

Nieman Reports

51

July, 1950

The Pulitzer Prize Stories

Texts of the stories that won the awards for local and national reporting
—and the prize editorial.

**Milwaukee Journal Employee
Ownership Plan**

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

Nieman Reports

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Two Good Papers Are Better Than Either

by Ernest H. Linford

Denver and Colorado are to be congratulated for maintaining a competitive press. Because of the hard, cold facts of economics, newspapers are folding up all over the country and monopoly is on the march. A recent survey showed that in ten states there is not a single community with competing daily papers. More than 1200 cities have a one-ownership press (21 of them are major cities). Fourteen corporations owning 18 papers control about a quarter of the total daily circulation of the United States.

This alarming trend is not limited to the metropolitan or daily field. More than 3200 weeklies have disappeared since the first world war, victims of the race between rising production costs and shrinking revenues. With an ever-narrowing profit, the papers without great financial resources fall by the wayside and monopoly is accelerated.

Anyway you look at it, this is bad for democracy. The more papers there are the more outlets people have for expression of ideas and opinion—as well as news. Democracy needs all the media possible for dissemination of information and opinion.

Competition—healthy competition—is the blood stream of business, including the newspaper business. Competition in a community serves to keep an editor on his toes. It brings out facts which might otherwise be ignored, it brings a champion for causes toward which a publisher might prefer to remain indifferent.

The One-Eyed Man

The single-ownership newspaper has been compared with a man with one eye. The eye may be good, but it is not as good as two. Regardless of the high aspirations of the one-ownership press to give the community the best possible

service—to keep the columns open to all—the single authority at the top eventually in some way or another influences the various departments below—including the editorial column. No institution is without “sacred cows” of some kind. Even if the “old man” hasn’t strong prejudices, junior executives down the line have a way of interpreting what they think he wants. The one-newspaper community just doesn’t get the variety of opinions and coverage. It is denied that hard-to-explain something that comes from virile competition.

This is not a criticism of the publishers who operate monopolies. Many of them would prefer the situation were otherwise. There are some examples where the monopoly press is doing a superb job of serving the people. Some of them are here in Colorado. In the metropolitan field, the Louisville *Courier-Journal* is an example. But Mr. Barry Bingham, the owner, has stressed in *Nieman Reports* the heavy problems involved.

There are instances where publishers try so hard to be fair, to fill the gaps left by vigorous competition—being all things to all people—that there results a colorless newspaper that serves nobody satisfactorily.

The monopoly press faces tremendous responsibilities these days when 21 cities of more than 100,000 population have a single press ownership. Many are valiantly trying to meet it, but many are looking the other way.

(The regional press and the radio are a form of competition which help to keep the community press on its toes.)

Painful as it is, we have to admit that the editorial page has lost much of its audience and that our advice, especially political advice, doesn’t go very far.

One of the troubles with many editorials is stodginess.

To capture readership we must relate our subject to the reader personally. We’ve got to improve our writing style. If we have that *extra something*, we can still do some effective writing. But we’ve got to remember that we aren’t writing for other writers, but for ordinary Joes.

If One Paper is Good

I believe a paper should try hard to balance its syndicated columns and comment—even as it does the news—to give the people both sides. A Tom Stokes should offset a Sokolsky, or even a David Lawrence. A Marquis Child should balance a Frank R. Kent. But why a paper would run both Pegler and Sokolsky is a mystery to me.

Have you noticed that when there is a good newspaper in a town, and there is competition, the other paper is usually good too?

ERNEST H. LINFORD writes editorials for the Salt Lake *Tribune*. For many years he was editor of a small paper, the *Laramie Republican-Boomerang*. He was a Nieman Fellow in 1946-47. This is from a “Newspaper Week” talk at Boulder, Colorado.

NEWSPAPER EMPLOYEE OWNERSHIP

The Milwaukee Journal's Unique Stock Plan

by J. D. Ferguson

*President and Editor
Milwaukee Journal*

In June, 1949, Harry J. Grant, chairman of the board of directors of the Milwaukee *Journal* Company, received an honorary doctor of law degree from the University of Wisconsin. The citation said in part that "one of his most significant contributions to journalism and at the same time service to the public, is the plan that he conceived and executed for stock ownership control of the newspaper by the employes themselves." Sigma Delta Chi, national journalistic fraternity, named Mr. Grant a Fellow for "blazing a new trail in industrial democracy by conceiving and carrying out employe ownership in the newspaper field, which may well set a pattern in the years ahead for keeping 'freedom of the press' a freedom from exploitation."

Many business organizations and particularly several newspapers have had some degree or some form of employe ownership but the *Journal* plan, in effect for 13 years, is unique in the American newspaper field; in many respects its advantages exceed those of any employe ownership plan in this country. No other plan that the trustees of the *Journal* Employe Stock Ownership Plan have examined has the widespread employe distribution that the Milwaukee *Journal* plan has, with legal provisions for maintaining majority ownership of the institution in employes' hands in perpetuity.

Today 727 employes own 55 percent of the capital stock of the *Journal* Company. There is no other class of security and any possible future issue of additional stock could be issued only with a pro rata distribution to employe owners. Shares owned by employes can be re-sold only to other full-time employes. Distribution of shares, by fixed formula, extends from janitors to front office.

The Nieman Wills

The Milwaukee *Journal* was founded May 16, 1882, by Lucius W. Nieman, who died October 1, 1935. The provisions of Mr. Nieman's will raised the prospect that control of the *Journal* Company might pass to outside hands. His trustees were empowered to sell the stock at the direction of Agnes Wahl Nieman, his widow, and Miss Faye McBeath, his niece, not necessarily to the highest bidder, but to one who would be able to "carry out the ideals and principles" established and maintained by the Milwaukee *Journal*. It was further provided that in the event of Mrs. Nieman's death, one-half of the trust estate was to be dis-

posed of as directed by her and the remaining one-half was to go to Miss McBeath.

Soon after Mr. Nieman's death, Mr. Grant renewed his offers to purchase the Nieman stock for the benefit of *Journal* employes, but Mrs. Nieman died before negotiations were completed, and by her will bequeathed the proceeds of her interest in *Journal* stock to Harvard University "to promote and elevate the standards of journalism in the United States." It was this bequest which established at Harvard the Nieman Fellowships.

In March, 1936, the *Journal* Company, under Mr. Grant's leadership, and Miss McBeath, made an offer to the trustees under Mr. Nieman's will to purchase the Nieman stock, which was 55 percent of the outstanding capital stock of the company. The transaction called for cash and the trustees accepted the offer with the approval of the county court of Milwaukee County.

One-fourth to Employes

Mr. Grant convinced the several stockholding interests involved that his plan of employe participation in ownership was sound and won their support for the undertaking. In 1937 one-fourth of the outstanding *Journal* stock was sold to eligible *Journal* employes at the same price that the *Journal* Company had paid to the Nieman estate. Since that date a total of 55 percent of the stock has been sold to men and women actively engaged in producing the Milwaukee *Journal* and in operating its radio and television stations, under terms of easy payment, which made the employes' obligations self-liquidating.

The *Journal* Employes' Stock Trust Agreement became effective May 15, 1937, as the instrument for carrying out the employe ownership plan. The purpose of the agreement is to enable eligible *Journal* employes to enjoy a beneficial interest in *Journal* shares, to vote them and to receive dividends, to use them for collateral, but to prevent those shares from being sold to persons outside the *Journal* employe group.

When an employe buys a share of stock, he technically buys a "unit of beneficial interest," representing the share of stock. He can vote his stock in a stockholders' meeting, either in person or by proxy. He is entitled to all the usual legal rights of a stockholder and directly receives all dividends. But if he wants to sell his stock he must offer

it through the trustees, themselves active employees, to other eligible employees.

