

NIEMAN REPORTS

VOL. XLII, No. 3, AUTUMN 1988



GARRY TRUDEAU
faces news executives and
talks about *his* comic strip and
their prerogative to delete.

CONRAD BLACK lambastes the missionary zeal of journalists
and appraises "the concerned, informed,
responsible publishers."

RICHARD CLURMAN makes use of the comic strip word
"POW!!!" to describe stories that have
the impact of a right to the jaw.

ATHELIA KNIGHT extols a vaudevillian who flung open doors
for black show people.

MICHELE McDONALD photographs scenes from Israel.

JOHN STROHMEYER examines Alaskan newspapers and its
history of "high hopes, false starts, and hardscrabble success."

FLETCHER MARTIN reminisces on the way it was
in his early days as a reporter.

South Africa Media Conference on Controlling the News.

Chilean Journalist Wins Lyons Award

BOOKS

REVIEWS by: KEVIN BAINE, MARGARET ENGEL, FRED WARNER NEAL,
JERROLD SCHECTER, LESTER SLOAN, and WALLACE TURNER

To Have and To Hold

Browsers in today's bookstores will discover a variety of titles that begin with the same words — How To. The subjects range from *How To Make Your Own Will*, to *How To Talk to Teenagers*, *How to Become a Millionaire*, to *How to Build Your Own House*, and so on.

Self-help books are nothing new. Some have become classics — Ovid's *Ars Amatoria*, Machiavelli's *The Prince*, and Izaak Walton's *The Compleat Angler*, to name a few.

The part of human nature that is basically insecure guarantees the popularity of such volumes although taken out of context, some lose their relevance.

The Victorians, in their earnest pursuit of perfect deportment (or the semblance thereof) created a code of behavior so finely tuned as to be inaudible to the uninitiated ear. Training in awareness of these niceties began early on. Monroe's New Series, *The Fourth Reader*, published in 1896, includes on page 10 a special section headed "Holding the Book for Reading." Instructions are exquisitely wrought.

Hold the book fully open in the left hand with three fingers beneath it, the thumb and the little finger above, to keep the leaf down.

Advance the elbow a few inches, and raise the forearm from thirty or forty degrees, so as to secure perfect vision without bending the neck or body. Incline the plane of the book so as not to hide the face.



Twentieth century readers will not regard these directions seriously. Content now takes precedence over behavior. The pages that follow contain:

— Garry Trudeau's comments on the public's response to editorial cartoons, the politics of newspaper layout, and the liability of the artist's pen.

— Conrad Black, a veteran media observer, writes a provocative analysis of the journalistic function.

— John Strohmeier outlines the history of the press in Alaska. He concludes that despite a "tyrannical climate and capricious economy," publications in the 49th state already have attained a stature and an ethos that newspapers in the lower 48 states might envy and emulate.

— Athelia Knight, after extensive

research on the development of the black vaudeville circuit in this country, brings luster with her article to this little known facet of Americana.

— Fletcher Martin recalls his early newspaper days, when he was one of the few black reporters on a metropolitan daily, and how he was instructed to use "precise, moving language."

— Excerpts from Richard Clurman's newest book, *Beyond Malice*, include some of the "attention-getting stories" produced in a twelve-month period. The author also shows how decisions are made in the news media and how the "hypertension of the 1980's between the press, the public, and the government" was "dangerous to democratic health."

— A report of a media conference in London sponsored by the Association of British Editors, the African American Institute, and the Nieman Foundation. Titled "Controlling the News," it centered on the current situation in South Africa.

— In addition, NR's contents include the customary book reviews and news about Nieman Fellows, at home and abroad.

* * *

No matter how a person's body language expresses itself and no matter in what posture or style NR is held, our hope is that its readers will gain substance and stimulation from its pages and their modest part in the larger journalistic field.

— T.B.K.L.

NIEMAN REPORTS

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Publisher
HOWARD SIMONS

Editor
TENNEY BARBARA K. LEHMAN

Consulting Editor
FAY LEVIERO

Editorial Assistant
ELIZABETH TIBBITTS

Business Manager
KETTEE J. BOLING

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The Views of a Cartoonist

Garry Trudeau

A comic strip artist defends satire — it's supposed to be unbalanced, unfair.

Garry Trudeau gave this keynote address at the American Newspaper Publishers Association this past Spring in Honolulu, Hawaii. He was introduced by John McMeel, president of the Universal Press Syndicate which syndicates Mr. Trudeau's strip.



It is very disorienting for me to see John McMeel standing here today in his brand new publisher's fedora. Eighteen years ago, when "Doonesbury" was first being introduced on the market, it seemed to both of us that it was the publishing class that stood between us and the realization of our dreams. Whenever a newspaper refused to buy the strip — or whenever the strip was canceled by a paper which *had* bought it — word always filtered back that it was not the editors but the publishers — the stuffy, staid, out-of-touch publishers — who had been underwhelmed by the feature.

After a few months of this, I concluded that we had an insurmountable generational problem, and began to consider other lines of work. But McMeel, it turned out, had a game plan.

He revealed it to me the same night we'd received word that a well-known publisher had just banished "Doonesbury" from all four of his family-owned newspapers. The 34-year-old-McMeel looked at his 22-year-old discovery over the rim of his martini glass, smiled, and confided, "Don't worry. Sooner or later, these guys die."

Well, damned if he wasn't right. Two years later, the beloved patriarch passed on, leaving the paper to his rash and dissolute son, whose first official act, naturally, was to buy "Doonesbury." And in the years that followed, a happy pattern emerged. Time and again, a previously impenetrable newspaper would open up to us following the demise of its crusty old publisher, seemingly before his or her corpse had even reached room temperature. All across the country, publishers who had vowed that "Doonesbury" would appear in their papers over their dead bodies were getting their wish.

McMeel was clearly onto something — a brilliant actuarial marketing strategy. Our client list floated upward on the tears of widows and children. We begin to look forward to inquiries from publishers whose names ended in "Jr."

Of course, all of this was back in the days before the dominance of newspaper chains. In the years that

followed, McMeel's strategy lost much of its potency as the media scene became permanently altered by acquisition mania. Hundreds of newspapers were transformed from family heirlooms into corporate divisions, and there began to emerge a new breed of publisher — savvier, more progressive, and less given to heart attacks on the golf course.

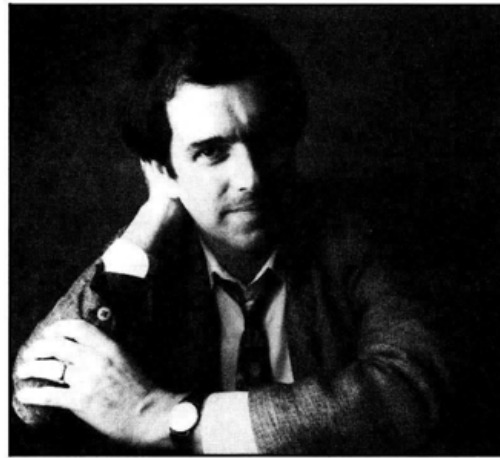
By then, of course, McMeel had no need to adjust. After 15 years of attending funerals, one day John McMeel woke up to find himself atop a \$50 million family-owned empire. That day he looked in the mirror, saw, much to his horror, an aging syndicate czar peering back, and wondered what was left to do in life. The next day he went out and bought a newspaper. What followed bears relating.

The first thing John McMeel the publisher did was call up John McMeel the syndicate head and order "Doonesbury," that sensational feature that had only been available to his paper for two decades. McMeel the syndicate head replied he'd be happy to send along a rate card, but warned McMeel the publisher that should he elect to purchase the strip, he would be obligated to run it at 44 picas.

McMeel the publisher hit the roof. No one, he shouted, was going to tell him how to run his newspaper. Harsh words were exchanged, feelings were hurt, and a close and valued relationship was suddenly thrust into jeopardy.

That night in the McMeel household, only McMeel the pushy syn-

The Artist Surrounded by a Passel of Friends



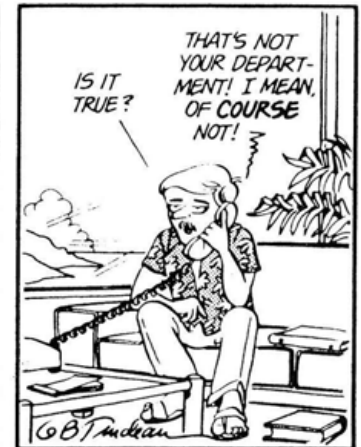
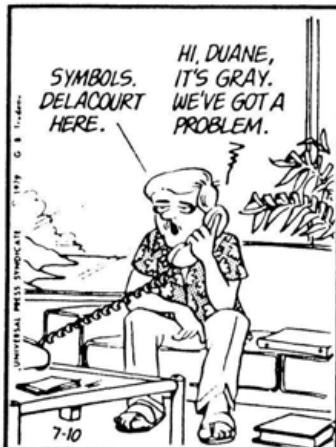
G.B. Trudeau Photo by William Coupon



"It's not as if this is the only thing we've run on Reagan. And any voters who might be influenced by something they read on the comic page probably shouldn't be voting."

Lawrence Beaupre, Rochester Times-Union

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"Asked if he planned legal action against newspapers running the cartoon, Brown said, 'Well, the First Amendment allows libel by the press.'" San Francisco Chronicle

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dicade head showed up for dinner. McMeel the deeply-wronged publisher sat by himself out by the kidney-shaped pool, looking out over the twinkling Kansas City skyline and wondering how it had come to pass that the neat, symmetrical SAU [Standard Advertising Unit] comics format of his California newspaper could be so easily disrupted by a cartoonist in faraway New York. Therein lies another tale, and to the cartoonist and his peers, one of consequence.

For many years, cartoonists had been concerned by the slow but steady shrinkage of newspaper comics. In an era when newspapers faced their gravest threat from television and other visual media, their managers perversely persisted in reducing in size the one area of genuine pictorial interest contained in their pages. Editors seemed oblivious to the fact that visual impact — the simple pleasure of looking at the pictures — was greatly diminished with each reduction in size.

Comics Council meetings at which these concerns were debated invariably ended with both newspaper and syndicate representatives telling cartoonists that larger comics meant fewer comics. Cartoonists were admonished to accept the new reductions or perish.

The net effect on both artist and art form was devastating. The very things that made comics so appealing in the first place — the detail of the art, the complicated, engrossing story lines — were gradually, permanently compromised. Great artists, such as Al Capp and Milt Caniff, began to feel the pressure to change the space ratios between dialogue and artwork. Strips became greatly simplified — some were reduced to talking heads.

More and more readers, particularly older ones, began to voice complaints that they could no longer read the comics. "Doonesbury" in particular, perhaps because of the amount of text it contained,

generated a great deal of mail from readers who protested it had become illegible.

When the SAU standards went into effect a few years ago, what had been a variable problem then became a uniform one. In spite of the pleasing symmetry of the two-column page, the individual strips never looked worse. The new standardization effectively dramatized the need for some standards of our own.

The timing of our new policy seemed fortuitous since "Doonesbury" was out of circulation and would require no disruption of existing page formats should editors decide the new stipulation wasn't worth the trouble. But when the minimum size was announced, a number of editors and publishers immediately turned a modest, reasonable format stipulation into a personal challenge. Even those who agreed we had legitimate grievances still felt UPS and I were somehow trying to tell them how to run their newspapers. Such a view greatly misrepresents both our intentions and actions.

Strictly speaking, the relationship between syndicate and newspaper is defined by contracts. Contracts exist so that both buyers and suppliers can protect their own interests. Why should certain of our legitimate interests be excluded from that protection, especially after every other avenue of accommodation has been exhausted? In attaching a size condition to the sale of "Doonesbury," we were simply affirming our option not to appear in a format which, in our judgment, was detrimental to the feature.

Most of us recognize that putting out newspapers is a collaborative enterprise, a sometimes uneasy alliance among publishers, editors, reporters, advertisers, and suppliers, each of whom has his own competing agenda. We never sought to challenge management's area of responsibility. We did not perceive ourselves to be in a position to demand anything. As a supplier of features, we simply

approached our former clients and asked, "Will you buy a 44-pica feature from us?" It is a measure of your ultimate authority that you were free to reply, "Fat chance."

What needs to be emphasized is that the size policy for "Doonesbury" never had anything to do with any special importance we felt the strip had or should have in your newspaper. I never tried to make a case for the specialness of "Doonesbury." It is all comics that are suffering, but "Doonesbury" happens to be the only strip I have any control over. While we recognized that we might lose clients who found our requirement untenable — in fact, we were certain we would — we accepted that as a regrettable trade-off.

For papers to suggest, as many have, that we left them no choice in the matter is to greatly exaggerate both the strip's appeal and the syndicate's leverage. Few of you operate in genuinely competitive markets, and those of you who do certainly don't depend on a single comic strip to give you a competitive edge.

Ben Bradlee of *The Washington Post* once wrote me that the two times that "Doonesbury" left *The Post*, his newspaper's circulation actually increased. While he conceded that the increases were probably for unrelated reasons, his point was that "Doonesbury's" appeal was highly

Papers seem to want to have it both ways: They want the considerable readership that comics bring in, but they don't want to devote the space that makes comics effective in the first place.

overrated, and let me be the first to agree.

The public noise surrounding my leave of absence and my subsequent return was all out of proportion to the event, and many editors justifiably felt they were buying into a media event, not a newspaper feature. For some, it heightened the sense of being bullied.

And so, the protests rolled in. One publisher wrote to complain that it would cost his paper \$54,000 in lost advertising space to enlarge "Doonesbury" to the requested size. Our response was that it was exactly that kind of revenue-based editing from which we sought to protect ourselves.

In our view, the whole revenue-loss argument suggests something of a double standard. After all, your entire newspaper represents a system of trade-offs between the requirements of editorial features (i.e., legibility, intelligibility, visual impact) and the exigencies of advertising (space, space and more space). At a time when newspapers are adding business sections, beefing up their sport pages, and increasing lifestyle coverage, the case for downsizing comics is not compelling. Papers seem to want to have it both ways: They want the considerable readership that comics bring in, but they don't want to devote the space that makes comics effective in the first place.

We are talking about a guideline of utmost moderation here. Despite fears of an unmanageable precedent, the probability that Jim Davis will now start to demand 52 picas for "Garfield" or that Charles Shultz will ask for 56 picas for "Peanuts" is extremely low. Cartoonists for the most part are temperate individuals, and they know the space limitations you are working under.

I suppose it all comes down to not wanting to be taken for granted. Daily comic strips continue to be regarded as a kind of public utility; they are viewed as providing a routine service, a dependable year-in, year-out source of light entertainment.

This attitude goes a long way toward explaining some of the resent-

The message was that I wasn't entitled to conduct my life as I saw best . . . to explore other interests was self-indulgent and an abdication of some implied covenant with newspapers and the public. ...when I took a two-week leave... thunderstruck editors and publishers phoned in their indignation from Martha's Vineyard.

ment in the industry when I took my leave of absence. Some editors were actually incensed — one called me an "intermittent cartoonist," as if his staff were loaded with employees who had met a deadline every single day for twelve years in a row. The message was that I wasn't entitled to conduct my life as I saw best; that to take the opportunity to explore other interests was self-indulgent and an abdication of some implied covenant with newspapers and the public.

Likewise, when I took a two-week leave from the strip to work on an outside project some summers ago, thunderstruck editors and publishers phoned in their indignation from Martha's Vineyard. When a columnist takes some time off and leaves "favorite columns" behind, it is considered perfectly acceptable. When a cartoonist asks for comparable consideration, it's considered an unconscionable disruption of a public service. "Why not just get two weeks ahead?" editors ask.

You try it sometime. Cartoonists

are among the most compulsive workers I know, and they have to be. The late Dick Moores, who wrote and drew "Gasoline Alley," used to take two days off a year — Christmas and Thanksgiving — and he wasn't writing a topical strip.

Not that he would have ever complained. I don't know any cartoonists who don't love the work and the lifestyle. And like you, most of them take pride in what they do. What is at issue here is not ego but rather simple respect for a medium that does more than its fair share of attracting readers to your papers. Not to put too fine a point on it, comic strip creators rightly consider themselves artists, and ask only for modest allowances in the presentation of their work. In all the talk about arrogance, no one seems to have detected arrogance in the view of some: that artists should not presume to advocate their own aesthetic and professional interests.

* * *

Thus the case is made and the tale is told. Now, had he been possessed of even half the sensitivity of his alter ego, McMeel the publisher would have intuited these things, but as it was, he stewed in his deck chair by the family pool long after McMeel the syndicate head had finished his snifter of cognac and shuffled off to bed. The publisher's mood had blackened further, for he had traded one unsettling thought for another.

It had suddenly occurred to him that if he *did* capitulate on the size issue and decide to buy the rights to "Doonesbury," he might come to feel compelled to actually run the damn thing. He would not be the first publisher to feel such ambivalence.

He knew that only last year there had been some 20 wire service stories generated by suspensions of "Doonesbury," and he had noted with alarm who had been the goat in most of these stories.

What McMeel the publisher couldn't have known is that his evil twin, the sleeping syndicator, had always been a fierce supporter of editorial prerogative. As had been the

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troublesome cartoonist himself. They had always maintained that editors have both the right and the responsibility to delete materials they deem inappropriate for their readership, for whatever reason. As you know, it's called "editing," and those who call it censorship are either careless or ignorant.

Still, in conceding the principle, the two men didn't always support the logic that leads to the strip's removal. The most persistent rationale has been that the strip is, far too often, unbalanced and unfair. This is a curious objection inasmuch as that is pretty close to a *definition* of satire. Satire is *supposed* to be unbalanced. It's supposed to be unfair. Criticizing a political satirist for being unfair is like criticizing a 260 pound nose-guard for being physical.

The effective political satirist is not in the business of making friends with the people he writes about. As a form of social control, the satirist simply reacts to the agendas and foibles of those in positions of power and prominence. All the tools of his trade — distortion, caricature and ridicule — mitigate against fairness and endearment. This is what makes the recent spate of libel suits against editorial cartoonists so puzzling. As *The Philadelphia Inquirer's* Gene Roberts [NF '62] said on the

"Doonohue Show" devoted to the subject, "My goodness, a political cartoonist holding a politician up to public ridicule? That's not libel, that's a job description."

Be that as it may, a lot of editors and publishers are feeling the pressure, and don't mind saying so. Following a controversial "Doonesbury" series on Frank Sinatra two years ago, the *Los Angeles Times* cut a syndicated column of Mark Russell for the first time in ten years. A *Times* editor explained to Russell that after the "Doonesbury" incident,

the climate was too "hot" to run Russell's satirical piece. This might have been an isolated incident of overreaction, but there is no denying the chilling effect that potential lawsuits are now having in newsrooms around the country.

It's not that newspapers are worried about *winning* suits; the recent Supreme Court ruling on the Falwell case, after all, has reaffirmed the First Amendment protection of satire. What seems to worry them is simply *incurring* suits. A small paper sued by a powerful interest can be driven out of business even if it wins. Larger papers can be crippled by having to devote tremendous resources to defending themselves in court. When the cause of a suit is a piece of satire, litigation becomes particularly troubling. Plaintiffs are in effect contesting a traditional consensus of what satire is meant to be and holding it to the same standards of fairness that front page reporting must meet.

In the first letter that Universal Press received from Frank Sinatra's attorneys, it was charged that in one episode of the strip I had misrepresented the facts of Sinatra's involvement in an incident that took place at the Golden Nugget Casino in 1983. Well, of *course*, I misrepresented the

continued on page 54

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A Hard-Hitting Address to the Press

Conrad M. Black

A publisher predicts that "the working media may become the rogue elephant of our society."

Mr. Black recently gave this speech at the annual dinner of the Canadian Press.

* * *

Nearly twenty years ago, I wrote a Submission to Keith Davey's Senate Committee on the Mass Media, which attracted little notice at the time, and none at all from Keith himself, who professes not to remember it. In the last ten years, however, these remarks have been regularly excerpted in the most diverse places, usually without reference to the fact that they were written in 1969.

The most popular passage for resurrection is my assertion that my experience with journalists taught me, and I quote myself, "A very large number of them are ignorant, lazy,

opinionated, intellectually dishonest, and inadequately supervised. The so-called profession," I added, "is heavily cluttered with abrasive youngsters who substitute what they call 'commitment' for insight, and, to a lesser extent, with aged hacks toiling through a miasma of mounting decrepitude." I suggested that alcoholism was endemic in both groups.

Of course the personal lives of journalists were never any of my business, and when I wrote those words it was not entirely without admiration. However, I am reliably informed by my few remaining personal contacts in the so-called working press, that most of the people I described, or their successors, are now monogamous, doting, moderate, suburban quiche-eaters. In most cases, their evolution has also been considerable in other ways.

In 1969, I wrote that the predilection of most journalists as well as the nature of their jobs encouraged a leftward bias. As the journalistic function was in considerable measure an investigative one, a generally oppositionist attitude often results, particularly when, as happens from time to time, prominent office-holders brazenly mislead the press and the public. The working press is close to the centres of authority in a democratic society and familiarity breeds reciprocal contempt, as the press relations of our last four prime ministers indicate.

As Bill Deedes, our long-time editor of *The London Daily Telegraph* and Minister for Information in Mr. Macmillan's Government, and Evelyn Waugh's model for his book *Scoop*, has remarked, the press's relations with politicians must be abrasive. Add to natural oppositionist tendencies the frustration the press collectively feels at having great power but often indistinct responsibilities. For as important a group as the media, there are inevitable tensions in being consigned to a role of reporting on the sayings and doings of others, of those whom it is disposed not to respect and conditioned even to oppose.

In this country, we have seemed at times close to the point when the media would have an unofficial power of advice and consent over the nomination and election of political candidates. Paradoxically, the greater the indirect power of the media becomes, the greater is the inherent sense of frustration that that power is over the fortunes of office-holders, rather than in the direct conduct of the offices themselves. I am sure there is an element of this frustration in the regicidal tendencies that abruptly pop out, like an immense cuckoo bird, every few years, in Washington.

In this country, the antagonism between the press and many prominent individuals is accentuated by the practice of compulsively, almost rhythmically, building up and tearing down reputations. This happens in

Conrad M. Black, the Canadian publisher, is chairman of the board and CEO of the Argus Corporation Limited based in Toronto. He is chairman of the Daily Telegraph in London, England; and Saturday Night Magazine Inc. He heads companies in the United States and in Canada. His interests here include the American Publishing Company and the M.A. Hanna Company in Cleveland, Ohio.



every field, sports, the arts, business, politics, the media themselves, and is a time-honoured journalistic formula. In Canada, however, the diet of newsworthy events and the cast of newsworthy characters are much thinner than in the United States and the United Kingdom. And the media here engage in a much more extensive and mechanical process of elevating and demoting people than in other countries. When there isn't any news, an obvious and rather overdone gambit is to profess to detect an impending rise or fall. We must face the fact, and many of us have to work with it, that at the spontaneous generation of news, Canada is a less interesting country than the United States or even the U.K., often even to Canadians themselves.

It is sometimes a challenge to find enough news to fill the pages of air-time available, but the expedient of manufacturing personal triumphs, setbacks, and incidents is an unenterprising response to the problem that does not enhance the media's credibility.

In 1969, another aspect of the media's condition which tended to confirm their contrary-mindedness was the youthfulness of many journalists. The formless structure of the craft. The lack of academic or other formal requirements for admission to its practice, the comparative absence of any seniority system, and the adversarial nature of the work, all, I felt, put a considerable premium on the youthful characteristics of zeal, dogmatism, and belligerency. I was 25 years old at the time, and I must tell you that those properties were not completely foreign to me either.

The moral and social climate of the late sixties, with its emphasis on the fashions, attitudes, mores, political discontent, alleged creative energy, and simple demographic strength of the young, especially those born between 1945 and 1950, lent weight, if not prestige and legitimacy, to them and to their contentions. In the unique atmosphere of fifteen to twenty years ago, when economic prosperity united with serious political and

social contestation, the craft of journalism expanded its ranks to embrace the young. For many publishers and editors, this was an earnest effort to comprehend the discordant phenomenon of youth, and harness its energy to the old occupation of journalism. For some others, I am afraid, it was just appeasement.

In none of the learned professions and in no other skilled occupation was there such a swift and sure passage from the novitiate to sufficiency and even eminence. This truckling to youth by and among journalists could have had no other effect than the encouragement of an excess of glib and righteous reporting. That was my opinion at the time, and for expressing it often and rather forthrightly, even if I didn't attract the notice of Keith Davey, I achieved some recognition as a precursor of what has since been described as a "young fogey."

Publishers, like other employers, are usually identified by their organized employees with the establishment and the *status quo*. Generally, this is not an inaccurate appreciation of the publisher's attitudes. Reaction to the employer naturally encouraged what was until recently, an almost universal press sympathy for strikers, protesters, fugitives from justice, separatists, disgruntled students, and other visi-

ble elements in the broad spectrum of the disaffected.

It pleased the journalist, as it pleases most people, to think of himself as an underdog, a person with a cause, if not a mission. To the antagonistic mind of the freshman journalist, in the uproarious atmosphere of the late sixties, with the Vietnam War raging and Quebec's independence possibly looming, with every well-turned paragraph evoking a response from the public, almost autonomous of the employer, and only a couple of years out of university if not high school, there was a powerful incentive to quixotism, cynicism, and whatever would shock.

I never suggested that there was anything evil or conspiratorial about this. Few journalists had much concept of ideology. Only a small proportion of them held clear intellectual positions at all. It was, as I have said, by inadvertence, the investigative nature of the press, the antithetical role of the employee, and the lassitude of some employers, and not by any organized subversion, that the press veered away from being a mirror to society in the sixties, and became, I felt, and still believe, a perverse sort of irregular and sometimes unnecessarily destructive opposition.

I greatly endeared myself to my friends in the media in 1969 by

Reaction to the employer naturally encouraged . . . an almost universal press sympathy for strikers, protesters, fugitives from justice, separatists, disgruntled students, and other visible elements in the broad spectrum of the disaffected. It pleased the journalists . . . to think of himself as an underdog, a person with a cause, if not a mission.

writing that, "The individual journalist, if he has any panache or talent, soon becomes something of a celebrity. He develops a following and soon tastes the toadying of all manner of people within his beat. He rubs shoulders with other celebrities and much of his social life is spent in the rather stifling media community." As a former denizen of that peculiar community, I commented that it was, and presumably still is, infested with media groupies, hucksters, and publicity seekers, "the fawning and the unfulfilled," I diplomatically called them. It is a beguiling, but also a somewhat corrupting environment which makes a mockery of journalism's frequent lapses into sanctimony. The relationship between power and corruption is well known. I suggested in 1969 that, "In the case of the press of this country, neither was absolute but both were excessive."

The power of the press has been a hackneyed theme for many decades, but it has been given a new twist by the abdication of many publishers and even many editors from their former operating preeminence in favour of the individual journalists. There has been a general decline in the editorial role of the media proprietor and executive. With the rise of the newspaper chain, and the heavy emphasis on commercial aspects of the newspaper business, the publisher has often become a local purser and paymaster, answerable to his absentee owner on economic matters. The media are now, in administrative techniques, an industry like the others, though more profitable than most and more strategic than any. Many of the successors to some of the greatest figures in the history of Canadian newspapers and of this association, such as Joseph E. Atkinson, J. W. McConnell, Jacob Nicol, Max Bell, Victor Sifton, Michael Wardell, Gratton O'Leary, both John Bassett's, and Dick Malone, are, for better or worse, comparatively equivocal.

This renders especially implausible

the organized consternation in this country about concentration of media ownership. Neither Thomson, nor Southam, nor Maclean Hunter have ever attempted in my memory to impose any editorial conformity on their newspapers. The sameness and predictability of journalistic opinion is a good deal more generalized, relentless, and effective. It is at that level, and not at the echelon of ownership, that there have been energetic efforts to administer a dreary and unimaginative soft-left anaesthetic to the media-consuming public. To confirm this, we need only listen to the press react like wounded animals whenever a proprietor looms who might not share their biases about important matters of public policy, nor conform to their passive proprietary ideal. This is a subject of which I have some personal experience.

try seeks or takes seriously. Their status is conjured and fictionalized the more easily because of the purposeful bravura of some of their number. "We have seen the power of the press," said Sir Jimmie Goldsmith, "now we shall see the power of money." Orson Wells, in his unforgettable portrayal of William Randolph Hearst in *Citizen Kane*, when his wife cautioned against a course of action because "people might think" something, interjected, "People will think what I tell them to think."

The great power and reckless irresponsibility of media proprietors was memorably apostrophized by Stanley Baldwin, of all people, as harlotry. This was in the era when a popular ditty in music halls and at Labour Party gatherings, with which I have several times been serenaded in the last two years in England, in-

. . . we need only listen to the press react like wounded animals whenever a proprietor looms who might not share their biases about important matters of public policy, nor conform to their passive proprietary ideal.

I submit further that the working press's general scepticism toward much of the business community has relatively little to do with ideology. It is more a question of interest group rivalry. The only visible competitor the press has for influence over the elaboration of public policy and on politicians, themselves, is the influence exercised by large corporations and wealthy individuals. In fact, this influence is largely a fiction. Wealthy individuals and corporations are public-relations sitting ducks, and they are, in my experience, practically the last people whose advice the political leadership of this coun-

cluded the assertion — "If we want truth and justice here, we will have to damn the Beaverbrook and drain the Rothermere."

Baldwin, of course, is now better remembered, if he is remembered at all, for the vacillations and deceptions that motivated Mr. Churchill to say, in 1940, when informed that the German air force had levelled Baldwin's family business — "That was very ungrateful of them!"

Baldwin's reference to Beaverbrook and Rothermere as harlots referred to the British national newspapers where, even today, most proprietors exert more influence over the con-

tents of their newspapers than is usually the case in this country or the United States, and in an era when publishers generally were much more editorially assertive than is commonly the case now. It was an uncharitable comment, but it has contributed importantly to the almost impenetrable mythology that has arisen to solemnize the baneful influence of the newspaper owner.

This mythology enjoys an especially vigorous incumbency because it suits both the subject and the propagators. All those who in Stanley Baldwin's day would have had vast political influence because of the authority of the press-owner are assuaged that they are still people of great influence, continuators of great prerogatives. And the working press, which fosters such fictions, maintains a straw scarecrow to attract public concern and divert attention from what is a much more legitimately worrisome state of affairs — that the media have no rival, no countervailing force except the good sense of the public and the fairness of most individual journalists as an antidote to their potential for capricious manipulation of public opinion.

Here again, the surest proof is the shrieking horror with which the press responds to any mitigation of their unlimited right to confect opinion. The most recent instance of this recurring phenomenon is in the present press reaction to the threat of libel.

I will not, of course, comment on the merits of individual pending defamation actions, but the widespread press reaction that such litigation or the threat of it constitutes "a libel chill" and a possible infringement on the right of and to a free press is preposterous. In several present defamation actions, the defense filed states that the press has the right to republish opinions about designated public figures, regardless of whether those opinions have really been published before, and of whether, if they have been, they have

Anyone who has witnessed, as I have, . . . the pitiful spectacle of reckless journalists trying to defend under oath, negligent or malicious libels with spurious apologia or glazed prevarication, will not soon forget . . . how much better the working press often is at dishing out abuse than at answering for its own conduct.

any reasonable basis in fact or were maliciously formulated in the first place. This defense in effect holds that the press has an unlimited right to build or destroy the reputations of whomever it wishes, and that any litigation by the subject of such treatment is a dangerous and unconstitutional restriction of a free press.

