons who handle church publicity are pastors, their secretaries or other administrative assistants. Few have editorial designations. Of these, three are called publicity director and two, editorial secretary.

Churches first should designate a person as publicity director and give him or her a title befitting the job. Even if a person has other functions, his title should include information about his journalism function. This will give him prestige and make him feel responsible. Moreover, a congregation needs to know to whom to submit news items.

Since 16 persons lack courses in religious journalism, a need for this type of training is indicated. Seminaries perhaps should set up as entrance requirement one general course in the field of news writing. Ministers and directors of religious education should have writing skills both for sermons and writing of press releases.

A church publicity program is much broader than writing of press releases, as Peterson indicated. But even the best churches have a long way to go in accomplishing the first public relations step of setting up an adequate press release program.

Mike Berger's Paper

THE STORY OF THE NEW YORK TIMES—1851-1951. By Meyer Berger. Simon & Schuster, New York. 589 pp. \$5.

by Louis M. Lyons

With the New York *Times* as the story and Meyer Berger as the writer, it may be assumed that a minimum circulation for *The Story of the New York Times* will be the one million readers who feel that greatest paper indispensable and all newspapermen with \$5 after taxes. There will be other readers, for this book becomes at once an important text in all schools and all libraries and a strategic volume in the history of American institutions. The inevitability of this is a little too bad. For it is, first of all, a great story greatly told, a book to be dipped into with pleasure, read with continued excitement and put aside only for meals and sleep—for it is, unhappily, too heavy to hold up in bed.

This is a reporter's story and it is the news that is told, and the drama of the great episodes of *Times* coverage of the stories that have long been journalistic legend because of herculean beats and superb and dedicated reporting.

All Americans who can read know that the New York *Times* is one of the most distinguished and conspicuous products of American culture and the greatest newspaper yet produced in the English language. This makes *The Story of the New York Times* one of the important books for Americans to read to understand the greatness of their own institutions. It also makes doing an adequate history in a readable volume an almost impossible task. Newspapermen at least will not regret that the assignment was given a reporter rather than a historian, and that the result is a superbly told, easy reading episodic account of a century's handling of the news by the paper that has served up more of it than any other and most often given its readers the first, the fullest, the finest account of the news that matters. The *Times* has specialized on the news that matters and so has made itself indispensable to one million buyers Sunday and one-half a million daily. This in itself is no measure of greatness. Circulation counted by the million has more often been achieved by any other measure than printing the news that counts. The *Times* achievement is that it has won its great success by winning the respect of readers who need to be reliably and fully informed.

Its full century is woven into the tapestry of American history, as the concurrent biography, *Raymond of the Times*, just out by another *Times* man, testifies by its solid texture. Within a couple of years the biography of Adolph

Ochs, who created the modern *Times*, was done by another able newspaperman. And an earlier, obscure biography had documented the career of Ochs' great managing editor, Carr Van Anda. Meyer Berger draws freely on the episodes of all these. But he has not undertaken the formidable task of the complete biographer, nor hesitated to scamp the immense detail that would have loaded down his writing had he felt responsible for the complete annals of the *Times* century. Had the biographies of Raymond and Ochs not been in the prior record, his task might have been differently conceived. Some will regret that these several books, all essential to a full appreciation of the *Times* and the men who have made it, were not patterned into a single great book, such as the three volumes of *The History of the London Times*. But one can't have everything, and that would have prevented the brisk, fast moving sweep of Berger's story.

The difference is significant of the notable distinction between the kinds of greatness of the *Times* and the only other newspaper one would mention in the same breath with it. The London *Times* was great because it was so involved with the British Empire and British imperialism as to be its finest exemplar. Its great concern had been with the policy making of its informed and powerful "leaders." But Ochs' *Times* has sought no Thunderer role. The news was its meat and drink. Indeed the scant treatment of its editorial pages and policy in Berger's book—if not the very choice of a reporter to write the book—is a fair reflection of the minor role of the editorial page in the *Times*. Ochs would even have preferred to have no editorial page, and both he and his successor have taken pains to protect their primary news function from any chance of being under the influence of a great editorial page. This negative editorial concept is a matter of regret to very many *Times* readers and a continuing issue with those who venture to criticize the *Times*. It is a policy which Arthur Hays Sulzberger defends as surely and convincingly as did his great father-in-law. It is of course inherently a difference between American and British character and attitudes that the run of the news—i.e. the demand for the facts—overshadows all else in America. One recalls Van Anda's constant repetition, "The reader is entitled to the facts." He meant all the facts, and in space rate days he paid bonuses for additional paragraphs of the fullest details, which most editors felt unessential.

So the *Times* has not, since Ochs began, hammered great issues with the force of the St. Louis *Post-Dispatch*. It has not crusaded. Possibly Ochs' attitude was in part a result of timing. He came to New York in the heyday of yellow journalism, when Hearst and Pulitzer were

making so much noise that, as Gerald Johnson says, Ochs' course was determined by his conviction that in the great metropolis there were enough people who wanted the news "but wished a quiet life." Two generations of Americans have been indebted to Ochs for that. And now that thirty has at long last been written to Hearst's career, it is worth remarking that Ochs' *Times* set in motion the chief and invaluable influence against the lurid vapid mode of newspapering with a new venture in responsible journalism. Of course the solid successful example of Ochs' *Times* has done more to develop responsible journalism in America than all the critics and reformers who have attacked the still too prevalent irresponsibility of vast areas of the press. It had to be successful to count. Success has been built on news coverage. Whatever his regrets for the lack of a great editorial page in the *Times*, none can doubt that the honest reason for it with Ochs, and now Sulzberger, has been the concern to insure the independence and objectivity of its news columns. And this primary object has been not only the *Times*' greatest success but its greatest contribution to American journalism and to Americans. Sulzberger's definition of the readers the *Times* writes for is perfectly simple—people who need to be informed. A very great function, and the one Berger's book celebrates with its informing story. Significantly, the one exciting episode in this episodic book which concerns the editorial page is the occasion when an editorial almost destroyed the *Times*. Or Ochs thought it did at the time. That was committed by the one editorial page editor Ochs ever gave really free rein, the great Charles Miller, from whom Ochs took over the *Times* in 1896. But the fateful editorial—in Miller's old age (1918)—that unloosed the foolish fury of those who read into it the absurd notion that the *Times* had turned appeaser at the very end of the war it had doughtily supported, was a lapse caused by the sin of editing by long distance telephone—the very thing that killed the *World*. This was a rare instance of it in the *Times*, that has lead, *Times*-wise, to such fantastic correction as the device of keeping an editor on all night whose sole function is to read editorial proofs against later news proofs to be sure that they jibe, right up to press time. This in itself suggests the dominance of the unpredictable news report over any editorial expression.

But this, most readers of Berger's book will quickly say, is all by the way. Check. So perhaps is a word of regret that Simeon Strunsky rates only one meaningless sentence and his distinguished "Topics of the *Times*" just one more.