When Employee Leaves

Whenever an employe stockholder ceases to be an employe of the company he must turn in his stock to the trustees for resale. The employe stockholder likewise must relinquish his stock upon reaching age 65, even if he continues in *Journal* employ. This provision, written into the trust agreement, is to assure widespread distribution of the employe stock at all times.

Any employe may offer his stock, or any part of it, for resale at any time. The price at which it is bought or sold is fixed by a formula established by the trust agreement. This formula is based on the book value of the outstanding common stock (capital plus accumulated undistributed calendar month less dividends paid in that year; plus net income in current year at the close of the preceding calendar month less dividends paid in that year; plus three times the average annual net income of the company available for dividends on *Journal* stock during the preceding five fiscal years; divided by the number of shares outstanding. The result is a price per unit, reflecting not only the company's capital worth, but also its theoretical earning power over an extended period.

When stock becomes available for resale, it is offered to other eligible employes designated by the president of the company. Although the Stock Trust Agreement provides that the president of the *Journal* Company shall have full discretion in the allocation of stock, a definite system for allotment has been developed. This system provides for a broad basis of distribution, but it also recognizes that employes who have demonstrated capacity for responsibility, vision and leadership through long service and actual performance should be correspondingly considered in the stock allotted to them. Financial ability to pay does not influence distribution. Over 90 percent of employe eligibles have purchased stock, though there is no obligation for them to do so.

Five to 15 Times Weekly Pay

Under this method of distribution, employes may be offered stock numbering 5 to 15 times the dollar amount of their weekly salaries. Employes whose relationship with the company is governed and limited by union contracts are considered on a group rather than on an individual job basis. The fair allotment of stock, therefore, requires that in these cases individual quotas be uniform. This allotment quota is 225 shares. The March 31, 1950 value of a share was \$20.36.

Three years of continuous service are presently necessary to qualify an employe for the purchase of stock. Any employe who is unable to purchase stock when it is offered to him is again offered stock (if available) at the end of a year, or before at his request.

At Mr. Grant's suggestion, in May, 1943, a Unitholders' Council of employes, (4 from each of 6 major departments) was created to work with management. This group, chosen by employe vote, is articulate in all matters affecting the welfare of the Company. It has no executive function, but has contributed many valuable ideas which were welcome to management.

That employe-stockholders may have a direct voice in the top Councils of the Company, one from each of the six major department Council members is elected to serve on the *Journal* Board of Directors. The Board is at present composed of 22 members—general officers and department managers are included with the employe stockholders' representatives.

The *Journal* plan of employe participation in ownership is more than a "profit sharing plan." Most profit sharing plans are a form of wage or salary bonus which management takes out of the company's net profits after certain other requirements are met, and are subject to cancellation by management. Under the *Journal* plan, employes actually participate in the ownership and management of their company, and their dividends are just the same as any other company stockholders; and if they leave the *Journal* for any cause, there is a ready market at the formula price for their stock. At death their stock is purchased by the employe trustees at the formula price for redistribution among other eligible employes. This formula price amounts in general terms to the price originally paid by the employe, plus any undivided profits that may have accrued. The money received for this stock is paid to the executors of the deceased.

Employes Own 55 Percent

The total value of the 55 percent of *Journal* stock owned by employes, based on the price as of December 31, 1949, was \$6,164,400. This is \$2,838,480 more than the \$3,325,920 paid to the original stockholders. Dividends paid to the employes owning stock, from the beginning of the employe ownership plan in 1937 to December 31, 1949, totaled \$4,536,000. But these impressive figures tell only part of the story.

Journal employes have a feeling of economic security. They are no longer pawns in the game of business, nor chattels to be sold to the highest bidder along with other fixed assets. They are legal owners of majority stock. *Journal* employe stock ownership has brought within reach bigger insurance and estate programs for employes, home ownership, broadening travel and stimulating vacations, higher education for their children. Through it their interest in vital community problems has been increased.

For the newspaper it means that its ideals and policies, its services to the public, will be safeguarded and perpetuated.

There is growing recognition among newspaper owners of the need to provide a means of lasting service to the community. Many have shown a marked interest in the *Journal* plan.

Newspapers have frequently been destroyed on the death of individual owners by failure properly to provide for changes in ownership and management. Sometimes new owners and management come almost unannounced. Despite good intentions, they often bring confusion and misunderstanding affecting employes' rights that are fatal to the institution.

Many bequests place control of estates and responsibility for their operation in the hands of trustees and executors, usually drawn from the legal and banking professions. These men, honest and efficient in their financial dealings and competent in their judgment of broad general policies, do not have the background needed in successful newspaper making. It is not surprising that they should lack this knowledge, as many intangible things and details are involved in printing the news and editorials dealing with

daily events. Frequently they dare not take the needed risks involved because of legal restraints.

The men and women on the job are the most trustworthy and competent partners, either as productive workers or managers.

A tremendous force for good or evil lies in the control of any newspaper, since the welfare of the community is involved. Employe ownership and control should generate, through management, the highest ideals of service, advanced technical knowledge and efficient work by the employe group, under liberal conditions of employment. Permanence and continuity of maximum service are assured. The concept of public service at its best will never be lost sight of under such ownership.

Unexpected and demoralizing changes in ownership or stock manipulation by large minority blocs of outside investors are effectively eliminated, under the *Journal* employes plan. And the employe group, as stockholders with majority control, has gained a new freedom and dignity in its work.

WHAT MAKES A GOOD NEWSPAPER

by Oxie Reichler

The editor of the Yonkers Herald-Statesman judged New Jersey dailies in a Better Newspaper Contest for the New Jersey Press Institute. Here he describes what he looked for in a newspaper.

What is a truly excellent newspaper? What makes one newspaper distinctive and good? I wish I knew.

I regret that there are not fixed standards, which all of us could use to rate our own paper, and all others in which we are interested. Then there would be no need of errors which we all make daily, no room for the bad guesses, no place at all for some practices we indulge for no other reason than that they are delightfully easy and often delightfully acceptable to many readers. Were there such fixed and guaranteed standards—of editorial content, of makeup, of typography—we would all be doing our very best all of the time, instead of slipping down to levels which we ourselves would be the first to admit are sometimes pretty terrible.

Lest we get too serious about the whole business, let me say (1) thank God that there are no such official and accepted standards, or our papers might all be as dull as an overdressed fop, and our readers would be deserting us for something less perfect and less boring than such perfectionism; and (2) that there is plenty of virtue (wholly apart from economy and success in business) in being simply adequate.

It is our trials and our errors, our bold departures and our occasional successes, that keep our profession the living,

glowing, amazing, progressive, shocking, offensive, pleasing and impudently delightful thing that it is.

Personally, I should deplore the day indeed when a formula will have been arrived at by which we shall be told that this is super and the other is not. I should resent any such formalism in journalism, quite as much as I should resent it at the dining table. Leave me to my own appetites—and keep your dictatorship of my newspaper or my other diets far on the other side of the globe from where I am.

When it comes to newspaper reading—or even to newspaper publishing or editing—I cuddle my prejudices and my own whims, as I'm sure each of you does with your own. If you're welcome in your methods, your ideas and your preachments, your readers may go along with you a good distance, even when they thoroughly disagree with you. If they catch you trying perfectionism, I suspect they may desert you in droves.

To show you what went on in my mind as I tried to set up a yardstick for judging papers, I shall give you a brief description of the processes I used. My instructions had been to pass judgment on these seven departments: General Excellence, Front Page, Sports Page, Editorial Page, Social Page, Display Advertising and Classified Advertising.

Jumps Are a Nuisance

Besides the box score itself on each of the classifications, I added a few arbitrary points for special excellence or special demerits. For example, a distinguished feature anywhere in the paper—like a very splendid radio program or fine pictures—got two points apiece surplus, while I deducted arbitrarily a point apiece for jumps of stories off page one. These are so often a reader nuisance that jumps simply must be discouraged.