Anyone who has witnessed, as I have, both as a media owner and employer and as a litigant, the pitiful spectacle of reckless journalists trying to defend, under oath, negligent or malicious libels with spurious apologia or glazed prevarication, will not soon forget the illustration of how much better the working press often is at dishing out abuse than at answering for its own conduct.

In this present campaign against the available recourse to libel suits, it has been falsely alleged by some prominent defendants, who have not always declared their timely interest, that it is more difficult to defend than to prosecute a libel action, that even the existence of the threat of such an

action is demotivating to honest reporting. And that judicial rules governing libel should be rewritten to make judgment for the plaintiff practically unattainable except where defendants can be found who virtually proclaim that their purpose was to defame.

Frivolous and vexatious litigation is thrown out of court in defamation as in other matters. There are heavy disincentives against bringing such actions, and the onus on plaintiffs to prove libel is already heavy, as it should be. The working press, through some of the most influential media outlets in this country, is now claiming impunity for its own lapses of self-control, and in evoking this self-pitying scam of libel chill is seeking to create a right that would enthrone the media as the absolute arbiters and creators of public opinion, liberated from the disciplines and countervailing forces that all the rest of us must respond to.

I speak as a sometimes rather unambiguous columnist and as one of the not too numerous non-passive media owners who might notionally gain from such changes, but that does not soften my opposition to such a trend. Any such power is as offensive today as in Baldwin's time, whether it is exercised by publishers, columnists, or bylined or anonymous journalists.

I speak also as a frequent defender of the United States, but if *The New York Times* and Sullivan Rule of Required Proof of Malice is imported into the jurisprudence of this country, it would be a retrograde step. The media have all the resources they need to defend themselves. Immunizing them from any practical legal consequences of their actions will disserve everyone, first of all the honest journalists who would be the ostensible beneficiaries.

There has been an uncoordinated drift towards an informal code of journalistic practice, which has been pursued with particular assiduity in the United States because of the penchant in that country for constitu-

tional refuge-seeking, but which, like almost all American customs, has its Canadian emulators. This unofficial code has been enumerated at suitable length, intermittently over the last several years in *Commentary Magazine* by Herbert Greer, an occasional contributor to *The Sunday Telegraph*, and may be summarized in the following nine points:

First. The overarching journalistic objective is to attract public attention by almost any means, and the appropriateness of those means will be judged by professional journalists, including editors, and by no one else.

Second. The manner, and the propriety of the methods of obtaining information on every subject will be judged by the professional journalists, and by no one else.

Third. If the subject of journalistic attention wishes to reply, the subject's right of access through the media will be determined by the professional journalists and by no one else. Any outside attempt to interfere with this discretion shall be construed as an attack upon the freedom of the media, and loudly publicized as such.

Fourth. There is no such thing as an abuse of press freedom by the press itself. Any attempt to apply this concept to the practice of journalism in any medium shall be construed as an attack on the freedom of the press and democracy generally, and loudly publicized as such.

Fifth. Judgments of journalistic honesty, truth, morality, justice, fairness, and propriety shall be adjudicated by professional journalists and by no one else.

Sixth. Any attempt by any person or body, private or public, to invoke any legal restraint upon the practice of journalism, either through recourse to the laws of libel and slander or through appeals to discretion, decency or the public interest, shall be construed as an attack upon democracy and the freedom of the press, and shall be loudly publicized as such.

Seventh. Freedom, democracy, and

the people's right to know, are synonymous with the unfettered practice of journalism. Any suggestion that this identity is anything other than absolute shall be construed as an attack upon democracy, and loudly publicized as such.

Eighth. The professional journalist shall normally be responsible to no one but his colleagues. In certain circumstances, he shall be responsible to the law, but these circumstances shall be determined by the professional journalists and no one else. Any attempt to do so by anyone outside the journalistic occupation shall be construed as an assault upon democracy, and loudly publicized as such.

Finally. The discretion of professional journalists in all matters covered by these rules of ethics is absolute. Any suggestion to the contrary, even one emanating from the employer of the journalists in question, shall be construed as an attack on freedom, democracy, and the people's right to know, and loudly publicized as such.

In the foregoing, there is, I am

The working media implicitly seek to disenthral themselves from the disciplines and countervailing influences that all other elements of society must cope with. They claim . . . an exaltation of status that has never been legally conferred and that no one is entitled to.

afraid, only the slightest element of caricature and exaggeration. The working media, not the proprietors, or government or big business, or even organized labour, may become the rogue elephant of our society. They demand in effect, as a matter of constitutional right and democratic necessity, the status of being their own exclusive keeper, arbiter, and judge, as well as the definitive judge of everyone else.

The working media implicitly seek to disenthral themselves from the disciplines and countervailing influences that all other elements of society must cope with. They claim, as a matter of right, an exaltation of status that has never been legally conferred and that no one is entitled to. What we have, to coin a phrase from contemporary jargon, is an imperial working press that aspires to be above the law. Placebos like press councils, however sincerely intended and administered, are no more effective a monitoring mechanism than is the self-verified expense account.

Journalists, as a group, and like all other powerful groups, require some protection from themselves and their own excesses. I will not labour this point, but the first line of defense is the concerned, informed, responsible, publisher. I do not mean by this a euphemism for a baroque resurrection of Hearst and Northcliffe, nor even the generalized application of the methods of my friends, Bob Maxwell and Rupert Murdoch — that same Bob Maxwell from whom I received a letter that included his public comment after the High Court ordered that an unauthorized biography of him be withdrawn and pulped, Bob Maxwell triumphantly stated: "Recycling old and false stories about me has become a profitable industry for the unscrupulous. But, after today, those who want to pursue that course will know that they may find themselves contributing generously to the Great Ormond Street Hospital For Sick Children, and other similar causes —

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Prelude

Richard M. Clurman

The press and names in the news tangle in a strangle-hold hug.

The following excerpt is from Richard M. Clurman's book, *Beyond Malice: The media's years of reckoning*. Published by permission of Transaction Publishers. This book is protected by copyright. All requests for any additional use must be referred to the publishers located at Rutgers University, New Brunswick, N.J. 08903. Other excerpts will be carried in future issues of Nieman Reports.

* * *

Political journalism is not a way of satisfying the random curiosity or the voyeuristic inclinations of reporters or readers.

— Columnist David S. Broder, 1987

In the language of comic strips, "POW!!!" is the ultimate punctuation mark. You won't find it in print or broadcast journalism, or as a category in public opinion polls. But

Richard M. Clurman is chairman of the board of Columbia University Seminars on Media and Society, a program of the Graduate School of Journalism. He had been with *Time-Life Magazine* for over 20 years, serving as writer-editor of *Time's* press section, chief of correspondents of the *Time-Life News Service*, and editorial vice-president and chairman of *Time-Life Broadcast*.



Photo by Tiziano Magni.

in the recent history of journalism, twelve months in 1986-87 alone produced — among other attention-getting stories — these familiar POW!!!'s, one after the other:

- A tiny Beirut weekly revealed, in a planted story, that the U.S. was trying to trade arms with Iran for hostages. The news instantly ricocheted around the world, followed shortly thereafter by the revelation that profit from the two-faced dealing was being used covertly to finance arms for the contras fighting in Nicaragua. President Reagan at first blamed the year's biggest uproar on the media "sharks circling" around him. In the televised congressional hearings that followed, the name of Marine Lieutenant Colonel Oliver North became momentarily as well known for derring-do as Rambo. So did his White House secretary, Fawn Hall, whose celebrity and beauteous competence fleetingly gave her the fame of a Diane Sawyer.
- The Miami *Herald* accepted the challenge made by presidential candidate Gary Hart to the New York *Times* to prove the whispered charges about his philandering ("If anybody wants to put a tail on me go ahead"). The *Herald* staked out a Washington town house where Hart was caught weekending with a woman whom the paper had been tipped, Hart had been photographed nuzzling aboard a Florida fishing yacht, appropriately named — it was too good to believe but true — *Monkey Business*. The stakeout was sloppy,

but circumstantial proof enough so that when the Washington *Post* told Hart it was ready to go from a confirmed private detective's report with another such incident involving Hart, he bitterly withdrew his candidacy, blaming his fall from national grace on "misleading and false" stories in the press. He got instant support from

This time he [Gary Hart] began by aiming his campaign guns . . . squarely at the press, who . . . "has a need to destroy me." His new slogan: "Let the people decide" about what he called his "damned fool mistake." They promptly did — against him.

Richard Nixon who wrote him, "What you said about the media needed saying." Seven months later in an astonishing reversal Hart reentered the race. This time he began by aiming his campaign guns not at the Republicans or other candidates but squarely at the press, who he said, with tears in his eyes, "has a need to destroy

me." His new slogan: "Let the people decide" about what he called his "damned fool mistake." They promptly did — against him.

- Far from the Washington Beltway, the *Atlanta Journal and Constitution* published the charge that the Georgia politician and civil rights activist, Julian Bond, regularly used cocaine. Local television and the national news media picked up the charge, finally dismissed by a grand jury. "Everyone," said Bond, "is fair game [to the press] in a foul game with no standards and no rules." In Cleveland, the *Plain Dealer* decided to refute Ohio's Governor Richard Celeste's claim that he didn't have a "Hart-type personal problem" by reporting that in recent years he had been involved with three women while married. The paper said it broke the story because he was a "potential" presidential candidate. Evangelists Jim and Tammy Faye Bakker were exposed, by the Charlotte (N.C.) *Observer* of sexual shenanigans and financial fraud. One of their accusers, the Reverend Jerry Falwell, appeared for three nights on Ted Koppel's "Nightline," in programs that outrated Johnny Carson. (The paper won the 1988 Pulitzer Prize For Public Service.)
- In the middle of the televised hearings that so damaged Judge Robert Bork's nomination to the U.S. Supreme Court, the Senate Judiciary Committee's chairman, Delaware's Senator Joseph Biden, was forced to withdraw from the Democratic presidential sweepstakes. The *New York Times* and *Des Moines Register* reported from, and then NBC and other networks showed, the videotape of a plagiarized campaign speech. *Newsweek* followed with the revelation — also on videotape — that he had exaggerated his academic accomplishments. None of the news media that exposed him mentioned its anonymous source for the first and most

damaging videotape. When *Time* magazine, not bound by the pledge of confidentiality, said the source of the "attack video" was campaign aides of another presidential candidate, Massachusetts Governor Michael Dukakis, his campaign manager promptly resigned. Dukakis' "character" — the new buzzword in politics — was deemed undamaged, although his management abilities were thrown into question. Bork also was rejected by the full Senate for a seat on the highest court in the U.S., as much for his unprepossessing presence on national television before Biden's committee as for his intricate views on key constitutional issues. All together, a triple-header.

released its juiciest news before either the *Post* or *Newsweek* could serialize it in their pages, featuring what some of the press headlined as Casey's "death-bed confession." Although Woodward received accolades and a vote of confidence from other reporters and editors based on his past record, much of the public believed Woodward had made up at least his last four-minute Casey interview. And some of Woodward's supporters still wondered why he and his editors had waited to publish his much more startling news-making reporting in the book when they all worked for a daily newspaper that had led the fight in the courts for the right not to withhold even for a day stories they thought

. . . the two superpower leaders [Reagan and Gorbachev] had more in common than their desire to sign a nuclear treaty. Both were mad at the press. In a numbing "press conference" . . . in which Gorbachev did most of the talking, he angrily responded to his questioners: "The press tries to drive politicians into a corner. Is that a dialogue? Is that an interview?"

- Washington *Post* reporter-editor Bob Woodward had repeatedly led the entire world press on revelations about CIA secret operations. It turned out that while he had provided more than seventy stories for the *Post* on the CIA, he had saved some of his most important stuff for a book about the CIA under Director William Casey, who died before publication of Woodward's best-seller, *Veil*. But *U.S. News & World Report* managed to get galley proofs of the secret book and

important.

- The *Wall Street Journal* profiled Pat Robertson after he resigned his ministry and became a Republican presidential candidate. A Washington *Post* Robertson-watcher noticed in the profile that Robertson had changed his wedding date to conceal the fact that his son was born only ten weeks after Robertson was married thirty-three years ago. The *Post* made a front-page story out of what Robertson said was only an attempt "to protect

his family." He called the press coverage "outrageous" and a "reprehensible" invasion of privacy. *Newsday* columnist Murray Kempton acidly damned the *Post's* hypocrisy in coming out against Judge Bork's nomination because the *Post* charged he was, among other things, wishy-washy on constitutional "privacy," while the *Post* had not the slightest compunction about violating Robertson's privacy. The *Post's* ombudsman, Joseph Laitin, slammed his own paper even harder. "The press is hounding him," Laitin wrote, "and the *Post* is leading the pack. God would forgive [such] a lie, but I'm not so sure about the Washington press." Never mind the Washington press. The *Atlanta Journal and Constitution* followed by reporting that the wife of the only other cleric running for the presidency, Jesse Jackson, was pregnant on the day he married her twenty-five years earlier.

- By most reckonings, the media did an impressive job reporting, not making worse, the heart attack the stock market suffered in October 1987. Not to the U.S. secretary of the treasury, James Baker. In a howl of self-defensive anger he complained: "What triggered it was not my remarks but a front-page story in one of our major newspapers [the *New York Times*]." "
- National Public Radio's Nina Totenberg discovered that Judge Douglas Ginsburg, forty-one, President Reagan's follow-up nominee, after the rejection of Bork for the Supreme Court, had smoked a little marijuana in college and while teaching at the Harvard Law School eight years ago. The White House summarily dumped him, not for his all but invisible qualifications but because fake national piety demanded that anyone who ever smoked pot, which included a high percentage of the 60s generation, was unfit to dispense justice. Reporters promptly asked

every candidate the new "M" question: Do you now or have you ever...?

- When more than 6,000 press converged on Washington for the Reagan-Gorbachev summit, the two superpower leaders had more in common than their desire to sign a nuclear treaty. Both were mad at the press. In a numbing "press conference" that lasted more than two hours in which Gorbachev did most of the talking, he angrily responded to his questioners: "The press tries to drive politicians into a corner. Is that a dialogue? Is that an interview?" Reagan offered his sympathies: "I just told him what Lyndon Johnson once said. LBJ claimed that if one morning he walked on top of the water across the Potomac River, the headline that afternoon would read, 'PRESIDENT CAN'T SWIM' "
- Israel, confronting its worst violent Arab protest on the West Bank and in the Gaza in the past

Bush and anchorman Dan Rather. When Vice President Bush angrily refused to answer Rather's overheated questions about the Iranian hostage exchange, the aftermath produced more analysis, commentary, replays and locker room reports than a championship heavyweight fight or bruising Super Bowl game. "Using the news media as a foil," said political strategist David Sawyer, "is excellent because people think of the news media as manipulative and arrogant." The *Washington Post* editorialized: The candidates "are running against the media capitalizing on the public's fed-upness with the press — its pushy ways, its occasional dirty pool and its generally enormous power." And *Newsweek* summed up the 1988 campaign: "This year, bashing the press has become a popular blood sport in both parties."

Each of these stories produced a raw backlash blaming the press or at minimum wondering where all this media intensity and prying was

And *Newsweek* summed up the 1988 campaign: "This year, bashing the press has become a popular blood sport in both parties."

twenty years (an "all-stick-and-no-carrot approach," one reporter called Israel's tactics), once again blamed much of its troubles not on the unresolved, long-simmering dispute but on the American press, which reports "only those things that give Israel a negative image."

- For one whole week the biggest issue in the presidential campaign became not who was ahead in the polls or what the issues really were but who won in the evening news battle between candidate George

leading. Could we ever elect a president or confirm a nominee in today's all-seeing media climate who was more than a bland, lumpless bowl of cream of wheat? At another time didn't some of our most accomplished leaders (Roosevelt, Eisenhower, Kennedy, Martin Luther King) have unreported private lives that would have disqualified them from national leadership today? Was it possible altogether with today's omnipresent media to conduct the

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Sherman H. Dudley: He Paved the Way for T.O.B.A.

Athelia Knight

"Playing the Palace" was rare until one man created a black-operated vaudeville circuit for black artists.

This article is from the Fall 1987 issue of THE BLACK PERSPECTIVE IN MUSIC, published by The Foundation for Research in the Afro-American Creative Arts, Inc. The editor/publisher of the magazine is Eileen Southern, emeritus professor of Harvard University.

Sherman H. Dudley (1872-1940) contributed more to the development of the black vaudeville circuit in the early twentieth century than any other single person. A vaudeville entertainer himself, he had the foresight to recognize the importance of organization for black show people, and in 1912 he created the first black-operated vaudeville circuit, bringing together black performers with the theater managers and owners. His determination to build an organization that would offer security for members of "the profes-



Sherman H. Dudley (*The Freeman*, March 1913)

sion," coupled with a tremendous investment of his own money and energy into his work, led to phenomenal success. The results of his efforts over the years were so impressive that *The Freeman*, a leading black newspaper of the time, published in Indianapolis, Indiana, observed: "The name of Dudley to a colored show is what Barnum and Bailey is to the circus." (16 November 1918).

Sherman Dudley paved the way for the organization of the Theater Owner's Booking Association (T.O.B.A.) in 1921, beginning with his establishment of Dudley's Circuit in 1912.

When Dudley first began to agitate for black input into the show-business world, he could look back on a black-theater tradition that was almost one-hundred-years old.

As early as the eighteenth century, black men began to appear on the stages of urban America, and in 1821, a few intrepid blacks organized their own repertory company in New York City. Called the African Grove Theater, the company purchased its own somewhat makeshift building and produced a variety of plays, both dramas and musicals (called ballad operas at that time). When in 1823 the company produced a play written by its director, a Mr. Brown, entitled *The Drama of King Shotaway*, it was the first time a play written by a black playwright had been produced in the United States.

The emancipation of the slaves, finally concluded in 1865 with the thirteenth amendment, gave ex-slaves an opportunity to explore the entertainment field of Ethiopian minstrelsy, which got its start in the 1840s with white performers in blackface imitating the black man's songs, dances, and humor. Although the white minstrel companies drew strong color bars against the admission of black performers to their ranks, one or two managed to slip through, for example, Master Juba, who performed with Pell's Ethiopian Serenaders.

The first, permanent, black minstrel troupe was formed in 1865

Athelia Knight, Nieman Fellow '86, is a reporter on the staff of The Washington Post. This piece is based on a paper she wrote for the course, *Black Musical Theater*, while at Harvard University. Dr. Southern was the professor for this course.



Black actors appeared on the stage in America as early as the 18th Century. In New York City, blacks organized their own repertory company in 1821. It was called the African Grove Theater and it produced dramas and musicals in its own makeshift building.

by black minstrel man Charles ("Barney") Hicks (c1840s-1902) in Indianapolis, Indiana. Hicks's troupe, called the Georgia Minstrels, toured widely in the United States and Great Britain during the years 1865-1872 and became celebrated for its specialty acts and thirteen-piece brass band. Most of the leading black minstrels of the nineteenth century were associated at one time or another in their careers with the Georgia Minstrels, which later came under the management of white owners, such as Charles Callender and J.H. Haverly. The minstrel stars included James Bland (1854-1911), Billy Kersands (1842-1915), Samuel Lucas (1840-1916), Wallace King (1840-1903), Horace Weston (c1825-1890), Tom McIntosh (c1841-1904), and many others.

By the 1890s black performers were moving from the minstrel show to more modern forms of stage entertainment, such as vaudeville and musical comedies. Though the minstrel troupes initially were composed of males, women were added to the shows of the 1890s, for example, Isham's Oriental America company and Black Patti's Troubadours, which starred the celebrated soprano Matilda Sissieretta Jones (1869-1933). Women also performed in the traditional minstrel shows during this period.

Road shows flourished as well. In 1900 Patrick ("Pat") Chappelle (1869-1911), an ex-minstrel, organized a touring company to produce

musicals, of which the first and most popular was *A Rabbit's Foot*. Later, the troupe itself was called the Rabbit's Foot Minstrels. Among the famous blues and vaudeville singers who performed with the company were "Ma" (Gertrude Pridgett) Rainey (1886-1939) and Bessie Smith (1894-1937).

"Professor" Eph Williams (d. 1921), a black circus owner, began producing a tent show called "Silas Green from New Orleans" in 1910 with his Famous Troubadours Concert Company, and this company, like the Rabbit's Foot Minstrels was long-lived. In January 1912 the show was composed of forty-two performers, including magicians, a wire act, a boy contortionist, a band, a mixed quartet, a wooden shoe buck dancer, and singers. Both shows, Silas Green from New Orleans and the Rabbit's Foot Company, were still touring as late as the 1950s.

Along with the flourishing of black minstrel troupes and road shows, a black musical theater was slowly developing. The first productions came from the Hyers Sisters troupe, under the leadership of soprano Anna Madah (c1853-193?) and contralto Emma Louise (c1855-189?). The Hyers Sisters had first performed as concert artists, backed by a small company that included male artists and an accompanist. In 1876, they enlarged the company and changed it into a musical-comedy company. Active through the 1880s, the troupe functioned as a repertory company,

producing several "musical dramas" over the twelve or more years of its existence and occasionally giving formal concerts as well.

Not too long after the Hyers Sisters troupe had been disbanded, the vaudeville pair of George Walker (1873-1911) and Bert Williams (1874-1922) appeared on the scene. Opening on Broadway in 1896 in a white musical, *The Gold Bug*, they gradually made a name in their own productions: *Walker and Williams in Dahomey*, *Walker and Williams in Abyssinia*, and *Walker and Williams in Bandanna Land* — all these produced during the first decade of the twentieth century.

Walker and Williams won wide acclaim for their productions. Lester A. Walton, theater critic for the *New York Age*, praised their performance in *Bandanna Land* as follows:

"Bandanna Land" is some show! . . . My definition of the new play is that it is the most artistic and successful piece the two comedians were ever in. Void of any suggestions of low comedy, bubbling over with tuneful music and bright lines, and best of all it contains some real old-time Negro sentiment — something I have been wanting to see in a colored show for a long time. In the first act when Bert Williams produces an old pocket Bible his mother has given him years ago to keep, and George Walker looks at it and states that his mother also gave him one which he kept in his trunk, the sentiment was strictly Negro, and the thought occurred to me that in the colored contingent there were few whose mothers had not given them in early life just a book to keep and read as had the mothers of the two stars; then in another act when George Walker names the property in question "Bandanna Land" after a bandanna handkerchief, which he sees and causes him to grow reminiscent and recall the days when his dear old mother wore just such a handkerchief, there was displayed another bit of sentiment that should have been appreciated by many in the house.

I am glad to see that the day has come when our big actors have reached the point where they find it a pleasure to introduce in their shows some little character-bits that bring out strictly Negro traits and customs of which the race should feel justly proud. (6 February 1908)

Similar praise came from a white theater critic, whose comments about the performance in *The Brooklyn Eagle* were reprinted in the *New York Age*:

But art has no color line and it is simple justice to say that our stage has no white comedian so good as Bert Williams nor any singing soubrette with the grace and distinction of style which add a touch of Gallic eloquence to the work of Aida Overton Walker. . . . Anyone who loves laughter but stays away from "Bandanna Land" in the fear that it is an ordinary rough and tumble "darky show" will make an unfortunate mistake. (30 April 1908)

Bert Williams credited the success of *Bandanna Land* to the actors' preparation for their roles; they studied for a year the southern Negro character. He wrote to the *New York Age*:

The American Negro is the natural minstrel. He is one in whom humor is native, often unconscious, but nevertheless, keen and laugh-compelling. He dances from the cradle stage almost, for his feet have been educated prenatally it would seem. He usually has a voice, and when I say he, I mean she, too, and there is much necessity for schools of voice. There is soul in the Negro music, there is simplicity and an entire lack of artificiality. (27 February 1908)

This brief survey of black musical theatre from its beginning to the first decade of the twentieth century has of necessity touched only upon the high spots. By the turn of the century, thousands of black performers were earning a livelihood on the musical stage, and many of them attained celebrity equal to, or more than, that of the Hyers Sisters or Walker and Williams.

When Sherman H. Dudley came on the American-theater scene at the end of the nineteenth century, he was very much aware of the rich traditions of black musical theater in his time. A native of Jonesville, Louisiana, Dudley started his career as a performer with traveling carnivals and medicine shows. His first role was that of a singer and jokester for a man who sold "Kickapoo" cure (a

patent medicine) for a dollar a bottle. He later moved up, touring with various minstrel and vaudeville troupes, including John Isham's King Rastus Company and Dave Marion's Burlesque Show, and finally joined the Smart Set Company. In 1904, Dudley took over the leading role in the Company after the death of Tom McIntosh, the former star.

joined the show to play George Washington Bullion and "not to imitate Hogan or McIntosh." Hill was so impressed by Dudley's frankness that he signed him to a five-year contract and later renewed the contract, increasing the salary and benefits.

Dudley's career blossomed in the Smart Set Company. In 1908 Walton wrote in the *New York Age*:

The black press was important to the entertainment field. Such papers as *The Freeman*, *The New York Age*, and *The Chicago Defender* made their readers aware of black events and achievements which were almost never covered in white newspapers.

It was Dudley's unique talent that got him the starring role in the Smart Set Company. Nevertheless, some questioned whether he could fill the role adequately. Theater manager W. H. Smith, later reminiscing about Dudley's early days with the Smart Set, noted that Dudley had never seen Ernest Hogan or Tom McIntosh play the leading role in *George Washington Bullion*, which was the role Dudley had to play. "The manager and the straight man were worried very much," Smith wrote to the editor of *The Freeman*, "about how Dudley would handle the part and instead of them letting Dudley study his lines, they kept telling him how Hogan did this and how McIntosh did that." (24 May 1913)

After Dudley's first performance, the director complimented his work, and the show's owner, Gus Hill, impressed by Dudley's performance, asked him if he had ever seen Hogan or McIntosh do the part. Dudley answered Hill that he had not, and "in serious tones" told Hill he had

A word or two should be said about Dudley, who has been the chief fun maker of the Smart Set Company for several years. . . . For a number of years, Bert Williams and Ernest Hogan have rightly held the title of being the two funniest colored comedians. For all that they still deservedly hold the title, but S.H. Dudley should not be considered harmless by Messrs. Williams and Hogan, for Dudley is coming and coming fast. (2 April 1908)

Dudley performed in several of the Smart Set musicals, including *Dr. Beans from Boston*; *His Honor, the Barber*; and *The Black Politician*. He became most notorious for his act with his mule Patrick. Mary White Ovington, writing about Dudley's career in *The Crisis*, observed:

He never gave a show without the mule's appearing. His best speeches were poured into its ears. To him he confided his troubles and his aspirations. In "The Black Politician" or "His Honor, the Barber," whatever the role, the mule appeared coquettish, one ear cocked, a pair of trousers on his hind legs with a handkerchief half out of the pocket. It was a case of love at first sight with the au-



Mr. Dudley and his mule.

dience and such an animal, and the belief in his cleverness was universal.

Dudley was performing with the Smart Set Company when he first conceived the idea of organizing a black theater chain. In a letter published in *The Freeman* on 20 January 1912, he proposed to set up a chain of Negro theaters, which would be operated by black businessmen. He needed only ten such theatres, he wrote, and he would guarantee to supply acts for their stages that would keep their doors open 365 days a year.

When Dudley chose to present his proposition in the pages of *The Freeman*, he was taking advantage of the wide distribution of that newspaper to carry his message throughout the black community. The black press was important to the entertainment field, and *The Freeman*, possibly more than any other of that period. But the

"Dramatic and Musical" columns in the *New York Age* and *The Chicago Defender* were also informative and influential. The men employed to write these columns were able and articulate; most notable were Sylvester Russell of *The Freeman*, Tony Langston of *The Chicago Defender*, and Lester Walton of the *New York Age*. *The Freeman* also had a talented cartoonist, Harry W. Jackson, whose cartoons could bite as sharply as the music critics' tongues.

These newspapers, and others of the period, kept their readers abreast of black events and achievement, which rarely were covered in white newspapers. The black press published letters from performers who described their professional experiences, who described their travels and audience reactions if they were touring abroad, who complained about unfair treatment by theater owners and/or managers. But just as

the press allowed performers to have their say, so it also published letters from the owners and managers. If a theater owner had a gripe about a performer, he wrote to the black press to warn other owners against engaging the performer. Oftentimes the performer under criticism would respond by writing to the press to explain his side of the dispute.

Dudley's proposition won favorable comment from both performers and theater owners; representatives of both groups wrote letters of encouragement, which were published in *The Freeman* in early 1912. But Sylvester Russell of *The Freeman*, said he would reserve his judgment until Dudley had proved it could be done and had raised \$500,000 to establish a corporation with stockholders to oversee the venture. (10 February 1912)

Russell believed that the theater circuit could not survive if it were "all colored." He wrote:

Theaters are commercial enterprises and are therefore never totally patronized by either white or colored except in remote parts of the South, where the conditions are different and financially limited. . . . The only available system I can see at present in a colored theater alliance is as I have expressed it before, that the white man's successful colored theater, in the colored district and the black man's successful theater should link either as a booking alliance or a mixed race syndicate. (10 February 1912)

Six months after Dudley's proposition appeared in *The Freeman*, he had managed to secure the management or cooperation of theaters in New York, Philadelphia, Baltimore, two theaters in Washington, D.C., Richmond, Newport News, and Norfolk. Acknowledging the success of Dudley's efforts, the press reported:

It can be plainly seen that he is about to realize what was said by some to be a "pipe dream," and those who hooted at the idea are now sitting up and taking notice. Mr. Dudley's untiring efforts to bring about the success of his grand idea means very much to him and it is the salvation of the colored vaudeville performer. (6 July 1912)

On 20 July 1912 *The Freeman* began to publish weekly the column "What's What on the Dudley Circuit," which listed the names of the acts being performed on the circuit, the managers, the theaters, and the cities in which they were located. The *Chicago Defender* also published the column. Dudley purchased several theaters, placing them under management of such veteran showmen as Lew Henry and Leigh Whipper, but mostly he persuaded theater owners and/or managers to join him. The circuit was taking off.

In December 1912, "What's What on the Dudley Circuit" listed fourteen theaters in thirteen cities, including Washington, D.C. (two theaters), Richmond, Petersburg, Norfolk, Newport News, Philadelphia, Indianapolis, Cleveland, Columbus, Philadelphia, Greensboro, Winston Salem, and Lexington (Kentucky). Two theaters carried Dudley's name: the S. H. Dudley Theater on U Street in Washington, D.C. and the S. H. Dudley Theater in Newport News, Virginia. *The Freeman* reported that the Dudley Circuit had arrived "in the nick of time" since a large number of the "white houses [had] closed their doors to the colored performer." (28 December 1912)

On 15 March 1913 Dudley announced in the columns of *The Freeman* that he was quitting the stage to devote his full attention to his theater circuit. He pointed out that there were thousands of colored performers, who were "capable of playing from low comedy to Shakespeare's heaviest plays," and someone had to find work for them. All that was necessary was for managers to cooperate with him, and success would be theirs.