The unique contribution that Louis Stark has made in pioneering the whole field of labor reporting is another untold story that Berger shouldn't have missed. The *Times* has just recognized Stark's distinguished reporting career by appointment to the editorial page. Less spectacular

than the science reporting achievement of William (Atomic) Laurence, which Berger tells with happy relish, Stark's work deserves a chapter in the expanding frontiers of American journalism. Largely through his work for the *Times*, labor today is news, although it still needs the powerful pacesetting of a few papers of the *Times*' standards to secure it the objective treatment given politics and science.

The subordination of the editorial page would seem almost to be certified by the list of 24 Pulitzer prizes to the *Times* since 1918 (listed only in the appendix) of which only one was for an editorial. So much for the score on that. Yet, to this reviewer at least, it would be unfair to leave it there, without acknowledging the very high order of *Times* editorials and the very highest order of the people who write them, from able Charles Merz right through. Many of them, absolved of their editorial anonymity, contribute superb interpretive work under their by-lines—the incomparable Anne O'Hare McCormick, Hanson Baldwin, Robert Duffus, Waldemar Kaempffert notably. With its characteristic restraint that has almost eschewed columnists—only Arthur Krock and Mrs. McCormick recognized as such—the *Times* has gradually moved into interpretive (background) reporting, to render the greatest reader service. The writing of James B. (Scotty) Reston, the greatest American reporter today, is the most conspicuous instance, but Hanson Baldwin's, Louis Stark's, now Joe Loftus' work on labor, and Benjamin Fine's in education are outstanding among many.

Closely related is the emergence of the *Sunday Times Magazine*, the *Book Section* and the whole *News of the Week* section, under the remarkable editorship of Lester Markel, who has pushed back the once rigid frontiers of the Ochsian definition of newspaper content, to bring in the opinion and views of writers which are themselves news. This is probably the largest factor in making the *Times* on Sunday necessary, despite its weight, to rising a million buyers. Markel has even overcome, for Sunday only, the *Times*' incomprehensible taboo of cartoons.

Withal, the strength of the *Times* is news and it is built on that. It has, without any close rival, the most complete coverage on everything. Its foreign staff is the largest and their dispatches the fullest. The Washington Bureau is almost as large as that of the wire services and makes the *Times* practically independent of their ubiquitous coverage. Its theater critic, Brooks Atkinson, has no peer. Its book editor, Francis Brown, has just published what is easily one of the finest biographies of 1951. Its beautifully cultivated acreage of sports pages is certainly one of the reasons many readers lug home the *Sunday Times*, and if the burden brings on sacroiliac pains they can contentedly lay up with the *Sunday Times* for a week's reading.

The reading actually is easier than it was. The *Times* has by no means enough reporters like Meyer Berger, or enough Berger stories in the paper, to make the news flow in swift ease. But it has gradually, even if grudgingly, yielded to the modern demand for shorter, clearer sentences, and, without admission, has somewhat restrained the complicated scholars of the copy desk from adding their hedging, qualifying clauses to every sentence of the reporters. The *Herald Tribune* is still easier to read, and the *Tribune's* type is more appealing. But the completeness of the *Times* is unbeatable and the vast supporting strength of its circulation and advertising flow from that and sustain all its costs. Somehow Ochs intuitively realized that at the beginning, so that the core of his emphasis was to build on the news.

More than most American institutions the *Times* has had a continuity of great leadership. The continuity from Ochs to Sulzberger was almost without parallel in newspapers, and no mention of the *Times'* great history should permit the overshadowing genius of Ochs to minimize the extraordinary achievement of modest Arthur Sulzberger in keeping Ochs' *Times* not only great but constantly developing to meet the new needs. Sulzberger in his turn will rate a first-class biography, as does George Jones, the doughty publisher who carried on after Raymond and fought the great fight that broke the Tweed Ring. This most heroic crusade of American journalism was the fight of a publisher who had to be sensitive to the box office reaction. Raymond, as much politician as journalist, would hardly have kept at it, and Ochs in the next era did not believe in crusades. Fortunate for New York and for the soundness of American public life that there was an interlude when George Jones of Vermont carried the whole load and could neither be had by money nor influence, nor he deterred by caution or social association with the first citizens of New York, be they Astor or Vanderbilt, who thought it bad for business and not really important to destroy the leeches who bled the American metropolis. George Jones belies the cliché that a publisher because of his association with the rich and powerful is not a safe spokesman for the causes of the people. A rare instance, George Jones, but a landmark.

Of course a history of a century's continuity is partially an illusion as in almost any institution. There was a lapse

after Jones died in 1891, when the *Times*, on precarious footing, was almost added to that long mortuary list of once great but now forgotten newspapers. Only the sudden emergence of an unknown publisher in Chattanooga, with almost no resources for entering on metropolitan journalism, unaccountably saved the tottering *Times* and gave it a rebirth. Yet the actual continuity is very strong in the *Times* story. Starting with Raymond, who had been the news manager of Horace Greeley's *Tribune*, the *Times* began as a paper emphasizing the news. That was a departure, following the day of the great editors who identified their papers with their causes. Raymond was a straight news man, who had begun as a star reporter of his day. The news side, central with Ochs, reached its height through the astounding genius of Carr Van Anda, the greatest managing editor America has bred. The Ochs policy and the *Times* resources gave him the fullest freedom to develop such news coverage as the world had not seen.

Much the most exciting part of Berger's book is the recital of the almost endless news exploits under Van Anda and the incredible range of knowledge and intuitive sense of impending developments that made Van Anda a legend during his lifetime and held his staff in awe. That this is a twice-told tale, for Van Anda has had an all too little known biography, makes it nonetheless a momentous adventure in journalism, and Berger is the man to tell it.

To mention only two colorful Van Anda episodes, America owed its early appreciation of Einstein's work and the glory of Tut-ank-amen to Van Anda's hobbies of science and archaeology, which made fascinating news of these inscrutable mysteries. His coverage of the Titanic shipwreck was only the foremost of a series of *Times* beats that ran through his lifetime of directing the *Times* news staff. Without a Van Anda, the *Times* today has the greatest staff in its history, and in Turner Catledge, the executive managing editor, a far more human staff leader than the icicle-veined Van Anda.

Like a good *Times* reporter, Berger keeps on top of his story right to press time. The last episode of exceptional *Times* coverage is on the firing of MacArthur—the story of which was reported in the last issue of this journal.

The book is beautifully printed and illustrated and indexed, and is in all ways a delight, like all Berger's stories.

Book Reviews

Book Editor's Biography

RAYMOND OF THE TIMES. By Francis Brown. W. W. Norton Co., N. Y. 344 pp. \$5.

This is a solid biography with a good chance of being the Pulitzer prize book in its field for this year. It is a fine thing for journalism that a book editor produces one of the finest books of the season. Francis Brown is a Dartmouth man. He's been a first-class news editor and is now editor of the New York *Times* Book Section. The publication of his book, coincident with the history of the New York *Times*, which Henry Raymond founded, both adds and subtracts from its interest. It will have more readers outside journalism, for Raymond was as much politician as newspaperman — eventually national chairman of the Republican National Committee and a member of Congress — and for a generation successor to his old employer, Horace Greeley, as junior partner in the political firm that had been Seward, Weed and Greeley. This relation of Raymond to the politics of his day quite justifies Francis Brown in making his biography as much a book of the political battles of the period as it is a book about the newspaper Raymond edited.