I gave a couple of extra points where there was good makeup of inside pages, where there was a Page One index, where there was a good letter column, with names and addresses under the letters to identify the writers; where there was a good obituary column, where there was plenty of good art inside, where name lists were attractively done in half-column agate and alphabetized, where there was a particularly good localized feature, where there was a weather map, a beautiful woman's page, where bulletins were attractive, where the jump page was prettily dressed, and also where a paper had an especially good set of rules to guide contributors to the Public Opinion column.

Similarly I deducted overall a couple of points each where all letters were unsigned except for pseudonyms or initials, where there was no letter column at all, where social or other contents were almost deliberately scattered about, and where there were no local editorials.

I was impressed—in all this procedure—by the amazing excellence of most of the Sports Pages as compared to the rest of the paper. Where writing was often careless or uninspired elsewhere in the paper—particularly bad, often, on Social—it sparkled by contrast on the Sports Page. Sure, there was an abundance of trite and misused words and phrases, but the writing was full of zip and go, of information laid out by somebody who had a lot of fun writing the stuff, and who was intent on sharing that exhilaration with the reader.

Where makeup in a paper was generally poor, where headlining standards were incredibly low, the Sports Page of that same paper usually reflected better dress and better headlining.

In view of the fact that the great majority of men and women readers hardly devote much time to the Sports Page, this is a phenomenon worth noting. I suspect that—apart from the fact that sports news lends itself to livelier treatment than much of the rest of the paper—the Sports Page readers are plenty more vocal in their demands, their delights and their displeasures.

I was watching for each paper's know-how and its ability to demonstrate that know-how to its readers—whether in handling the news, in writing editorials, or even in presenting advertisements.

I had my eye peeled for the local comment in the editorial column, for the local editorial page feature, for the sharp local editorial cartoon, for the kind of type and makeup on

the editorial page that might provide each reader a comfortable fireside chat with the editor every evening, rather than a jumble of unattractive filler material which could hardly hold him for more than a glance.

And I was watching for each newspaper's self-respect, not only in presenting the news but the advertising too. It irritated me to find advertisements islanded for no special purpose, not only at the bottom of pages but at the very top. Ads are plenty newsworthy, but I still do not like to see them placed above news items on any page in the paper.

Frankly, too many of the papers entered in this contest have a general type-face that must be extremely popular with New Jersey oculists. The most attractive body type, properly based and spaced so that reading can be rapid and pleasant, is none too good for Americans. I would even venture to suggest that some day no good newspaper will print anything in type smaller than ten point. Remember, people are living longer every year—and that means more readers with declining vision and more powerful eyeglasses.

Obits a Test

When I pick up a newspaper I have never seen before—whether American or foreign—I usually turn to the obituary column. I can tell you pretty fast whether in that shop there is respect for the reader's needs and wishes, whether obits are ground out like hamburger with the same uninspired words (actually a horrid formula) and with absolute ultimate brevity, or whether the community's departed get their story told with a grace and an interest and a writing competence which can make every obituary notice one of the jeweled contents of that day's paper—for there is a story in each mortal career, although it must be sought out and found—and written.

I found myself a little aghast at some of the sad reproductions of news and advertisements, at the hard-to-read type on classified, at the recklessness of shaving pages so that portions are snatched away from the reader; at the careless inking, at the readiness of papers to allow reverse ads all through their issues, making the paper look extra-black, cheap.

We may be launched upon an age of color (only one of the entrants used color, and then only in an advertisement).

We have a great distance to go to reflect such progress as has been made—physically, at least—by the magazines and other publications.

Too many of our papers are still satisfied with practices and methods that were in vogue half a century ago. For whatever reason, we are using less than the best and giving our readers less than our best.

We cannot expect to be able to stay in that rut and deal with the competition that grows in communication fields with every passing hour. The sums that publishers at last are channeling into research are being well-expended.

A ONE-MAN BAND

The Business Editor in a Medium-Sized City

by Will Lindley

Ever see a "one-man band"—an entertainer who blows a harmonica, strums a banjo and pumps the foot pedal on a bass drum all at once?

That's the kind of show you've got to put on when you're the lone business editor on a daily in a medium-sized city. But if you take an interest in business news, there seldom is a dull moment, so diversified is the field and so abundant the opportunities it offers.

Perhaps the financial editor of a metropolitan daily would be surprised to be told that a city the size of ours offers innumerable possibilities for the business news writer.

But consider this: There are 365 pages of classified advertising in the Salt Lake metropolitan area telephone directory. Each one of the business firms listed will at some time be a news source, since our standards of what constitutes business news are not nearly so restricted as those of "big city" papers.

Salt Lake City has about 200,000 people living within its city limits. When you consider that almost every male among them has an interest in news of some particular business—the one in which he is employed, or perhaps the one he intends to enter—you can begin to realize the opportunities offered by a business news page.

And among the women, many will take an interest in the industries in which their husbands are employed. More important than that is the fact that the nation's wealth gradually is shifting into the hands of women. Many of them are employed by industry. Many more have stocks, bonds or other wealth left them by males of the family—since women, on the average, outlive their mates.

Of course readership of the business page probably cannot regularly reach the level of the comics, women's and sports sections. But consider those who read it:

There are the well-to-do and the wealthy, interested vitally in protecting their investments and in watching for opportunities for making further investments.

An \$85,000 Store

There is another group, including farmers, miners, oil men and others who regularly must have certain market-type information: wheat crop data, futures prices and weather forecasts for the farmer; news of ore development for the miner; and reports of oil well locations, completions and failures for the petroleum specialist.

A third group is interested in business pages. It is comprised of that group of citizens which takes a keen interest in the nation's economy. These citizens can, by studying market reports, get a better idea of how well the nation's business is doing.

Certainly the members of these groups are worthy of attention from any newspaper.

And the visiting businessman—is it important to have a man conversant with the industrial scene to interview him? Experience on the *Tribune* would indicate so, since many stories gained by such interviews have been moved to the best news spots.

The small metropolis business editor probably has a number of problems not faced by his big city brethren. The construction of an \$85,000 store is news, whereas it might be overlooked in San Francisco or Cleveland. If a distributor has a meeting to show his dealers a new line of refrigerators, it's news—not worth a top head, but worth a decent story. Mining and oil stories have good reader interest, as do construction items indicative of the city's growth.

Needs a System

Yet though the city is small enough to make such items reportable, it is large enough so that thorough coverage presents its problems. Every firm listed in the yellow classified advertising section of the hefty metropolitan Salt Lake City telephone directory is entitled to its day on the business page. When that day shall come and how much space the firm shall have is a matter left to the judgment of the business editor, who, of course, directs his actions along the general lines of policy established by editorial department executives.

With his large beat to cover, the business editor must have a system of coverage. He must know what he's looking for and how to get it rapidly and accurately.

For the purpose of covering Salt Lake City and the Intermountain Empire, business news has been divided into three categories: markets; construction, expansion and other physical plant changes; and personnel news.

Our needs in the market news field are filled both by the press associations and by local sources. Salt Lake City brokers and others conversant with investment policies of local people advise us on market news.

Construction and related items are of great interest to readers. Most people take pride in seeing the city grow.

We have worked out a system for blanket coverage of the building industry, and, within a certain dollar-value limitation, will use news of all new building projects.

In the third category—personnel—fall such stories as promotions, retirements and changes in officer lists which often accompany directors' and stockholders' meetings.

An interesting factor in our use of agate markets is that the composing room has instructions to give agate precedence over stories set in regular body type. We know from experience that our market list is read carefully.

We know it because when we tried to leave out the soybean market we got complaints, despite the fact that there is little interest in growing the crop locally.

And cattlemen tell us that in southern Utah they buy and sell stock in the field on the basis of quotations appearing in the *Tribune*.