Some of the nation's most prestigious performers joined Dudley's circuit; among them, the Griffin Sisters, Emma and Mabel; Salem Tutt Whitney and his brother, J. Homer Tutt, with their Whitney Stock Company; the Whitman Sisters, composed of singer-dancer-comedian Alberta Whitman and her sisters,

S. H. DUDLEY, Mgr. M. KLEIN, Mgr. S. E. REEVIN, Mgr.

DUDLEY, KLEIN & REEVIN

United Vaudeville Circuit, Inc.

—

The Circuit with the clean honest policy. Owned and managed by **S. H. Dudley, Martin Klein and Sam E. Reevein.** These three names are sufficient guarantee to both managers and performers. Their reputation is known to all in the show business. Their motto is "Give a square deal to both managers and performers."

Managers, you may rest assured that they will not promise an act unless they can give it to you.

Performers, you will not be promised a booking in a theatre unless it is really on the United Time. In other words, no four flushing about this circuit.

The names of **Dudley Klein and Reevein** are your guarantee. They book no houses unless they hold a franchise with the United. Write today to

S. H. Dudley,
Midcity Theatre Bldg., 1223 7th St.,
N. W., Washington, D. C.

Martin Klein,
311 So. State St., Chicago, Ill.

Sam E. Reevein,
Care of Liberty Theatre Bldg.,
Chattanooga, Tenn.

April 1920

Mabel, Essie, and Barbara, who were known as The Three Sunbeams; singer Hattie McIntosh; Cordelia McClain, who teamed with McIntosh in a vaudeville act in 1911; and vaudeville entertainer-song-writer Perry ("Mule") Bradford.

Emma Griffin, who was playing to packed houses at Dudley's theater in Washington, D.C., published a letter in *The Freeman* on 5 April 1913 urging others to join the Dudley Circuit. Though the Griffin sisters later left the Dudley Circuit to form their own theater booking agency, Emma Griffin continued to champion the cause of Dudley; she urged blacks to join

either with Dudley or with her agency. Again she wrote to *The Freeman* (14 February 1914), commenting on the dearth of colored stars — Mr. Bert Williams, the only one playing a white theater — and the decreasing number of opportunities for Negro acts to find work. And this, despite the facts that white actors tried to get black singers to teach them how to sing coon songs, and the big-hit ragtime songs being used in the prestigious theaters were written by colored composers.

Another popular group that toured on the Dudley Circuit was the Whitman Sisters, who always received

In 1913 *The Freeman* carried Dudley's announcement that he was quitting the stage to devote all his time to his theater circuit. He said there were many colored performers who were "capable of playing from low comedy to Shakespeare's heaviest plays." Someone had to find work for them.

rave reviews in the black press. On 7 December 1913, for example, *The Freeman* observed:

Miss Alberta Whitman, the famous singing, dancing, and character comedienne as well as a composer of popular music, has put together an act that pleases all classes of people. My prediction is, the moment any of the white managers see this act it will be taken off the colored time altogether. . . . Each member of this act changes their wardrobes three times during the act, and there is not a dull moment from start to finish. The act closes with Miss Whitman in male attire doing a characteristic song and dance mingled with artistic poses with her Three Sunbeams in the background which send the audience home saying, "We have seen one act that is clean, clever, artistic and refined."

Later, the Whitmans were a leading attraction on T.O.B.A.

Dudley won black-press acclaim not only for his celebrities but as well for his efforts to bring talented performers, although not necessarily as famous as his celebrities, to the attention of the public — many of them, names that today have been long forgotten. A reviewer wrote in *The Freeman* about a performance in Washington, D.C.:

Dudley's U Street Theater presented last week Edward Tolliver, one of the race's best character impersonators, and Goldie Chappelle, a charming interpreter of Spanish and Indian maiden roles, and one of the prettiest women on the Afro-American stage. Both are excellent singers and their act, embracing Mexican,

Spanish and Indian characters is delightfully original. . . . After making Virginia and the Baltimore and Philadelphia run, Tolliver and Chappelle go on the western time for the summer, covering Louisville, St. Louis, Indianapolis, Chicago, Cincinnati and other points. (4 July 1914)

As Dudley's theater circuit flourished, he expanded his business activities: in 1913 he opened headquarters in Washington, D.C. at 718 Florida Avenue N.W., and in 1915 he moved his offices to 1853 7th Street N.W. Veteran minstrel Lew W. Henry was hired as the manager and producer of the Dudley Theater in Washington, D.C. Dudley's practices were responsible for a steady stream of letters published in the black press, written by theater owners and managers, by performers, and by Dudley, himself, who wrote to inform readers of the happenings on his circuit.

Although Dudley drew high praise during the early years of his circuit, eventually the complaints began to come. On 20 September 1913 Manager Lew Henry complained in *The Freeman*, "the colored actresses of the East are beginning to knock the Dudley circuit on the point of salary." But, he pointed out, if the Dudley Circuit had the cooperation of performers, "it would ultimately mean more theaters, larger theaters, better working conditions and finally better salaries." Dudley was willing to do the utmost for his acts, but could not do the impossible.

By the end of 1914, Dudley's Circuit included twenty-three theaters, all owned or managed by blacks and located as far south as Atlanta. The theaters belonging to the circuit included such celebrated houses as the Howard in Washington, D.C.; the Lafayette in New York City; the New Standard in Philadelphia; the Grand in Chicago; the Booker T. Washington in St. Louis; and the Crown Garden in Indianapolis.

Several of these houses were quite imposing. The Standard Theater, for example, which had 2,000 seats, was regarded as "the finest theater under colored people's management in the entire United States." Owned by thirty-eight-year-old John T. Gibson, it met a weekly payroll for more than 100 black employees, and its expenditures for vaudeville acts amounted to more than \$52,000 in salaries.

Dudley was constantly on the move. In addition to hiring acts and dealing with theater managers, he took the time to tour his circuit in order to keep abreast of happenings in the field. Early in 1915 he expressed his gripes in a letter to *The Freeman*. The numerous problems he had to solve seemed to dampen his spirits considerably. And circumstances did not improve. On 7 August 1915 he complained in *The Freeman* that 1915 had been "the worst season for theatricals in years." But he expected 1916 to be better. And it was. By the end of 1916 the Dudley Circuit had increased its membership to twenty-eight theaters.

Despite complaints, Dudley's theaters remained popular with both audiences and performers. With each year, Dudley's operation continued to improve, and Dudley himself began to perform much more than he had previously. In 1917, *The Freeman* reported that there were 473 theaters catering to blacks, although only a few were owned or leased by blacks. Acts on Dudley's Circuit were reported to be playing from fourteen to twenty weeks a year (1 December 1917).

A major reason for the Dudley Cir-

cuit's popularity, according to R. W. Thompson, a Dudley employee, was because Dudley was fair and generous to his vaudeville acts and his staff. In 1918, for example, when playhouses in Washington, D.C., were closed because of a flu epidemic, Dudley nevertheless paid a full week's wages to those actors who were prevented from working, and those who had been engaged to work in succeeding weeks were given assignments in other theaters on the Dudley circuit. "It is this kind of 'live and let live' policy," Thompson pointed out in *The Freeman*, "that makes Dudley wax fat and prosper" (12 October 1918).

Dudley also "waxed fat and prospered" because he was a sharp businessman. Writing to *The Freeman* in 1918, a fellow businessman commented on how Dudley always managed to win the public over to his side, whether he featured good attractions or poor ones. Critic Sylvester Russell observed in 1918 that Dudley had built "a successful and stable circuit" with shorter jumps and the entire southeastern territory covered (12 January 1918). In a later issue of the paper, it was noted that Dudley was considering producing a new musical or staging a minstrel carnival because most of the young performers were fighting in the war, and the public had to have some amusement regardless of war (9 February 1918).

Dudley's efforts received constant praise in the black press. *The Freeman* said that he had done more for the colored profession than any one black or white man. He was fondly called "Uncle Dud" or "the Black Jack Haverly," after a highly regarded white manager of black shows in the late-nineteenth century (14 September 1918).

In 1919, while continuing to operate his own circuit, Dudley joined forces with white theater-men Sam Reeve and Martin Klein to form a new circuit, the United Vaudeville Circuit, Inc., so that he could give his performers a full season of forty

weeks. *The Freeman* approved of Dudley's new venture:

The Dudley, Klein and Reeve United Vaudeville Circuit, Inc., is comparatively new. Yet it is burning a trail through the South that threatens to wipe out all opposition. Mr. Dudley, by right of priority, experience and intimacy with the colored show game was naturally chosen president of the new enterprise; Mr. Reeve, manager, and Mr. Klein, treasurer.

The United Circuit is finding great favor with colored performers and companies. All of them know Mr. Dudley, and know him to be a straight-forward man of his word. It is doubtless if any other white man in colored show business has been as sympathetically and unselfishly

inclined toward colored performers as Mr. Reeve. (14 February 1920)

The three managers of United also had stock in, and were active with, the Southern Consolidated Vaudeville Circuit, Inc., of which the principals were John T. Gibson, Chintz Moore, E. L. Cummings, and Charles Bailey. Dudley did the eastern bookings for Southern Consolidated, and Klein took care of the western bookings.

This cooperative venture was dissolved in 1920 after a stormy meeting, which was reported in detail by Reeve and published in *The Freeman* on 14 February 1920.

continued to page 52

Theatre Managers

Watch

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TO THE

Whole Colored Theatrical World

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BIG SPECIAL

Important Announcement!

CONCERNING THE

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AND

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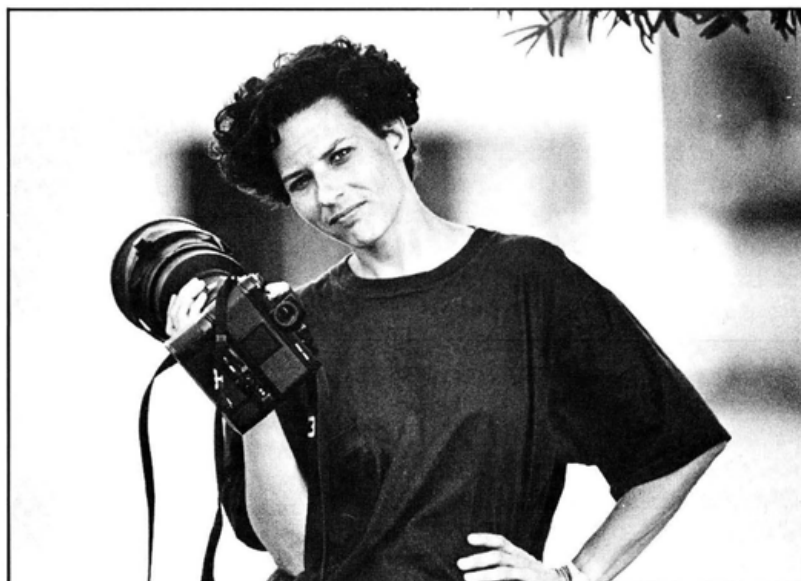
The Two Mammoth Circuits Have Decided to Affiliate for the Betterment of the Entire Show World.

THE FOLLOWING OFFICERS HAVE BEEN ELECTED:

E. L. Cummings, <small>President</small>	S. H. Dudley, <small>Vice President</small>	Sam E. Reeve, <small>Secretary</small>	M. P. Cummings, <small>Treasurer</small>
Chas. P. Bailey, <small>General Adjuster</small>	Martin Klein, <small>Special Representative</small>	John T. Gibson, <small>Financial Adjuster</small>	Chintz Moore, <small>Southern Representative</small>
E. L. Cummings	S. H. Dudley	Sam E. Reeve	M. P. Cummings
John T. Gibson	Chintz Moore	Martin Klein	

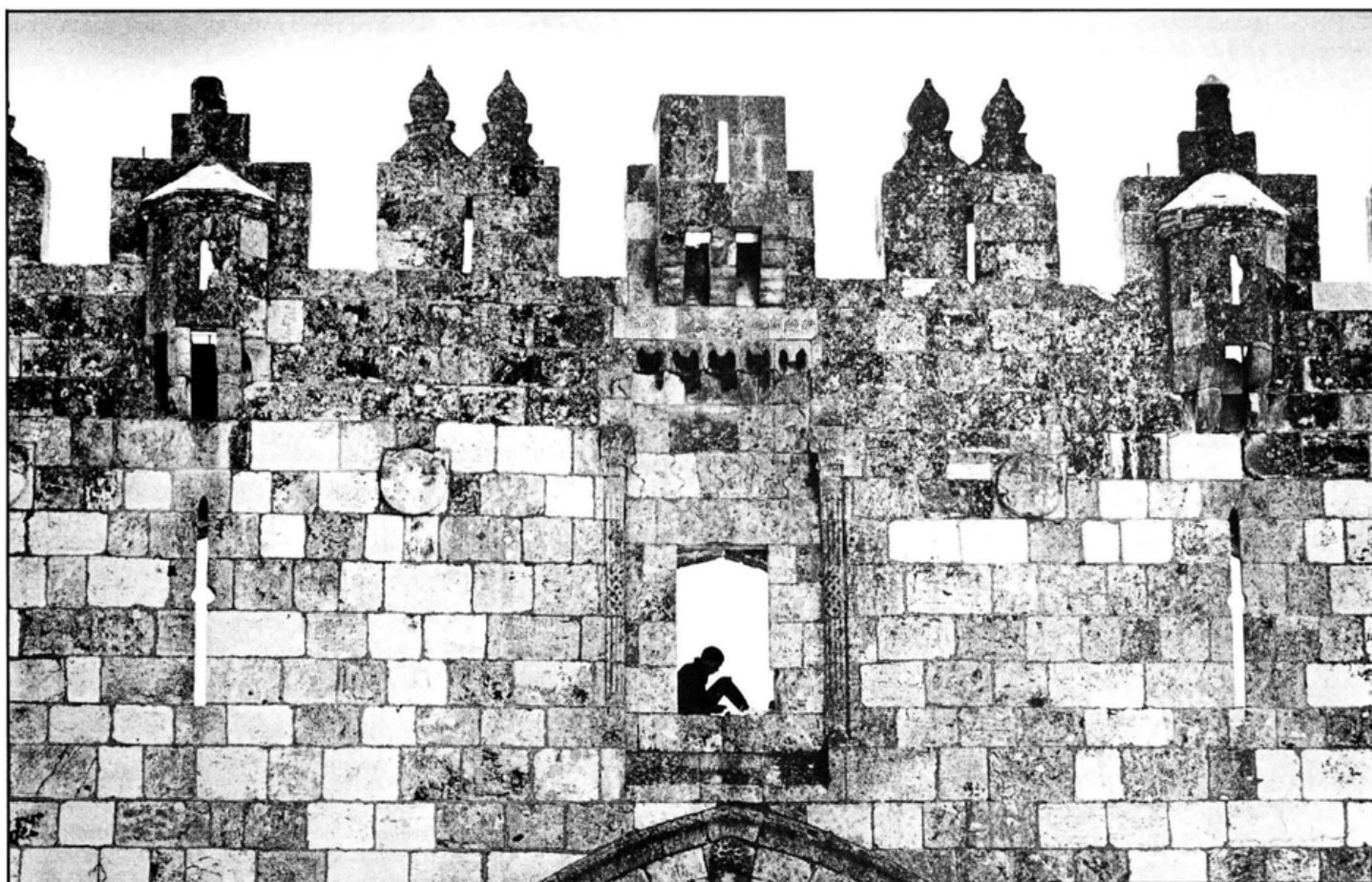
Photographs From The Promised Land

Michele
McDonald



Michele McDonald, Nieman Fellow '88, a staff photographer on The Virginian-Pilot in Norfolk, visited Israel this past summer and captured with her camera the Palestinians living in refugee camps and scenes in Jerusalem.

Photo by William Tiernan



The Watch on East Jerusalem. An Israeli soldier on his tour of duty settles in a "window" of the Damascus Gate that overlooks the Arab section of the Old City.

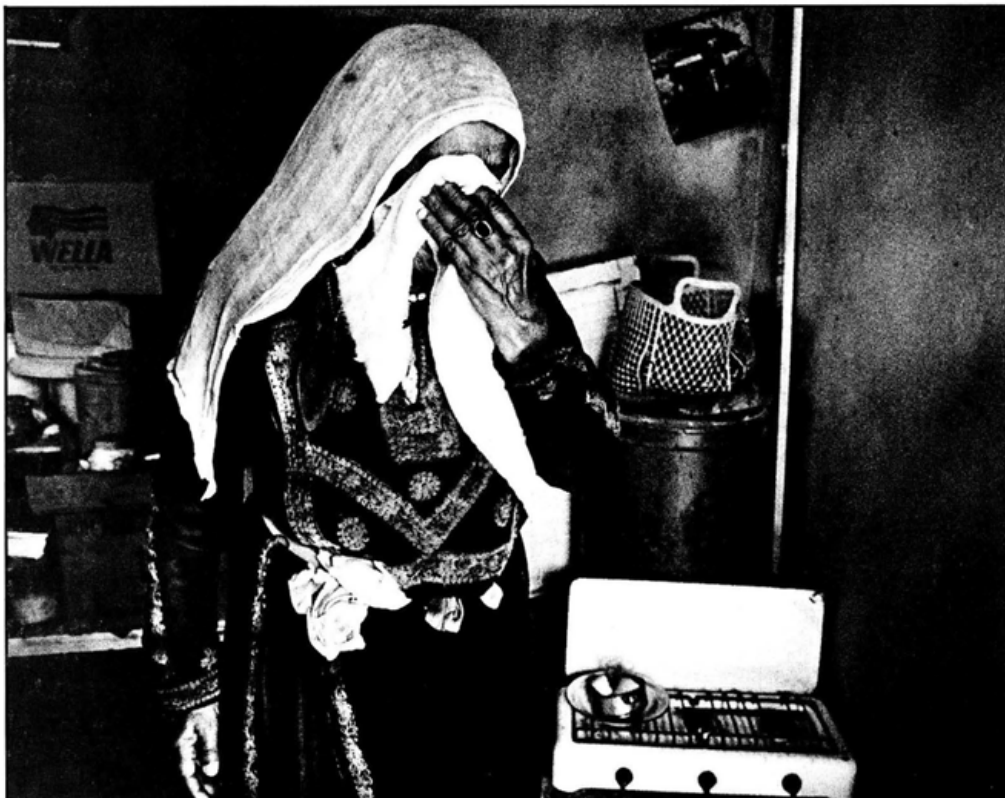


A non-combatant is hit by a stray rubber bullet and loses an eye. The nine-month old Palestinian child from the Jebalia refugee camp in Gaza, is held by a relative who forms tiny fingers into a V for victory sign.

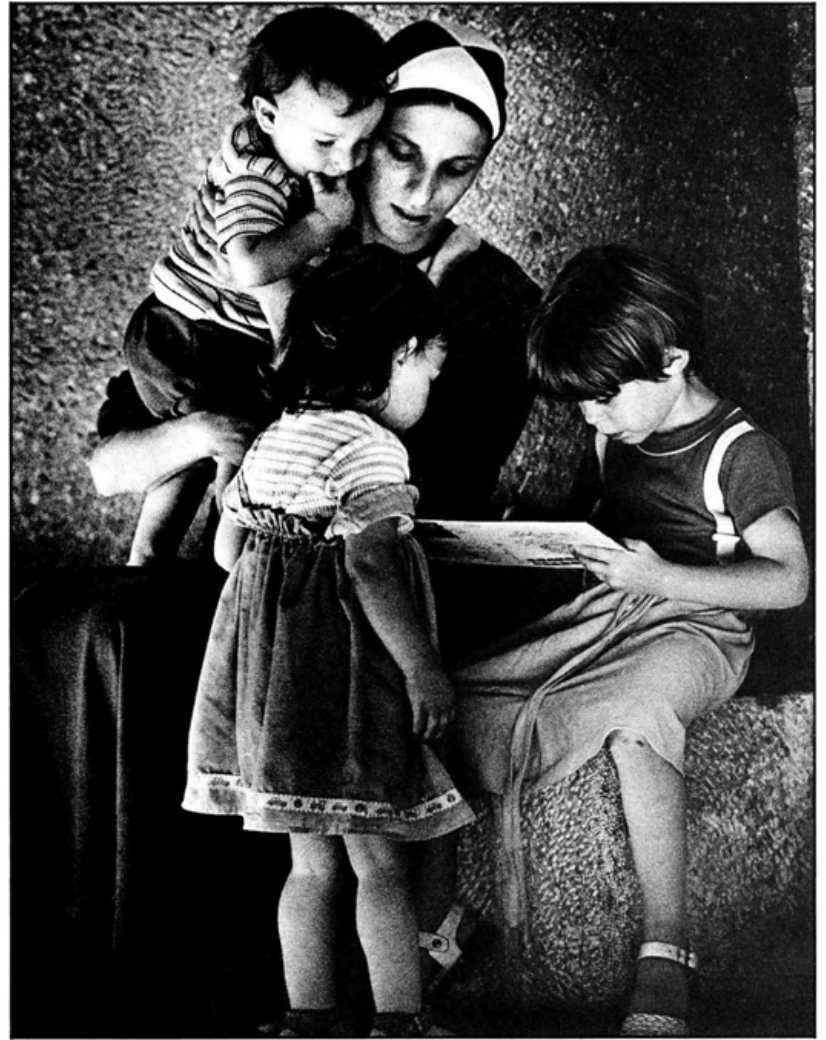
A World They Never Made



A woman from Gaza whose face tells a story points to where she says she was beaten by soldiers.



A Palestinian woman from the Maghazi encampment outside of Gaza City cries as she talks of her dead husband and son. Her home is a small room without running water or electricity.



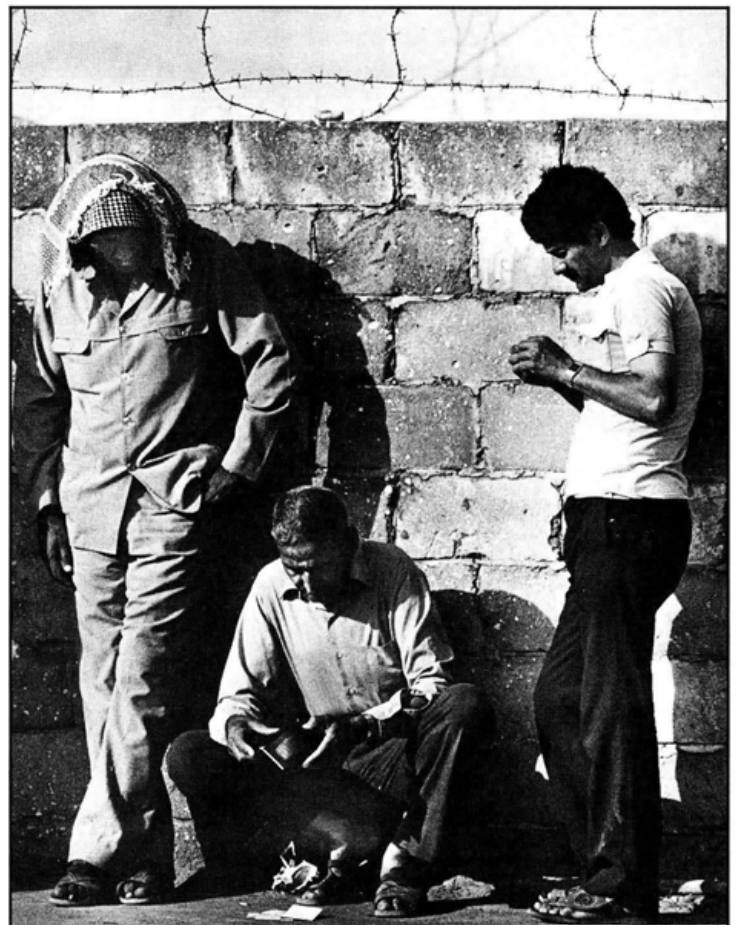
In the Jewish Quarter of the Old City in Jerusalem, children who are part of a play group gather around a young mother — one of several caring for the group — and listen to a “pupil” read from a Hebrew primer. The wall and seat are segments of Roman ruins.



Women and Children from a Gaza refugee camp await the opening of a clinic and arrival of Palestinian doctors who donate their services and work until they run out of medicine.



Praying. Two Hasidic Jews reverently face the Western Wall — it used to be termed the Wailing Wall — to make their religious observances.



Paying. Palestinians lean against a wall topped with barbed wire as they line up to pay their taxes to the Israeli Government.



The curfew tolls — from 10 P.M. to 3 a.m. — for Palestinians in the Gaza strip. For those who work in Israel (most workers do; there are virtually no jobs in Gaza) it means a long commute or staying — illegally — in Israel locked in in sleeping quarters, as is this Palestinian worker, the quarters also are illegal!

Alaska's Press — A Breed Apart

John Strohmeier

*Sourdough news and gamblers were the past.
Statehood brought problems shared with the lower 48.*

Alaska's newspapers, battling a tyrannical climate and a capricious economy, have a heritage few publications can claim: Against mighty odds, they were the midwives at the birth of a state. Indeed, the establishment of the 49th state would have been thwarted for years, maybe even decades, without them.

Yet, in that not so distant struggle, they were a pitiful few matched against powerful opposition. Well-financed outside forces, controlling what few industries the territory had, were not about to relinquish their feudal hold on the rich resources. Because Alaska, twice the size of Texas, has a sparse population and communities isolated by four mountain ranges and the Pacific ocean, journalism has had faltering progress in the state. Its history is one of high hopes, false starts, and hard-scrabble success.

No one has been able to determine the first paper to be published after

John Strohmeier, Nieman Fellow '53, former editor of *The Globe Times* in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, and a Pulitzer Prize winner, is the visiting professor of the Atwood Chair of Journalism, University of Alaska Anchorage. He is the author of *Crisis in Bethlehem*, *Big Steel's Battle to Survive*.



Alaska was purchased from Russia in 1867. *The Sitka Times*, dated September 19, 1868, claimed to be the first, but several little papers reporting mainly church news had been started by missionaries in south-eastern Alaska, where clusters of population existed in those days.

so blatant that Alaska's second territorial governor, Alfred Swineford, stated in his annual report that the Alaska Commercial Company "has reduced the Native population to a condition of helpless dependence, if not one of absolute and abject slavery."

. . . along with the miners, the outfitters, the claim preserving lawyers, the purveyors of booze . . . came the mining camp printers. Most carried a cigar box full of type, a batch of paper, and a supply of ink.

However, Alaskans discovered the broader uses of the printed word by circulating petitions to protest injustices inflicted by the early exploiters. In those days, the power lay with the Alaska Commercial Company, a firm run by a privileged group of outsiders who obtained a 20-year lease from the federal government for exclusive hunting rights to seal herds on the Pribilof Islands. The outsiders also inherited various assets of the old Russian American company that enabled them to spread their control of fur buying and trading throughout the territory.

While few petitions ever survived confiscation, much less reach Washington, the company's abuse became

Swineford sent his message to Washington in 1887, 20 years after the Alaska purchase. Now for the first time we see references to a press swinging into action. Swineford, a former newspaperman himself, supported his case by quoting a Juneau *Alaska Free Press* report on the Alaska Commercial Company's methods of eliminating competition. It wrote: "If an Indian came to one of their stores with money he had obtained through the sale of a fur, from other white men than their agents, not an article could he buy from them, and thus they would starve the Indians into utter submission to them."

By the turn of the century, a new

force expanded the mission of Alaskan newspapers: the Klondike Gold Rush. Lured by the promise of riches, a new breed of pioneers penetrated the frigid interior in swarms. Crossing rivers, ravines, and mountains, most came backpacking picks and staples into this unchartered wilderness. But along with the miners, the outfitters, the claim preserving lawyers, the purveyors of booze, the gamblers, and the frontier ladies, came the mining camp printers. Most carried a cigar box full of type, a batch of paper, and a supply of ink.

In 1903, one George Hill toted the makings of a small newspaper shop across about 400 miles of Alaskan wilderness in the dead of winter and started the *Fairbank News*, the parent of today's paper the *Fairbanks Daily News-Miner*. From the beginning, the paper plugged for better roads to the mining camps and for the incorporation of Fairbanks, which, it pointed out, was the only way "a good school will be secured for some time to come."

Estimates are that about 50 newspapers were founded during those first 10 years in which adventurers poured into the Yukon basin. In this era of goldstrike journalism, many papers lasted only a few issues. As gold ran out, towns died and journalists joined the move to other locations. Some papers were little more than tip sheets on where the gold was, or was supposed to be. Most received their news by "Mukluk Wireless," meaning that the old sourdoughs, wearing mukluks or moccasins, brought news back in from the hills.

In that first issue of the *Fairbank News*, gold naturally was the biggest story. But it is important to note that local public affairs quickly became big news too. While at this point no one could envision the development of such a gigantic territory as Alaska, the local newspapers did shape the direction of communities and, despite all their warts, they spoke for justice — at least as they interpreted justice

— and condemned those who operated above the law — as they interpreted the law. This was an important public service because lawlessness was rampant and jails were non-existent.

Inevitably, the papers suffered credibility problems. "Sourdough news" was not infallible, and no telephones existed to check rumors. Stories refuting previous published stories often made up a good part of page one. For example, in its October 1, 1906, edition, the *Fairbanks Evening News* retracted a story that the Wilbur Crimmin, a river steamer, had been wrecked and said the report of lives lost in a cave-in at the Chamberlin gold mine was "exaggerated." It turned out no one was killed.

needed help the most — the Eskimos and Indians. They had numbers but little voice in elections because of devious registration requirements. Before being certified as "competent" to vote, a Native had to show he could write his name, read the Preamble to the Constitution, and explain its meaning. That, in effect, left them almost powerless at the polls while native lands were being exploited by outsiders.

As greedy interests decimated the state's fur-bearing animals, the commercial salmon canning interests likewise robbed the Natives of traditional salmon runs. The commercial netters diminished salmon runs so badly that it threatened the ability of Native fishermen to feed themselves.

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However, the corrections suggested that ethics became an early concern. And so apparently did human issues. Alaska was way ahead of the country on the status of women, an issue that was woven into the newspapers' early calls for home rule. And when the federal government finally permitted a territorial legislature in 1912, the first act of that legislature was to give women the right to vote, a right not bestowed in the lower 48 until eight years later.

Unfortunately, equality did not come that easily for the ones who

Yet, they spanned the mouths of rivers with nets, took out tremendous tons of fish, and paid not a cent of taxes to the state that yielded this bounty. Now, once more, newspapers confronted injustice.

A paper called *The Alaskan Fisherman* was established in 1923 especially to protest fish traps. This also marked the emergence of the Alaska Native Brotherhood, an ethnic union which adopted the paper as its official organ as it battled the canners. When Congress in 1924 extended the vote to all American natives, the

When a territorial legislature was permitted in 1912, the first act was to give women the right to vote. Unfortunately, equality did not come that easily for the Eskimos and Indians. Before certified as "competent" to vote, a Native had to write his name, and read the Preamble to the Constitution and explain its meaning. It left them almost powerless at the polls while their lands were exploited by outsiders.

Alaska Native Brotherhood mounted a crusade to get its people to the polls. *The Alaskan Fisherman* was an important ally by informing them of the candidates most likely to "help" with their problems — until the paper went under in the depression of 1932.

From the start, blunt-speaking editors of Alaskan newspapers showed no fear in expressing opinions about issues or people. They seemed to care little about libel suits or hostile encounters. For example, as late as the 1950's, the editor of the *Mukluk Telegram*, published in Kotzebue, wrote in its News About Town Column: "Archibald Furguson, local windbag and buffoon, is on a business trip Outside, accompanied by his combination partner and mistress — we assume he is having a pleasant trip."