It is a quite different book from Berger's *Story of the New York Times*, which is nothing against it. Yet it is somewhat anachronistic to a generation steeped in the *Times'* non-political straight news tradition of the last 50 years to turn back to its beginnings under an editor not only up to his neck in politics at all times, but one whose chance to found a newspaper was directly due to the dissatisfaction of politicians Seward and Weed with Horace Greeley's *Tribune*. They had lost control of the disillusioned Greeley and needed a more dependable organ. Raymond's, the first chapter of the *Times*, was its last chapter as a political organ. This is not to deprecate Raymond. In his day newspapers were political organs. He went further than his contemporaries in making his newspaper a vehicle for straight news, uncolored by politics.

This was new, and no mean development. Raymond, a great reporter and

news manager, was nevertheless a lifelong influence in party politics, and it would never have occurred to him to make his paper other than a partisan political force.

Raymond, like his mentor Greeley, was a country boy who had conquered big city journalism at an age before today's youth are through their graduate school courses in journalism. He went through the University of Vermont and at twenty was a New York reporter, at twenty-one the *Tribune's* managing editor, and at thirty his own publisher starting the *Times*. His whole life was over at forty-nine. So he had packed the activities of this 344 page biography tight into twenty-nine years in New York.

He was a natural newspaperman and it is as idle to try to account for such as for a natural athlete. His training under Greeley was his first luck. Greeley picked most of the apt young reporters of the day and made them crack newspapermen by some process of alchemy and osmosis, for they saw little enough of Greeley, isolated in his editorial sanctum when he was not stumping the country for the multitudinous causes that made the *Tribune* an exciting index of the teeming utopianism of his day.

The preoccupation of the Great Editor with editorial crusades gave Raymond his chance to take hold of the news side and develop it. He became indispensable to Greeley and before long the *Tribune* ran as well or better when the editor was away. It was Raymond who gave it its news standards and kept it foremost among beats in the raucous competition of the Dana and Bennett rivalries. And it was to Raymond that Seward, then senior New York senator, and Weed, the Empire State political boss, turned when Greeley at last went irrevocably Mugwump on them and the *Tribune* was no longer to be counted on for the party clarion call at campaign time.

When Raymond started the *Times* he raided the *Tribune* staff of its news talent. "The little viper" Greeley was to call him thereafter. But his new *Times* soon took the lustre off the old *Tribune* and was

beating it on news, circulation and advertising, and of course was in the inside position with the dominant party as it passed from Whig to Republican. Raymond had been in politics since his school days, an assemblyman at twenty-eight, speaker of the New York Assembly at twenty-nine, and lieutenant governor at thirty-four.

So Brown's book becomes the biography of the political editor, close ally and journalistic supporter of Lincoln. The reader has a ringside seat at the issues that surrounded the Civil War, and sees the editorial impact and the news unfold hot off the presses from the war correspondent and the party councils. It becomes inevitably a political biography with a journalistic flavor. That seasons it vastly and makes it a dish to relish and an easy way, as biography always is, to comprehend the issues of the times.

This review suffers from the reviewer's prior reading of Berger's *Story of the Times*, and from the necessary journalistic confinement of my interest in it as a book. It seems to me that it classifies more under politics than journalism. Where Berger's story is of the newspaper exploits of Van Anda and the rest in covering the big news, Brown's story is of the political developments that made the news. The *Times* handling of the story is an undertone that runs through, neatly trying the chronicled events in a single format. Raymond the reporter, then editor, emerges to full stature as the man behind the scenes in politics, and the accent is on the politics more than the newspapering. Brown says that Raymond's life was one of continuing conflict of interest between journalism and politics. I think if Brown were not a newspaperman he would see that politics came out finally on top. Raymond is fully worth a study as politician, and his political career runs a curious full cycle. One of the comeouters in launching the radical new Republican Party of 1856, he ends resisting the post-war radicals who sought to destroy Andrew Johnson and vainly seeking to win them to the need for a truly national party.

Brown's book is worth a place in a newspaperman's shelf for its fine chapter on Civil War correspondents alone, and for its description of the New York draft riots of 1863. Raymond himself did some

war coverage, and became a staunch McClellan man when McClellan's relation to Lincoln's administration paralleled MacArthur's today to Truman's. But older heads, like Greeley's, made their war mistakes, and they were more egregious. Greeley was ready to call the war off after the humiliation of Bull Run, and later was to draw upon himself a famous letter of rebuke from Lincoln that probably did more to deflate the status of journalism with the American people even than Sherman's much cheered remark on the report of the death of two zealous correspondents, that he hoped they'd find news in hell for breakfast. Nothing like that happened to Raymond. In Copperhead New York the *Times* was a Union beacon. The Veterans Union Club band serenaded Raymond's house at the war's end, their tribute to one of the architects of victory. He was chairman of the Republican National Committee for the 1864 campaign. Two years later he was ousted from that post by the Radicals and further humiliated by the Senate's refusal to confirm his appointment as an ambassador.

Indeed Raymond's final political debacle probably served for a long generation as a horrible example to the newspapermen who came after him and served as a healthy deterrent to keep them and their papers to their journalistic last. The McCormicks and Hearsts of recent time have been the erratic exceptions. That may have been, unwittingly, the most lasting journalistic contribution of one of America's great editors.

A word of epilogue: It was Raymond's luck, as Greeley's before him, to have a partner in the business office to keep things going while the editor adventured in politics. Raymond's partner was George Jones, the man from Vermont. By Raymond's death Jones was, for those days, an old man when he had to take over both ends of the paper. Then was the *Times'* greatest political service performed. George Jones, smarting under the humiliation of his city's incubus — the obscenely blatant gouging of the Tweed Ring — turned loose his whole staff to get Tweed. Against the indifference of the citizens and the timid obstruction of the business leaders, he got him. George Jones is my man for a biography.

LML

Uncle Horace

HORACE GREELEY. By William Harlan Hale, Harper & Bros., N. Y. 379 pp. \$4.

This is not a great biography but it is a handy reference and anecdotal narrative on the great editor and belongs on a newspaperman's bookshelf. Greeley was an anachronism even in his day. He should have been a companion of Sam Adams to sound a tocsin and inspire Committees of Correspondence. Greeley welcomed all the new thoughts and movements of the yeasty years of the '40's when Utopias were growing like mushrooms in the still unhardened soil of the American society. He made his *Tribune* their forum. It was exciting creative journalism, as it would be today. But even in 1840 it was not enough to be an editor and Greeley's tragedy was that he lived into the period when only business men could own newspapers. So he lost his paper to the counting room men while he was off on the hustings in his final adventure — the first Mugwump candidate for President. From the start it was the publishing partner, genial Thomas McElrath, who made the *Tribune* pay by pioneering a weekly edition from the plates of the daily. The weekly, of national circulation, soon passed 100,000 and made the *Tribune* and Horace Greeley household names in America.