At present, we have about 70 inches of agate running on the page. The rest of the space, with the exception of that reserved for the New York stocks story, is devoted almost entirely to local news. It's not that we aren't cognizant of the fact that the bulk of the nation's business is handled in the East. It's just that we feel business news of a more local nature interests more of our readers.

And there are other problems—stock promoters who want you to help them peddle stock, advertisers who would urge stories upon you which are longer than sound policy dictates, and "handout artists" whose flamboyant press releases frequently must be scanned and tossed toward the wastebasket.

In addition, a business editor has to get around and meet people, especially in the medium-sized cities, where markets won't suffice to make a page, and personal items are needed.

In many instances, the business editor thus becomes the newspaper's goodwill ambassador to some of the largest business offices in his city. He is the only city staff member many such executives see, and sometimes they form their opinions of the paper on the basis of the consideration he gives them.

Some of his time off the business editor must devote to studying the field he covers. At all times he must be interested in that field.

Contacts Count

If business news is to have thorough and expert coverage, it cannot be had by sending one general assignment man and then another out to cover the field. Contacts count. So does specialized knowledge. Learning the intricacies of the business world is a lifetime job, because its size and constantly changing structure always present new problems.

Thus far we have discussed gathering and editing of business news in the medium-sized city. But what about the smaller cities, those of 25,000 to 75,000 and more population?

Experience in Salt Lake City would indicate that having one man specialize in business news reporting takes a load off beat reporters. If the business reporter takes an interest in financial news, he can handle such items in a much shorter time than can a general assignment man. He also, of course, builds up valuable contacts. It helps to have one man established as "the" man to which news sources can bring such items.

Furthermore, if one man handles all business news, he develops perspective which a beat man lacks. If a news source phones in a story about the air line he represents buying several new planes, the business editor can reach back in his mind and think: "Let's see, how much space did we give that other air line which last week announced some comparable purchases?" Thus he establishes a balance in news handling.

Perhaps on the smaller papers a reporter cannot be assigned to handle business news full time. But if the practice can be developed of funneling all business items to one man, a man who takes an interest in that type of news—it may prove beneficial both to the publication and its readers.

"LITTLE GUY"

by Jack Foisie

Not long ago in Oakland, California, an interurban train struck a man crossing a street, injuring him seriously but not fatally. The accident was worth, and received, about two paragraphs in the local papers. The story gave the essentials: name, address and age of the victim and something about his injuries; name, address and age of the train operator, and the location of the accident. The final responsibility for the accident was avoided by police, by the company ("pending an investigation"), and therefore by the papers.

A few days later the train operator came in to complain to the newspapers. He did not threaten suit. He did not request a retraction. He was not indignant. But he was unhappy and dissatisfied. He thought the two paragraphs were unfair to him. When we asked him why, this is what he said:

"You wrote that the accident happened at Twelfth and Franklin streets. Don't you see that that implies the man who was struck was crossing in the right-of-way? Couldn't you have added an explanation that although the accident did happen at the intersection the man had been walking diagonally across the street, and had stepped out from behind an automobile that blocked my view of the man? That was all in the police report.

"Don't you see the difference? It wouldn't mean much

JACK FOISIE, San Francisco *Chronicle* reporter, was a Nieman Fellow in 1946-47.

to you, maybe. But to me, it would make my neighbors say: 'It wasn't your fault, Dan.' Now they keep staring at me. I feel bad enough. It was my first accident."

There are many people like Dan. To us, just a ruffle in the daily scene, worthy of only perfunctory attention.

The cynics in the business might even contend that Dan was lucky. His name was spelled right and his age was printed correctly.

But the remedy for Dan's case is not difficult. The reporter could establish this arbitrary rule: In any accident involving a pedestrian, include whenever possible an indication of whether he was crossing legally, or jaywalking. Usually that much is readily obtainable from the police report.

The point of all this is that newspapers are needlessly careless about the "little guys" who break into print. And worse, some newspapers can't resist the horse-laugh treatment for little guys in unhappy situations. When the funny facts are there, okay. But, too often, the creation of

a "bright" calls for unbridled reportorial license. A quote is pulled out of context—or out of the air. I'm not pointing a finger; I've been guilty myself.

It is strange that only the "little guys" get this sort of treatment. Very seldom do we find a "big name" being taken for a wry ride. The only common exceptions are the people who are big because they make a career of eccentricity or of being funnymen. When the "real" important people get into the paper, they get the straight treatment. Just the facts. No funny stuff on the rewrite desk.

The reason for this inequality of treatment is obvious. The big name can fight back—a telephone call to the publisher, a stiff letter to the editor, or even maybe a libel suit. Of course, all these courses are also open to the little guy, but somehow he seldom uses them.

As the saying goes around the rewrite battery: "It's a question of knowing how far we can go." That's right. Rules of decency can't be laid down by the desk. They're made by the guy at the typewriter.

The Reporter as Artist

by Keen Rafferty

It is a commonplace to hear that a newspaper dies as soon as it is published and read, and that newspaper writing has merit not as writing, but merely as information.

While it is true that there are sometimes editorials which are well-done essays, and that some columnists have done some writing which is good, and that an occasional news or human-interest story rises to something pretty good, nevertheless most newspaper writing is ephemeral.

You will remember the event, perhaps because a skillful story brought it to you; but you are not likely to remember the story as a work of art in itself. News stories are not written for the sake of writing, but for the sake of quick, clear dissemination of information.

There are many anthologies of newspaper writing, but there is only a handful of newspaper pieces which can be called "creative" writing. A newer anthology, *A Treasury of Great Reporting*,* is excellent as an example: most of the material in it is of fascinating interest, but that is because it so graphically traces life and history and the movements of great events of nearly 300 years of the past.

One may admit all this, and remain unsatisfied, for there is in "journalistic" writing—and I hate that word and the arrogance of its stigma—something now worth noting. It is something which is excelled by few writers in any field:

*Louis L. Snyder and Richard B. Morris, Simon and Schuster, 1949

a synthesis of facts and moods and sequences which emerges, I am convinced, as a kind of great writing.

This kind of writing—reportorial writing—is "journalistic." If it does not follow a form so rigid as to require that certain types of information have to fall at fixed places, it certainly does follow a form dictated by reportorial attitude. It is a form involving a high degree of integrity, of lucid thinking, of factual compression, and of the art-of-the-whole. I believe I can cite work against which even the most unjournalistic writer cannot argue; he cannot but read it with a thrill of discovery, a sudden view of the creative spirit at work.

I suppose it would be easy to speak of Defoe's "journalistic" things. He reported plagues and fires in a journalistic way, even though he may not have been present at the event. Defoe still lives, and in part because of his reportorial writing.

But Defoe is excelled by some Americans (and a few Englishmen) writing today in a more disciplined reportorial way than he, on great events. I cannot read John Hersey's "Hiroshima" without a feeling of having read something with the attributes of greatness. It is only in small part because a bomb did fall on a town and kill many, many thousands of people, thus involving an event of magnitude and overwhelming significance: many have written of Hiroshima. It is much more to the point that this is a fine thing because of what Hersey himself did and said in writing about the event and about a few little people affected by the event.

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It is to me signal that here in the United States, out of the welter and rush and difficulties of our press production, something has happened that represents a journalistic best which is so good that it ranks with any kind of good writing. It is as if we have to set up a new category. Alongside the poem, the play, the essay, and the novel and short story, I would like to suggest that we now place such reporters' writing as becomes creative work.

In our journalism at the University of New Mexico we insist that every major study "Hiroshima." To me it is art as truly, if not as broadly, as Hamlet; I am convinced that "Hiroshima," originally published in *The New Yorker* and then as a small book, will last a long, long time, because it is so wonderful a story of so great a human tragedy. I cannot think of anything done with so little artiness, so much under-statement of a kind, so great a reserve, so little of emotion and so much of feeling, so little of philosophical attitude or of any attitude, and yet so impelling, so moving, so philosophically suggestive.