By the 1940's, when waves of economic and political change engulfed the state, newspapers began to show their true mettle as they rose to champion the cause of all Alaskans. Their pleas for a greater role in governing their own territory had long been brushed aside by the federal government. They still had no vote in choosing their governor. They had no input on setting fishing seasons or mining safety regulations. Their feeble territorial government had no power to tax the outsiders making millions from the state's salmon runs and mineral deposits.

It took World War II for the federal government to realize that Alaska was an important part of the union. The Japanese attack on Dutch Harbor and its occupation of the Kiska and Attu islands in June, 1942, was the first time an enemy occupied American soil since 1814. In the next five years, the American government built large military installations and carved a highway that linked the territory to the lower 48, forever ending Alaska's isolation.

The infusion of more people — and the arrival in 1940 of an enlightened, far-sighted territorial governor, Ernest Gruening — also raised Alaska's sensitivity to its own imperfections, especially the treatment of its Natives. Restaurants and saloons in Juneau and Anchorage posted such demeaning signs as "No Natives Allowed" and even, "No Dogs or Indians allowed." A theater in Nome actually had divided seating, whites on one side and Natives on the other.

The response of *The Anchorage Times* was to open its editorial columns to Governor Gruening. On February 14, 1945, he vehemently urged the end of "soul-searing race discrimination in our midst to the extent that we can do so by legislative action."

That very month, the territorial legislature in Alaska passed an anti-discrimination law, 10 years before such an act became the law of the land in the lower 48.

It was during this same period that

the press managed to persuade Alaskans to confront their biggest issue — statehood. For some time, it was clear to one newspaper publisher, Robert B. Atwood of *The Anchorage Times*, that Alaska was becoming a vital part of the United States and deserved statehood. However, Atwood was almost alone in that feeling at the outset, and furthermore he was a virtual newcomer, having come to Alaska in 1935. Worse, he was an easterner.

But he did have one asset that even old-time Alaskans had to concede made him more than a "cheechako." His highly regarded wife, Evangeline, was a native Alaskan, born in Sitka to a prominent banking family. And she campaigned and wrote relentlessly for statehood.

The battle for statehood by *The Anchorage Times* spanned 30 years.

Editors showed no fear in expressing opinions and seemed to care little about libel suits. As late as the 1950's, the editor of the *Mukluk Telegram* in Kotzebue wrote in its News About Town Column: Archibald Furguson, local windbag and buffoon, is on a business trip Outside, accompanied by his combination partner and mistress — we assume he is having a pleasant trip."

The Anchorage Times opened its editorial columns to Governor Ernest Gruening, and in 1945 he urged the end of "soul-searing race discrimination in our midst to the extent that we can do so by legislative action." That month, an anti-discrimination law was passed — ten years before the act became law in the lower 48. During this same period the press persuaded Alaskans to confront their biggest issue — statehood.

Founded in 1916 as the *Cook Inlet Pioneer* during the railroad building boom, the paper had grown by the 1940's into the largest circulation paper in Alaska. However, the obstacles confronting the newspaper in its campaign were formidable.

First, there was A. E. "Cap" Lathrop, a millionaire out of Fairbanks and the biggest developer in Alaska. As owner of the *Fairbanks Daily News-Miner*, five theaters, two banks, a brewery, and a coal monopoly in the north, he was an important man in Alaska, and he liked the *status quo*.

Second, there were the powerful salmon canning companies. They, too, liked the *status quo*. Determined to keep the territory open to unrestricted fishing for salmon, they saw no benefits from roads, schools, or other improvements linked to statehood. So opposed were they that they formed a well-financed organization to oppose it in Alaska and in Washington where the ultimate decision would be made.

Third, there was the locked mindset in the Alaska panhandle in the southeast. This was instilled early by the J.P. Morgan-Guggenheim interests which owned the Copper River and Northwestern RR that car-

ried ore from the Kennecott mines. They had vigorously opposed formation of the territorial legislature before it was finally passed in 1912, and for years they hammered their anti-home rule view through the *Cordova Alaskan Times*, which they controlled. The Treadwill mining interests, which controlled the *Juneau Record*, joined in the campaign.

After copper mining waned — and the *Cordova Alaskan Times* became a weekly — the dailies remaining in Ketchikan and Juneau picked up the tune. The *Ketchikan Fishing News*, owned by salmon interests, and the *Juneau Daily Empire* were already politically opposed to Gruening. In fact, at one point the *Daily Empire* even blacklisted the territorial governor's name from its news columns.

Finally, there was the opposition in the United States Congress itself. While scattered congressmen had honest concerns whether Alaska had the population and the governance experience to handle statehood, the real opposition came from the Southern block. It feared that the addition of two senators from a northern state would tip the balance in its fight to maintain cloture, the parliamentary filibuster that enabled them to hold back the flood of civil rights

legislation building up in Congress.

And what kind of support did *The Anchorage Times* have going into this prolonged battle?

First, it had Bob and Evangeline Atwood. Bob wrote hundreds of editorials and his wife, a newswoman in her own right, organized a statewide Alaska Statehood Association which funded a definitive and scholarly study of the statehood issues. The findings, largely favorable to statehood, were published as a supplement by virtually all the papers in Alaska, including the hostile *Juneau Daily Empire*.

Second, it had the Native population, which was discovering the power of the vote. They were ready to register their protest against the exploitation by the salmon canning industry any way they could.

Finally, there was Gruening, the controversial territorial governor, a former Boston newspaper editor, and a close friend of President Franklin Delano Roosevelt. Gruening paid dearly for his liberalism. When he became territorial governor, the *Juneau Daily Empire* tried to brand him a Communist in the prevailing hysteria that led to the McCarthy era in the late 1940's. But the *Empire* overplayed its hand by charging also that Gruening was a partner in diverting territorial money into a private account in a Juneau bank. Gruening was a fighter — he sued for libel and won.

Alaskans first voted for statehood at a general election in 1946 by a comfortable margin. But it took 12 years more before the United States Senate voted to admit the state. This occurred on June 30, 1958, with 64 votes for, 20 against, and 12 abstaining.

Several changes had taken place by then. "Cap" Lathrop had died and the *Fairbanks Daily News-Miner* had been purchased by C.W. Snedden. After an agonizing reappraisal, Snedden not only reversed the newspaper stand on statehood but he became a foremost champion, spending time and money to personally lobby for it in Washington.

Much of the national press came on

board, thanks to Atwood and Snedden. *Life Magazine*, *The New York Times*, the Hearst papers, and the Scripps Howard papers all endorsed statehood.

the Cape Thompson area, which is in the remote northwest.

The honored Edward Teller and a team of other nuclear scientists went to Alaska to campaign for it.

In 1958, the Atomic Energy Commission sought to help Alaska — it said — with its Plowshare Program. It planned to explode six atom bombs, equal to two and a half million tons of dynamite to create an artificial harbor in the remote northwest. Nuclear Scientists, including Edward Teller, campaigned in Alaska for the plan. A *News-Miner* reporter, Tom Snapp, wrote a jolting account about how the blast would permanently scar Alaska because of fallout and force the relocation of the Natives. The articles nipped the plan.

President Eisenhower ended his reservations. And as for the concerns about self-governance, Alaska held a constitutional convention on its own three years before the Senate vote and adopted a constitution that remains a model today. Again, the newspapers played a strong part in persuading the territorial legislature that this was an expenditure in the best interests of Alaskans.

Complex issues tested the press's leadership as soon as Alaska was admitted into the union. Immediately after the vote in 1958, the Atomic Energy Commission sought to help Alaska — it said — with its Plowshare Program. Under a plan known as Project Chariot, it planned to explode six atom bombs, equal to two and a half million tons of dynamite, to create an artificial harbor in

Snedden's *News-Miner* was enthusiastically for it but had the good sense to assign a reporter, Tom Snapp, to do an indepth study. Snapp turned in a jolting account of how the fallout from such a blast would permanently scar Alaska and force the relocation of the Inupiat Eskimos, which incidentally, were the last to hear that they would be displaced.

Snapp's series not only helped nip this foolhardy plan, but he raised a level of concern for the uninformed Native population. He subsequently left the *News-Miner* to help Howard Rock found the *Tundra Times*, a weekly which serves the Native populations in Alaska to this day.

Meanwhile, Alaska's newspapers played critical roles in the long and often confusing debates over the Native Land Claims Act and in open-

ing the north slope to oil exploration. And when labor goons moved in on the 800-mile pipeline project from Prudhoe Bay to Valdez, the *Anchorage Daily News*, under the leadership of Kay Fanning, did a courageous job of reporting the racketeering and won a Pulitzer prize in 1975.

That series on the Teamsters Union was all the more remarkable because the *Daily News* was then a struggling newspaper and had not yet received the capital infusion of the McClatchy chain.

Alaska's history is littered with newspapers that were born and abandoned, that struggled and survived. The eight dailies and 28 weeklies that serve Alaska today still risk unparalleled physical and economic hardships. But they are a joy to read. In a young state that started with no tradition, much of journalism in Alaska today performs in the highest tradition. □



Make the Verbs Count

Fletcher P. Martin

A black reporter in a city room was a lonely man. An assignment could turn into an obstacle course. But looking back — it was the written story that counted.

Years ago on the *Chicago Sun-Times* the city desk constantly stressed, warned really, that the lead, no more than 25 words, must immediately seize the reader's interest and imagination. Use precise, moving language. No fiddling around, get to it! Keep the reader in mind. Make the verbs count.

I recall an assistant city editor on one occasion chastising me: "Remember that short you did about the window cleaner falling to his death from the 10th story. He didn't fall — he PLUNGED! Make the verbs count."

Later on a slow Sunday morning, a short from City Press was given to me to rewrite. Utilizing the hierarchy's labored warning, I decided to put it all together. My lead: "A 60-year-old woman who fell asleep while smoking in bed, was found smoking in bed."

The assistant city editor reading the piece frowned and shook his head. "Death is sacred," he said, peering

unsmiling at me. Unknown to him, I had prepared a second piece on the tragedy keeping death sacred. But I wanted to show in a kidding way I knew how "to get to it. No fiddling around." We both chuckled and it helped ease the boredom of that slow Sunday morning.

correspondent to the South Pacific.

Mr. Pope looking at me, the ceiling light reflecting off his balding head, said with his tired, executive smile, "We like you. We respect your work. But if I hired you, my entire staff would walk out."

Happily, and later, the staff at the

The words of an assistant city editor:
"Remember that short you did about the window cleaner falling to his death. . . . He didn't fall — he PLUNGED! Make the verbs count."

Black reporters on metropolitan dailies in the early 1950's were few and far between. Only a few years earlier many newspapers carried lynch statistics and racially labeled blacks in the news. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. was then a young boy in school, and it might be presumed Ms. Rosa Parks had no trouble sitting in the back of the bus. Black reporters worked mostly for newspapers owned by blacks and catering to blacks.

Bursting with pride after my Nieman Year in 1947, I approached James Pope, managing editor of the *Louisville Courier-Journal* and asked about the possibility of a job. I was then city editor of the *Louisville Defender*, a weekly newspaper run by one of the finest of men, Frank L. Stanley. Stanley had sent me as a war

Sun-Times didn't walk out. But it did seem to me, looking back on it, the mammoth city room suddenly grew quiet. Maybe it was just my imagination. There was heavy typing at one machine, I remember. I learned that typist was Ray Brennan, the fine crime reporter whose interest as always was solely on the copy in front of him.

A quick shake of the hand by the city editor and told where to hang my hat, I was directed to the rewrite bank. I wasn't there 10 minutes before the city editor yelled for me to pick up a reporter on Line 2. Line 2? I saw the switchboard and headphone but I hadn't used either in my life. Brennan, sensing my dilemma, threw the switch for me and I managed the headphone. It felt like the headgear I

Fletcher P. Martin, Nieman Fellow '47, was the city editor of the *Louisville Defender* in Kentucky before joining the *Chicago Sun-Times*. Later, he served with the United States Foreign Service in Ethiopia, Ghana, and Kenya. He is now retired and is living on the island of Mallorca.



. . . After my Nieman Year in 1947, I asked James Pope, of the Louisville *Courier-Journal* about the possibility of a job. . . Mr. Pope . . . said with his tired, executive smile, "We like you. We respect your work. But if I hired you, my entire staff would walk out."

had worn playing college football. The reporter dictated rapidly as though he had a train to catch. I was thankful for having sweated through the typing course in high school.

It took maybe two weeks to become adjusted to that city room and all those people. People moving about, people pounding out copy, people summoning copy boys. I found myself in a strange situation because at home we had a staff of five only — no headphones, no switchboards, no rewrite bank, no copy desk. Yet we managed to turn out a fairly decent sheet.

A nice thing happened during my first days on the paper. When the owner of the bar on a ground floor learned the newspaper was hiring a black, he was heard to say he would never serve him. He was told by one of his best clients — our fastest man on rewrite — that if he didn't serve me he would never again serve him. The rewriter never mentioned this to me, but several other staff members did. As it turned out, that bar became one of my favorites in Chicago.

There was a kind of racial discrimination at rewrite and I felt it keenly. Brennan usually greeted his two white colleagues: "How are you, you old bastards." To me: "Hi Fletcher." One night at the downstairs bar he put his arm around my shoulder saying, "You're going home with me, you old bastard. My wife is cooking some short ribs." A little thing — but for me at that time, it

made my day. Brennan was the star of the staff. It was like Greta Garbo inviting a lesser known on the lot to share smorgasbord with her.

Some time later there was a knock at my door on Chicago's South Side. I opened it to find a middle sized white with reddish-brown hair. He smiled, introduced himself: "I'm James Reston of *The New York Times*." I was surprised and pleased. What reporter would question the weight and sheen of this man's byline?

Reston wondered if I could get him into a meeting of South Side Democrats that night. Someone at the *Sun-Times* had sent him to me. No problem. Several eyes turned our way as we entered the crowded storefront room, Reston was the only white present. When I announced his name no one paid particular attention. When his newspaper was announced, heads swiveled. Half of the meeting was devoted to the importance of getting out the vote; the other half to answering Reston's questions.

The *Sun-Times* executive editor, the late Lawrence (Larry) Fanning, approached me with an idea. After his reading a newspaper series on the Negro in the South, why not take a look at how he was faring in the "Land of Lincoln," as proclaimed on auto plates. Fanning suggested driving to southern Illinois, pose as one seeking work, and cross the state "and see what happens."

I headed down state in the old Pon-

tiac. It turned out to be an enlightening assignment. I ran into racial situations in the southern part of the state not unlike what one of my race and color would expect to find in the Deep South. Most hotels and motels where I inquired, I could neither stay nor eat. Cairo, the old river town, was beyond belief on the question of racial animosity. In my years, boy and man, I had never known such prejudice.

There was one humorous aspect at the state capital, Springfield. Here was real Abraham Lincoln country. Souvenirs extolling the Great Emancipator were easy to come by. I wondered if I would be denied hotel accommodations in this heartland of Lincoln. If turned down, I would make the verbs count. I parked near a well lighted hotel and marched in with the lead for a story whirling in my mind.

I inquired of the desk clerk if I could get lodging for the night. Certainly he said. As I was filling out the registry card he informed me when dinner would be served.

I did a six-part series for my paper. I said I was unable to find work, then I listed the racial inequalities I did find. The series never saw the light of day in the *Sun-Times*. Maybe people in charge of news thought the time wasn't ripe for such an assessment of race relations in the "Land of Lincoln." They didn't tell me. After a time, with the memory of the ordeal still fresh in mind, I did a long piece with the *Atlantic Monthly* in mind. They accepted it.

That some stories do not see the light of day on which one has done his level best, I learned, should not provoke dark and sinful thoughts. Even in print these stories might not bring the soulful joy anticipated.

I recall the anguish of a Mississippi editor hired by the *Sun-Times*. Wonderful fellow, tall, slim, long hair waved, mustache curled — right out of *Gone With the Wind*. Hominy grits written all over his face.

He did the usual obits stint reserved for most newcomers. Good discipline, claimed the desk — get-

For a story on how the Negro was faring in the "Land of Lincoln," I headed down state Illinois . . . It was an enlightening assignment. I ran into racial situations . . . not unlike what one of my race and color would expect to find in the Deep South. I could neither stay nor eat in most hotels and motels. Cairo . . . was beyond belief. . . . I had never known such prejudice.

ting facts straight, spelling names correctly, learning to use the phone. Healthy training for one, even though he had been an editor on a daily.

Finally, this fellow was given an outdoors assignment. It required footing it in research. If he pulled it off, the desk encouraged him, it could mean a column and a half, byline *et al.*

He pulled it off. The story ran in every edition. Was he ever proud! His pride was shown in his stride and "Rhett Butler" leer. He made one fatal mistake though: he dared ask those around him if they had seen his story. Of course they had, but they weren't going to tell him. The general attitude among *Sun-Times* reporters in my day was, as the song goes, "Whatever you do I can do better, I can do better than you." There were no congratulations, no pat on the shoulder, no offer of a drink. The poor man was absolutely crestfallen. Finally, this fellow left the paper and became managing editor of a daily in Indianapolis.

On this rocky plateau in Mallorca, many things come to my mind about the profession — its ups and its not-so ups. For me there were those moments that bring a chuckle even now.

I recall preparing to dictate a story from Oklahoma City on the annual convention of the National Associa-

tion for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP). Robert (Shad) Northshield (later national television producer) was my rewriter. I heard the desk say, "Shad take Martin on three." For some unexplainable reason I handed the phone to Walter White, the nationally known civil rights leader and head of the organization, who was standing beside me.

"Alright dammit," I could hear Shad's raucous voice booming over the phone, "come on with that racial stuff."

"Why Mr. Northshield," White said in his soft, southern drawl, "this is Walter White." Shad and I laughed about it later.

At one Nieman Reunion during a

talkfest and martini session in Wiggleworth Hall, my wife, heavy with child, took a chair that creaked. The famous publisher of the *Louisville Courier-Journal*, Mark Ethridge, a true southern gentleman, asked, with a courtly bow, if she would kindly remove herself from the chair. He then hurled the creaky thing out the second story window into Harvard Yard. That incident remains a pleasant mental keepsake.

Working as a reporter, as every reporter knows, can bring a thousand laughs — and strangely enough, a few tears. Who could keep from clouding up as they lowered into the earth the mutilated body of the Chicago kid, Emmett Till, murdered in Mississippi. So young, so lynched. I was assigned the "react" story when the body came home. It was one of the few times I had been assigned a story with heavy racial overtones.

Milburn Aikers, then executive editor of the *Sun-Times*, made it clear I wasn't on the staff as a Negro reporter (black wasn't in vogue then, it could provoke a fight) to cover Negro news. Anyway, when the police radio channel cracked out a shooting on the segregated South Side, it was generally termed a "cheap story." Cheap, cheap, cheap. "Don't bother," was the desk reaction, "City Press will send a graph."

Sloughing off racial incidents, as newsroom people know, changed

continued to page 55

On this rocky plateau in Mallorca, many things come to my mind about the profession — its ups and its not-so ups. . . . I think that few other professions can bring that joy of a piece well done. . . . you can probably see your product the next day. The masons who labored on the Pyramids couldn't do that.

South Africa: Controlling the News Report of the Media Conference

A media conference on covering news in South Africa, sponsored by the Commonwealth Secretariat, was held recently in London. Co-sponsors of the conference were the Association of British Editors, the Nieman Foundation at Harvard University, and the African-American Institute.

* * *

Opening

SHRIDATH RAMPHAL, the Commonwealth secretary-general, pointed out that while the conference would focus on news censorship, at the same time it would ineluctably be responding to the wider crisis in South Africa of which censorship is a part.

Many white South Africans have convinced themselves they live in a "democratic" country. But the rest of the world knows that President Botha has no clothes—the "electorate" is only three million in a land of 30 million. If the National Party were truly for change, it could pick up tomorrow the "negotiating concept" of the Commonwealth Eminent Persons Group and move to end apartheid. Like tyrannies before it, apartheid South Africa can stamp on protest, on dissent, even on simple truth. But it cannot stamp them out. There is no way of resolving the contradictions of apartheid. The choice is to preserve, or end it.

Publish and Be Damned

LORD MCGREGOR of Durris, a professional historian and former

chairman of the Royal Commission on the Press, noted that denial of freedom of expression is the ordinary condition of many countries other than a few Western democracies. News and opinion are suppressed, and deviant journalists and broadcasters persecuted, imprisoned, and sometimes killed in the interests of state policy. The majority of governments practice press censorship, but in South Africa the censorship is in support of apartheid ideology and the government has passed the stage of being authoritarian and is now totalitarian.

And, unfortunately, a totalitarian government which is determined to suppress dissident opinion will largely succeed. The press as a domestic critic will be muzzled, so it is up to the foreign media to maintain the largest flow of accurate information that is possible.

Pressures on the South African Media

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS were made by James Bishop, chairman of the Association of British Editors and the editor-in-chief of *The Illustrated London News*; Howard Simons, curator of the Nieman Foundation at Harvard University, who noted that Zwelakhe Sisulu, [NF '85] editor of *The New Nation* in South Africa, is still in detention; and Frank Ferrari, senior vice president of the African-American Institute, who said that one foreign policy concern of Americans is South Africa, although

the percentage of interest is small and depends on the extent of information Americans have about the issue.

He said the issue raised at the 1987 media conference by Richard Cohen, then a producer at CBS News, who said that if the media cannot cover the issues in South Africa, then foreign news organizations should pull out, has generated a good deal of discussion among U.S. media organizations.

Hazards for the Independent Press

THE OPENING PANEL was chaired by Richard Steyn, editor of *The Natal Witness*, and the first speaker was Oupa Mmotsa, editorial board journalist on *The New Nation*, who explained that his weekly paper is published by the Southern African Catholic Bishops' Conference. It is just over two years old and for 15 months of that period the editor, Zwelakhe Sisulu, has been in detention without trial. The editorial stance is to give voice to the voiceless masses in the black ghettos. This is not an example of "the alternative press," but a reflection of the majority, not an alternative to them. We support the aspirations of the people, we are accountable to our community, and for this we face closure. (*The New Nation* was closed by the government for three months on March 22, 1988).

In the last three years, nonviolent opposition to apartheid has taken on a truly national character. Deeply rooted mass-based organizations have arisen in almost every community,

. . . nonviolent opposition to apartheid has taken on a truly national character. Deeply rooted mass-based organizations have arisen in almost every community, posing the greatest challenge yet to apartheid.

posing the greatest challenge yet to apartheid. The government's attack has taken two forms: the legal response via the state of emergency, and armed vigilantes who have been allowed to burn, plunder, and murder.

The very existence of independent newspapers is threatened. Pictures and articles published by mainstream newspapers have drawn no attention from Botha, while similar reports and pictures in *The New Nation* have been subjected to a completely different set of criteria. So it is not only the regulations we have to cope with, but also the government's bias, which is heavily weighted against us. The emergency regulations go further than the existing security laws — they give the government and police more absolute power and more streamlined procedures.

The picture is a grim one, but it is a reality. We at *The New Nation* have opted to live with this reality and challenge it at every level we are able to. We will continue to operate in the tradition of the newspapers that went down before us and died at the hands of the government. We will continue to let the world know what the government wants to hide.

The Opposition Press Is a Symbol

IRWIN MANOIM, a founder and co-editor of *The Weekly Mail*, said the crackdown on the media in the last few months has intensified. What is it that suddenly causes the government to crack down on the media? The crackdown has ceased to have anything to do with what the media

is saying, it now has to do with what the media symbolizes, what it represents. P.W. Botha is in fear of a phantom—the possibility of the Conservative Party taking power.

This phantom is invisible to people on the left. The government is haunted by the possibility of being pushed out of power by the right wing.

The government could close a newspaper by simple diktat, but chooses instead to invent the most complex, convoluted bureaucratic procedures: issuance of warnings, by letter, and in the *Government Gazette*. The point of this is public ceremony, symbolism. Newspapers are not merely suspended or censored, they are gradually closed down publicly. It can take several months. It seems irrational, but there is nothing irrational about it. It is simply that what the papers say is no longer of importance.

The newspapers have been sufficiently stifled, the major news of the day is not getting out, the foreign press is not covering the story. What matters is that the newspapers are useful witches to burn and right now P.W. Botha needs to find witches.

The danger facing us is that our future is no longer in our own hands. It is not just a matter of the alternative press or the mainstream press deciding to censor themselves and finding themselves rescued. The entire agenda is on a different level and it is hard to predict when you will act or how you will act.

The Afrikaans Newspaper

HENNIE VAN DEVENTER, editor of *Die Volksblad* since 1980, said the Afrikaans newspaper is particularly susceptible to direct or indirect measures from readers.

The Afrikaans paper serves a community split by discord and dissension, including differences about basic aspirations and an underlying bitterness between Afrikaner and Afrikaner. The Afrikaans newspaper established to support the ideal of Afrikaner self-realization finds itself in the group which acknowledges the realities of South Africa and constructively strives to convert these realities into a just order.

The Afrikaans newspaper is probably the most important explorer of a new Afrikaner school of thought; it paved the way for meaningful reform and in fact initiated reform. The result was the alienation of the other Afrikaner group, those who refuse to face realities and continue to believe in white supremacy. As a result, the Afrikaans newspaper has become a primary target of right wing ire in South Africa.

The outside world, to its own loss, is mainly aware of the English-language newspapers in South Africa. Many critics are therefore extremely aware of black aspirations and of leftist frustrations, but alarmingly uninformed about the ominous rumblings in the inner circles of Afrikaner politics. You adopt an attitude of indifference toward the tremendous effort by committed Afrikaner South Africans to stem these dangers from the right.

If it is said the Afrikaans newspapers should encourage more far-reaching reforms, or distance themselves from certain government actions, then there is one reply: if the National Party should be brought down, the incoming government, an alliance of the Conservative Party and the AWB (Afrikaner Resistance Movement), would not be more inclined to reform. They would tear up the constitution and would systematically set about destroying

everything in South Africa that has been achieved to date to avert a bloody racial clash.

In their eagerness to get at the government, many people are simply contributing toward the growth of the right-wing parties. By denying positive developments, which have happened on rather unprecedented scale in recent years, these people are guilty of fanning black discontent and completely frustrating those who, under difficult conditions, are working to make South Africa a better, happier place for all its peoples to live in. Against this background, the Afrikaans newspaper has to play its even more finely nuanced role. Those who expect it should be done any other way are expecting that the good should be destroyed together with the bad.

Difficulties for Black Journalists

SIPHO KHUMALO, journalist on *The Natal Mercury* and a founder of Concord News Agency, said it was especially difficult for black journalists because they live with the people in the townships and are seen by the majority as representatives of their views, of their sufferings, and of their aspirations. But as the government becomes more belligerent to the press, our very existence as journalists is being questioned by the people in the townships and rural areas. They say basically, "What is the use of them talking to us because they cannot publish?" We are being alienated from our own people because of press censorship. The government is also involved in a number of attempts to discredit journalists by trying to force them to provide names of their sources to the police. This is meant to frighten people from talking to journalists.

The state of emergency has given some establishment newspapers the excuse not to report the conflict between the police and the resisting people in black areas.

Newspapers not known for extensive coverage of issues in the African communities now proclaim in footnotes, "We cannot publish a report on

unrest because of the emergency regulations." That is something they had not been doing even before the state of emergency. Stories have to be checked with the police because if the police don't confirm it, there is no story. Stories are sometimes changed to give more emphasis to the police version, and that creates problems for black journalists. It is difficult to explain to people that we are not in control of the information they are giving.

If we are not in control, then what is the use of them talking to us?

The international community needs to challenge these newspapers to publish, because the major media operate under conditions of virtual monopoly answerable to and speaking for minority interests. Vast sectors of our community are denied forums on political problems, and denied access to resources and infrastructure to establish mass media to speak for them.

The alternative newspapers, or democratic media, have committed themselves to the creation of a mass media available to all. Democratic journalists in South Africa believe that no media run by the unrepresentative government as a propaganda mouthpiece can claim to fully and accurately inform its listeners. The international community should defend and support the development of a democratic press.

Discussion

AN AMERICAN asked whether TV coverage had exacerbated violence in South Africa. Mr. van Deventer said the presence of TV cameras had in certain instances stimulated riots; since the TV cameras have been withdrawn from the townships, there is an evident reduction in violence. TV is the most handy propaganda weapon available. Mr. Steyn said that the exclusion of TV coverage has to do with the image the government is trying to get across. There has been no television in the townships, but the violence has continued. A South African pointed out that journalists never see the start

of the unrest in townships, only the tail-end; there is no way a TV camera provokes a riot or continues the momentum.

A Briton said that just because a TV camera isn't pointing at a story doesn't mean there is no story; there are hundreds of stories. Are the TV companies actually interested in news? An American said the perception that American TV has virtually abandoned South Africa comes from the lack of dramatic pictures; those pictures were influential in galvanizing public opinion. Censorship has forced TV to try to come with different ways of telling the story.

An American said that surely the point of the TV images is not the effect on the townships but on public opinion overseas. Mr. van Deventer agreed that was the main reason for the censorship measures, but the world has seen only a very small part of complicated South African issues. TV coverage gave the perception that the country was in flames; it is not a balanced picture, it is the wrong image. All the pressure in the world is not going to change the situation; the hearts and minds of the South African people must change.

An American commented that in American television terms the story has always been framed in the context of violent confrontation rather than the routine, every day violence of apartheid. The definition of what the story is should be reframed — the story should illuminate the impact of apartheid on South Africans, black and white.

Pressures On The Media Covering South Africa

ANTHONY LEWIS, columnist for *The New York Times*, who chaired this panel, said it is not surprising that a society in transition should resent the press reporting the transition, nor is it surprising that a government at odds with a large majority of the people it rules should try to exclude the press. But there is plenty for a foreign correspondent to do in

South Africa, even under the restrictions. There is a great deal of information about South Africa in the newspapers, despite the restrictions. Occasionally, reporters don't do things they should be doing.

TV Pictures Move People

WILLIAM WHEATLEY, executive producer of *NBC Nightly News*, said censorship had made television probe more deeply into the root causes of the violence. A criticism could be that the method has been highly episodic, though sound, journalism. All the American networks are re-examining their news function, since there's been an information explosion, for example, with local TV news using national and international stories. This gives a greater opportunity to deal in context; we have been evolving into more and more perspective reporting as opposed to spot news.

South Africa provides opportunity in that regard. Just because the access to dramatic pictures is drying up does not mean that the story is not dramatic and is of considerable interest to the average American. We want to make stories interesting and compelling, but we probably haven't done that enough with South Africa. *NBC Nightly News* is beginning to explore doing certain international stories in depth, four or five minutes, over a series of nights.

The truth is it was the dramatic pictures which caused the greatest American interest, and that upset the South African government. Even with the best efforts to communicate the importance of the continuing story, it may never be on the same level without those dramatic pictures. It's a fact of life that television pictures move people. That is what the Pretoria government wanted to stop and they've been successful in doing it. We continue to do what we can to exert influence on the government to change its policy, but no one is very optimistic.

Keep Plugging Away

PETER PRESTON, editor of *The*

Guardian, said journalists ought to be honest with themselves and acknowledge that they don't have the opportunity, by what they do, to change demonstrably the way in which South African history will now proceed. We also ought to be honest about the amount of help those on the outside can offer to good, struggling South African journalists.