Greeley looked more like an editor, shaggy and inky, bespectacled, benign and bemused, than any editor has ever succeeded in looking since Greeley. He is also the most noteworthy illustration of the familiar contention that newspapermen make poor husbands. His home life was a tragic travesty on domesticity. Indeed, most of the journalists reviewed in this issue fail on the side of human relations. Van Anda appeared to his staff to have no human side. Scripps enjoyed scandalizing monogamists with his own account of his relations with women. Raymond's biographers prefer to soft pedal his private life. Greeley was all humanity and indentified himself with the causes of the people more than any other journalist. He won from them a faith and hope in the press such as had never been known in any other land and to which, despite betrayals and disappointments, many cling to this day.

SCRIPPS HIMSELF

DAMNED OLD CRANK, A Self Portrait of E. W. Scripps. Edited by Charles R. McCabe. Harper & Bros. N. Y., 259 pp. \$3.50.

This is a disappointing book which answers no questions about anything. It is a confused contradictory self-laudeation of an eccentric egotist who might have been in any business. It happened to be newspapering because of family connections. Scripps had a gift for making money and liked to brag about it. His money-making vehicle was the newspaper. That is about all you learn about newspapers from E. W. Scripps. He started the *Cleveland Press* but there is no clew in his book to what made it a great paper. Nor is there any clew to the genius of Roy Howard in the meaningless chapter on the man Scripps chose as his successor and claims to have discovered and developed. Scripps gives much advice to young newspapermen but cancels it all out with his philosophizing in the next chapter. He liked to hear himself talk and was convinced that he was the Great I AM. If journalism owes him anything it is for the legend that advertisers never could influence him. This legend has stood the Scripps Howard papers in good stead even if it owes its origin simply to the fact that he treated advertisers as sourly as he treated everybody else. He protests too much. His own strident pronouncements make it abundantly clear that it was envy of the rich and powerful that motivated his hostility to them. If this often put him on the same side as the underdog, that was purely coincidental. The best line in the book, and the most descriptive, is its title.

STATE DEPARTMENT JOB

MY MISSION IN ISRAEL. By James G. McDonald Simon & Schuster, N. Y. 303 pp. \$3.50.

As the easy way to get history is through biography, so the most interesting approach to the first chapter of the history of the new State of Israel is through the personal adventure of the amateur statesman who was America's first representative there. The reader sees the Israelis and the regime of old Ben-Gurion through sympathetic eyes for Mr. McDonald was

a friend of Israel before he was America's ambassador there. But he had earned a right to such partisanship as he shows, first by his long scholarship in international relations, next by his devoted career to rescuing the refugees of the scourge let loose by Hitler, and finally by his experience on the Anglo-American Palestine Inquiry. James McDonald should have rated as one of Truman's brilliant unpolitical choices for a strategic job in a crucial area. It is instructive to discover that to the professionals in the State Department he was just an outsider and they didn't intend to take him inside, even for a decent briefing. Possibly Mr. McDonald was somewhat free with his own views about the area of his great enthusiasm and special problem and might have listened more meekly. But by his own account, nobody had much of anything for him to listen to. Possibly he was a little too simon-pure for diplomacy, although his experience in the issues involved was large. But it is always instructive to see an institution through the eyes of another layman. James McDonald's story of working for the State Department is therefore instructive if not encouraging.

THE CRUEL SEA. By Nicholas Monsarrat. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 510 pp. \$4.

The longest battle of World War II was the Battle of the North Atlantic, which began with the sinking of the *Athenia* on September 3, 1939, and ended 30,000 lives, 3,000 sinkings and almost six years later when the surviving U-boats surfaced and sullenly surrendered after Germany gave up. It was fought to protect the British lifeline to America, its fighters were escort ships and submarines and its theater was 3,000 miles of treacherous ocean.

In *The Cruel Sea*, Nicholas Monsarrat has reported the battle in terms of two Royal Navy ships—the tiny corvette *Compass Rose* and the destroyer-size frigate *Saltash*—and the men who sailed, suffered and exulted with them. He has recorded their losses, their mistakes, their pursuits and their victories. In the process, perhaps necessarily, the ships and the sea take on a more realistic life than the men.

Mr. Monsarrat, an amateur sailor, rose to command both a corvette and a frigate in the Battle of the Atlantic. Although one may sometimes question his political

judgments and a tendency to dwell on garish details, this is a novel of great range and a sustained pitch of excitement.

—Robert S. Crandall

REWRITE MODEL

THE SEA AROUND US. By Rachel L. Carson. Oxford University Press, N. Y. 230 pp. \$3.50.

This is a book for the newspaperman or any other writer, as a model of good writing. People have discovered a fascinated interest in the sea and its mysteries from Rachel Carson's beautiful prose who had never had any curiosity about it. It is a rewrite job, of course, by an editor who had the research materials for it available to her as they were to a multitude of others who lacked her imagination and talent at writing. Very many newspapers have had the good judgment to run the book, or parts of it, as a serial, following the lead of the *New Yorker*, which has taught those newspapermen who are teachable the best to be learned about writing in America from its every week models of that art in its highest journalistic form. What Miss Carson has done with the sea, other rewrite men can do with other obscure but endlessly inviting themes, and a good way to begin is to read her book.

Letters

**Letter to the N. Y. Times
Sept. 10**

Conduct of Newsmen Questioned

To the Editor of the *New York Times*:

The indignation of America's working newspaper men at the imprisonment of their colleague, William N. Oatis, is completely understandable. Mr. Oatis is the victim of a crass frame-up and it is not likely that the relationship between the United States and Czechoslovakia will improve until he is released.

However, it may be questioned whether the expressions of indignation voiced by reporters interviewing Mr. Prochazka, the Czech Ambassador, were in the best traditions of American journalism. Reports of press interviews with Mr. Prochazka contain such phrases as "—a reporter shouted" and "—a reporter snapped."

American newspaper men have enjoyed a reputation for impartiality both in attitude during an interview and in the articles that they write. Some of them who have worked abroad have not admired the tendency of many reporters in other countries to take personal part in the controversies that they are called upon to report.

When Haile Selassie, Emperor of Ethiopia, appeared before the League of Nations to plead the cause of his country, Italian newspaper correspondents jeered and hooted at him from the press gallery. In the Parliaments of certain European countries the news men make their partisan attitudes known vociferously from the sections reserved for the press.

American journalism can learn much from the best journalism abroad, but it is not necessary to adopt this least desirable of foreign newspaper practices; the open participation of the reporter in the controversy about which he will write.

Skillful news writers will make their indignation plain in the manner in which they set forth the facts. The raised voice of anger, even if the excuse is as great as the unjust treatment of a colleague, belongs on the editorial page and not in the interview.

Reporter.

New York, Aug. 30, 1951.

Fills Void

Thanks for continuing my subscription to *Nieman Reports*. In recent months, my interest in the publication has increased, and, along with my \$2.00 subscription fee, I want to send along my best wishes for extended success.