Harper's in 1949 published about 89 things which I have identified as articles, and about 38 of them I've identified as having been done by journalists. The *Atlantic*, which seems to me less "journalistic," in one 1950 issue picked up at random, carried eight articles of which three were by people identifiable as journalists.

A professor of English has in an unguarded moment confided in me his unorthodox belief that the best brains in America are in journalism. I am grateful to him, even if I do not know whether he is right or not. He has discovered a kind of writing which is at once informative, moving, and creative; that is, something we may have been accustomed not to look for in the work of the journalists. He is talking of the journalist as a writer as well as a reporter, and of the Walter Lippmann kind of piece as well as the Hersey kind. For in addition to the truly reportorial article there is the discussion piece, like Lippmann's, which more and more journalists are doing superbly, each in his way according to his own specialty.

Lippmann, Gerald Johnson, William Bradford Huie,

James B. Reston, Henry F. Pringle, Elmer Davis, and scores of other newspapermen and journalists have written superior things for magazines and newspapers in this country in one style or the other. But the special skill of the group as a whole is in the factual article; here the American journalist is becoming so good as to be almost unique.

The man or woman is rare who can cover an event, as it happens or afterwards, in a way which makes his story ring with the depth and implications of the event. Creative artists are rare in any field. The finest type of reporter—one who can gain information and then write of it in a creative way—is as rare as the poet who can write poetry which is beautiful.

I have been given comprehension by John Bartlow Martin's impact on social questions in his true-crime stories or his piece on Middletown revisited, just as I was fascinated by Fletcher Pratt's articles on the Pacific naval battles in the last war.

If I speak of magazine articles, let it be remembered that in the magazine the trained reporter may have his best chance for his best work simply because he has more time and direction at his command. But it was as newspaper writers that men discovered what could be done; and the "creative" reportorial writing that I am talking about is essentially newspaper writing, following the disciplines of a kind of tortured objectivity and accuracy and organization which the newspaper has demanded.

All of which makes me very happy about American journalism. Let the newspaper "die" as soon as it has appeared; that is of no moment if it has given the reader his day-full of fact and interpretation and opinion. The big fact is that the newspaper somehow has set up a system which prepares men for a fine kind of writing, and we should be glad of it, as Americans, because it is we, with the help of the British, who have brought it to its perfection. We can claim it in its best form as ours, as much as we can claim the American Colonial house, or the skyscraper, or even the Walt Disney movie cartoon, and I am proud of it.

"His Journal Sets a High Standard"

Citation for the honorary degree of Doctor of Laws to Mark Ethridge, publisher of the Louisville *Courier-Journal*, at Harvard Commencement by President James Bryant Conant:

"Reporter, editor, publisher; his journal sets a high standard by providing the reader with accurate information and balanced judgments of the daily news."

MEYER BERGER—REPORTER

How a Pulitzer Prize Reporter Works on a Story

by Robert H. Fleming

Mike Berger has a private office these days, up on the ninth floor of the New York *Times* building. Arthur Krock's New York office is on one side, Anne O'Hare McCormick's on the other. While his neighbors are writing alternate columns for the *Times*' editorial page, Berger is writing the history of that newspaper. It will be 100 years old in 1951, and Berger's book will tell the story.

It's understandable that the *Times* should want Berger to tell that story. But when is the *Times*—or someone—going to tell Mike's story?

He's the best reporter in the business these days. He was the best even before he won the 1950 Pulitzer prize for local reporting. Those who have other favorites usually rate their choice against the criterion of Berger perfection.

He's Meyer Berger in the bylines, but Mike to all who know him. A stoop-shouldered six-footer just past 50, with piercing eyes and a friendly voice. Only because he's had so many great reportorial experiences can he talk about himself at length and still be modest. Despite this, he stops in every recital to ask sincerely "Am I boring you? You don't have to listen to me run on."

But no one who loves the business ever wants him to stop. He's so full of the satisfactions of hard work on news stories that he's inspiring, as well as instructive, when he talks. The story that won him the Pulitzer prize is an example of his attitude. That was the story of how Howard Unruh, a deranged war veteran, went berserk in Camden, N. J. last September 6 and killed twelve persons.

Mike wasn't scheduled for news assignments that day, or any other until the history of the *Times* was finished. But he was tired of research and writing, and perhaps even tired of that tenth floor office, where he generally works from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. So he came in early that September morning, and wandered into the *Times* city room on the third floor. And once the flash on that story came into the office, no city desk could remember admonitions about history projects. Berger was sent to Camden.

Afraid It Was Dull

When Mike reached Camden, Bill Wert of the *Times*' Philadelphia bureau was already on the story. Wert took Unruh, covering the jail and then the hospital. Berger

One good reporter can understand and appreciate another. ROBERT H. FLEMING reports politics on the Milwaukee *Journal*, has just finished a Nieman Fellowship.

gave the story the full Berger treatment—the complete coverage of the scene and of the people involved. He went to see the minister of Unruh's church. He spoke to the killer's few friends. He dug for facts. After six hours, he sat down at his typewriter and wrote 4,000 words. He never looked back at the copy; he gave it to Wert to read and pass on to Western Union.

When he was through, Mike felt he had done a mediocre job. He had tried to hold down the story and avoid overwriting. At the end, he was afraid the story was dull. Yet at the *Times* not one word was changed.

As *CBS Views the Press* said:

"The last paragraph of Berger's story read: 'But all day River Road and the side streets talked of nothing else. The shock was great. Men and women kept saying 'We can't understand it. Just don't get it.'" But Meyer Berger understood it. And his smooth four thousand word story in the *Times* left nothing out. Every action of the killer, every comment from East Camden was there."

Mike's Pulitzer story is printed in this issue.

Eire Abu

In contrast to the nerve-tingling excitement in the Unruh story is another of Mike's, written on St. Patrick's day, 1947. It's the kind of writing which, if Mike knew someone else had done it, he'd say with honest admiration "The guy writes like an angel."

Here's a sample of that story:

In keening wind that tore at their banners, 80,000 men, women and children marched up Fifth Avenue yesterday, from Forty-fourth to Ninety-sixth street, in a four-hour procession to honor St. Patrick.

Shrill blew the pipes and shriller the fifes, and shrill were the million who stood wind-whipped at the curbs. Bright sun spread pale gold on the pavements and turrets, and in the late afternoon the marching phalanxes clumped through barred shadows.

Red-faced and red-kneed, the pipers looked left at the grandstand at Sixty-fourth Street, to smile in salute at Mayor O'Dwyer. His tie was the greenest, and all seemed to know him. Hoarsely the men shouted "Up, County Mayo" and others roared "Bill-o, the Boy from Bohola." The mayor waved back at the wild-waving blackthornes. He threw them a greeting "Good luck to you all." . . .

The tune of the pipes and the bleating of fifes called up more marchers—hour after hour their tread echoed and faded. Wind tore at their capes and whipped the girls' hair. Men clutched at their derbies and held fast to the banners and faces grew redder and fingers more rigid.

The Pipers of Tyrone came like men flying, their kilts whipping behind them. Green-kilted Clare men, bearing the banner of Brian Boru, leaned on the wind abreast of the grandstand, their pipers all grim and their faces all blue. . .

A wind-harried group from old Tipperary came bearing great banners. Then over the rise, from out of the Fifties, a murmurous strain hailed the marchers from Mayo, stout men and true from the Mayo's home county.

Stopping in place, the pipers of Mayo faced "The Boy from Bohola" and played him his favorite pipe tune, "O, Men of the West." A look of nostalgia changed Mayor O'Dwyer. He looked grave for a moment, then threw the salute. The pipers wheeled right in the gathering gloaming, missing never a step or a note in the movement. The crowd had thinned down to shivering handfuls. The westering sun withdrew from the park.