We ought to think carefully about what has happened and how we cover it. The South African story has taken another lurch on. There will probably be an internalized debate within the Afrikaner community, an extremely important part of the story. The press can still do an awful lot. The pressures are bureaucratic and boring—you can't get the people you want in to cover stories, you can't change correspondents. Everyone is doing the best they can but it's not a forward-moving situation. However, those on the outside must settle down and say that one of the world's greatest stories is continuing and deserves to be followed with all the attention and ingenuity we can muster. We have to keep plugging away.

Role of the Committed Press

SIMON JENKINS, columnist for *The Sunday Times*, said it is useful to come back to the role we as journalists feel we ought to be playing in a political struggle. When people talk about press censorship, they end up talking about their own moral rectitude, or their relationship with their editor and readers. They lose sight of the role a committed press should be playing. The extent to which South African censorship laws fall short is well known to all of us. It's not helpful to go over and over again about how villainous the laws are—it's to try to see what are the lingering fragments of freedom that still exist in South Africa and what role can journalists play in building on those fragments to try to increase the role a free press can play in helping people struggling to be more free.

It's surprising and impressive that

there is a continuance of brave and courageous journalism in South Africa. There is a nongovernment press, a press that does not automatically support the government. South Africa is one of the few countries in the Third World about which that can still be said. It is a function of the relatively capitalist society that this exists, and a function of large numbers of people who feel strongly that there ought to be media pluralism. They are prepared not only to back small magazines, or big newspapers, but also to go on buying them.

It is impressive that there are so many magazines and newspapers on sale in South Africa which are shameless in their criticisms of the government.

How can we help? It is useful for us to constantly liaise with South African journalists, to use them as stringers, thus helping them with money, to use them to cover news stories, to get photographs from them, and generally to play our role in trying to maintain the living standards of South African journalists. We can buy their periodicals and disseminate what they're producing so others can read what they're writing rather than merely what we regurgitate in our own newspapers.

There now is a developing program of training for South African journalists overseas, which also maintains this interflow of ideas between journalists abroad and South African journalists.

But nothing is more important than covering the story. It is appalling to hear people advocate that foreign correspondents leave South Africa. If that attitude were used all over the world, journalists would find themselves only going to Western Europe.

Pretoria's 'Payne Policy'

LES PAYNE, assistant managing editor of *Newsday*, said that foreign journalists in South Africa have not taken advantage of what access they have under the press restrictions. To-

day in the U.S., South Africa is not a burning issue as it was when the topic was on the front pages and on the nightly TV newscasts. Foreign journalists should not pull out of South Africa, but it is a fact in America that most editors are more preoccupied with keeping their credentials to remain in South Africa than with informing their readers or viewers.

A good deal of what little information comes out of South Africa now is advertisement, rather than news, for example, black on black violence, the black middle class, blacks moving into white areas. These are stories the South African government would not have any real problem with.

The South African government has a standing policy that *Newsday* will not be allowed to have any reporter, editor, or photographer enter the country as long as Les Payne works for the paper. This stemmed from the aftermath of coverage of the Soweto uprising of 1978. When the story picked up again in 1983, *Newsday* did not have a bureau in South Africa but would just send reporters there. Six different reporters were given the run-around and finally *Newsday* was told of the "Payne policy." But *Newsday* had to find a way to get reporters to cover the story.

A correspondent already living in South Africa was taken on staff, without telling the South Africans, and she filed stories for two years before requesting new credentials. The South Africans discovered who she was working for and took away her credentials.

Our role is to inform people. We cannot stop the inevitable, but we can fulfill our role, which, if we don't do it, will buy the South Africans more time, although what is going to happen in South Africa will happen whether we write it or not.

Discussion

A CANADIAN participant said a myth about television is that it is chock-a-block with great pictures; in fact, many of the stories run every

night do not have great pictures. An American asked whether foreign correspondents should be prepared to risk expulsion from South Africa. Mr. Wheatley said the restrictions produced a guessing game as to how much can be got away with; what the limits are is a tricky business. Correspondents have risked expulsion. A Briton said it is imperative for correspondents to stay in South Africa; the guidelines for the restrictions are murky and sometimes it has to be played by ear. Any notion that foreign television coverage of South Africa can be kept from being seen by South Africans is a myth—because of satellite receiving dishes.

A Briton asked why the disclaimer that news from South Africa has been subjected to censorship has disappeared from press and TV reports. Mr. Jenkins said the disclaimer becomes ridiculous because you'd have to use it for every story from Israel, Russia or anywhere subject to censorship. The solution is to say it within the story. Mr. Preston said *The Guardian* could and does keep reminding the reader whenever a reporter's article has been materially altered.

A British participant asked what would happen if the situation in South Africa gets more severe. In the 1930s, Nazis exerted stringent controls on the press and the press conveyed the story that things were much more normal than they really were. Had the foreign press reacted differently, it would have been fairly easy to convey a realistic impression.

Another Briton commented that correspondents working in South Africa who take the line that they should bang their heads against the limits to do their duty are proceeding in an absurd way. Working in an environment like South Africa, you do have to adapt. If the people who watch our work or read our words don't think it's different there, then we have been wasting our time.

A Briton asked why there is a much bolder, fuller view of the situation in South Africa from the alternative press than from the American or

British newspapers.

Mr. Jenkins commented that the press in South Africa exists in a relatively pluralistic environment; if anything, the press, particularly the black press, is more vigorous now than ten years ago. There is a relationship between the constraints and the vitality of the press that keeps it going. Another British participant pointed out there are different audiences for the press in South Africa and in Britain and the U.S.

An American said the difference lies in the interpretation of what the story is. The U.S. press doesn't delve into what is going on inside the black community; much of that depends on the individual reporter's interpretation. Another American said the Western media is predisposed to report the story from the perspective of white attitudes; blacks are presented as some aggrieved, amorphous mass and the perspective is the Afrikaners' reaction to them.

A South African commented that black journalists are not hired by the foreign media and the reason is racist: black South African journalists are not regarded as journalists. An American said that white American editors have a cultural disadvantage that skews their views of how you tell the South African story. A South African said that black reporters are being used more and more by South African and foreign media. A British participant pointed out that the BBC regularly uses black journalists in South Africa, but there are great risks for them. A South African commented that a journalist in South Africa is always taking risks; he makes the decision whether to work as a journalist and that decision does not have to be made for him.

Mr. Lewis said that journalists can perhaps make a marginal difference by voicing their feelings when something happens to a Zwelakhe Sisulu. That makes a difference to his safety.

The African National Congress Viewpoint

THABO MBEKI, director of the information department of the African National Congress, addressed conference participants at a luncheon sponsored by the Association of British Editors.

Mr. Mbeki said there might have been a bit of concern that he would want to use this occasion to propagate ANC policy and that press people don't want to be dictated to by political organizations whether they are governments or not governments. But there is a matter of common concern that the South African struggle should be told.

Pretoria wants the South African story to be told, but a particular kind of South African story, so they allow foreign correspondents to come. That's what the restrictions are about. You are allowed to report some things and not allowed to report others. Or allowed to report things in a particular manner and not in another. If press people agree to that, then they allow an agenda to be set for themselves by the regime, which violates the objective of getting the South African story told.

The issue that brings us together is that we want the truth about South Africa to be told. And if we try to achieve that, particularly foreign correspondents, then we must take on board the reality that we might get shut down. If we're going to say the truth must be told, we are ready to carry the consequences of our being expelled from South Africa.

There are many capitals around the borders of South Africa. There are diplomatic sources in Gaborone, diplomatic sources in Maseru, which can tell the story, even if the story originates from a journalist in South Africa, who lives with the situation and in many instances has got a better comprehension of the South African realities than somebody who's sent in from London or Washington. And so, he can become a "diplomatic source" in Gaborone.

If we pursue that objective of get-

ting the truth about South Africa, we must contend with the fact that journalists can get chucked out. But the fact that the foreign correspondent is not there does not mean that the story cannot be told. The story might even get told better. There are many television companies in the Western world that have sent crews and reporters to South Africa, who've traveled to South Africa as tourists, and they probably tell the story of South Africa today better than the resident representatives of particular television companies, because they don't have this obligation to demonstrate to Stoffel Botha that they're keeping within the limits of the law.

There's a context in which the South African story is told by the Western media that here you have a Western democracy, a bit errant, it does some bad things, wrong things, in fact, many bad things and wrong things, but basically it's a Western democracy. White politics, because there's a democracy among the whites, then begins to take primacy in terms of reporting South Africa.

There is insufficient reporting about apartheid. It may be that you can't go and report a situation of unrest. But even to correct the notion which might be prevalent, that you've got here an errant democracy, democracy nonetheless but doing all manner of terrible things, you have to address the issue of what is apartheid. What's happening to the people in the bantustans, which are not affected by the emergency restrictions?

Finally, there might be an underestimation of the commitment of black journalists to the telling of the story about South Africa. These people need enormous support not only to tell the story to South Africans, but to become a base on which the international community can draw to tell the story to the rest of the world.

In the end, what's needed is a sense of outrage about this terrible thing, apartheid, that editors will say we have an obligation in the interests of

justice, in the interests of democracy, we have an obligation to do anything and everything possible to make sure that our own listeners, readers, and viewers, get to know the truth without restrictions, without bowing to the wishes of the P.W. Bothas. It's a bit of an appeal.

Can The Story Be Told?

CHARLAYNE HUNTER-GAULT, national correspondent for *The MacNeil/Lehrer NewsHour*, who chaired this panel, said that although there are differences in how TV and print journalists go about gathering the news, a journalist is still a journalist, and they all operate under the same rules. Differences in perspective, however, are important, and those differences help journalists arrive at some kind of representation of truth. It is not a matter of black and white, but good journalism and fair journalism in the interest of truth. The essence is how we look at people—who are the players in this drama and how do we ensure that we cover all of them?

The Struggle Is The Story

JOE THOLOE, political editor of *Sowetan*, recalled seeing in New York the documentary *Witness to Apartheid*, a very moving film. The film was a collation of many brutal facts and seeing them in that one package brought tears. A doctor in Mamelodi township, interviewed about injuries during a "police action," and his wife are dead today, assassinated by unknown assailants.

Another documentary, *Children of Apartheid*, showed a boy talking about his time in detention; today, that boy is dead with a bullet in his head. The story was told, in very moving fashion, but in the end the people who told the story were again the victims.

Have we been telling the right story? Are we telling the real story of South Africa? Mr. van Deventer told of the pressures the National Party is getting from the far right. Frankly, that is a sideshow, and not the story

of South Africa. The real story is between black and white, the three million whites who have the vote as against the 30 million blacks who don't have the vote. The story is the struggle of the majority to have a say in the running of their own lives.

A new phenomenon emerged in the recent eruption. The repression, though, is not symbolic in the sense that certain things have been happening since 1984. When you go to a funeral you will find young men doing a dance and chanting ANC slogans, "Oliver Tambo." "Liberation." You go to another funeral and you will find young men dancing and singing about the Pan Africanist Congress, about Johnson Mlambo, about liberation. There is a whole new mood. This has come after the time when the people were scared of mentioning the name of the ANC, of the PAC, or Oliver Tambo, but now they are getting bolder.

You will find armies surrounding them while they're singing these songs, hoisting the flags of these organizations. More and more people know about organizations that have not been publicized inside the country. We are getting a new type of communication among blacks.

There will be a painful period ahead, where guerrillas are going to come in and swim in the water, and it will be difficult for the security forces to find them. The security forces will try to uproot them and in the process innocent lives are going to be lost. People are going to get more bitter than they are now. It is going to be terrible.

The government is aware of this and that is one of the reasons why they are stamping so hard on the press. It is not symbolic. If we are hoping to take up our cameras again, then the story cannot be told. It will never be told, because P.W. Botha and his National Party and the whole right wing are going to get worse.

The present restrictions are nothing compared to what we are going to face. Ultimately, this story must be told. The people's anger can

be interpreted, the story can be written in ways that the writer cannot be banned, but how many outsiders can come in and get the feel of this anger? Perhaps we need a closer liaison between the foreign media and the native journalists, the people who have the feel of what is happening inside. The risks they are taking is because they are part of the people, the struggle for liberation. We believe we can tell the story better than everybody else.

We have a problem, though. We do not have trained journalists, we just drift into the trade and learn as we go along. One major contribution that the Western media can make is to train black journalists and give them jobs. We believe these are necessary.

The black journalists who are used by the Western media say their job is to send the message out, a commitment on their part. Let us focus on the black journalists, let us see how we can help them express what they are feeling, what they are committed to.

We need more interpretation of what is happening inside South Africa, rather than the sensational one-off.

Our Beacon Is Politics

RASHID SERIA, editor of *South*, said his paper tries to be the voice of the extra-parliamentary groupings. Change in South Africa won't come from the Nationalist government; change lies in the hands of the people, in the black working class. That point needs to be made very strongly and in doing that put the situation in a perspective so that we can understand why issues like the right wing are contrived.

The South African government is extremely concerned about international opinion and we should not bluff ourselves about it. We should ask why the government has stopped short of outright banning of an organization like the United Democratic Front, or not gone further against Cosatu. Part of the reason is that the government is concerned

about what the international community thinks, it is concerned about sanctions, about disinvestment. It is also concerned about the image that is portrayed on the TV screens and in overseas newspapers.

People find it may be difficult to understand why papers like *The New Nation*, *South*, and *Sowetan* are not allowed to exist. You can pick up the English-language newspapers and often read criticism about the South African situation. Why does this happen, why did the government allow opposition when it introduced its tri-cameral parliamentary system? We must understand that this government is expert in repression, they deliberately allow a situation to develop whereby opposition voices can protest. It is essential for the perception overseas that those small loopholes are allowed.

We all feel that foreign correspondents are doing a great job, but there are also black journalists inside South Africa who are able to assist in getting information out of the country. We should look at how those individuals can be used, how the emerging small news agencies can be used, to enhance the flow of information overseas. It is not sufficient for us only to make noble statements, we have to back up these statements with deeds, and one way is to make more use of these people. They don't have to be intermediaries; we don't need people in between to tell the story.

We have got capable people and they should be utilized. A lot of the problem is orientation. We can't reorientate foreign correspondents to understand the situation in South Africa, irrespective of the very good job they are doing. Some of the black journalists are very professional, skilled, and they can help.

What are the demands of the political situation? We are involved in media for political ends. We are not ashamed of this, that we use our columns of our paper—and the same applies to the other independent papers—to fight apartheid and

exploitation. We are proud to promote the vision of an alternative society based on a nonracial democracy. It is the political situation in South Africa and our analysis of this situation that determine the media's approach. Our beacon, therefore, is politics.

Our people have shown tremendous political resilience, to come back after every crackdown, and we shouldn't make any mistake that it will come back again. The point is in what form? On the media front, papers like *The New Nation* and *South* will definitely be shut down. Irrespective of how we tone down the papers or make secret undertakings with the state, the process of muzzling the voices will continue.

The question is, what form will the struggle against apartheid take following the latest crackdown? This whole issue is being debated in South Africa. It centers on the nature and form the struggle will now take. How is media going to adapt to a situation where the struggle will now be conducted on a much more informal level, on a less institutionalized basis?

This political situation will make increased demands on the alternative press, which the government wants to shut down. We are faced with a changing political situation, a situation where people are now debating the question of violence, and people are operating underground. The role the newspapers will play will be dictated by the political conditions prevailing in South Africa. Those conditions will say to us in future how we should move and where we should move.

There is no doubt the situation is going to worsen and that papers are going to be closed. If we want to tell the story, will we be able to do it with the papers put out of business? [*South* was suspended by the government on May 9, until June 10.]

The Story Is Multi-Faceted

ANTHONY ROBINSON, South Africa correspondent for the *Finan-*

cial Times, said some areas are extremely difficult to cover, for example, the dissident side and the ANC in particular, those in prison, and it is impossible for a white journalist to give an account of what it is like for blacks in South Africa and the pressures of being a black activist.

It is a difficult country to understand, particularly when it comes to dealing with black politics. The struggle of the blacks against apartheid is a major story, of course, but it is only part of the story. White correspondents tend to speak only to those blacks who speak English, are urban and middle class, while most blacks are not. One should be dubious about anyone explaining what the black majority thinks. This society is infinitely more complex than color alone.

What is the story? Repression, yes, but it's only part of the story. The government is not only repressive—there is a mixture of repression and reform, coercion and co-option. The society is going backward and forward at the same time; societies can do that. Societies are more complicated than the sum of the people, who make them up. South Africa is one of those societies where it is difficult to keep track of what's going on, in fact it's impossible.

What is actually happening in South Africa? It is important to look far under the surface of the society. The story is multi-faceted, part of it is about black society, the growth of a black middle class, and about white society, the traumatic divisions within Afrikanerdom, the changes in education, the question of housing, the fact that apartheid has created a Marxian proletariat in a classic way, a proletariat without property and few political rights. If you're going to have a change in society, then fundamental changes at the grassroots level must be watched. The fact that blacks can now own property, in racially defined areas, and can build up a capital base, the fact that the restrictions on blacks as employers and businessmen are now falling

away, are creating the circumstances for a radical transformation of the society, which may be the most hopeful aspect of South Africa.

The Afrikaners are trying to buy time with this repression to do what Franco did in Spain, leading to a large middle class. This might happen in South Africa. The degree of repression now is stronger than it might otherwise have been because the Afrikaners are so divided.

The Issue Was Incorrectly Framed

JIM HOAGLAND, associate editor of *The Washington Post*, said that the journalistic equivalent of divestment—the foreign media leaving South Africa—illustrates the flawed assumption of the definition of the story. Richard Cohen seems to believe that the turmoil and violence that began in 1983 constitutes the story and the crackdown marks the end of the story. But the story is a much longer-term process that is almost certain to go on in its current form for the next ten to 20 years.

For about a decade, the government cared about what the outside world thought. Was that decade, which ended in the past year, an anomaly? The situation today is remarkably similar to what it was in the 1970s, the full force of the government being used to cut off dissent at the source, an effort to confine political and economic activity to the innocuous or the ineffective. It is remarkable that we have a discussion today over government intentions to cut off foreign funding for church and other groups, issues straight out of the 1970s. Then, it was the Herstigte National Party that was threatening to take over from the National Party.

We have now the reimposing of the peace of the graveyard. It is most puzzling that they felt compelled to declare a state of emergency at all, to give a name to something that already existed.

But we are not in the 1970s. The discussions today have clarified many of the changes, and one stands out—we have framed the issue incorrectly,

we've focused on the state of repression and censorship. What is striking is the state of dissent in South Africa, how much stronger the dissent is, how much healthier it is. This is what the media should look at, over a long period, and try to define it not only through a white prism, the prism of censorship, but also through the prism of dissent.

Another flawed assumption in Cohen's statement and some of these discussions is the idea that South Africa has disappeared from television screens because of the crackdown. It may be at least as likely that the crackdown came now, in the form that it came, because the story has disappeared off the screen. This anomalous period, where there was an opening in South Africa to the outside media, which is now restricted, came from the sense of the government that it could sell the story of reform, a sort of Manichean struggle between reform and repression.

For several reasons, including the failure of Pretoria to be able to do much with a friendly, conservative administration in Washington, the government decided there was no sale on that reform story, and had little to lose from the foreign media by restricting organizations and making arrests.

In the future, there will probably be such cycles, opening up for perceived political advantage and then a closing down. There is a numbing quality to the kind of violence that Cohen focuses on and it would have driven the story off the screen in any event. *There is a tactical reasoning behind the crackdown.*

The current wave of the crackdown runs counter to the notion that South Africa truly subscribes to Western democratic values. That ultimately is the justification for the high degree of interaction that Pretoria has and wants with the West. We are one of you, South Africa says, but we are in a tougher bind than you are. This justification is denied by the wave of censorship, and it is the role of the

press to say that, to say it repeatedly.

The idea that it is simply ordinary, decent people voting for neo-Nazi parties that preach blood and thunder policies needs to be called what it is, an absurdity. They are either one or the other. The role of the press is to say to South Africa, "You can't have it both ways."

Discussion

MS. HUNTER-GAULT asked if it were the numbing quality of the story that caused it to disappear, or was it how the story was framed and a lack of imagination about how to tell the story? Do editors think in terms of a commitment to this story?

Mr. Hoagland responded that some editors do, but more should. The point has certainly come now where you have to shift from the daily police coverage to taking a step back; the idea of 500 deaths from vigilante operations over the past six months cannot be reported and is not reportable in a way that has great impact in the U.S. But if it were done in-depth on TV, explaining how those 500 deaths occurred and what it means, it could have tremendous impact in the U.S. We need to shift to cover the systematic nature of violence in South Africa.

Ms. Hunter-Gault commented that there are many little dramas in South Africa that people fail to look at, including the drama of the Afrikaners as they experience internal dissension. The decline of coverage is due more to a lack of imagination than the fact that the story has become boring.

An American said many such stories were done, but the ones which stick in the mind are mainly the ones with violence. A Briton said that British television had by no means just settled for stories of violence. But people do remember those unbelievable scenes of violence that they had never seen before—that is the impact of television.

An American cited Mr. Robinson's comment that the situation had probably been worse in Spain. That

represents a tendency to flatten out the South African problem, to make it like other problems. In Spain, if you just shut up about politics, you could go about your business, but if you are black in South Africa, and you shut up, you may still starve to death or be forced to live in a hostel, you cannot imagine a decent life. It is not helpful to look around the world for analogies that don't exist.

Mr. Robinson said that was not his point. The comparison was with the Afrikaners' hold on power, which is similar to what happened in Franco's Spain, where you put the lid on everything on a political level and try to channel energies into social and economic change, with the ultimate aim of power sharing. It's too early for power sharing now; the blacks don't have any power right now.

How To Get The News Out Of The Country

THIS PANEL was chaired by Evelyn Leopold, Africa editor of Reuters, and the first speaker, Ameen Akhalwaya, editor of *The Indicator* of South Africa, said the panel's topic should be divided into two parts: the technical aspect, and the type of news to get out.

Technically, it is not a serious problem, since South African communications are sophisticated. The question is, What is the story? Is it about the AWB, or the black-white clash? It is a complicated story and there are different perspectives on it. People in the front line are reporting the story. Who decides what is the news? Is it the South African government which sets the agenda? The people in the front line are trying to say there is something going on and it is not according to the agenda set by the government.

It is imperative when trying to get the news out of the country to get a commitment from the people abroad to decide what the story is. There should be some sort of broad consensus before people within the country can write the story. Why should people who are not part of the

establishment do stories? To get the stories out of South Africa, you need the emerging press. But if they are not around, there will not be a story to be told.

How do you help these emerging journalists to survive? You have to support training programs for them. You can buy our editorial services, you can subscribe to the newspapers and news services. Some of us live on grants, but that is not comfortable, it is a form of charity.

The government is trying to control the news but at the same time, it expects journalists within the country to subscribe to it. There was an interview with Albertina Sisulu in *Africa Report*, and when we tried to publish that interview, our lawyer cut out about a third of it, the printer's lawyer cut out another third. Now that Mrs. Sisulu has been silenced, does this mean that there are no publications prepared to publish this story?

Foreign publications, especially the British media, since the Americans have become sensitive to our criticisms of not hiring black journalists, should try and get as many voices as possible.

Packaging TV News

JOHN OWEN, chief news editor of the national TV news of the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, said the CBC has not had a resident correspondent in South Africa since late 1985 because visas have been denied. There should be harder stories coming out of South Africa; we have had our fill of context stories. We devote enormous amounts of time to planning and packaging stories on a host of subjects. But we have not really put our minds to packaging and presenting this kind of television; most of TV news is pre-planned.

We have to find a way to take elements of the news in South Africa and turn them into a news story. The electronic gadgetry is available to get the story out. Interviews can be done with people who have been in the townships, there are observers in ex-

ile communities, experts all over the place, and we could periodically and regularly find a way to package what we might call, ironically, "Inside South Africa." It is perhaps time for TV news to come a bit further than where we are today.

But it cannot be a one-shot deal, a special report. What gives us additional incentive is a recent report on information coming out of South Africa — the public levels of awareness about the South African situation were highest when the story was on television.

Humanize the Story

ROBERT ROSENTHAL, foreign editor of *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, said first you have to decide what the story is and how to cover it. A journalist really has to push that line of what you can cover, and then step over it. There are so many rules that you have to report what you see. The analogy was made before to what the press did and did not do in Nazi Germany. It is not farfetched. It is the role of the media to tell the story, across the board.

South Africa is a confusing and complicated place for a reporter. All the facets of the country are the story. We cannot have the luxury of deciding in our hearts and minds of who is right and wrong. In terms of getting the story out, South Africa is easy, because there are so many people who want to tell you the story from their perspective. You can humanize the story, telling the story of a person who has been detained and tortured, for example. You have to take that approach. You cannot rely on government reports of what happened in a police action, that would mean following censorship.

Some institutions may weigh the choice of being there or not being there. That is wrong. You have to do what you can to really explain what is happening. The impact of censorship can create a mentality where you start thinking whether you can do the story, or get thrown out. Who then is going to tell the story? You have the

obligation to tell the story from the inside. There is also the responsibility that the people you talk to may be at risk. This is their responsibility and the journalist's as well. They know the risks better than foreign journalists do.

Generally, the media has become lazy in approaching the story. TV had a crisis mentality on what was being reported, but the crisis was not real. The impression on American TV was that the revolution had come, giving an expectation that change was going to come. Now, the story is seeping and oozing and has to be reported in that way. That way, it is more dramatic, and more difficult to get at. The drama is not sweeping across South Africa, the drama is in individuals.

How Far Do You Go?

TONY WEAVER, former news editor of *The Cape Times* and now a freelance journalist, said the most pressing concern is the steady process of criminalization of South African journalists within the country. Many of us have criminal records or are in the process of getting them; the state is trying its best to make sure we get criminal records.

Being a journalist in South Africa means inevitably you are going to end up on trial for something. There are so many South African journalists who are quite prepared to become criminals, to go on trial—and foreign correspondents, too.

There has been a lot of talk today about employment of stringers and black South Africans. If foreign newspaper groups are going to use South African journalists, what would their obligations be to those people? Will they be prepared to pay legal costs? Will they be prepared to lobby their own governments? Will they be prepared to sustain the pressure on the South African authorities if people are in detention or on trial?

It is easy to become a criminal in South Africa. Those of us who have been covering "unrest," or ongoing

resistance, become pretty wily, to avoid getting arrested, unless you're unlucky. But there are other problems. You're not allowed to be at any scene which is termed "unrest" or any scene where there is police action. Therefore if you report it as an eyewitness account, you are breaking the law. So you have to publish it as someone else's eyewitness account.

The question is, Are organizations which are publishing and distributing outside the country prepared to run that material? Will they be prepared to run accounts of police brutality, the accounts of military action, and possibly risk having a tit for tat action—their correspondent expelled?

Correspondents have to toe the line, do checks and balances—do they risk getting thrown out to get the story out? You don't always know why you're falling afoul of the government. This is why it is important to develop alternative news sources. A lot of people have spoken of the confusion of the South African situation; perhaps it's time to look at enlisting stringers, although the emphasis all the time on black stringers is quite offensive.

There are many white journalists equally committed to a nonracial, democratic South Africa. If there is a problem with activist journalism, then perhaps you should start hiring columnists, giving open space to reporters inside the country so they can give their point of view.

Those journalists based in South Africa who are filing out of the country are aware of the risks. They don't need by-lines, because of the risk. There is also danger to contacts, so getting the sensational one-off piece out brings up the constant dynamic between responsibility and getting the story out. The Richard Cohen thesis of getting out of the country is not on—people should hang in for as long as they can.

Discussion

A SOUTH AFRICAN commented that it is difficult for the white stringer to get to where the action is,

in the black townships, and asked whether it is not true that black journalists get the news and deliver it to white rewriters who have since become famous because of their interpretations of what black journalists were feeding out. Isn't it time we broke that dependence, by getting the black journalist to tell the story?

Mr. Weaver said he wasn't suggesting that only white journalists could do the job, just objecting to the constant saying that black journalists must be employed. There aren't enough journalists to go around; every single journalist in the country could be employed. The physical mobility for white journalists is a problem.

An American asked how you put at ease white editors who might be concerned about the self-proclaimed political agenda of black reporters. Mr. Akhalwaya said black journalists operate no differently from white journalists. If you are relying on professional journalists in a country, they will know their jobs; the policies are clearly laid out. Most of us in the emerging press have gone through *The Rand Daily Mail* or other publications. We are not there to distort the story, to write lies or enhance the image of liberation organizations at the expense of the truth. We are committed to getting the truth out. It is not our intention to be propagandists. We have to pay hell back home if we lie, we are answerable to the government as well as to the people we are writing for outside.

Closing

ANTHONY SAMPSON, author and former editor of *Drum* magazine, said that South Africa is a very complex country and none of us can hope to see all sides of it, for either geographical or political reasons. The more we can exchange views and ideas, the better. Despite this great spread of opinion, we all see the same basic problem existing, which is the difficulties of getting the truth.

Is there anything we can do about

it, more than we are doing? Richard Cohen's thesis was quite fiercely attacked, but it served a useful purpose. He was really challenging the existing system, saying that unless you can show you're doing rather better, perhaps the whole system should be changed and correspondents should get out. It has forced all of us to think about what lies behind it.

When David Astor raised the analogy with Hitler's Germany, doubts also concentrate our minds because none of us would like to think that in the future we were looking back on a period when the press could have said more, and did perhaps conceal or evade rather crucial truths.

Some of us have been over-influenced by false expectations in part. There is a mood among many journalists that because they were overexpectant, and they thought that perhaps there was some kind of basic change around the corner, that therefore they must be totally skeptical from now on. There has been a major switch of emphasis of reporting.

In 1984, very few of us foresaw what was going to happen in the year to come, that in that critical period with the new constitution, in fact, the townships were already beginning to become ungovernable. It has been difficult for people to get the story right for a long time. Part of that is due to the particular difficulties of whites in black townships, and the undercurrents, the groundswells in South Africa, are difficult to spot until they suddenly surge to the surface.

Foreign correspondents have the problem that in a situation where practically all the black opposition groups are banned, they become very largely dependent on the white agenda. It's almost impossible to avoid, and it's made more difficult by the technical demands of the media, who always deal in deadlines, they always prefer something that happened two hours ago. This is one of the great snags of our profession, as so many news editors are aware.

It is difficult to persuade either the

editor or the reader that background pieces are as important as something that has the dramatic dateline and the emphatic statement of what Terre-Blanche said today in Pretoria. And it will become increasingly more difficult.

The Richard Cohen question brings up the point that in the end it might be better for correspondents to go, if a totalitarian state is reached, which we are not at the moment in. There are, though, constructive alternatives and complementary activities that the media could use more of, and if those do risk the continuation of the foreign correspondent's existence, then we should test the line further. But we do not take enough advantage of new technologies, the FAX system, the international telephone, and the availability of audio and video tapes, as well as travelers. That doesn't necessarily jeopardize the correspondent's existence for the time being.

What is remarkable is how little we have learned, after a long process of coverage and extremely competent and conscientious reporters, about what goes on inside the National Party caucus, or inside the minds of some of the critical figures in the government.

There should be some kind of center, which will make it possible for journalists to have easier contact with people passing through South Africa, and with sources which are part of unofficial networks, specifically church sources, who are well-informed and provide helpful information. The press could take some initiative in providing a means by which visiting people in London could have quick access to the press, and vice versa. It is important to have that.