Nieman Reports fills a void felt by newspapermen. I look forward to each issue.

ROLLY CHAREST,
Lynn (Mass.) *Daily Item*.

SCRAPBOOK —

Either, Or

On the day that General MacArthur came to Boston, the following notice appeared on the editorial blackboard of the *Atlantic Monthly* in the hand of Rosemary Hart, chief of the secretariat:

This office will close at one p.m. Wednesday for the convenience of those who wish to see, or to avoid seeing, General MacArthur.

Nieman Notes

1939

Frank S. Hopkins, after six years directing training in the State Department, has been assigned to the Army War College at Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, as State Department consultant. His duties include helping to plan the course of study, arranging lectures by outside authorities, helping with policy problems, selecting outside reading and answering questions on political issues. He reports that the Hopkinses are learning a lot about life on an army post and finding it a pleasant change from the tensions of Washington.

Wesley Fuller, who was the baby of the first group of Nieman Fellows, has a son entering Brown University this Fall. **Louis M. Lyons** of the same group has two grandchildren, five and two, and expects two more this Winter.

"How do you know you know?" is the title of a booklet by **Stephen E. Fitzgerald**, published this Summer by the Stephen E. Fitzgerald Associates, public relations consultants in New York.

1940

Weldon James, on military leave from his editorial page job on the *Louisville Courier-Journal*, became a major in the U. S. Marines by promotion in August. He is the public information officer of the Quantico Marine School.

1941

John H. Crider, editor of the *Boston Herald*, finds his most absorbing outside activity in conducting a television program weekly on the background of the news. He also participates weekly in a very active and popular program, called "Meet the Editors," conducted by **Erwin Canham**, editor of the *Christian Science Monitor*. He is the only Nieman Fellow whose name is indexed in the just published *History of the New York Times* by **Meyer Berger**. The *Times* has had four other Fellows in the ten years since Crider was appointed to a fellowship from the *Times'* Washington Bureau.

1942

Victor O. Jones has just returned on an Autumn vacation in Europe to his position as night editor of the *Boston Globe*,

responsible for the morning editions under Managing Editor Laurence L. Winship. This summer Jones lost a valued colleague and many Nieman Fellows an old friend in the death of **Charles A. Merrill**, executive city editor and assistant managing editor. This is a heavy loss in a great team that has served under Winship and Editor emeritus **James Morgan** to render responsible journalistic service to the New England community. Rare is the alma mater that can claim a greater affection by its alumni than the *Globe* under the generations of editorial direction by **James Morgan** and **Laurence Winship**. **Merrill** and **Winship** had been colleagues on the *Globe* for 40 years since they left Harvard College to come under the mellow inspiration of **James Morgan**, then as always the greatest newspaperman in New England. Jones has developed under **Winship**, who this year completes thirty years as a *Globe* editor. Practically anonymous to the public he serves, **Winship** is known among newspapermen nationally as one of the finest managing editors alive and valued even more for his great human qualities, which have uniquely weathered all the occupational hazards of executive editorship.

Kenneth Stewart, professor of journalism at New York University, and author of *News is What We Make It*, has completed a new book on Journalism to be published this Winter.

Edward M. Miller, assistant managing editor of the *Portland Oregonian*, became a father-in-law August 11th with the marriage of his daughter, **Patricia**, to **Edward Nils Rein**.

A post-mortem on the great Kansas floods with especial emphasis on the flood control issue was rounded up by **Robert Lasch** of the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* editorial page in the *Reporter* magazine for Sept. 4. In the same issue **Arthur Hepner** ('46) had a political article, "Back to Normal in Connecticut."

1943

Professor **Arthur Musgrave** of the University of Massachusetts spent the Summer at Boston University completing work for a master's degree in journalism.

Fred Warner Neal began a new assignment in September on the faculty of the University of Colorado, teaching in their international studies division. He spent much of last year on a Fulbright Fellowship in Eastern Europe. One of his courses will be on that area.

John Day on leave on a Fulbright Fellowship from the Washington Bureau of the *Louisville Courier-Journal* writes that he had seen a good part of Europe by the first of September and hopes to have seen all the western part by Christmas.

1945

Robert Bordner of the *Cleveland Press* was a vacation visitor at the Nieman Foundation, on his way to Maine. An intrepid sight-seer, **Bordner's** most adventurous pilgrimage during his Nieman year was one to Plymouth on Thanksgiving Day. Poking an investigative nose about the holiday-locked historical places of Plymouth, **Bordner** in his Sherlock Holmes ulster and waxed mustaches attracted the spy-conscious attention of the local constabulary, who took him along to the police station as a suspicious character.

A. B. (Bud) Guthrie finished a Summer's writing stint on his Montana ranch to return in September to resume teaching in his writing seminar at the University of Kentucky.

Colonel and Mrs. **Joseph Wilson Knighton** announce the marriage of their daughter, **Betty Jane**, to **David Edward Botter** on September eighteenth. **Botter**, for several years Washington correspondent of the *Dallas News*, is now on the staff of *Quick* magazine. The **Botters** spent a honeymoon on Cape Cod and are now at home at 225 Adams Street, Brooklyn.

On September 27th, **Houstoun Waring** observed his 25th anniversary as editor of the Littleton (Colo.) *Independent*. Long before the end of this quarter century, **Waring** had demonstrated that even a very small weekly paper can be a forum of state-wide and larger influence. Year after year he has won state awards for his editorial page. By close cooperation with the State University's journalism school he has stimulated local newspaper editors and journalism students to high standards. The State Department recently selected

his paper for a film to be used abroad as a demonstration of a good American small town newspaper. The New York *Times* has invited his views on the function of the small weekly. He was instrumental in bringing to the Summer session of the State University the Russian Institute from Columbia. Editing the weekly in Littleton must have looked like a small obscure job when Waring took it in 1926. Nobody so regards it now. Littleton, Colorado, is a familiar name and its *Independent* a newspaper of note because Houstoun Waring went to work there and stayed to make his work count.

1947

Paul L. Evans has moved to Knoxville, Tenn., as director of information for TVA. He had just directed the journalism work at Ohio Wesleyan.

Henry Hornsby, farm editor of the Lexington (Ky.) *Herald*, and Mrs. Hornsby announced the marriage of their daughter, Marcia, to Joseph Allen Owens, August 25th in Lexington.

1948

Lester Grant, former science writer of the New York *Herald Tribune*, entered Harvard Medical School in September, at age 38. Student Grant is simultaneously, by appointment of the Harvard Corporation, assistant to the dean of the Harvard Medical School.

Walter H. Waggoner of the Washington Bureau of the New York *Times* was one of the *Times* team at the San Francisco peace conference. Returning to Washington he covered the Big Three conferences on Germany. Other former Nieman Fellows covering the Japanese peace treaty conference at San Francisco were Peter Lisagor (1949) of the Washington Bureau of the Chicago *Daily News* and Donald Gonzales (1950) of the Washington staff of the United Press.