Then the parade ended. Clattering horsemen closed up the rear. The Mayor came down from the stand, his friends close about him, and moved toward his car. Northward the pipers grew fainter and fainter, and the last tune they played was "Eire Abu."

Mike Berger is surprised when others ask him how he learned to write that well. There was no conscious learning effort in it. That, plus his great skill in gathering facts, came with years of work. He's had about 40 of them as a newspaperman, since his first full-time job when he was 11.

Just before he finished grade school, he was hired as a messenger for the old *World*. He worked at night, for \$1.50 per week.

One-fifty Plus Expenses

"I should say \$1.50 plus expenses," Mike recalls, with a typical display of his memory for details. "I carried ads and news copy from the Brooklyn office across the Brooklyn Bridge to Park Row, and I got 10 cents a night for carfare. I saved 5 cents each night by walking to the bridge and taking the local car, where tickets were two for a nickel."

Mike wasn't a very good messenger because he frequently loitered around reporters to hear their talk. He had a better opportunity to do this in his next job. He became night telephone operator, and could listen to incoming calls.

Berger was 17 when he went off to World War I. His eyes were bad and he couldn't enlist or be drafted; so Mike claimed he was a musician. Good with the tuba, he told the enlistment officer, who didn't bother to test him. By the time the army found out that Mike was loose with the truth, it had him; so it kept him. He went into combat as a private, and came out with a sergeant's stripes, the Silver Star and the Purple Heart. Mike had saved a fellow sergeant under fire.

"Sure I went out and got him while the Heinies were firing," said Mike, "but I'd broken my glasses so I couldn't see that there was any danger. I wasn't brave; I just went out and got him."

That battlefield promotion indirectly caused Mike to leave the *World*. When he was discharged, he wanted his old job back. The *World* made him a reporter instead of a telephone operator, though with no increase in pay. And the same day he was told that he owed the paper \$87. It seems the *World* had a policy of paying to employes' families the difference between their army and civilian wages. Mike's mother had been getting \$19 a month from the *World*, or the amount necessary to bring his \$21 military pay up to his \$10 weekly wage as phone operator. The news of his promotion to sergeant, which ended the *World's* contribution, was slow in reaching the newspaper. Meanwhile the *World* had paid Mrs. Berger \$87 too much. Mike was asked to repay it.

He had no idea where the family would get \$87. He told his troubles to other reporters in the Brooklyn police station, where he was assigned.

Write It Yourself

"Why don't you go to Standard News?" one asked. "They'll pay you three times your ten bucks."

So Berger, coached on a few exaggerations of his experience, saw Jonathan Eddy, Sr., the manager of the local press service for New York papers. He was hired at \$32.50 and stayed nine years, ultimately getting \$65 as a rewrite man.

He might have stayed a district man, covering police, if he hadn't called in a murder verdict one day when the office was short-handed. The desk man on the other end of the phone asked:

"Can you write simple English?"

Mike said he thought he could, and was told:

"Come on in and write it yourself."

He did, and four New York papers sent notes to Standard News praising the story. Eddy didn't keep them from the young reporter, either.

"You've a hidden talent," Eddy told Berger. "You're a rewrite man, and you get a raise—\$2.50 more a week."

It was typical Berger work that caused him to move to the *Times*. A reporter telephoned in a yarn about a wealthy

Brooklyn family fighting over an estate, and mentioned that private police had been hired to keep one faction out of the house. Berger wanted more information. When the reporter didn't have it, Mike phoned the house and talked to one of the officers.

"He probably never heard of Standard News, or maybe he was a gabby guy who was lonesome, but he talked for an hour," is the way Berger recalls it now. "He told me of gold-plated pianos where he and other dicks played chopsticks, and the gold-plated spittoons, and all sorts of wonderful description. I just wrote it all down. It made a much longer story than Standard News usually put out, but the *Journal American* used the whole thing. A man on the *Times* read it. He called me up, asked me if I wanted a job, and I came to the *Times*, 20 years ago.

Berger clearly remembers his first days. A night city editor didn't like the newcomer.

"This guy handed me four sheets of AP copy on a Westchester law suit and told me he wanted the story in four lines. By the time I had a dateline, the litigants' names and the judge, I needed half the fifth line for "reserved decision today." I tried for half an hour to cut it down, but there wasn't any way; so I handed it in. This guy called me over and wilted me with 'Whoinhell ever told you that you were a rewrite man? I told you four lines. Can't you follow orders?' And without giving me time to answer, he ripped up the copy and threw it in my face.

"I was sure I couldn't stay long. But I got a break. He left, and I stayed—20 years."

Not For Ross

There was one break in that period, when Mike tried working for *The New Yorker*. He didn't like the place; so he went back to the *Times*.

He probably won't put himself into the history of the *Times*, but he should be there.

The *Times* sent Mike to London during World War II, with his assignment personality and color stories. One of his best stories there was his first. Here's the way he recalls it:

"I got in on a Sunday and found our bureau closed. I went looking for some GIs and some beer. I found a couple of both, and got talking to these two non-coms about what there was to do for fun around London. Suddenly one of the boys said to the other 'Tell him about spankin' Churchill's daughter.' It sounded impossible, but it wasn't.

"It seems this sergeant, from *Hamtramck*, Mich., was at a dance for American soldiers the night before, and was dancing with the daughter of Britain's prime minister. She remarked about his big feet and he chose to be insulted. He told her if she did it again, he'd spank her. She made another crack, and over his knee she went."

Mike knew he had a great story. Somehow it passed the

censors, and the *Times* used it on page 1. London papers picked it up from press services. And the next thing Mike knew, Mr. Churchill's anger was aimed at the *Times*, Berger and the soldier from Hamtramck. To give the smoke time to blow over, Mike left London and visited the Shakespeare country. But his story from Stratford-on-Avon was about a New York soldier who had no interest in the immortal bard, but was homesick for Tenth avenue and West 23rd street. It was for such stories that Berger went to England.

He insists, however, that he doesn't seek any single type of story. His record supports him; he does a job so workmanlike that its excellence comes from missing no details.

When To Stop Asking

During a recent CBS series, "You and the Press," Berger offered some examples of his war stories as those which attracted the biggest response from readers. He recalled three: a night on a train with the first load of wounded returned from Africa and Sicily; the reactions of 1300 men taken off the front lines for brief respite due to special heroism; and a report on the blind veterans at Valley Forge General Hospital.

Of his methods on those stories, Mike told Quincy Howe and the CBS audience:

"Whenever I feel a story telling itself, I always avoid asking questions. That's a hard thing to learn, but you get the atmosphere better; people act more naturally. On the hospital train, I didn't ask a single question. The murmurs, the little gestures, the reactions to common sights of men who hadn't been home for three years made a pretty powerful document that called for no questioning. It told itself."

In explaining why he liked to write his own stories, without the aid of a rewrite desk, Mike said:

"A good story doesn't take on dimension until you see it. I always try to get life and sound and motion, and the only way you can do that is by being there."

He cited an example. Some years ago Mike was covering Murder, Inc. Police had the principal witness, a gangster, under guard in a suite high up in a Brooklyn hotel. One morning the man climbed out the window, hung for a while, and then fell to his death.

"I got there several hours after it happened," Mike said, "but by standing in the same window, listening for sounds he must have heard and looking at the ground below, I could write details in my story that a lot of fellows didn't have because they hadn't gone up there."

There's another case where Mike outdistanced rivals by his careful effort to "get the feel" of the people and places in news.

Back in June, 1947, nine convicts broke out of the Brooklyn jail one noon hour. It was about 4 p.m. when the

Times' desk decided to send Berger over to interview housewives on neighborhood reaction to the incident. Wanting more details than his office had supplied, Mike first stopped at the jail. He found some 40 reporters and photographers on the outside, waiting for official action. No one hesitated to fill Mike in.