One can often pick up more about the black political scene from the emerging media than from the international press. They are subject to tremendous threats and pressures. There should be a greater sense of protecting by constant publicity the key figures on those papers. There is

a small charmed circle of black leaders the government appears not to dare seriously touch, and that circle is charmed because those people are very well known in the world outside.

The more we mention names of Zwelakhe Sisulu and others, the more reluctance there will be by Pretoria to take the next move. Relationships between the international media and the emerging press could be closer, to the profit of both. Those black journalists who say they are not properly recognized do indeed have a point.

The Story Must Be Told

ROGER WILKINS, president of the Pulitzer Prize board and Robinson Professor of History at George Mason University, said he agreed with Robert Rosenthal, who said, "Push the line." That is really the only way to do it. But when you do that, remember David Astor's comment that there may come a time when the presence of Western journalists in the country tells a story that is fundamentally not true. One does not agree with Peter Preston that outsiders cannot make a difference in the history of South Africa.

The Free South Africa Movement in the U.S., for example, made a difference. The South African government does not operate in a vacuum, and it does feel reverberations of the journalistic work done inside the country.

Joe Thloloe and a number of the black journalists seemed to be saying that the international press is a good deal better at telling the story of yesterday in South Africa, rather than the tomorrow story, the emerging South Africa that is going to be.

It is quite striking to spend a whole day discussing journalism as practiced by white journalists, by and large, who work for institutions run and owned by white people, and not hear the word "racism" mentioned once. When Charlayne got close to it, people started sweating. It is a problem. Racism is a fundamental part

of the American culture that shapes our minds and spirits, just as sexism does. How can a person grow up in a racist society and be formed by racist attitudes and values, and then turn his or her attention to a racially charged issue like South Africa and not be affected by that racism? It is not possible.

The black journalists seem to be saying that emerging South Africa is there to be seen, but you really have to work at it, and you really have to take those black people seriously. How do you do that? You have to exhaust yourself talking to the people. You sit in their kitchens all night long. You slop up all the drink it takes for them to talk to you, until you have a sense that you are able to touch their souls.

And you do it because what they think and what they feel and the things that shape their thought and feeling are of fundamental importance to the world you want to understand.

Somehow, the story of that emerging South Africa must be told. If, as there surely are, there are racial problems about getting that story in that sustained way, there are reporters there who can help you get it, who should be paid for their trouble, and potential reporters who can be of help down the road if we find ways to train them and employ them.



Nieman Conferees

Nieman Fellows attending the conference were: Ameen Akhalwaya, '82; Anthony Lewis, '57; Howard Simons, '59; Richard Steyn, '86; Hennie van Deventer, '77; Andries van Heerden, '87; and William Wheatley, '77. Joseph Thloloe, who was a conferee, is now attending Harvard University as a Nieman Fellow '89. □

Monica Gonzalez, Chilean Journalist, Wins 1988 Louis M. Lyons Award

Monica Gonzalez, a Chilean journalist under attack by the regime of General Augusto Pinochet for her interviews with opposition leaders and her investigations of government officials, including Pinochet himself, has won the 1988 Louis M. Lyons Award for Conscience and Integrity in Journalism.

A committee of the 20 members of the 1988 Class of Nieman Fellows chose Ms. Gonzalez, 38, for the award, which is named in honor of former Nieman curator Louis M. Lyons. The award is in recognition of Ms. Gonzalez' courage in reporting objectively and honestly on events in Chile, despite attempts by the regime to silence her.

"Her bold journalism has attracted the admiration of her peers in Santiago and the fury of General Pinochet's regime," wrote Mary Lou Finlay, Nieman Fellow '86, in nominating Ms. Gonzalez for the award. "It has also led to her being charged with defaming the president of the republic. When she was in jail, Ms. Gonzalez interviewed other political prisoners, and she published their stories when she was released on bail last November."

The award carries an honorarium of \$1,000. It will be presented this fall.

Ms. Gonzalez writes for the opposition magazine *Analisis*, and previously reported for the journal *Cauce*. She is the second journalist associated with *Analisis* to win the Lyons Award. In 1984, the award was presented to Maria Olivia Mönckeberg for her reporting in the face of official harassment.

Ms. Gonzalez was jailed for several weeks last year for publishing an interview with an opposition politician whose remarks were critical of the regime. Instead of beginning legal action against the politician, the government went after the journalist, and although she is currently free the case remains active.

She is known as one of the leading investigative reporters in Chile — a dangerous occupation given the Pinochet regime's efforts to clamp down on free expression. Ms. Gonzalez has published an account by a former security agent of crimes he committed for the regime, a description of a lavish estate owned by Pinochet, and many other articles that the regime has found embarrassing or inconvenient.

"The Chilean regime allows a measure of expression, but in ways subtle and overt tries to cow journalists into hewing close to the official line," said Eugene Robinson, chair-

man of this year's Lyons Award Committee. "Monica Gonzalez is one of the best known of the many journalists in Chile who daily risk liberty and livelihood to print the truth. That the government would seek to prosecute her is indicative of its attitude toward the press, and also of her effectiveness and courage."

Last year, the award was won by Zwelakhe Sisulu, [NF'85], editor of the Johannesburg-based *New Nation*, who has been jailed by South African authorities for more than a year. Other past winners include Violeta Chamorro, publisher of *La Prensa*, for her newspaper's efforts to keep a free press alive in Nicaragua; American correspondents who covered the war in Indochina; Tom Renner, a *Newsday* reporter, for coverage of organized crime; and Joe Alex Morris Jr., a *Los Angeles Times* reporter who was killed while covering the Iranian revolution. □

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American and Foreign Journalists Appointed Nieman Fellows, Class of '89

Twelve American journalists and nine journalists from abroad have been appointed to the 51st class of Nieman Fellows at Harvard University. Established in 1938 through a bequest of Agnes Wahl Nieman, the Fellowships provide a year of study in any part of the University.

The journalists in the new Nieman class are:

CECILIA ALVEAR, 48, senior field producer for NBC News, Miami. She attended the City Colleges of Los Angeles and Santa Monica, and the University of California at Los Angeles. At Harvard, Ms. Alvear, who is responsible for coverage of Central and South America, plans a comparative study of the United States and the Soviet Union and their impact on Third World nations.

CONSTANCE CASEY, 42, book editor of the *San Jose Mercury News*. Ms. Casey is a graduate of Barnard College. She proposes to study satire and satirists whom she characterizes as seeming "to be the most sane and most truthful of writers."

MICHAEL CONNOR, 35, managing editor of *The Post-Standard*, Syracuse, New York. He is a graduate of Cornell University. Mr. Connor plans to concentrate in two areas: Russian studies, reviving an interest in the Russian language, and studies of the American Indian.

WILLIAM PATRICK DOUGHERTY, 35, city editor of the *Anchorage Daily News*. Mr. Dougherty is a graduate of Baylor University. At Harvard, he proposes to concentrate in the study of and developments in Alaska's Pacific neighbors, principally Japan, Korea, China and the Soviet Union.

JONATHAN FERGUSON, 31, reporter for *The Toronto Star*. Mr. Ferguson holds degrees from Dalhousie and Carleton Universities and received a diploma in economics from the University of Paris (La Sorbonne). He plans to study economics, music, and morals and look into such fields as physics or chemistry.

CATHERINE GICHERU, 26, reporter with the *Daily Nation*, Nairobi, Kenya. Ms. Gicheru plans to study the new technology, especially as it applies to communications, and drama as it relates to communications.

D.B.S. JEYARAJ, 34, journalist with *The Island*, Colombo, Sri Lanka. Mr. Jeyaraj attended the University of Colombo. The conflicts in the Middle East and southern Africa, especially as they relate to ethnic stratifications and nationalism, are what he wants to study.

LIU BINYAN, 62, journalist and writer from the People's Republic of China. While at Harvard, he will study the democratic movements in Socialist countries, in particular China and the Soviet Union. He will also study the contemporary history of Germany.

ROSNAH MAJID, 35, feature editor of *Utusan Melayu*, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. Ms. Majid is a graduate of the University of Malaya. At Harvard, she wants to study American presidential politics, American foreign policy and continue French language studies.

MOELETSI MBEKI, 42, senior reporter/features with *The Herald*, Harare, Zimbabwe. Mr. Mbeki is a graduate of Willesden College of Technology, London, and the University of Warwick, Coventry. He plans

to concentrate on an examination of what factors draw the modern superpowers to southern Africa.

RODNEY NORDLAND, 38, deputy foreign editor (foreign correspondent) with *Newsweek*. Mr. Nordland is a graduate of Pennsylvania State University. He plans to study foreign affairs, especially as it relates to Europe, South America, southern Africa and the Soviet Union, as well as the formulation of United States foreign policy.

PETER RICHMOND, 35, national sports writer with *The Miami Herald*. He is a graduate of Yale University. Mr. Richmond proposes to concentrate in the study of politics and culture in the first half of the 20th Century in the United States.

NORMAN ROBINSON, 36, managing editor of WWL Television, New Orleans, Louisiana. Mr. Robinson attended the United States Naval School of Music and the Columbia School of Broadcasting. He plans to study several aspects of challenges to the environment. He proposes to do so at the Law, Business and Kennedy Schools.

SUNIL SETHI, 33, senior editor with *The Hindustan Times*, New Delhi, India. Mr. Sethi is a graduate of St. Stephen's College. While at Harvard, he will combine a study of political democracy and government with a look at the comparative nature of developing societies.

JIM THARPE, 34, managing editor of *The Alabama Journal*, Montgomery. He holds degrees from Gulf Coast Community College and the University of Florida. Mr. Tharpe plans to use his time at Harvard studying two aspects of the changes transforming the South: specific

economic ramifications and the sociological implications of the transition.

JOSEPH THLOLOE, 45, assistant editor of the *Sowetan*, Johannesburg, South Africa. Mr. Thloloe studied at the University of the North and the University of South Africa. He intends to study East-West relations, as well as the question of color and discrimination in the United States.

MARTHA TREVINO, 33, managing editor of *El Norte*, Monterrey, Mexico. Ms. Trevino attended the University of Texas at Austin and is a graduate of the Escuela Normal de Monterrey. She wants primarily to study economics, but, also, the political, economic and social relations between the United States and Latin America.

CYNTHIA TUCKER, 33, associate editorial page editor with the *Constitution*, Atlanta, Georgia. She is a graduate of Auburn University. At Harvard, Ms. Tucker wants to study two broad areas: economics, trade and how fiscal policy is made; and Central and South America and the Caribbean.

FREDRIC TULSKY, 37, reporter for *The Philadelphia Inquirer*. He holds degrees from the University of Missouri and the Temple University School of Law. Mr. Tulskey, in addition to studying Constitutional law, plans to concentrate in literature, history and philosophy.

IRENE VIRAG, 32, special writer with *Newsday*, Long Island. She holds degrees from Boston University and the Medill Graduate School of Journalism at Northwestern University. Ms. Virag wants to explore the evolution of the nation's welfare system, the politics of poverty and the psychology of dependency.

DOROTHY WICKENDEN, 34, managing editor of *The New Republic*. Ms. Wickenden is a graduate of Hobart and William Smith colleges. At Harvard, she proposes to study an introduction to political theory, American history, public policy and creative writing. □

Sherman Dudley

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According to the report, the argument arose over who was to serve as president of the organization. When Reevin nominated Dudley for the office of president of Consolidated Southern, Charles Bailey "flew into a rage at this action and offered his franchise and stock for sale." The meeting became tense, and had to be adjourned so that those present could cool off. At the next meeting, Dudley nominated Bailey for president; Bailey won, and it appeared that matters had been settled. But Bailey was not well-liked. It was pointed out that:

Bailey has been too arbitrary and selfish in handling the affairs of the Consolidated and not altogether fair to the performers, imposing fines on performers for playing opposition houses when they were compelled to lay off from lack of booking over the Consolidated and needed work to pay board and rent. Also the price Mr. Bailey received for acts was not fairly divisioned with the performers, the Consolidated receiving more than was its due. (14 February 1920)

Pushing himself into the fray, Sylvester Russell stated that Dudley was qualified to be the president of Southern Consolidated Circuit: "Money and a white face don't count for much with brains otherwise proved by a record" (21 February 1920). Dudley was upset by the "high-handed methods" used to obtain the presidency for Bailey, and soon thereafter he, M. Klein, and Sam Reevin withdrew from Southern Consolidated, Cummings buying out their financial interests.

Consolidated and United competed strenuously for the show people, primarily through running large advertisements in the newspapers. In a *Freeman* ad of 6 March 1920, for example, United Vaudeville listed an offering of thirteen acts and indicated

there to be "a number of others that space will not permit us to mention." On that same date, Southern Consolidated, in an ad on the following page, billed itself as "the only time where performers can work all the time."

On 20 March 1920, a scathing letter appeared in *The Freeman*, in which Dudley accused an unnamed black man, associated with Consolidated, of being "The White Man's Nigger." Calling the man an Uncle Tom, Dudley accused him of trying to undercut the Dudley Circuit. Again Russell thrust himself into the on-going dispute, stating that "a very well known, well read colored actor was busy trying to apply the houses of the S. H. Dudley circuit over to a white manager's circuit in the South." He did not name the actor (17 March 1920).

On 3 April 1920 there was an answer in *The Freeman* to Dudley's accusatory letter of 20 March: a rambling article, unsigned, appeared under the caption "No Coward." The writer denied he was an Uncle Tom, accused Dudley of being Caius Cassius, and stated that Dudley was trying to take advantage of the "weaker minded performer" in order to gain more money for himself.

Dudley responded in a letter published in *The Freeman* on 24 April 1920, reminding his adversary that he was the first man to get decent salaries for colored acts in the South. Point by point he took up the charges of "Uncle Tom" (whose name was never divulged in the press) and demolished them. At the mid-point of the letter, the text suddenly used capital letters for one sentence (as requested by Dudley?): "I, myself, have nothing but a BIG HEART AND A FIGHTING SPIRIT FOR THE RIGHTS OF THE NEGRO PROFESSION."

Sylvester Russell continued to involve himself in the dispute; he commented on one of Klein's complaints in *The Freeman*:

Charles P. Bailey of Atlanta, Ga., slavonically kidnapped William Selman's company from the United Time, after his salary has been increased. It is intimated that Bailey raised the salary \$225 more and declared that he owned the act, but according to Klein, he took rebate, which is practically no increase in salary at all for the ignorant colored actor. Luke Scott, a much more intelligent actor, turned manager Bailey down on a like proposition. The South presents two kinds of white managers in the show business, the square dealer and the cracker dealer and performers will have to be given a square deal by those who are crackers, if cracker managers expect to get any more colored people's money. (29 May 1920)

Eventually, the squabble disappeared from the newspapers, and apparently peace was restored to the world of black show business. An advertisement published in the 5 June 1920 edition of *The Chicago Defender* listed about fifty theaters owned and controlled by the Dudley, Klein and Reeve's United Vaudeville Circuit, Inc. Certainly members of "the profession" could look forward to plenty of work.

On 3 July 1920, *The Freeman* published a huge, seven-column ad that made an extraordinary announcement in a few words:

Big Special/Important Announcement! Concerning the Southern Consolidated Vaudeville Circuit, Inc. and Dudley, Klein and Reeve United Circuit. The Two Mammoth Circuits Have Become Affiliated for the Betterment of the Entire Show World.

The ad identifies the newly elected officers — Dudley is Vice President — and states: "This means shorter jumps for performers, more consecutive weeks' work, and absolute success for all theatre managers."

The new circuit flourished. By December 1920 the circuit, which retained the name Southern Consolidated Vaudeville Circuit, Inc., was advertising itself as "the only Big Time Circuit" and as "the largest col-

ored circuit in existence." The officers and managers included all the principals of the two former circuits (now combined), with Dudley still as Vice President, plus Milton Starr as the Traveling Representative and a Mrs. J. W. Williams as "Oklahoma" Representative. Although the advertisement referred to the circuit as "colored," this applied only to the performers, for the principals were both white and black. The circuit managers boasted of booking "the best of talent in the best of theaters anywhere in the United States, at any time and all the time." On another page of the newspaper there was a list of the shows offered by Southern Consolidated. (4 December 1920)

The last two editions of *The Freeman* for 1920 carried a huge ad, filling the top-half of the page, which was directed to theater owners, theater managers, producers, and actors. In large letters the ad stated: "Watch This Space for Announcement of Tremendous Importance to the Whole Colored Theatrical World." It was at the beginning of the new year, in January 1921, that the important event took place: the Theater Owners Booking Association came into being! The world of black musical theater would never be the same again.

According to its founders, T.O.B.A. was organized "by a group of the most influential theater owners in the South and Middle West" in order to ward off disaster to the "colored theatrical industry," which was "threatened by the gross mismanagement and unfair dealings of the book-

ing agents" who controlled the industry. An article published in *The Chicago Defender* on 12 February 1921 gave details of the new organization. Theater owners could become members by purchasing shares, but a stockholder would have only one vote no matter how much stock he owned. The article lists the officers of the new organization, followed by the long list of members. Significantly, two of the T.O.B.A. officers, Starr and Sam Reeve, were officers of the now defunct Southern Consolidated Vaudeville Circuit, which presumably was guilty of "gross mismanagement" in its handling of the colored vaudeville circuit. Significantly, S. H. Dudley's name appears neither as an officer nor as a member. Dudley had been squeezed out!

The story of T.O.B.A. is beyond the confines of the present discussion. Dudley did return to the fold, however; on 8 October 1921 *The Chicago Defender* cited his name as Manager of the Washington, D.C., office, and in January 1922 he was re-elected to the Board of Directors. He must have reflected many times on the turbulence of the past decade, during which he had surmounted innumerable obstacles in trying to establish a colored vaudeville circuit that would offer first-class service to members of "the profession." When T.O.B.A. was organized, he must have taken great pleasure in knowing it was he who had paved the way. □

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Views of A Cartoonist

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facts; I made them up. It would have been a very short trial.

For what it's worth, then, you have our sympathy. We're all up against a very dangerous trend of intolerance toward free expression. When I returned from my sabbatical three years ago, I was astounded at the vehemence of reaction against my strips dealing with the current administration. A number of papers complained that the tone of the strip had changed; few of them gave even passing consideration to the possibility that the tone of the papers themselves and the national dialogue in general had changed.

When I was satirizing Jimmy Carter a few years back, I was only one in a cacophony of voices raised in disapproval. In recent years, I was one of very few. Indeed, if "Doonesbury" has sometimes seemed too pungent to some of you, it may be because it appeared in an environment unfriendly to critical comment, a time when impertinent questions were unwelcome. The sad irony for people in my business is that the most insensitive president of modern times has been so universally regarded as "nice" that even the mildest criticism is denounced as excessive. The mere fact of Reagan's awesome popularity constituted irrefutable proof of its legitimacy.

There was no denying, of course, that until the Iran affair, the President seemed to fulfill a deep yearning in this country to feel positively about ourselves as a people. And yet, the Reagan presidency has always reminded me of a remark made by a woman to sportscaster Heywood Broun following Secretariat's victories in the Triple Crown. After the trauma of Vietnam and Watergate, she told Broun, Secretariat had "restored her faith in humanity."

I would submit to you that Ronald Reagan is the Secretariat of the '80's. He has restored our faith in ourselves, and for that, we are all in his debt. And who can hate a guy who, as revealed in Larry Speakes' new book, reads the comics before the headlines? Not me. Never mind that the implications are a bit sobering. The average comic strip only takes about ten seconds to read, but if you read every strip published in *The Washington Post*, as Reagan claims to, it takes roughly eight minutes a day, which means, a quick computation reveals, that to date, the Leader of the Free World has spent a total of 14 days, 16 hours and 48 minutes of his presidency reading the comics. This fact, along with nuclear winter, are easily the two most frightening thoughts of our times.

But so it goes. One of the things that's truly remarkable about this country is that we're always challenging ourselves to do better. This, of course, is the very point of satire. As a practitioner, I can't foresee any administration, Republican or Democratic, in which the abiding message wouldn't be the same — that it's possible to do better.

That inspirational thought certainly wasn't lost on McMeel the publisher during his long night of the soul. By the time he emerged from his reverie, the first rays of dawn were slicing through the stately elms that surrounded the family compound. As the morning dew evaporated off the tassels of his loafers, he heard the harsh crunching of gravel and turned just in time to see McMeel the syndicate head stride into the garage and fire up the Ferrari.

There was no resentment in the face of the man left behind. After all, he was a publisher, a newspaper publisher, and the decision to buy "Doonesbury" had come to him as an epiphany. Life doesn't get much better than that. □

LETTERS

A Tribute From an Admirer

A letter in your spring issue from William J. Miller, [NF '41], one-time editorial chief of the *New York Herald Tribune*, rebuts impressively certain canards about him in Richard Kluger's book, *The Paper: The Life and Death of The New York Herald Tribune*. I not only read the *Herald Tribune* faithfully during Mr. Miller's stint there, but wrote a few op-ed pieces for him, and had several occasions to watch him at work. Many others knew his contribution to the paper far better than I, but since most of them seem to be dead I feel impelled to add this word to Mr. Miller's.

If my observations had any merit, Bill Miller was not just a good editorial-page editor; he was a great one. He ran the liveliest, hardest-hitting page in the city — many called it the best in the country. He spoke his mind, and he had a mind to speak. He treated facts with respect; he gave credit where it was due; but he wielded a heavy sledge hammer and a sharp rapier. He kept his readers in a fine state of ferment, and even made a few of them think his interests went everywhere, but his red pencil followed right behind.

With all respect for the present crop of editorial writers, I don't know where his like is to be found today.

Williard R. Espy

Mr. Espy is an author and an editor. He has contributed articles to a number of magazines.

Prelude

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public's business without the media messing it up?

As for the journalists themselves, by this time many were worrying more about their power and their *ad hoc* standards than crowing over their triumphs. The crown of avenging angels fit uncomfortably on their gnarled heads.

Was all the public criticism and press self-examination something new? Certainly not. But the questions had never — not even during Vietnam or Watergate — been asked outside and inside the media with such intensity and so few convincing or even resolute answers. If it wasn't a new milestone, was it the beginning of a new era — or at the very least a new period? Not likely.

Some beginnings are easy to describe. The builder of a skyscraper begins with a hole in the ground. An artist with a clean canvas or an unmolded piece of clay. A writer with a blank sheet of paper (or a blank word processing screen). The precise beginnings of periods of social, political and cultural change are usually harder to fix in time. Did the nuclear era start with Albert Einstein or J. Robert Oppenheimer? Did modern popular music begin with Elvis Presley or the Beatles? Changes in life patterns are more often a string of events than a singular moment. When did these years of media power accompanied by floods of resentment and anguish really overflow? In its modern incarnation, of course, there were Vietnam and Watergate.

But for the sake of example, not of argument, go back to a more recent high watermark: the winter of 1984. □

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The excerpt, "A Very Cold Winter," will be published in the next issue of this magazine.

Hard-Hitting

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more worthy than themselves."

In summary, I rejoice that the working press are less tendentious and more mature as individuals than they were when I first wrote about them at the height of the Vietnam War nearly twenty years ago. So, I would hope, are we all. Most of them are honest men and women doing their jobs adequately and, in many cases, conscientiously.

As a group, they have more power and influence than any other identifiable element of society, and are considerably more independent of their employers, and more preeminent opposite their political and corporate rivals for influence than they were in the era when even so dubious a figure as Spiro Agnew could rouse public hostility against them. They have demonstrated no correspondingly high academic or ethical qualification for so lofty a position, and they, and all of society would be better served by a more, and certainly not less, vigilant evaluation of their performance.

I wish I could have given a more flattering picture of the occupation with which many of us here are in some way involved, but I don't think that's why you invited me. □

Journalists . . .
require some protection from themselves and their own excesses. . . . the first line of defense is the concerned, informed, responsible, publisher.

Verbs Count

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with demonstrations of violence which were to upset the country no end — King's assassination and the like. Sending in white reporters to ask questions of aroused demonstrators could be a chancey thing.

Now black reporters among a bevy of whites in the city room is the usual rather than otherwise. How different from that era when, during my Nieman Year, Philip Graham asked if I would accept separate toilet facilities if I were to work for *The Washington Post*. That good and remembered man thought, I'm sure, the job more important than the temporary slight and cost of an added toilet.

In certain situations back then, funnily enough, black reporters for daily newspapers became suspicious as representatives of "The Man."

Looking back on it in these years when the musical sound of clinking sheep bells has replaced the loud clack of typewriters of an earlier period, I think few other professions can bring that same joy of a piece well done. If it is pulled off, you can probably see your product the next day. The masons who labored on the Pyramids couldn't do that.

I thought my son, the unborn baby Mark Ethridge was concerned about when my pregnant wife took the creaking chair, would consider the profession. Thoughtfully given the name, Peter Nieman Martin, with such a distinguished middle name surely he would, some sweet day, find his place in a city room. He heeded the call, however, of another information service — the ministry.

Not long ago, a fellow sitting on a bar stool next to me, asked what I did for a living in a place like Mallorca. Retired, I said. From what? Among other things, newspaper reporting. "Ah," he beamed, "I was once in the newspaper game myself." GAME? I was inclined to ask who won. □

THE BOOKSHELF

The Specter Behind Investigative Reporting

Coals of Fire: The *Alton Telegraph* Libel Case

Thomas B. Littlewood with foreword by Rodney A. Smolla. Southern Illinois University Press, 1988. \$22.50

by Kevin T. Baine

"Never bring a suit in law for assault and battery or for defamation. The law affords no remedy for such outrages that can satisfy the feelings of a true man."

That was the advice Andrew Jackson received from his mother. One's reputation and honor were to be defended on the dueling ground, not in the courtroom.

Times, of course, have changed since Old Hickory's day. Dueling has fallen out of flavor, and suing for libel has come of age. Modern day Andrew Jacksons, like General William Westmoreland, find satisfaction in the mere filing of a libel complaint. And although many, including General Westmoreland, eventually abandon their claims or suffer defeat, most of those who can survive the pretrial skirmishes are rewarded (at least temporarily) with verdicts that would have satisfied even the "true men" of yesteryear.

In recent years, Carol Burnett won a \$1.6 million jury verdict based on a *National Enquirer* gossip item about her behavior in a Washington, D.C. restaurant. A jury awarded a former Miss Wyoming \$26.5 million for a fictional article in *Penthouse* magazine that she claimed was really

about her. A Washington, D.C. jury ruled that *The Washington Post* should pay Mobil president William Tavoulares \$2 million for reporting that he had set up his son in a ship management business. More recently, a Las Vegas jury returned a verdict of \$16 million in favor of Wayne Newton, who complained that the NBC broadcast had falsely linked him to organized crime. Verdicts such as these are not atypical. Most juries rule in favor of libel plaintiffs, and the average plaintiff's verdict is approximately \$1 million.

Fortunately — at least from the press's vantage point — most of these plaintiffs' verdicts are set aside on appeal. William Tavoulares lost his \$2 million when an appellate court ruled that *The Post* article about him was substantially true. Miss Wyoming's verdict was thrown out on the ground that the fictional *Penthouse* article could not reasonably be understood as saying anything about her. Carol Burnett was more successful on appeal — she held on to the judgment in her favor, but saw it reduced to \$200,000. (Wayne Newton's case has yet to be resolved). The fact is that those who can afford to defend a libel suit to the bitter end are likely to come out on top. Still, massive jury verdicts have thrown a scare into the nation's newsrooms — especially among those who do not enjoy the financial resources of *The Washington Post*, NBC, *Penthouse* and the *National Enquirer*.

No case more dramatically illustrates the threat posed by modern-day libel litigation than the case of a local newspaper in Alton, Illinois. In

1980, the *Alton Telegraph* was socked with a libel judgment of over \$9 million and driven into bankruptcy because of statements made by its reporters while pursuing a story that was never even published. Thomas B. Littlewood's book, *Coals of Fire*, is the story of the *Alton Telegraph* libel case. The title is taken from the 75th anniversary issue of the *Alton Telegraph*, which noted with prescience: "Every newspaper sees its defeats and its victories, and the wise newspaperman has learned not to gloat over his fallen adversary, for the fallen may rise to wreak vengeance, either with coals of fire or vindictive measures."

When the *Alton Telegraph* case was brought to a conclusion, the trade periodical for the newspaper business, *Editor and Publisher*, wrote:

"An itemized progress report on the libel suit against the Alton Telegraph reads like a mystery story on how to murder a newspaper legally. Agatha Christie couldn't have done any better."

Coals of Fire doesn't exactly read like an Agatha Christie murder mystery. In fact, the author's commendable desire to paint a complete picture of the town of Alton, the local judicial system, and the *Alton Telegraph's* history makes for some slow going at the outset. But this book has a few notable characters — including a gourmet judge who serves bouillabaisse to the lawyers, parties, and jurors on the last day of the trial, and a plaintiff's lawyer whose courtroom performances are worthy of a part in "L.A. Law." When an adverse witness complains that plaintiff's counsel isn't letting him answer a question, counsel teases — "You are a Harvard grad, aren't you?" Later plaintiff's counsel interrupts his cross-examination to announce that

the witness's lawyer is signaling the witness how to answer. When the witness's lawyer denies the charge and accuses plaintiff's counsel of browbeating his client, plaintiff's counsel responds — "Go to hell, butt out, get lost, disappear, quit screwin' up the lawsuit!" And still later, plaintiff's counsel announces — "Your Honor, the witness is absolutely lying to me."

In Mr. Littlewood's view, the theatrics of plaintiff's counsel help explain the result in the *Alton Telegraph* case. The result certainly requires explanation. Two reporters for the *Telegraph* received tips from local law enforcement authorities that Mafia money from Chicago had found its way into a local bank, which used the money to finance real estate ventures by a local developer (the plaintiff in the case). Lacking enough information to write a story, the reporters told what they had heard to two Justice Department attorneys. Their apparent hope was that the Justice Department would be able to check the charges that they themselves had been unable to confirm. At the request of the Justice Department attorneys, the reporters prepared a "confidential memo" on the charges. The Justice Department then relayed the allegations contained in the memo to the Federal Home Loan Bank Board, which proceeded to conduct an examination of the Alton Bank's records.

The allegations contained in the memo were never confirmed. But the FHLBB uncovered various regulatory violations and inadequacies, including a concentration of loans to the local real estate developer. The Board's findings led the bank to cut off further credit to the developer — action that ultimately led to the developer's financial ruin.

The chairman of the FHLBB wrote a letter praising the *Alton Telegraph* for the responsible way in which it handled the matter. But the developer saw things differently. Almost eight years after the *Telegraph* reporters conducted their investigation, the

developer sued the newspaper for libel — not for anything the *Telegraph* ever published, but for what the reporters wrote in their confidential memo to the Justice Department. Therein lies the first lesson of the *Alton Telegraph* case. Many journalists fail to appreciate that they can be sued not only for what they report in the newspaper, but also for what they say to a source in the course of gathering news. Care needs to be exercised at every step along the way, not simply when deciding what to print.