One of the most thorough and penetrating pieces on Greece in the period of American ECA influence was published in the *Reporter* for Sept. 18 by George Weller, an old hand as a correspondent in Greece, who now covers a wider area, based in Rome for the Chicago *Daily News*.

1949

In several articles in the New York *Sunday Times* this Summer, Tillman

Durbin has backgrounded developments in the murky region of Southeast Asia that he covers for the *Times*. His former colleague, Christopher Rand, left the Far East service of the New York *Herald Tribune* early in the Summer to free lance and to complete a long cherished book project. He had been for some years one of the few distinguished correspondents in Asia and in the past year has contributed several notable articles on China to the *New Yorker*. His last newspaper assignment was as war correspondent assigned to UN headquarters at Tokyo.

1950

A son, Robert Graham, was born August 27 to Mr. and Mrs. John Hulteng. Hulteng is an editorial writer on the Providence *Journal*; Mrs. Hulteng, former Rhode Island State Women's Golf champion. The stork, on their announcement card, brought the baby in a golf bag.

1951

After a Summer in the Paris bureau of the New York *Times*, Dana Adams

Schmidt was reassigned to cover Israel starting October 1.

Malcolm Bauer returned to the Portland *Oregonian* to a new assignment on the editorial page staff. He was city editor before his Nieman Fellowship appointment.

Hoke Norris, after a writing Summer at the Breadloaf Writers Conference in Middlebury, Vermont, rejoined the staff of the Winston-Salem *News* to start writing editorials. He had always been on the news side.

1952

Two of the first Associate Nieman Fellows from the British dominions arrived in Cambridge on successive September days. Edmond W. Tipping, chief of staff on the Melbourne *Herald*, had brought his family by a seven weeks trip on a Swedish freighter, via Montreal.

H. J. E. Kane, chief reporter on the Christchurch *Press*, New Zealand, came by plane in four days from New Zealand. Both chief of staff and chief reporter correspond to city editor.

SCRAPBOOK

The Reader's Obligation

by Stephen E. Fitzgerald

Despite the great increase in the competition for men's minds, despite the breakdowns which can and do occur in the communications transmission belt, despite the fact that communications tools can be used for bad as well as for good, despite the flood of information and pseudo-information around us—despite these problems, the picture is brighter than we sometimes realize.

The citizen must, of course, struggle to get at the truth. But he is getting today more information in every twenty-four hours than he would have received in a week at the turn of the century. So long as we have the boon of a free press and the rights of free speech, we can at least make an earnest effort to separate the chaff from the wheat.

Oliver Wendell Holmes put it this way: "The best test of an idea is its ability to win acceptance in the market place of public opinion."

Thus the important need is to do what we can, collectively and individually, to

see that this market place of public opinion is preserved. This means, for one thing, nothing less than old-fashioned, vigorous opposition to censorship, to the suppression of opinion—even if we don't happen to like the opinion being suppressed—and a firm conviction that Holmes was right. Over the long run, as the opinion polls show, the public as a whole seems to have a singular ability to choose wisely among the many opinions offered.

We must recognize also that a great deal of the responsibility for our information rests with us. It is up to us to recognize the forces that are at work on our opinions.

We must recognize the basic obligation to be tough-minded, to examine the information we are getting from many different viewpoints—as to the source, the way we got the information, and the motives of the people who passed it on to us.

Above all, we have to recognize our own personal obligations to take an active

rather than a passive part in the formation of our own opinions and ideas. This calls for effort, and an insistence on at least exposing ourselves to ideas.

I am reminded here of an amusing comment on this score attributed to the Russian Vishinsky. He had just met for the first time a young Englishman of royal blood and considerable political importance. Asked what he thought of the young man, Vishinsky said: "Very pleas-

ant indeed. But he reminds me of the kind of man who reads only one newspaper a day."

And that is my only moral for the evening: people who read only one newspaper a day may find themselves in trouble.

This is from an address by Mr. Fitzgerald, a Nieman Fellow of 1940, now in public relations, to the New York State Society of Certified Public Accountants.

Times Talk, August, 1951

Ochs Policy on Libel

In thirty-five years of investigating *Times* libel suits the thing that has most impressed me is how often the men on the third floor have days off. Whenever a libel suit is started, or a complaint about a news item is handed to me for follow-up, I go looking for the reporter. Nine times out of ten I am told, "Oh, this is his day off." One of our editors always greeted me with, "I was off that day," before he even knew what I was going to ask—or tell—him.

Reporters don't like their records spoiled with libel suits, or threats of them. I invariably find them anxious to clear themselves and that makes my work easier.

Libel is any statement that exposes a person to contempt by others, or ridicules or tends to degrade him. A news item may, on its face, seem libelous but if it is a report of a judicial or legislative proceeding, or an official and public hearing, the newspaper may defend itself on the ground that such reports are protected by statute. Justification or truth may also be a defense. It is no defense, though, to say, "it is alleged," or that someone said it first. Likewise, statements by police, district attorneys or other public officials are printed at our own risk.

Most libel suits against the *Times* never come to trial. Frequently, the aggrieved complainant agrees to withdraw his complaint when informed that the alleged libel is based on a report of an official and public hearing, or a judicial proceeding, reports of which are privileged.

When a correction is demanded, a little finesse is employed in urging the uselessness of a correction without rerunning the original news item. The complainant

usually has a change of heart when he realizes that the original charge will be repeated with the correction.

Libel suits against newspapers have fallen off in recent years. In the case of the *Times* this may be due to the increased space given to war and international news and the consequent reduction in the number of items about magistrate court actions which are a great potential source of complaint.

One libel suit against the *Times* that eventually got to a jury was based on a story which reversed the names of two women involved in a shoplifting case—where one woman was arrested and the other went to the police station to arrange to bail her out. The *Times* tried to settle for a sum—less than four figures—but the plaintiff's attorney held out for a five-figure settlement. The jury verdict awarded the plaintiff less than half of what the *Times* had offered.

Few judgments have been rendered against the *Times*, which is surprising when you consider the vast amount of information printed each day. In a majority of suits which the *Times* lost, the stories originated in news services. When a *Times* staff member covers a story it is safe to say that all dangerous statements are questioned and checked for accuracy. Most new staff members are either experienced reporters or, if just out of journalism school, have studied libel law. Reporters turning to the morgue for background material know that if a news item has been previously questioned, a printed warning to check further will be attached to it.

Volumes have been written on what is

libelous. As in most other court actions the facts usually must be contested before a jury. Years ago newspapers gladly paid money to discharge a libel suit. When Mr. Ochs took over the *Times* he brought into this field a new concept of meeting libel suits. He refused to pay anything. He held that neither the plaintiff nor the *Times* could fairly assess the real value of the damage to the plaintiff and, therefore, a jury would have to decide. This attitude eventually dissuaded lawyers from taking libel suits on a contingency basis. Other newspapers followed the Ochs policy.