They Hadn't Asked

A deputy police commissioner came from the jailer's office. There was nothing new, he said. Mike was the only one who had any questions. He wanted to know the interior layout and the officer finally said "Come on in and have a look."

That brought a tumult of protest from other reporters. It wasn't fair, they said. Mike couldn't understand their attitude till he found out none of them had examined the scene. They hadn't been denied the opportunity; they simply had not asked.

Half an hour later Mike walked around to the back of the jail to start following the fugitives' trail. There, in a watchman's box, was a policeman. Mike explained he'd arrived on the scene late, asked for information, and added "I suppose you've told this story 50 times since noon."

"It's a funny thing, but I haven't," said the officer. "I haven't told anybody anything. Nobody has asked me.

What's also funny is that if they ask me, I can't tell 'em a thing. I was off to lunch when this happened."

So Mike had one of the best angles of the story—how the break came while the rear wall was unguarded.

Mike's attention to detail makes him a great reporter, but so does his writing skill. His writing has seldom been seriously criticized. But there was one time—

"I was up at Syracuse to cover 'Dutch' Schultz's trial," Mike recalls. "No one could pin murder on him, so there was this tax charge. And his attorneys were holding a press conference, trying to get reporters to forget Dutch's record as a killer and concentrate on the tax deal. They were introducing reporters to him, and my turn came. I knew him, so I said hello. But Dutch didn't smile.

"I hear you wrote in the *Times* that I'm a pushover for blondes," he said.

"I gulped quick and said 'Somebody told me you are, Dutch.'

"That ain't the point," said Schultz. "The point is, that's no kind of language to use in the *New York Times*."

Schultz is welcome to his opinion, but there are those who would quit worrying about reporting if there were more Mike Bergers. There won't be many of them, though. That's why someone ought to tell Mike's story.

THE WINNING OF A PULITZER

Edwin Guthman's Work That Cleared Dr. Rader

by Hays Gorey

Edwin Otto Guthman, 31, stocky reporter for the *Seattle Times*, a year ago was virtually indistinguishable from thousands of other promising young newsmen throughout the country. He was drawing some top assignments from his paper, doing the best job he could on them, as were so many others.

Today, "Ed" Guthman is the holder of a Pulitzer prize. More important than that, he is the chief instrument through which an unjustly accused American citizen was able to clear his name.

And the youthful army veteran probably would be the first to admit that he arrived at the Pulitzer prize-winning formula by mixing up the simplest ingredients. No secret supermannish talent, exclusively his, brought Guthman to the top of the heap. He got there via an ordinary step-ladder—through hard work, thoroughness, patience, and a generous sprinkling of common sense.

What distinguishes Edwin Otto Guthman is the fact that

HAYS GOREY, city editor of the *Salt Lake Tribune*, was a Nieman Fellow the past college year.

he devoted five months to arduous, sometimes monotonous, digging for facts and evidence. In contrast to the dramatic story of Melvin Rader, University of Washington professor whose name Guthman helped to clear, the story of Edwin Guthman is a simple tale of hard, unspectacular work, with a spectacular result.

It was late Spring of 1949 when the *Seattle Times* and Guthman embarked on a fact-finding expedition. It was a simple case of two conflicting stories having been told. The court system had run up against a stone wall in its efforts to determine who lied.

Said Russell McGrath, managing editor of the *Times*, to Reporter Guthman:

"This time, the courts have broken down. If it's possible, the paper should find out who told the truth. You see if it's possible."

Those whose veracity was in question were a mild-mannered professor of philosophy at the University of Washington, Melvin Rader, and George Hewitt, a Negro ex-Communist. Hewitt had told the Washington state legislature's committee on un-American activities that Pro-

fessor Rader had been a student at a secret Communist school in 1938. Professor Rader denied the charge, but investigators for the committee reported their checks indicated Hewitt had told the truth.

Whisked out of the state after his testimony, Hewitt was in Bronx county, New York. To get him back, the Washington state prosecutor charged him with perjury, and sought extradition. Here is where the case reached an impasse which probably could not have been broken had not the Seattle *Times* and Reporter Guthman stepped in.

In Bronx county, Judge Aaron J. Levy refused to extradite the former Red. Rader, not Hewitt, should be charged with perjury, said the judge. He would not send Hewitt "to eventual slaughter" in the state of Washington.

"I am wondering, really genuinely wondering," he commented, "what the civilization of that area is."

The Red Label

So the Red label hung over the household of Professor Melvin Rader. The case against him had not been proved, and he continued to teach his classes. But Hewitt would not return to document his allegation that for six weeks during the summer of 1938, Professor Rader attended a secret Communist school in New York State.

Rader would have to clear his name. His first effort to convince the Canwell investigating committee that he was at a summer resort in the state of Washington, not closer than 3,000 miles to the New York Communist school, had been futile. When committee investigators visited the Canyon Creek lodge, where Rader contended he had been, they came back with a report he had not been there at all in 1938.

More than a decade had passed. Would the lodge still have any records of his stay? Would any of the employes remember him after all that time? How long would it take to document that summer vacation? Professor Rader tested his memory. He knew he would need help. Who would provide it?

His position was not too good. The Canwell committee had taken Hewitt's word against his. In the public eye, Rader was guilty, and had to prove himself innocent.

Not from a conviction that Rader was innocent, but from a sense that the investigation had not gone far enough, the Seattle *Times* had entered the picture. The chips would fall where they might. This would be a crusade for the truth, not for Professor Rader.

Methodical Ed Guthman began at the beginning. First he sent for a transcript of the extradition hearing, and his eye fell on a photostat of a card from the files of Canyon Creek lodge, a summer resort near Everett, Washington. At first glance, the card was damaging to Rader's contention that he had been a guest in 1938, for with Rader's name and address, the card bore a notation in ink, "8/16/40."

Guthman Picks Up the Trail

On the surface, it appeared the professor had been a guest in 1940, not 1938, as he had maintained. But Guthman wanted to be certain. He took a second glance.

With some effort, he found the woman who had owned the resort in 1938, and showed her the photostat.

No, she told Guthman, the date didn't mean the Raders had registered on August 16, 1940. The card was from her correspondence file. She had written the Raders on the 1940 date regarding a lot she was trying to sell them.

But the register for 1938 might still be available. If it recorded Rader's registration of that summer, there need be no further doubt of the professor's word. But, Guthman was told, the Canwell committee had borrowed the register, and had not returned it. The reporter's job was just beginning when it appeared it might be coming to a quick end.

So Guthman began a search for employes of the summer resort on the chance at least one of them might remember the quiet professor and his wife. But eleven years was a long time, of course.

The housekeeper who worked the summer of 1938 had an excellent memory. She recalled the Raders, she told Guthman. Mrs. Rader was pregnant at the time, and she (the housekeeper) had driven them back to Seattle.

"Where did they live?" asked the reporter.

The housekeeper remembered it was on Thirtieth Avenue, N.E.

This scored another point for Professor Rader. Guthman had checked city directories, and learned that the Raders had moved from Thirtieth Avenue, N.E., early in 1939.

Did the housekeeper remember anything else? She talked. One thing she recalled, perhaps of no importance, was that she showed the Raders the ruins of the main lodge building, which burned down in February, 1938.

To Guthman, this recollection was of major importance. He ascertained that the fire ruins had been cleared early in 1939. It was beginning to appear that Professor Rader had indeed been at Canyon Creek lodge in 1938, not later, as the Canwell committee professed to believe.

Guthman might have stopped there, but this mound of new evidence, though impressive, could stand a few more shovelfuls. Professor Rader, still racking his memory, recalled that he had broken his glasses, and his eye doctor checked his office records. His finding: Professor Rader had come in on August 15, 1938, for new glasses.