The *Telegraph* defended the case on several grounds. It argued that the suit was barred by the one-year statute of limitations for libel. But the one-year period didn't start to run until the plaintiff learned of the reporters' memo, and the court left it to the jury to determine when that occurred. The *Telegraph* also invoked the privilege all citizens enjoy to report possible violations of the law to law enforcement authorities. But the court ruled that it was questionable whether the reporters' primary purpose was to report a crime, and left that issue to the jury as well. The *Telegraph* also argued that whatever financial losses the developer suffered were attributable to the bank's actions in response to the regulatory violations found by the FHLBB — not to the allegations contained in the reporters' memo, which were never credited by the FHLBB. The judge let the jury decide that issue as well.

The jury took little time in reaching a decision. According to Mr. Littleton's account, the jury barely discussed the question of liability. After briefly debating whether to award a higher figure, the jury returned a verdict of \$9.2 million — \$6.7 million to compensate the plaintiff and an additional \$2.5 million to punish the *Telegraph*.

The *Telegraph* proceeded with plans to appeal the judgment, and it had reason to be optimistic. There were substantial arguments to make — both on the issue of liability and

on the question of damages. But the *Telegraph* found itself unable to pursue its appeal. Under Illinois law, it was required to post a bond equal to one and one-half times the amount of the judgment — in other words, \$13.8 million. The paper's physical assets were worth only \$3 million. With its legal fees mounting, the *Telegraph* was forced to file for bankruptcy. It eventually settled the case for a payment of \$1.4 million.

Not surprisingly, the *Telegraph's* experience with libel litigation dampened its enthusiasm for investigative reporting. A *Wall Street Journal* reporter concluded that "the *Telegraph's* crusading spirit all but died." The *Telegraph's* editor commented that the paper became more cautious — like a "tight end who hears footsteps." Those footsteps, of course, are heard not only in the newsroom of the *Alton Telegraph*. They echo in every newsroom in the country. They intimidate all who take to the field of journalism — especially those, like the *Alton Telegraph*, who lack the size to take a solid hit.

Press lawyers like to speak of the "chilling effect" that libel judgments can have on the press. The words have a hollow ring in some cases, but not in this one. *Coals of Fire* is a chilling tale. It is well worth reading, because what happened in the *Alton Telegraph* case can happen — and will happen — again. □

Kevin Baine is a partner in the Washington D.C. law firm of Williams & Connolly. He has represented the press in many libel cases, and participated in the defense of Mobil President William Tavoulares's libel suit against The Washington Post.



Too Little Recognition! Too Late the Promotions! Too Many Barriers!

A Place in the News: From the Women's Pages to the Front Page

Kay Mills. Dodd, Mead, 1988.
\$19.95

by Margaret Engel

You wouldn't know it from newspaper's mastheads, but American journalism has become a female occupation.

In the last decade, substantially more women than men have entered the field. According to Ohio State University's latest survey for the Dow Jones Newspaper Fund, of the nation's journalism graduates, the percentage of females is now at 66 percent.

Logic might suggest that this abundance of women in entry-level and middle tiers has created a critical mass sufficient to alter the institution of newspapering. But as we all know, newspapers are run by deadlines, not logic.

I'd like to will each female graduate a copy of Kay Mills' book, *A Place in the News: From the Women's Pages to the Front Page*. They're going to need it as they labor in a profession that champions social change — as long as it's outside the newsroom.

Mills, an editorial writer at the *Los Angeles Times*, has not shied away from naming names and criticizing the big boys — her own paper, *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post* and *The Wall Street Journal* — for what she sees as paltry moves to integrate women into their hierarchies. As she details, improvements took place chiefly because dozens of women, many now finishing their careers in second and third-level jobs, genuinely sacrificed their future to

sue their employers.

Her book's hero is Al Neuharth, who is treated in many journalism circles as a flamboyant outcast. He and the company he operates, Gannett, are praised for their ability to achieve what others endlessly claim to be working on — finding talented women and minorities to run newsrooms. Mills does not get very satisfactory answers in trying to find out why these candidates still are so absent in the top job searches among other news organizations.

Her book tells us that Neuharth's commitment stems from a very personal source. His widowed mother worked as a waitress, seamstress, and housekeeper to support her family after her husband died from injuries suffered in a farm accident, a death that occurred when young Neuharth was only two years old.

"I saw in that little town in South Dakota where I lived that she had to work twice as hard for half as much income," Neuharth told Mills. "I didn't think that was fair. And I don't forget that."

A Place in the News chronicles newswomen's achievements, as well as the barriers to news-gathering, hiring, and promotion that women journalists have faced in the last 60 years.

Many journalists may not know that women didn't cover Washington news until Eleanor Roosevelt refused to hold press conferences unless women covered them. If you want to work up a good anger about wasted time and talent, read about the Associated Press' policy of retiring only women, not men, at age 55. Read also about the superhuman perseverance of reporters like Marvel Cooke and Katherine Beebe Pinkham Harris in the 1930's and 40's.

There has been progress, of course,

in the last two generations of newspaperwomen. In so many cases, however, Mills shows that women's achievements did not have the logical progression of success building on success. One reason is that individual careers often were propelled, not by a recognition of talent or hard work, but by war, court decrees or accidents. When those stimuli disappeared or waned, newspaperwomen often were sent back to the society desk, copy rim or other low-status spot where they started. Women foreign correspondents especially were, and seemingly still are, prone to this treatment. In several cases that Mills uses to make this point, women would prove themselves abundantly overseas and return state-side to either little recognition or no promotion or no job.

One of the strengths of the book is that many of the women chronicled are not familiar names, even in the journalism world. Her tale covers the small and large of newspapering, the struggles and victories of Marj Paxson covering the courts in Lincoln, Nebraska in the 1940's to Judy Klemesrud writing ground-breaking features for *The New York Times* in the 60's, 70's, and 80's.

Every chapter ends with an "Everyday Indignity," wry incidents, often humorous, that occurred to such journalists as Flora Lewis, Vivian Vahlberg, Fran Dauth and Mary Ann Dolan.

I was surprised that Mills' descriptions of trail-blazers and the management stupidity that abbreviates promising careers wasn't more depressing. It's a testament to the survivance of the human spirit that so many of these pioneering women were not embittered by their reduced opportunities in newspapering. So many of the women simply loved their work that the slights and lost promotions were resented, but dealt with philosophically.

In case anyone thinks the problems Mills describes are relics of past insensitivity, read what the women reporters and editors currently in the

field tell her. It is a world where female subordinates still are in the position of pleasing male bosses, and of seeking male permission to get issues like child care, and health and social services into the paper. It's still the male arenas of politics, business, and defense that provide the short ladders to the top. "...The press still relies obsessively on politics to fill its pages, although the wonders of science and medicine concern more people intimately," Mills writes.

Her interviews produce a litany of vital stories that are overlooked and misplayed because they don't fit into the aged beats of covering male institutions. Throughout the country, women covered the ERA, women political candidates, and emerging social issues on their own time, because of a personal commitment to these stories. In many cases, women hoped that their coverage might get a message to their bosses, perhaps to improve their own work lives.

It doesn't seem their eyes and ears were open, however. It still is news when a paper opens a day-care center for its employees, as a California paper finally did last month.

Mills finds that women and minorities shape the news only at the reporter or lower editor level. At several papers, Sundays and holidays are the "affirmative action days" — the time that women and minorities get the chance to put out most of the paper, as many of the male editors have those days off.

Those who have succeeded in non-traditional beats, like Eileen Shanahan, who covered the Treasury Department and Securities and Exchange Commission, among other areas for *The New York Times*, feel a sense of pleasure in seeing other women's bylines on budget or tax stories. "Those frightened men who run so many of our newspapers, magazines, and TV news operations probably don't do it consciously," she told Mills, "but perhaps some of them have buried somewhere deep in their subconscious a sense that women can, in fact, cover such beats

successfully because Eileen Shanahan did it. I like to think so."

All of the coping mechanisms that we've read about women adopting in other fields are detailed by Mills' subjects. Women journalists pursue advanced degrees and fellowships, such as the Nieman, to boost their careers. "Women after women used such extra credentials to legitimize their presence in the newsroom," Mills found.

There are nuggets of poignant truths throughout the book, illuminating a history of accomplishments and set-backs in an industry that has never made it easy for "newcomers." News organizations appear to have spent an inordinate amount of time and worry on items far removed from the newsgathering, writing, and editing abilities of female employees. Molly Ivins, now of the *Dallas Times-Herald*, said that her choice of clothes and loud laugh were criticized when she worked at *The New York Times*. "I can't imagine the personal style of a man getting that much attention," Ivins said.

Mills paints an unvarnished portrait of women in newspapering, by using interviews with journalists who are juggling child-rearing, facing stalled careers, and finding a lack of mentors. She also faces what is the \$64,000 question for most women journalists today — whether the prize is worth the price. (Answer: It depends).

My hope is that enlightened managers read Mills' book, especially for passages like the following: "Too many editors...cannot see what they have before them. These women on their staffs are bringing perspectives and specific stories that they might not otherwise have carried, that reach readers they might not otherwise have reached."

In an era when newspaper readership is aging and dwindling, perhaps there finally will be more urgency to this advice. □

Margaret Engel, Nieman Fellow '79, on leave from The Washington Post, is executive director of the Alicia Patterson Journalism Foundation.

Another Country Viewed With Western Eyes

The U.S. Press and Iran: Foreign Policy and the Journalism of Deference

William A. Dorman and Mansour Farhang. University of California Press, 1987. \$29.95

by Fred Warner Neal

The general theme of this book is that American reporting on foreign affairs tends to reflect the "ideology" on which official United States positions are based. The resulting "Cold War" bias is more often than not subconscious but nonetheless insidious.

This is hardly a new charge, but the

authors here argue it convincingly. They cite enough specific examples so that even journalists who reject their theses can profit from reading it. Their main evidence is American reporting about Iran, from the 1950's on.

William Dorman, a professor of journalism at California State University at Sacramento, blends his expertise on the American press with Mansour Farhang's intimate, first-hand knowledge of Iran. Farhang, professor of politics at Bennington College, came to the United States from Iran in the 1960's. He received his Ph.D. degree in international relations as my student at the Claremont

Graduate School, and later, he became Iranian ambassador to the United Nations after the fall of the Shah. He resigned this post in protest at Ayatollah Khomeini's refusal to accept the United Nations Commission of Inquiry recommendation to release the American hostages in Tehran.

Dorman and Farhang are by no means hostile to the press or to American reporters. They accept and appreciate that the vast majority of American journalists are both non-partisan and factually objective. But they conclude that this in itself results in our reporting on foreign affairs being directed by "deference" to the American foreign policy establishment and thus reflects a kind of subconscious "ideology" which often seriously distorts reality.

Focusing on reportage from and about Iran, the authors contend that with very few exceptions American correspondents painted a misleading picture reflecting prevailing American — especially official American — views. They base their conclusions predominately — although not exclusively — on an exhaustive survey of reporting in *The New York Times*, *The Christian Science Monitor*, *Newsweek*, and *Time*, with samples also from the Associated Press, United Press International, *The Washington Post*, *The Wall Street Journal*, the *Los Angeles Times*, and the *Chicago Tribune*.

Only when "foreign policy elites" begin publicly to doubt a policy, according to Dorman and Farhang, does the press subject a particular American foreign policy to a really critical examination. They cite Vietnam as a classic example. Public opinion in the United States can affect foreign policy, and public opinion is largely formed by foreign news in the press, they say. The lack of adequate reporting thus contributes to the rigidity of American foreign policies once they are launched.

The authors emphasize that they are not accusing American reporters of conscious bias or partnership.

Although many correspondents are ill-equipped to deal with the complicated politics of Third World countries, the basic problem, as Dorman and Farhang analyze it, is the correspondents' psychological inability to see "politics" in any other than the Western, and particularly American, sense.

The major concrete examples cited are United States press treatment of Mohammad Mosaddeq, the Iranian leader who nationalized the oil fields and chased out the Shah in 1953; the CIA-engineered overthrow of Mosaddeq and the return of the Shah; and the 1978 revolution which resulted in the Shah again fleeing the country and, ultimately, in the Ayatollah Khomeini coming to power.

American reporting, encouraged by United States officials at home and abroad, is seen as treating the overthrow of Mosaddeq as a popular uprising, ignoring the major role of the CIA; portraying Mosaddeq as a dictator and an instrument of the Iranian Communists and/or the Soviet Union; and heralding the return of the Shah and his program of modernization as a stabilizing influence widely supported by the mass of the Iranian people. All these views, according to Dorman and Farhang, were wrong and adopted by American journalists primarily because of ignorance of Iranian realities and inability to see meaningful political processes in the country.

Mosaddeq, they contend, was neither anti-democratic, anti-Western nor pro-Communist. The perverted view of Mosaddeq in the press, they believe, was primarily a consequence of his nationalization of British-dominated oil fields, which itself reflected decades-old resentment among masses of Iranians. Whereas he was invariably cited in American dispatches as a "dictator," the Shah — returned to his throne thanks to CIA — was never, with a single solitary exception, referred to as a "dictator" despite the fact that his rule was "infinitely more" dictatorial

than that of Mosaddeq.

The favorable press treatment given the Shah, the authors believe, reflected both the official American view of the Shah as the main United States "surrogate" in the Middle East and the Shah's clever public relations tactics. Additionally, they state, American journalists failed completely to comprehend that Iranians of all classes — save the very rich involved in the Shah's enterprises — increasingly saw the monarch and his policies as the cause of their progressive malaise. It is a normal reaction of people who become worse off to blame it on the regime, but because the Shah talked — and in part acted — in terms Western journalists could understand — combatting the "Soviet threat," modernization, land reform, etc. — they assumed opposition to the Shah came only from the Communists and anti-modern Moslem leaders. When the unreported mounting popular opposition to the Shah exploded in revolution and the Shah was again driven out, the revolution was portrayed as the work either of pro-Communist forces or reactionary Shi'a mullahs. The revolution, in fact, was both anti-Western and anti-Communist, according to the authors, but United States Cold War assumptions precluded the possibility of such a combination.

Dorman and Farhang believe that an ethnocentric reaction to the Shi'a Moslems kept American correspondents from understanding that the Shi'a leaders were by no means all fanatics opposed to progressive reforms. This was doubtless true of the non-mullah leaders, although it is not clear from the authors' account how far it applies to the mullahs themselves. In any event, they insist that although the extreme fanatic types, under Khomeini, did ultimately dominate, this was not inevitable and in itself does not exonerate the failure of American journalists to describe the situation as the authors believe it should have been described. Indeed, they imply that American reporting of the early days

of the revolution may have been a factor in Khomeini's success.

The book emphasizes the difference in American reporting about the Shah's savage police-state rule and that of Communist-dominated countries. The negative portrayal of Islamic opposition to the Shah is contrasted with that of the Islamic Afghan "freedom fighters."

Dorman and Farhang cite copiously and approvingly from articles and essays by Kennet Love, *The New York Times* correspondent in Iran during Mosaddeq's final months in office. Love's reportage appears to have been in sharp contrast to editorials and "analytical" articles in *The Times* written in New York. His correspondence with *New York Times* Foreign Editor Emanuel Freedman is especially interesting.

The authors reject charges that Love, who later became a Carnegie Press Fellow at the Council of Foreign Relations, collaborated with the CIA in the anti-Mosaddeq coup. But they accept at face value his claim that at the time of the coup he "had never heard of CIA nor did he know what the initials stood for." If true, Love certainly had no business in Iran, or anywhere else, as a *New York Times* correspondent. The authors' easy acceptance of such a statement contrasts with their generally skeptical treatment of other commentaries on the same period.

Whatever reservations they may have about some portions of this book, American journalists would do well to ponder the authors' summary conclusion:

"...if there is to be any substantive change in the way the press performs in the foreign policy setting, journalists must come to recognize the subtle ways in which ideology in its broadest sense informs what it is they do. Until this recognition is forthcoming, journalists will continue to serve more as instruments of American foreign policy than as its serious auditors." □

Fred Warner Neal, Nieman Fellow '43, is a former Washington correspondent for The Wall Street Journal and the United Press. He has served in the State Department as consultant on Russian Affairs, and as chief of Eastern European Research. He is

professor-emeritus of international relations and government at the Claremont Graduate School in California. Mr. Neal is executive vice president of the American Committee on U.S.-Soviet Relations.

Mood Swings — Heroic High to Anxiety Low — Color Covering Moscow

The Moscow Correspondents: Reporting on Russia From the Revolution to Glastnost

Whitman Bassow. William Morrow & Company, Inc., 1988. \$18.95

by Jerrold L. Schecter

I approached *The Moscow Correspondents* with positive anticipation for the thrill of returning to Moscow, if only in print. Could Whitman Bassow capture the intensity, provocation, excitement, and drudgery of being stationed in Moscow? Could he describe the bizarre combination of heroic and boring moments, the swings of anxiety and exhilaration that came with discovering a big story and seeing it in print or on television. Would he find the humor that sustains correspondents, and would he unlock the secrets of what makes Moscow such a special, sealed-in-amber experience for virtually every reporter who has served there? It is not an easy task, and, sadly, Bassow has done only a mediocre job, given the riches he had to work with.

When you talk to a former Moscow correspondent you usually find that the years he or she served in the Soviet Union are ones that permanently colored their impressions and judgments. Whitman Bassow worked for United Press under Henry Shapiro from 1955 to 1958 and then

was *Newsweek* correspondent in Moscow from 1960 until 1962, when he joined the inner circle of the most exclusive club in American journalism, those who not only served in Moscow but who were expelled from the Soviet Union. Bassow's history of reporting on Russia over the past seventy years reads like a series of not very good wire service reports, snappy but shallow, more concerned with how the story was gotten than what it meant or portended.

Bassow is weak in the period after he left in 1962 until the present. He has a first cut at the facts but then seems unsure of what to do with them or where they lead. In the chapter on *défente* and dissidents Bassow describes how AP bureau chief Henry Bradsher's Volkswagen was demolished by a mysterious explosion minutes after he parked near the apartment house in which he lived. No one was hurt, but the blast destroyed the car and shattered windows in neighboring buildings. "There seemed to be no connection between the incident and AP coverage of dissidents," writes Bassow, "but the correspondents regarded this as a warning from the KGB." Who else has explosives in the Soviet Union?

Such an unprecedented attempt at intimidation or murder deserves fuller explanation and interpretation. So does the whole dissident and human rights movement and how it

was covered. Bassow never interviewed Bradsher, who believes the bomb was a KGB attempt to intimidate him for a series of critical articles he wrote on the fiftieth anniversary of the Soviet Union in 1977. The Soviet police never gave Bradsher a report on the incident, but the insurance was paid on his car after considerable delay.

Bassow is overly concerned with the tradecraft of obtaining a story, and the competition for getting the news out first. Granted that is the *raison d'être* of the wire services, but there is more to reporting than scooping the opposition. Bassow fails to follow through on details or tell us the nuances that offer insight into how the Russians work. He cites the case of an American businessman, Francis Jay Crawford, the Moscow representative of International Harvester, who was arrested for currency speculation in 1978. It became clear almost immediately, Bassow writes, that Crawford was "being held hostage for two convicted KGB spies imprisoned in the United States. He was freed after sixteen days in exchange for the two men and deported." Bassow is in error. Crawford was tried and convicted in a Soviet court and then deported.

The two spies, Vladik Enger and Rudolf Chernayev, who had been sentenced to fifty years in prison, were not released until April, 1979, after a tough negotiation that resulted in their exchange for Crawford plus five leading dissidents — Gyorgi Vins, a leading Baptist, Valentyn Moroz, a prominent imprisoned Ukrainian nationalist, Edward Kuznetsov, a Jew imprisoned for organizing an aborted hijacking in Leningrad in 1970, Mark Dymshits, involved in the same case, and Aleksandr Ginzburg, an outstanding Russian dissident.

This complex triangular arrangement is totally overlooked by Bassow who also fails to note that the pattern for Crawford's release served as the precedent for working out a face saving solution to free *U.S. News & World Report* correspondent

Nicholas Daniloff, who was accused of spying in August, 1986. Daniloff was held in Lefortovo prison for thirteen days but was never tried. He was held hostage for a Soviet employee of the United Nations, Gennadi F. Zakharov, who was arrested by the FBI in New York while passing money for classified documents on military aircraft engines. Exiled human rights activist Yuri Orlov and his wife Irina were permitted to leave the Soviet Union as part of the deal to free Daniloff and Zakharov.

There are small errors that make one wonder about Bassow's larger judgments. Mrs. Solzhenitsyn was not deported from the Soviet Union with her husband on February 13, 1974 as Bassow asserts, but she left separately with their children on March 29, 1974. Former AP Moscow Correspondent George Syvertsen is listed in a picture caption as having disappeared on a combat mission in Vietnam and "is presumed dead." Syvertsen was working for CBS when he was killed by a B-40 rocket in Cambodia. His body was recovered and he is buried in Florida.

Bassow's mentor was Henry Shapiro, UPI's long-time Moscow Bureau chief, who went along to get along with the Russians. Too much of the book is spent extolling the virtues of Shapiro in his struggles with the rest of the press corps. His portrait of Shapiro is without the warts and prickles that won him the nickname "Shapirka," for his often high-handed, commissar-like manner. Bassow asserts that I unfairly accused Henry Shapiro of devising and using the camp system as a means of controlling correspondents. The camp system divided up the wires services and correspondents into two competing groups to share information. The camps excluded the enemy. A good UPI man to the end, Bassow says it should be Henry Cassidy of AP who deserves the onus for launching the system just before World War II to protect the AP. Cassidy found, writes Bassow, that "Shapiro had set up a news pool under which the few

resident correspondents were exchanging copy. Determined to give the UPI some serious competition. Cassidy lured several correspondents to his side, dividing the press corps into two camps." That sounds like grounds for self-defense against Shapiro. In *An American Family in Moscow*, (Little Brown, 1975), I never said who devised the system only that, "The Soviet effort to exert control over journalists had worked its way into his (Shapiro's) own system through a kind of osmosis." Bassow fails to deal with the impact of the system and how it affected coverage, the real issues.

Bassow interviewed 76 colleagues over the four years that he took to write the book, which was finished in June of 1987. There are lots of quotes about what correspondents think, but he never really tells us how Novosti Press Agency (APN) worked to influence foreign correspondents through an elaborate system of assigning watchdogs or *mamkas* (baby sitters) to correspondents. Ostensibly newsmen for Novosti, these journalists were KGB agents who gathered information, tried to influence coverage, and reported on foreign correspondents.

Novosti offers translations and facilitates services for foreign correspondents.

The Novosti fee system remains a scandal to this day and demands to be documented and exposed in any history of reporting from Moscow.

Bassow is weak on humor, but he does have a few marvelous anecdotes such as Walter Cronkite's first interview with a Russian in the two years he was in Moscow. Cronkite fell on the ice and was helped up by a Russian who asked if he was all right. "Yes, thank you," replied Cronkite. When the man realized he had assisted a foreigner he fled. Cronkite filed the story but it never got past the censor. I wish Bassow had told the Shapiro tale about how his bathroom was leaking during the days of Stalin's purges. Shapiro went downstairs to tell his neighbor, a

famous writer, that the water was coming through the floor and to prepare for the worst. The neighbor refused to answer the door because he did not want to be seen talking to a foreigner. I also missed retelling of the classic moment when Irving R. Levine of NBC and Carl Mydans of *LIFE* magazine met in the National hotel in the 1950's. Levine complained bitterly about how difficult life was in Moscow. Mydans looked up at the chandelier hanging from the ceiling and said: "That is Irving R. Levine of NBC speaking. This is Carl Mydans of *LIFE* magazine and I like it here."

The nuances and subtleties that make Moscow such an exciting assignment are missing. Bassow takes seven pages to tell us about his expulsion but he cannot figure out why he was ousted for "violating the regulations governing the conduct of foreign correspondents." Where were his Soviet sources when he needed them?

Bassow still appears to be protecting his Soviet sources. In an account of how he "risked expulsion" in March, 1958, Bassow says he phoned London when UPI learned that Khrushchev would oust Premier Nikolai Bulganin and succeed him as the head of government. Those were the days of censorship and Bassow proudly notes that "the press department never raised a fuss about the evasion of censorship by the United Press." What he fails to explain is who leaked the story to UPI and what was the purpose behind it. Clearly, he and UPI were being used. Somebody wanted the story out and UPI was considered "reliable" so they were given the news. Who used whom? Bassow does not speculate about motivation in this instance or many others. It is the great weakness of the book which, for the most part, reads like the transcript of a bunch of former Moscow correspondents telling their best tales over a long evening.

Some of the tales are legendary, and Bassow's account of the early period

is fascinating because he has brought together the material, but it lacks cohesion and focus. There are no sources given either in footnotes or end notes, and there is nasty, unsubstantiated innuendo against famous correspondents such as Harrison Salisbury and Edmund Stevens.

Bassow makes much of interviewing heads of state and meeting visiting celebrities; but it is not interviewing the big shots that makes Moscow count. What does count is knowing that it is you and your colleagues against a massive, pervasive system that is working full time to manipulate you and the news. This element is mentioned by Bassow but never systematically documented, especially after the end of censorship.

There is no mention of the purge trials of 1936-1938 that led to the execution on Stalin's orders of Nikolai Bukharin, Alexsey Rykaov and other Communist party leaders. What did the correspondents think about the trials? Did they know they were being used or did they stifle their doubts and report what they saw going on about them? Nor does Bassow mention the Katyn forest massacre to which Western correspondents were invited to see the horror of the mass grave and hear how the Germans allegedly murdered 15,000 Polish officers. There were eleven American correspondents invited to see bodies exhumed from the mass grave in 1943 as part of a skillful NKVD (the predecessor of the KGB) exercise to place the blame on the Germans. As we now know, it was the Russians who carried out the massacre, again on Stalin's orders. This is a chapter that cries out for a detailed place in history. Bassow talks about Khrushchev's career and death but never mentions the controversy surrounding *Khrushchev Remembers*, the two volumes of his memoirs published in the West.

A study of seventy years of Moscow reporting should have probed the Soviet system and how it controls and manipulates the press by in-depth examples rather than glanc-

ing anecdotes and unsubstantiated mean spirited jibes. (Bassow alleges Thomas Shanker of the *Chicago Tribune* was unfit to cover Moscow because his experience was limited to writing arms control think pieces and a stint covering City Hall politics. He should have added that Shanker is one of the best American correspondents in Moscow today because of his wide range of Soviet sources and his specialization in dealing with human rights cases and Jewish emigration).

Bassow spends too much space gloating over who got the story first, and not enough on how the news is manipulated and dissembled in Moscow. Access and speaking Russian, Bassow's touchstones, are not enough. Covering Moscow is the best there is because it is the toughest, not only physically, but intellectually, morally and psychologically. Bassow offers a superficial portrait of *The Moscow Correspondents*. They deserve better. □

Jerrold Schecter, Nieman Fellow '64, was Time-Life Moscow Bureau chief from 1968-1970 and former diplomatic editor of Time.



A Land Unmasked With Words and Pictures

Beirut: City of Regrets

Photographs by Eli Reed, Text by Fouad Ajami. W.W. Norton & Company, 1988. \$19.95

by Lester Sloan

Journalists today are more and more faced with the impossible task of making sense out of the wars and rumors of war, conflicts, and misunderstandings whose roots are buried in centuries of hate. They parachute into the midst of a conflict taking pictures and impressions that convey the heat and passion of the story without shedding any light on the causes that feed the flames. For this reason alone the book by Eli Reed (NF '83) and Fouad Ajami is an important addition to the small body of work about Beirut in particular, and the region in general.

Fouad Ajami's opening text provides an auspicious beginning for those of us interested in learning more about the people of Beirut through Reed's evocative photographs. Ajami explains "why" the city is a great myth — "that it was a place where Islam and Christianity met and fashioned a compromise — that failed.

Lebanon was and is a country of contradictions; a place whose character and vocation was defined "in the tales of the mountains and tales of the sea." But more than geographical considerations shaped the character of this "garden without fences." Ajami deftly traces the religious history of the Druze and Christians, each earning a place for themselves out of the impenetrable mountains of the region. Both were religions of faith as well as place. Both thrived — the Druze in the Shuf Mountains and southwestern hills of Mount Lebanon. The Maronites too, found a

home in the hills of Mount Lebanon, and in 1180, formed a historic union with Rome. Ajami takes us step by step through the Crusades, the decline of the Ottoman Empire, and the ascendancy of Western power in the region.

Commerce with the West followed, and by the 19th century Beirut was transformed from "an insignificant port town" with a population of 6,000 in 1820, to an energetic population of 120,000 by the turn of the century. With economic and religious ties to the West, the power balance shifted in favor of the Christians. The Muslims didn't take the change quietly.

Ajami grew up in Beirut during the 1950's, a city where a cable car ride — "a single fare" — separated the Muslim and Christian worlds. Beirut became the playground of warring Arab military dictators and wealthy Arabs, and the millions of displaced Palestinians. It would also become a city of factions that would bring it to the brink of disaster and ruin.

Ajami leads us through the upheavals, the intrigues, the selling and short-changing by the West. Eli Reed's photographs give a face to this century-old conflict, a face in which, if we look closely, we may recognize something of ourselves.

I first met Eli Reed by phone in the summer of 1981, when he asked me to take a look at the work he planned to submit to the Nieman Foundation for a Fellowship. After agreeing to do so, I had to call him back and withdraw my promise. I had been asked by the former curator, James Thompson, to serve as a member of the selection committee, and I wanted to avoid a conflict of interest. Now there is no conflict and I can freely say that the talent I saw in his application portfolio is reaffirmed in this fine book.

"I wanted to see how the average Lebanese citizen could survive their days and nights," was Eli Reed's reason for going to Beirut. He shows us with 128 photographs of such perception and insight that we too — the viewers — are made wiser and are enriched from his voyage of discovery.

Beirut: City of Regrets was Reed's journey, but we too made the crossing. In an age of telegenic "response journalism" this man's work provides balance to a story that often only focuses on the cause without giving equal time to the affect in human terms. The rush to airtime or to meet a print deadline along with the space-age advances in technology has turned us into "hunters and gatherers" of information, to paraphrase Joshua Meyrowitz, in his book *No Sense of Place*.

Often, the scene of a breaking news story resembles a feeding frenzy. News sharks descend on the victims in such numbers that the uninitiated are sometimes swept away in the process. But repeated exposure has a way of making victims of the sharks.

In Beirut, the media-wise participants on one side of the war or the other became the orchestrators of what we digested as "the news." These staged events made good television and produced exciting pictures for the weekly news magazines, but gave the viewer little insight into the lives of the people. This artist's vignettes of Beirut provide the fabric for a tapestry of everyday life that shows the city for what it is: a city of contradictions, "a city of regrets"; but also, in the midst of despair, a city of hope.

Ours, indeed, "is an age fascinated by exposures," to again quote Meyrowitz. "The act of exposure itself now seems to excite us more than the content of the secrets exposed." Reed's book is not one where style overwhelms content. He has a gift: he observes without judging; he probes without provoking; he seems to care and respect the people he photographs and they reciprocate

by allowing him — and us — to witness some of the most intimate and oftentimes revealing moments in their lives.

I can't imagine a more difficult assignment for a journalist. Beirut is a city accustomed to basking in its own light. But she has paid a tremendous price both in human and material terms. Dazed in her own despair, trapped in a bloody oasis of conflicting ideologies, she seems to court tragedy. Beirut is ever ready to perform for the camera, and like a child without a parent to impose limits, she now screams for our attention.