When a libel suit is brought against the *Times* it is customary to investigate the plaintiff's life to discover where his past might yield something useful in cross examination that will show the jury he isn't as lily white as he would have them believe. A minister who had been pastor at several Midwest churches once sued us. We sent a reporter to Chicago to look into his record. En route by trolley to a church where the minister had been pastor, the reporter found himself the only passenger on the car. The motorman struck up a conversation which revealed that he had been a vestryman at the church for which the reporter was heading, and told of the pastor's not too creditable sojourn there. Additional leads from the motorman helped kill the pastor's desire to push his suit when it was called for trial. He begged to be allowed to withdraw the action.

Often, very small leads reap rich harvests of information. One of the *Times* attorneys read in his alumni news bulletin an item about a man whose name was the same as that of a man suing the *Times*. Up to that time the plaintiff's record seemed fairly good. The attorney sped to New Haven, examined a ream of clippings in the alumni news file and concluded that the alumnus and the plaintiff were one and the same person. He had the peculiar addiction, it turned out, of clipping newspaper items about himself—favorable or derogatory—and sending them to his alumni bulletin. He had had a stormy career here and abroad. The *Times* got court records of a few of the escapades recorded in the alumni bulletin and included them in its court answer. The plaintiff's lawyer asked the *Times* to discontinue the action.

Sometimes, material printed in the *Times* raises the question of copyright. The author of a poem printed in the Queries and Answers section of the Book Review once sued the *Times*. He had forgotten that he had printed the poem as a greeting card some ten years prior to his claimed copyright date. This constituted a dedication to the public and he had lost his right to claim a copyright at the later date.

Editorials also may be subject to libel. One pending now involves a news item and an editorial comment of the following day. Both are set out in the plaintiff's complaint. The suit hasn't yet come to trial.

A Topics of the *Times* item once cost us a six cent (or nominal) verdict. The item charged that if a teacher had read a certain book he would not have shown his ignorance of a certain historical situation. It is dangerous to accuse a professional man of being ignorant in his profession. In this case, though, the teacher didn't stand up very well under our examination of his historical knowledge. The jury decided that the *Times* had libeled him, but had not damaged his reputation.

Libel doesn't usually turn up in advertisements but the *Times* has had a few—for example, the case of Sarah Tow. Macy's inserted an ad requesting Sarah Tow to meet someone at their lingerie counter where they could purchase some lovely things. Macy's claimed to have made up the name but a genuine Sarah Tow in the lingerie business in midtown Manhattan sued. Eventually the complaint was dismissed.

Again, a gentleman placed a Public Notice ad that he would not be responsible for his wife's debts as she had left his bed and board. The wife sued the *Times*, claiming the ad libeled her and affected her credit. The *Times* began an international investigation to discover how much the glamorous lady had been damaged. We started with her birth certificate in England, found she had lived in France,

Egypt, New York and other places. A lot of people, it turned out, were willing to testify against her. She had been married twice, but reports from Egypt indicated that her divorce from his first husband was not legal. The matter hasn't reached the trial stage yet but if it does, and she

takes the stand, she may wish she had searched her memory before bringing suit.

After thirty-five years on the defending end of libel suits my advice to prospective plaintiffs is—don't bring your linen suit to court unless it's completely spotless.

—George Norris.

Cervi's Rocky Mountain Journal, Sept. 20, 1951

A Declaration of Purpose

Brick by brick we've been putting the foundation of this new kind of newspaper together.

This week, with the aid of loyal subscribers and devoted advertisers, we have arrived at our second anniversary.

This is really not a new kind of newspaper in the true sense of that word. This is rather a return to neglected virtues that are as old as civilization. We strive to find and report the truth.

We're in business to produce and sell news. We try to run a clean, attractive, healthy and thriving stall.

"If you don't see what you want, ask for it."

Again, I say, we've made mistakes in the past. We're going to make them inevitably in the future. We don't do it on purpose and we rectify errors when it's humanly possible.

Number I aim of the *Journal* is NOT to make a lot of money. Money is a wonderful institution and we're not against it. We want as much of it as we can acquire consistent with social and economic justice as it is—not in the light of private coziness.

Some of our best friends and admirers are very rich and influential men and women. They don't agree with us very often. But they read the paper avidly. In their heart of hearts they suspect we are calling the turn with painful accuracy.

Some of our most constant readers are ordinary people doing highly essential and useful work in mundane jobs.

These include our friendly mailman, the cigar stand keeper in the Symes building, the dispatcher at a Denver trucking firm, the night manager of a downtown hotel, the owner of a barber shop and the assistant cashier of a bank not on 17th street.

The *Journal* is against special privilege at all levels—and we don't seek any for ourselves. Sometimes it is thrust upon us and this is embarrassing.

We believe in and respect true conservatism—based on enduring human values.

However, the *Journal* is drawn to a more exciting role—equally necessary to promote the common good.

The *Journal* strives to be adventurous with prudence, courageous with a purpose and generous without improvidence.

We have little patience or tolerance for the town's sacred cows, stuffed shirts, snobs, drones, guys who married dough and position without love, and guys who are planning to do same.

But beyond that are the countless wonderful people whom we love. To them this paper is dedicated.

Eugene Cervi, former *Denver Post* newspaperman, is in the second year of his provocative hard-hitting weekly, which he describes on the masthead as "a relatively independent weekly newspaper intended to merit the attention and respect of mature adults interested in significant news." Published in Denver, it has regional circulation and sells for \$12 a year.

Saturday Night, August 28, 1951

Hearst's Influence on Canada

by R. A. Farquharson

Not a single Canadian editorial tear marked the death of William Randolph Hearst, yet no other man had so profound an effect on Canadian newspapers. Few other men so influenced the Canadian way of life as the unwept founder of the Hearst publishing Empire.

Hearst's basic contribution to newspapers was the substitution of hard-boiled business thinking for the old doctrine of editorial responsibility. His goal was to sell more papers; nothing stopped him, not even involving his country in a war with Spain in a jingoistic battle to excite readership.

The comic-strip age in which we live, where popularity of the comic-page is more important in governing size of a newspaper's readership than soundness of its reporting, is largely the outgrowth of Hearst's agile brain. He was involved in a fight with Pulitzer for possession of *The Yellow Kid*, first of the comics, thus giving the name "yellow" to the type of journalism he so successfully practised all his long life.

In the years following *The Yellow Kid*, Hearst developed more comics than all his competitors and his strips now dominate the comic pages across Canada. It is a reasonably safe assertion that Canadians daily spend more time reading this output of the Hearst factories than they spend on any other type of reading. And as the comic strips no longer pay much attention to humor but turn their specialized abilities to the whole field of sex, crime, politics and even international affairs, Hearst has played a major role in the Canadian educational system. For a generation the Hearst influence has been noticeable in the popular slang of the day, the "English" of the younger set.

Hearst was the first publisher to demand what he wanted regardless of cost and the first to pay a newspaper writer more money than was paid to the President of the United States. Hearst stars now rank

with movie people in size of income tax.

Hearst methods have called for lavish expenditures which is perhaps one reason why newspapers in small, non-competitive cities have escaped the Hearst influence to a greater extent than larger papers in keenly competitive centres.

Hearst led in front paging sex, in creating such terms as "love nest," in bringing to full flower the type of pictured femininity photographers label "cheesecake," in getting circulation flavor out of crime and scandal. And as newsprint is the major cost in producing a newspaper, there was not room for a continuous daily presentation of serious news, which Hearst felt, had only a minimum readership anyway. Hearst's methods have always been decried, but even in Canada the Hearst influence can be seen in the dwindling of serious news whenever a keen circulation battle develops between rival papers. Canada's morning papers have escaped the Hearst influence to a greater extent than the evenings. Perhaps the fact that in no Canadian city now is there morning competition has been a factor in this escape.

Hearst was a crusader—for circulation—and his crusades in his early red hot years invariably were successful in accomplishing just that. His exposés provided big red headlines; gave the opportunity to tell about hometown vice; provided the excuse for running the life stories of innumerable prostitutes.

No paper in Canada has ever followed the pattern in the Hearst manner, but from time to time there has been just enough of what might be termed the headline exposé to make serious readers realize that the Hearst influence did not stop at the border.

Hearst has been one of the reasons why many editors do not like talking about the "freedom" of the press. To his school "freedom" meant the licence to depart from the rule of law governing other business enterprise. It meant the shame-

less invasion of personal privacy, slanderous attacks on individuals whether in public or private life. The Hearst methods undoubtedly kept many good men out of public service and led to the unthinking use of that snide phrase "politics is a dirty business."

Hearst shook the stuffiness out of newspapers as he found them and for this we will give him credit. By his willingness to pay for what he wanted he introduced a greater professional competence into the business. The newspapers of today are livelier, better written, far better illustrated and Hearst undoubtedly started this trend.

Hearst achieved the distinction of having his papers barred from Canada during the first world war. In 1916 it became an offense for which a reader could be sent to jail for five years or fined \$5,000 to have a copy of a Hearst paper in Canada. The British Government at the same time banned the mails and cables to Hearst reporters as Hearst gloried in ugly stories about the British. As the *Winnipeg Free Press* remarks, "it takes more than skill in journalism to make one forget an offense of this magnitude. Hearst's criticism of the British Empire rivalled in industry though not in imaginative malevolence the drum-beat of hate kept up through the years by the *Chicago Tribune*."

One of the encouraging facts about newspapers is the way cycles change and there are indications that new influences are at work in the news rooms. After fifty years the Hearst formula is growing wearisome and editors themselves are tiring of "leg art" and "pretty blonde" criminals. The American Society of Newspaper Editors and the Canadian Managing Editors' Conference are focussing discussion on ways to make important news interesting in an effort to be commercially successful and still fulfil the responsibility that is definitely theirs.

Berkshire Eagle
March 31, 1951

Press Rates Censure For Aiding Gambling While Deploing It

by Roger B. Linscott

The often-heard complaint that the press is willing to criticize almost everything except itself takes on an element of validity amid the current hue and cry over gambling in Massachusetts. Endless columns of news and editorial space have been devoted to Henry Long's gambling taxes, to the Watch and Ward Society's righteous revelations, and to the Kefauver exposures that touched the whole thing off. But there has been little or no mention of the fact that a majority of newspapers in the state contribute consciously and materially to gambling profits.

Their contribution takes two principal forms: The printing of daily figures on the U. S. Treasury balance, and publication of advance information (usually with experts' selections) from out-of-town race tracks. Treasury figures are for the tens of thousands who play the numbers pools; track selections are for horse players who patronize illegal off-track bookmakers. In Boston, every paper but the *Christian Science Monitor* and the *Herald* carries out-of-state racing dope and, until very recently, the same papers all carried the treasury balance too. The *Traveler* and the *Globe* discontinued the latter item last week when the Kefauver TV show began breaking all-time audience records.

The practice of printing treasury balances, it should be added, is by no means confined to the big bad city. The same information is published in most smaller dailies throughout the state including—to cite two examples close to home—the North Adams *Transcript* and the Springfield *Union*. In a majority of cases the figures are obligingly furnished by the

Associated Press, which puts them on its wire every morning.

Occasionally a newspaper editor, if hard-pressed for an explanation, will maintain that the U. S. Treasury balance is of legitimate news interest as a financial item. This whimsical argument is easily demolished by the fact that the *Wall Street Journal*, America's most comprehensive financial newspaper, doesn't publish the daily balance and, to the best knowledge of its editors, never has. Actually the figure is of no interest whatsoever to anyone who doesn't play one of the dozen-odd Massachusetts lotteries that are currently using it as the basis of their daily pay-offs.

Similarly, it is sometimes argued that advance information on horse races has a legitimate place on the sports pages. Maybe it has when the horses are running near enough to home so that the newspaper reader can get to the track to place his bets. But even a superman would have a tough time getting from Massachusetts to Oaklawn Park, Arkansas, or Gulfstream Park, Florida, in time to place his \$2 on any of the selections currently being recommended by the Boston papers. Like the rest of the Massachusetts horse players, he'd end up by entrusting his money to an off-track bookie.

It can be argued reasonably enough that off-track booking wouldn't be crippled if newspapers stopped carrying advance information on race-track entries and probable winners, since horse players would still be able to buy racing forms at the newsstands. But the fact remains that a blackout on this type of news would shut off the most widely used source of off-track betting information—and, perhaps more important, would make a lot of editorials on the evil of gambling sound a good deal less hypocritical.

It can also be argued that censoring the treasury balance would be of little value since pool operators can and do use other figures on which to base their pay-offs. True, treasury balances aren't the only daily figures that lend themselves readily

to the gambling industry. The "jumbo pool" in North Adams used to pay on the basis of total sales recorded at the Boston Stock Exchange each day. The Boston *Post* (which still carries the daily treasury balance) ran a story yesterday describing a huge Massachusetts number pool based on pari-mutuel pay-off figures (which the *Post* also carries). But from the point of view of the professional gambler, the treasury balance has at least two advantages: It is available each day in time for the evening papers; and it is fix-proof enough to be trusted by even the most suspicious bettors.

Why, if the press is reluctant to cut off its own contributions to gambling, haven't public officials raised a more audible voice in protest against these practices? One possible answer was furnished the other day by a Boston lawyer who served with distinction in the attorney general's office for some years and has as good a claim to the "racket buster" title as anyone in Massachusetts. He told an *Eagle* reporter that, in his opinion, the newspapers "could put a tremendous crimp in the gambling business" by joining in a policy of intelligent self-regulation—but he was emphatic in stating that his name must not be used in any story on the subject. He didn't mind tangling with racketeers, he explained, but he had no intention of jeopardizing his public relations by needling a large segment of the Massachusetts press.

Six years ago the late Robert T. Bushnell, then a crusading state attorney general, did do some vigorous needling and even went so far as to talk about indicting several papers on grounds of conspiracy. The threat came to nought, partly because any "conspiracy" involved is between publishers and their circulation departments rather than between newspapers and the gamblers. For all practical purposes, there are no legal restraints on newspaper practices that aid and abet bookies and pool operators. The cure is self-regulation—and it might be a nice by-product of the Kefauver hearings if such a housecleaning came to pass.