A less astute observer might have been caught up in the frenzy, but Reed is no ambulance chaser. Armed with a dedication to his craft, a willingness to tell someone else's story without imposing his opinions, he navigated his way through a perplexing world of bloody photo opportunities, instant replays, and 15-minute prepackaged celebrities to tell a story that speaks to our hearts and not to our biases.

Reed performs with grace under pressure: he never intrudes on the space of his subjects. He is as welcome as the air or soft light he uses to capture a Druze woman in Al Shuwayfat, a mother mourning in East Beirut, or a wounded man with his family in Tripoli. Reed seems to calm and not excite his subjects and they, in turn, respond to his gentleness, warmth, and desire to listen and learn.

Despite the hate, desolation, death and despair, there is a thread of hope weaving its way through the pages of this book. Hope is alive in the eyes of the street urchin in West Beirut, the ritual in the beauty parlor, the ceremony of a Christian wedding in East Beirut, and on a family picnic in Junieh.

Despite the bizarre circumstances of the city, Reed's pictures have a casual informality about them. He moves among the ruins, the despair, the shattered hopes and dreams, the promise of a new life, and death —

with the same quiet deliberation. His pictures speak a language that is, at times, indifferent to their content: a language of patience, a language of tolerance, a language of humility, a language of hope. "I have seen the light of Lebanon in their eyes and when it was there, it was pleasing."

We, the viewers, must try to see the same light in the eyes of Beirut; must try to understand and not judge too harshly. Beirut is a reflection of our embryonic growth. She has had the misfortune of coming of age in today's telegenic period, the same fate of most of the fifty or more nations that have come of age since "Eyewitness News." They all had an

unsympathetic voyeuristic world as a midwife. England had its Hundred Years War; we our Revolution and our Civil War. But there were no news cameras around while America enslaved millions of black men, women, and children. Americans fought the first truly televised war and it changed us. It showed us a side of ourselves that miles of official denials couldn't hide. America, most of all, should try and understand and be patient with Beirut. Reed has. □

Lester Sloan, Nieman Fellow '76, is a photographer-journalist with Newsweek magazine. He is in the Los Angeles bureau.

Reeling Toward the Right Corner

The Coming Battle for the Media: Curbing the Power of the Media Elite

William A. Rusher. William Morrow & Company, 1988. \$18.95

by Wallace Turner

I'm not certain I ought to review this book. There may be multiple conflicts of interest. Rusher says Nieman Fellowships go to those who show "a commendable eagerness to advance the liberal cause," and grasp at the chance for a "brainwashing at Harvard." He says Pulitzer Prize selections are fixed so liberals get them. He raps *The New York Times* over and over for the liberalist tendencies of its reporters, columnists, and editors.

Every dark corner he points to, there I sit.

But we're where we are, and if I don't do it, they might give the assignment to Ellen Goodman [NF'74] or Claude Sitton. That would be even worse, because Rusher complains that they both have Pulitzer

Prizes for writing commentary. He wonders how that could be when his great friend, William F. Buckley Jr., struggles on, Pulitzer-less.

I must tell you that, to me, what Rusher has turned out here is a disappointment. You ought to get more for \$18.95 than a lot of huffing and puffing to try to intimidate media people into paying more attention to Rusher, Buckley, Phyllis Schlafly and their colleagues on the Right.

I searched through every word. I marked up my review copy so much that no one else could stand to read it. Finally I came onto what I nominate as Rusher's pivotal paragraph. The one that justifies his title.

In getting there, he sets up the premise, indispensable to his book, which is that the people who deliver news and comment on public affairs in the United States are biased against conservatives and in favor of liberals.

I don't agree with that — but it's his book. Let us move forward with his thought. To get where he's going, Rusher needs another premise, which is that the conservative movement is

growing in strength and will in time dominate. I doubt that one, too.

He says this past and present bias favoring liberalism has created a terribly unfair imbalance in supplying information to the voters of the Republic. It creates a situation fraught with dangers for the media, he warns.

He says the media have been lining up against the President and in favor of Congress. If they don't quit this, Rusher says, publishers and broadcasters are going to lose a lot of the rights they now enjoy. But he doubts that anybody could successfully propose changing the First Amendment. That sets up his pivotal paragraph:

"And yet, if the current performance of the major American media represents, as I would argue it does, a serious abuse of the media's role in our polity, and gravely undermines the justification for the freedom granted to the press by the First Amendment, then it is entirely appropriate to consider modifications of that sweeping grant. And such modifications would not necessarily have to rely on the cumbersome processes of constitutional amendment."

That last sentence got my attention. Seems I could hear the echo of hobnailed boots on the cobblestones. Just my imagination.

Rusher isn't calling for suspension of the Bill of Rights, although he does sound sort of wistful when he writes about Lincoln suspending habeas corpus. Rusher just wants to warn us that this madness of the liberals, this baiting of his heroes, has to stop or the Supreme Court is going to take things into its own hands. This will be after conservative presidents have been in office long enough to give the Court a conservative majority.

So what will the Court do? It could uphold laws that the media would dislike, and it could fool around a bit with past decisions on libel, he says.

Rusher, a lawyer before he became publisher of the *National Review*, doesn't like the way *The New York Times vs. Sullivan* has evolved through subsequent decisions. He

writes: "The journalistic savaging of public officials and 'public figures' has become a routine aspect of our politics; but just how necessary is this to ensure 'robust debate' on political topics? Britain permits such individuals to sue the media for libel almost without restriction, with the loser paying the lawyers' bills, yet there is nothing notably anemic about Britain's political or journalistic processes."

He mentions with approval the suits by General Sharon and General Westmoreland which made no money for either plaintiff, but cost Time, Inc. and CBS a bundle each for defense. Rusher did not mention his fellow conservative, Paul Laxalt, who froze the media in their tracks with his suit against McClatchy Newspapers. After four years Laxalt dismissed his suit when it was about ready to come to trial.

I kept expecting to read Rusher saying how nice it would be for some government official to be able to have a notice delivered to Ben Bradlee and Max Frankel and Tom Brokaw that forbade them, on pain of a trip to the slammer, to print or broadcast such and so.

But he never makes this proposition, although in a sort of dreamy — nightmarish? — chapter called "Scenario," he has a president reading out a meeting of publishers and broadcasters and telling them they have to change the way they cover the war he's gotten the country into. Otherwise, he'll limit "the right of journalists to brainwash the American public, by highly selective reportage, into bugging out on a military operation."

Rusher criticizes Congress because some members leak confidential materials to reporters, and the stories then embarrass the Reagan Administration. He complains that special prosecutors "pawed over" activities of Meese, Deaver and Nofziger, but nobody laid a glove on Tip O'Neill or Jim Wright. Liberals caused it, you see.

Surprisingly, Rusher has a deep

affection for the Fairness Doctrine.

He was grieved that President Reagan vetoed the bill when Congress tried to write a Fairness Doctrine law after the FCC dumped the administrative rule that created it.

I guess Rusher explains his position when he tells us twice that Phyllis Schlafly says she could not have beaten the Equal Rights Amendment almost single-handed (his judgement, not mine) had she not had the Fairness Doctrine to use.

"There is no intrinsic reason why egregious examples of bias on the part of the electronic media, at least, could not be demonstrated and then stopped by the ordinary processes of administrative law, subject as usual to judicial review," Rusher proposes. Yes, sir, you bet. Be just great to have bureaucrats oversee broadcast news.

The National News Council was the sort of organization that Rusher could support. He served on it seven years, he says. Rusher blames Abe Rosenthal for what he calls "the tooth and claw resistance of the nation's leading newspaper" to the Council. The fact is that a lot of us opposed having *The Times* cooperate with the Council. We were afraid that people would gain ascendancy on the Council who would manipulate the media in the guise of correcting "mistakes" and achieving "balanced" news presentation.

Even though Rusher's definitions of conservative and liberal don't suit me, they let us know what he believes he's talking about. He says conservatives are anti-Marxist while liberals are not.

He says of liberals that "while maintaining a sincere commitment to democracy that many avowed Marxists regard as outmoded, democratic socialists in the world at large, and liberals in the United States, have consistently favored the expansion of government's role in the management of the national economy and correspondingly severe and comprehensive regulation and limitation of private economic activity."

So domestically, Rusher sees

liberals as sort of lapsed Marxists. But in international affairs, they become much more dangerous. He writes:

"And when Communist aggression is masked as, for example, a Third World country's rebellion against 'capitalist exploitation' and in favor of some ambiguous form of socialism, liberal resistance often collapses or even, temporarily, turns into support."

First he defines conservatives as not just opposed to liberalism "though it certainly means that too." He says conservatives rely on economic forces — The Market. In tones almost priestly, Rusher defines this force as "that net product of myriad private economic decisions which sensitively detects and responds to the demands of the economy while simultaneously encouraging maximum economic growth and prosperity."

Conservatives are real smart about things overseas, too, Rusher says. But the liberal bias of the media distorts the truth about events abroad; that results in rejection of good conservative causes. He writes this:

"We have seen the remarkably encouraging political and constitutional developments in South Africa under the Botha government misrepresented or wholly ignored, in favor of intensive coverage (until this was banned) of inflammatory incidents involving riots. We have seen the Nicaraguan contras systematically depicted as callous, cocaine-smuggling Somocistas. We have seen the supporters of Corazon Aquino 'winning' their first election (narrowly) in the teeth of 'massive fraud' by the backers of Ferdinand Marcos — but without, as far as American reportage was concerned, themselves stealing so much as a single vote in the entire Philippine archipelago. From 'acid rain' to 'hunger in America', the media have hewn wood and carried water for the liberal side of virtually every issue before the American people. If there is an exception to that statement, I would like to know what it is."

There are blind spots in the book.

Rusher comes as close as he can to ignoring Spiro Agnew's monumental disgrace, while his book glorifies Agnew for the media bashing speech (remember Nattering Nabobs) in Des Moines in 1969. Rusher averts his eyes from the final shame. He comes no closer than to write "Agnew's own downfall" and again mentions "the Agnew resignation." He's talking about a fellow who accepted bribes while sitting in his vice presidential office.

Somehow Rusher overlooks an event that stands out in my memory as the first time I was aware that media bashing was going to be hot stuff among conservatives.

We're in the Cow Palace. Conservatives are in control and have booed and hissed Nelson Rockefeller for five minutes. Former President Eisenhower is addressing the 1964 Republican Convention that will nominate Barry Goldwater. Ike reads from his speech text something critical about "columnists and commentators" and the convention explodes with a roar, delegates on their feet shaking their fists up at the rafters where the TV booths are perched.

My impression was that Ike looked up in surprise, a sort of "what did I say?" look. But you can't rely on such impressions.

Not much new or surprising comes out of Rusher's book, but one thing aroused my interest: He has no place in the ranks of true conservatives for George Will. He seems to see Will as a sort of commercial toady conservative.

Rusher says "Will has made a cottage industry out of being the commentator to whom Washington's embattled liberal media automatically turned whenever they feel obliged to make room for a relatively conservative opinion."

He credits Irving Kristol with discovering Will. Is Rusher mad at Kristol about something? Another thing: Will has a Pulitzer for commentary.

Rusher and his crowd, which is big and influential, have a problem com-

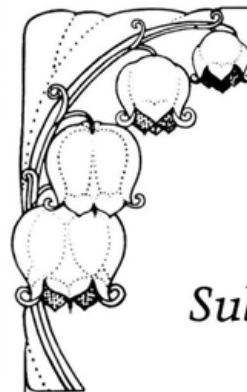
ing up: Their security blanket will be taken away next January. After eight years the Old Cowboy is going back to a little spread in Bel Aire.

Rusher and his brand of conservatives learned through this year's primaries that they have no other candidate of Ronald Reagan's power. So what will they do?

For one thing, Rusher writes this book, which closes with a plea to the self interest of liberals that they ease up a bit, share a little of the power and glory because the day may come when "conservative ideas may seek to crowd liberal ones out of the newsroom."

What he's saying is: "What goes around comes around." □

Wallace Turner, Nieman Fellow '59, recently retired from The New York Times. He was a national correspondent from 1962 to 1988 based in San Francisco, and then in Seattle where he now lives. In 1957 he shared a Pulitzer Prize with William Lambert, Nieman Fellow '60.



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(See page 50)

NIEMAN NOTES

In many American households the month of September, not January, signals the start of a new year, as young family members head for the classroom. Whether it is their first time at a school desk or their return to higher levels of education, structured learning will be supplemented and deepened by day-to-day lessons gleaned outside the building's four walls.

Perhaps one September eve might be set aside in recognition of fresh endeavors. To mark the occasion, parents and offspring could exchange hearty sentiments on the stroke of midnight and wish each other, Happy (Academic) New Year!

—1939—

Springtime visitors to Lippmann House included IRVING DILLIARD, who was in Cambridge to be one of the panelists at the May 19 conference, The Holocaust and the Media, sponsored by the Harvard Divinity School, WCVB-TV, the Anti-Defamation League, and the Nieman Foundation.

HOWARD SIMONS ('59) was one of the conference chairmen. A reception at the Nieman Foundation followed the affair.

—1945—

An interview with A. B. GUTHRIE of Choteau, Montana, was featured in the July 3 issue of the *Great Falls Tribune*. The interviewer was his neighbor, BERT LINDLER ('84), a reporter with that newspaper.

Mr. Guthrie, 87, talked about his newly published collection of essays on environmental issues, *Big Sky, Fair Land*, published by Northland Press of Flagstaff, Arizona. The earliest of the essays is a 1939 editorial that he wrote to deplore the shooting of a golden eagle in Kentucky. His most recent article on the Rocky Mountain Front was printed in the September/October 1987 issue of *Montana Magazine*.

Last year a collection of his poems, *Four Miles from Ear Mountain*, was published by Kutenai Press of Missoula. He has recently completed his latest mystery, *Murder in the Cotswolds*, which will be

published by Houghton Mifflin. In addition, he has completed a piece on his boyhood in Choteau for a book on western writers being published by Alfred A. Knopf.

"I get edgy if I'm not working," he said. "I have to justify my occupation of space."

A. B. Guthrie won the Pulitzer Prize in 1950 for his novel, *The Way West*.

Editor and Publisher featured HOUSTON WARING as their Weekly Editor in the June 11 issue.

Mr. Waring retired as editor of the *Littleton (Colorado) Sentinel Independent* in 1966 but has remained there ever since because "I never feel better than when I am sitting at my typewriter." He goes to the office every day to write a weekly column, as well as editorials, news stories, features, and obituaries. He estimates that he has written 6,000 editorials and 13,000 obituaries.

At 86, he holds the title of editor emeritus. He believes that a community paper should build community spirit. During the 62 years that he has been with the *Sentinel*, he has won dozens of journalistic awards. The first one was given to him when he was a journalism student at the University of Colorado. He began his career as an intern at the then *Littleton Independent* and has never left. At one time he was co-owner.

In July of this year the newspaper celebrated its 100th anniversary. "Hous" Waring remains a key staffer, according to editor Shirley Smith.

Mr. Waring's contributions have been well recognized. A college theater, a city park meadow, and a street have been named after him. He has received honorary degrees from the University of Colorado and Loretto Heights College and was given the Cervi Award at Northern Illinois University for a Lifetime of Newspaper Contribution.

The Colorado Association of Realtors named him Citizen of the Year and four former governors have given him letters of commendation. In 1987 he also won the University of Denver's Distinguished Service Award. But it is Littleton that he cares most about. "I can't separate myself and the *Independent* and the city of Littleton," he said. "We just seem like

one. It's my life."

—1951—

ROY FISHER of the University of Missouri School of Journalism's Reporting Program, has been elected a vice president of the Regional Reporters Association at its first annual meeting May 27. The Association is made up of correspondents who cover Washington from a local, state or regional perspective.

—1959—

JOHN SEIGENTHALER, editor and publisher of *The Tennessean* in Nashville, has received the 1988 Distinguished Service Award from the Association of Schools of Journalism and Mass Communication.

HOWARD SIMONS, curator of the Nieman Foundation, is the author of *Jewish Times, Voices of the American Jewish Experience*, to be published in October by Houghton Mifflin Company. The book is made up of first-hand accounts from men and women in all walks of life and from all corners of the country, describing their experiences in settling in as United States citizens.

When WALLACE TURNER left *The New York Times*, three dozen colleagues and friends marked the event by contributing to the Norman Cherniss Book Fund at the Nieman Foundation. Gifts from *Times* staff members were matched by *The Times* for a total gift of \$5,212.

NORMAN CHERNISS, great editor, great wit, great book lover, and one of Wally's closest friends, was a member of the Class of 1959. He died in 1984. The Cherniss Book Fund makes it possible for the Foundation to buy books for the sitting Nieman Class.

—1963—

BERNARD NOSSITER is writing a weekly column, titled "The Europeans," on economics and world affairs for syndication. He formerly was national economics correspondent for *The*

Washington Post, European economics correspondent in Paris, South Asia correspondent in New Delhi, and London correspondent. From 1979 to 1983, he was *The New York Times* bureau chief at the United Nations.

In 1987 he returned to London, where he now lives.

—1968—

GERALD GRANT, professor of education and sociology at Syracuse University, New York, is the author of *The World We Created at Hamilton High*, published in April by the Harvard University Press.

Mr. Grant has been named a fellow at the Center for Advanced Study in the Behavioral Sciences at Stanford University for the 1988-89 academic year.

—1971—

HYUCK-IN LEW in May wrote from Lisbon, Portugal. "I am pleased to inform you that I have recently arrived in Lisbon to take up my post as Korean Ambassador to the Portuguese Republic. . . . It has been eight years since my retirement from the Korean Government. . . . My very best regards."

—1977—

ZVI DOR-NER is executive producer for a new documentary series, *War and Peace in the Nuclear Age*. The 13-hour documentary, a production of WGBH-TV, Boston, will have its premier showing on public television early in 1989. The series, five years in the making, traces the 40-year history of nuclear weapons, nuclear policy, and arms control.

A companion book to the series, *War and Peace in the Nuclear Age*, by New Yorker staff writer John Newhouse, will be published by Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., and released to coincide with the premier showing of the television program.

Mr. Dor-Ner traveled to the Soviet Union four times between 1985 and 1987 in preparation of the series. He said, "The Soviet point of view is crucial to a complete and balanced treatment of nuclear issues. . . . In this series, it was important that the Soviet perspective be well expressed by the most influential and knowledgeable people."

War and Peace in the Nuclear Age represents unprecedented Soviet participation in a nationally broadcast televi-

sion series. Cooperating groups included the Soviet Embassy in Washington, D.C., Gostelradio, and the Institute of U.S. and Canadian Studies in Moscow.

—1978—

The National Press Club awarded its top consumer-reporting prize to a team led by BRUCE LOCKLIN, investigative news editor at *The Record*, Hackensack, New Jersey, for a series on deceptive practices at the Wild Bill car dealership. Soon after the series was published in February 1987, the state attorney general's office filed a lawsuit seeking to close two dealerships by Chrysler executives. Subsequently, Chrysler Corporation sued the dealerships in a federal court, seeking to revoke the manufacturer's franchise with William J. Perretti, owner of both Paramus Dodge and Paramus Chrysler Plymouth. The suits are still pending.

On another note, Mr. Locklin wrote that he and Barbara Hoffman were married in August. She is a "Lifestyle" writer at *The Record*. His previous marriage ended in divorce.

—1979—

PEGGY SIMPSON in June became bureau chief of *Ms* magazine in Washington, D.C. She formerly covered politics for Hearst Newspapers. At *Ms* she will cover the presidential campaigns and legislative and congressional affairs. *Ms*, formerly owned by an Australian company, is now American owned and staffed by women. Sandra Yates is president; Anne Summers is vice-president and editor-in-chief.

KATHERINE HARTING TRAVERS wrote from Maryland to say that she and her husband Robin announce the birth of their daughter, Katherine Leone, on July 5, weight: 8 pounds, 3 1/2 ounces.

"We have moved to this tiny town [Princess Anne] so we could buy our own home. . . . My job is media specialist at the University of Maryland, Eastern Shore Campus, for the School of Agricultural Sciences, which is one of three schools here — the one with the smallest student enrollment and the largest research budget.

"There's a little bit of expertise required in many media — print, photography, video, radio, and three-dimensional displays. I have my own weekly radio

show. . . . We are able to live five minutes from campus on a fenced half-acre."

—1981—

HOWARD SHAPIRO, editor of *The Philadelphia Inquirer's Weekend Calendar* magazine, stopped by Lippmann House in July with his wife Susan Kershman and their two-year old daughter Lillie. They were in Cambridge because Ms. Kershman was conducting workshops for educators of blind and sight-impaired students at the Perkins School for the Blind in Watertown.

—1982—

MARGOT ADLER and John Gliedman were married June 19 at Lambert's Cove Inn in West Tisbury, a town on the island of Martha's Vineyard, off the coast of Massachusetts. Selena Fox, a minister of the Circle Sanctuary, performed the ceremony.

The bride, who will retain her name, is a reporter with "All Things Considered" and "Morning Edition," both on National Public Radio. She is the author of *Drawing Down the Moon*, a study of modern neo-paganism and goddess religions published by the Beacon Press. The bridegroom, a psychologist and science writer, is co-author of a report for the Carnegie Council on Children. His book is titled *The Unexpected Minority: Handicapped Children in America*.

Ms. Adler is the daughter of Dr. Kurt Alfred Adler, a psychiatrist in New York, and the late Freyda Nacque Adler. She is a granddaughter of the late Alfred Adler, a psychiatrist of Vienna and New York. She graduated from the City and Country School, the High School of Music and Art, and the University of California at Berkeley, where she was elected to Phi Beta Kappa. She received a master's degree from the Columbia University Graduate School of Journalism.

Mr. Gliedman, the son of the late Dr. and Mrs. Lester H. Gliedman of Luther-ville, Maryland, graduated from the Park School and magna cum laude from Harvard University. He received a Ph.D. degree from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. His previous marriage ended in divorce.

(From *The New York Times*)

Nieman classmates attending the ceremony included ALEX JONES and his wife Susan Tiffit, CHRISTOPHER

BOGAN and his wife Mary Jo Barnett and their baby Evan, ANITA HARRIS, PIERO BENETAZZO and his spouse, Sylvia Poggiolo, EDWARD WALSH and his wife Michelle, and JUDY ROSENFELD and her husband, Ira Simmons. Lois Fiore, assistant to the curator of the Nieman Foundation, also was present.

—1984—

DERRICK JACKSON, formerly Boston bureau chief for *Newsday*, is now a reporter with *The Boston Globe*.

BERT LINDLER wrote in July. "I'm editing a weekly outdoor page and reporting on outdoor recreation and natural resources for the *Great Falls Tribune*, Montana." (See also Class of 1945 note.)

"My wife, Kristi DuBois, is working at Benton Lake National Wildlife Refuge, a few miles north of Great Falls, this summer. In addition, she is studying ferruginous hawks, prairie falcons, and golden eagles that nest on the Kevin Rim, a seven-mile-long cliff facing the Montana prairie 15 miles south of the Canadian border. The eight-week contract is for the federal Bureau of Land Management, which manages land and minerals on the Kevin Rim. I've spent several weekends helping her.

"On July 4th I was with her when she checked to see how the babies were doing in a ferruginous hawk nest near where an oil well is to be drilled. The two parents soared high above her, screeching a warning. Occasionally one tucked its wings tightly against its body and dropped like a rocket to defend the nest. I stood back where I could watch the hawks without threatening them. Every time I saw one start to fold its wings in a 'stoop,' I warned Kristi, who was wearing a hardhat and a leather jacket to protect herself. She heard and felt a 'whoosh' several times as the hawks rushed by, but was not struck. The five babies are doing fine."

NANCY WEBB and Richard A.F. Shafer are the parents of Ariel Christian Shafer born on June 29, 1988 at Mount Auburn Hospital in Cambridge. The infant weighed 9 pounds, 4 ounces.

Ms. Webb most recently was an instructor in expository writing at Harvard University.

—1985—

ROBERTO EISENMANN, publisher of *La Prensa* in Panama, now living in exile in Florida, has received the Pedro Joaquín Chamorro Award for Freedom of the Press, given by the Inter American Press Association.

MARGARET (PEG) FINUCANE and Robert Heisler announce the birth of their first child, Sarah Frances, on June 26 in New York. She weighed 8 pounds, 7 ounces.

Ms. Finucane is a news editor with *Newsday*.

JOE OGLESBY and Linda Blash were married in Philadelphia on February 14, 1988. The couple met during Joe's Nieman year when Linda (Harvard '85) was studying economics. She is now working on her Ph.D. degree in economics at the University of Pennsylvania. But the most exciting news of all — a baby is expected in January.

Mr. Oglesby, formerly assistant city editor at *The Miami Herald*, is suburban editor at *The Philadelphia Inquirer*.

The Boston Globe, July 6, 1988 reported that ZWELAKHE SISULU, the detained editor of *The New Nation* newspaper, had been hospitalized and was being treated for depression, according to his attorney, Priscilla Jana. He has been released from the hospital and is back in prison.

Mr. Sisulu was taken July 1 from Kiepkloof Prison in the black township of Soweto and admitted to Johannesburg Hospital. He has been detained without charge since December 1986, and courts have rejected requests that the government charge or release him.

Zwelakhe Sisulu is the son of Walter Sisulu, an imprisoned leader of the African National Congress. His brother Thabo is chief spokesman for the outlawed ANC in Lusaka, Zambia. His mother Albertina is copresident of the banned United Democratic Front, an anti-apartheid group. She is prohibited from giving news interviews or speeches.

During Zwelakhe's detention, his two-year-old newspaper, *The New Nation*, which is published for black readers by the South African Catholic Bishops Conference, was banned for three months. It resumed publication the end of June. A black-run newspaper, it calls itself *The Voice of the Voteless*.

South African government officials

have said Sisulu was detained because of his journalistic activities and because he was reputed to be a member of the National Education Crisis Committee. He denied that he belonged to the committee, which is legal and unrestricted, but the court upheld the right of the police to hold him under national emergency regulations.

Despite his inaccessibility, Zwelakhe Sisulu has become one of South Africa's most influential black newspapermen. He covered the 1976 Soweto uprising and led the first-ever strike by journalists. Two years ago he became the editor of *The New Nation*.

The Nieman Fellows Class of 1987 chose Zwelakhe Sisulu for the Louis M. Lyons Award for courage and integrity in journalism. At the close of his Nieman year, some of his classmates tried to persuade him and his family not to return to South Africa, but were unsuccessful. Zodwa his wife explained recently from their home, "It would be a betrayal if we had stayed away." Howard Simons frequently telephones Zodwa to keep in touch.

Earlier this year protestations from Derek Bok, the International Federation of Newspaper Publishers, and 52 U.S. senators were to no avail (See *NR*, Summer). The South African government has not released him, and he remains in detention.

* * *

And yet another honor for the imprisoned South African editor — ZWELAKHE SISULU. He is the recipient of the first PERCY QOBOZA (NF '76) AWARD given by The National Association of Black Journalists at an awards ceremony held during the Association's thirteenth annual convention on August 27 in St. Louis, Missouri. Mr. Qoboza, an eminent South African journalist, died — on his fiftieth birthday — this past January 17.

The award cited Mr. Sisulu for his "Courage and Professionalism Under Trying Circumstances in Order to Inform the World of Political, Economic, and Social Conditions in Third World Countries," was presented by CALLIE CROSSLEY (NF '83), producer of ABC's weekly news series, *20/20*, and accepted for Zwelakhe Sisulu by JOE OGLESBY, A Nieman Fellow Classmate of Mr. Sisulu, who is with *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, and Thabo Mbeki, minister of information for the African National Congress, and a

childhood friend of Mr. Sisulu. The award, to be presented annually, will be given only to journalists of Third World Countries.

—1986—

HARRY BISSINGER III (Buzz) plans to follow the pigskin. Buzz has taken a year's leave of absence from *The Philadelphia Inquirer* — he will travel with the Odessa (Texas) High School football team to assess the effect of the game on the players and their families, the rest of the Odessa population, and on the town itself.

The journey and the research will result in a book by Buzz that will probe the feelings of 11 players on a 100-yard long field and of a town in west-central Texas.

DAVID SYLVESTER, formerly of the *San Jose Mercury News*, is now senior reporter for *California Business Magazine*. He will also do free-lance writing for other publications. While on his former newspaper, Mr. Sylvester had won the Loeb Award for newspapers in the 150,000 to 400,000 circulation category for his story in the newspaper's magazine section — *West* — depicting how difficult it is for a family to live on \$40,000 a year in the United States.

—1987—

CHARLES ALSTON, formerly a reporter with the *Greensboro* (N.C.) *News & Record*, has joined the staff of the *Congressional Quarterly* in Washington D.C. He will be covering the congress.

MALGORZATA NIEZABITOWSKA, a member of the editorial board of the *Catholic Review* in Warsaw, Poland, wrote in April that she had just returned from a two-month journey. In February she and her husband Tomasz Tomaszewski met in Tel Aviv on their tenth wedding anniversary. The couple had been invited there by the Museum of the Diaspora to open an exhibition of photographs with text and caption of the book, *Remnants: The Last Jews of Poland*, authored jointly by her and her husband, Tomasz Tomaszewski. She wrote the text and captions and her husband took the photographs. Later Malgorzata went to England to take some courses in English at Cambridge.

Regarding *Remnants*, she wrote "Recently a big Italian magazine has published it and now the Dutch one

wants to. . . . Hebrew and Spanish versions of the book will be on the market this year."

Random Note

Among the media professionals and educators who have been named to fellowships for the 1988-89 academic year at the Gannett Center for Media Studies at Columbia University are two Nieman Fellows. They are: JOHN CORRY ('65), public affairs television critic of *The New York Times*, and PATRICIA O'BRIEN ('74) writer and former Knight-Ridder columnist.

* * *

At the close of this compilation of Nieman Notes, your editor has appended the traditional "30." The digits in this instance mark the conclusion of more than twenty years with the Nieman enterprise, and an experience that per-

sonally always will be green and lively.

And yet the staying power of habit is strong. In retirement this editor will continue to edit, but apart from the printed page. From now on, our larger scrutiny will have its focus on the coming and going of flora and fauna in nearby fields and woods; the fluctuations of bird-watching; the persistence of upstart weeds in the garden; the disarray on every bookshelf; the yield from berry and shellfish crops; the number of salty gifts in the sea wrack; the moods of the water in Vineyard Sound and the boats passing by; the size of the woodpile in summer's heavy sunshine, gauged for comfort in icy winter; and, in general, a monitoring of the four seasons and, concurrently, the personae of three granddaughters.

All these "galleys" will be blue-pencilled "stet."

T.B.K.L.

— 30 —

Books Received at Lippmann House

Cable Television: A Reference Guide to Information.

Ronald Garay.
Greenwood Press, Inc.

Development Communication: Information, Agriculture, and Nutrition in the Third World.

Robert C. Hornik.
Longman Inc.

Global Guide to Media & Communications.

John A. Lent.
George Kurian Reference Books.
An Imprint of K.G. Saur
München.

Media in Society: Readings in Mass Communication.

Caren J. Deming,
Samuel L. Becker.
Scott, Foresman and Company.



The Press and America: An Interpretive History of the Mass Media.

Sixth Edition.
Michael Emery, Edwin Emery.
Prentice Hall.

Writing Opinion: Editorials.

William L. Rivers,
Bryce McIntyre,
Alison Work.

Writing Opinion: Reviews.

William L. Rivers.
Iowa State University
Press/Ames.

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