And payroll reports of the University of Washington disclosed that Professor Rader had taught summer school until July 20 of 1938. The period of time for Professor Rader to have attended a six-week secret Communist school all the way across the nation was becoming narrower and narrower.

An election had been held in 1938, someone recalled. Guthman checked city voting records, found that the professor had cast his ballot on September 13, 1938.

Then Ed Guthman got another idea. The professor was an avid reader. Perhaps he had checked books from the library. Perhaps there would be a record. He was right in both instances. The library records showed Professor Rader had checked out a book on July 20.

In retrospect, it sounds like a simple case to prove. But it wasn't. In eleven years, memories fade, records get lost. It was five months before Reporter Guthman was satisfied that he had unearthed the truth.

That elusive register was the only important item still missing. Guthman asked Albert F. Canwell, the chairman of the un-American activities committee, where it was. After a three-hour session, he gave up. Two additional appointments he made with Canwell were not kept by the committee chairman. So Guthman took his accumulation of data to Dr. Raymond B. Allen, president of the University of Washington.

And so on Friday afternoon, October 21, 1949, some 150 days after Reporter Guthman had been assigned to get at the truth, the double banner line across page one of the Seattle *Times* read:

DR. ALLEN CLEARS PROFESSOR RADER OF CANWELL-COMMITTEE CHARGES

The university president had issued a statement to Guthman which said:

I have examined the evidence assembled by Professor Rader and the Seattle *Times* bearing upon Mr. Hewitt's testimony that Rader attended a Communist school in New York state in the summer of 1938 or 1939.

This evidence satisfies me that Professor Rader was in Washington State and not in New York State during the periods referred to by Mr. Hewitt. I consider that Professor Rader was unjustly accused.

The University administration is fully satisfied by the present evidence that Mr. Hewitt's allegations concerning Professor Rader have been disproved.

And Mr. Canwell? He examined the evidence in Dr. Allen's office, and said: "If Rader got a bad deal, it was as much his fault as ours, and I'm not convinced he got a bad deal."

Responding to a question from Guthman, the committee chairman said: "If you think the (Canyon Creek lodge) register has been suppressed, go find it." Canwell denied that he had ever seen it.

Red Label Removed

But even without the register, the Red label had been removed from the philosophy professor and his family, after months of torture.

No longer were the Raders and their children to be subjected to scorn and cruelty. Miriam, oldest of the four children, need not again rage inwardly and helplessly as she had in class one day. A classmate of hers had digressed from a discussion of Russia and the United States to say that people could be Communists and no one know about it. Turning directly to eleven-year-old Miriam, she continued:

"In fact, the daughter of one such person is in school, I think."

The *Times* handled the finale to the sorry witch-hunting spectacle with admirable restraint and little self-congratulation. The lead story was based on Dr. Allen's statement and a review of the case's development. Guthman, of course, wrote it, and five more lengthy articles inside, which modestly unfurled the role of the reporter and newspaper in picking up the ball where a court had let it drop.

The six articles told the whole story, giving generous praise for the triumph of truth to two prosecutors who had tried in vain to extradite Hewitt, to the former owner and employes of the lodge, to the doctor, the library attendants, and others who had helped. And the paper gave full credit to Professor Rader for his courageous struggle to clear his smeared reputation.

Canwell was defeated in his bid for reelection to the state legislature, but now is seeking the Republican nomination for the United States senate.

For Guthman, who was graduated from the University of Washington in 1941, served on *Yank* and *Stars and Stripes* during his Army career, then wound up as the *Times'* No. 2 man covering the Washington state legislature, the months of plodding had provided citizens of the state of Washington a graphic comparison between thorough investigation and cursory checking. The difference, plain for all to see, was that Guthman and the *Times* went after the case with no preconceived notions of guilt or innocence. From the record, it is impossible to say as much for the Canwell committee or for Judge Levy.

No doubt the Raders are grateful. So is the University of Washington. So, too, is the profession of journalism, which was exhibited here in its brightest light. When the courts broke down, the press, correctly and objectively functioning, did a neat job of backstopping.

When the Pulitzer prize came to Reporter Guthman, he naturally was grateful, and justifiedly proud.

But he had been prouder still on October 21, 1949, when he gave the public the truth, and cleared an innocent man.

“MASS PERSUASION”

The Role of the Soviet Press

“Public Opinion in Soviet Russia,” by Alex Inkeles of the Russian Research Center at Harvard University, describes the strategic relation of the press to the Communist Party and the use made of it by the Party apparatus. It is a unique study of mass communication under the Soviet system. Mr. Inkeles’ findings are summarized here by William M. Pinkerton, director of the Harvard News Office.

“Unless we are fully conscious of the vast apparatus which the Party and government have organized for mass production,” says Alex Inkeles, “we will be unable to have a realistic picture of the actual potentialities and capabilities of the regime in times of both peace and conflict.”

Mr. Inkeles’ study traces the impact of the Communist Party apparatus and the Soviet type of society on the structure and functioning of the radio, the press and the film industry, and shows how the system of communications becomes a source of both strength and weakness in Russian society.

This system includes agitators, night training schools, a network of more than 7,000 newspapers with a circulation of 31,000,000, a radio network of 10,000,000 receivers reaching an audience of 40,000,000 people and a party-controlled movie industry. The population of Soviet Russia is about 200,000,000.

The Russian agitator system of “mass persuasion” depends as much on the local “agitator” as on the network of newspapers and radio relays run by the Communist Party.

Here is a summary of Mr. Inkeles’ detailed findings:

Agitation

“In the Soviet Union, personal oral agitation, conducted everywhere throughout the country by Communist Party members working in face-to-face contact with small groups of the population, ranks with the newspaper and radio as one of the major organized forms of mass communication.”

“The extent of the party’s interest and faith in personal agitation is probably best reflected in the size of the army of agitators. . . . The party regularly maintains a force of approximately 2,000,000 agitators. Assuming a population of 200,000,000, this would yield a ratio of one agitator for each 100 of population, or one agitator for every 65 persons over the age of 15.”

“The concentration is higher in the more densely settled and economically important areas. . . . Thus, the capital city of Moscow in 1946 had one agitator for every 30 individuals. In contrast, in some rural areas there are many collective farms, incorporating several hundred people, which do not boast a single agitator, and which may be visited by a district agitator only two or three times a year.”

“One of the difficult tasks of the group agitator is to exhort and constantly to urge the workers on to greater efforts. . . . Even more difficult are his tasks of criticizing workers whose production records are poor or who violate labor discipline, and of introducing and carrying into effect new government measures such as increases in the work norms.”

For many years, agitators were typically workers; but since 1939 lists of agitators have included the plant manager, the chief engineer, shift engineer, chief technologist, shop foremen and similar engineering and management people. Mr. Inkeles believes it may be anticipated that “in the future the party will continue to draw upon both the rank-and-file and the managerial groups for its agitators.”

Agitation is a part-time job, in addition to a man’s regular work. Besides pushing production, the agitator is supposed to be the political teacher of his group. Agitators are constantly being criticized by the party hierarchy. At the same time, their message is often unpopular with the group.

“One solution of their dilemma which many agitators have apparently adopted has been to dodge their responsibility, in one way or another to get out of agitation. Certainly all of the turnover in the ranks of the agitators, and it appears to be considerable, cannot be attributed to the personal difficulties faced by the agitator, but a significant percentage of the total may safely be traced to this factor.”

Newspapers

“The Soviet newspaper is not concerned so much with the transmission of news as it is with the conduct of propaganda and agitation, or with the transmission of information, ideas, and appeals.”

“It is standard practise for a Soviet editor to hold a major news item for several days or even weeks if need be, until his newspaper’s pages have been cleared of the material which is at the moment current business, for example, an especially lengthy party or government decision. . . . It is this basic approach to news that enables the editors of what is regarded as a model newspaper to make a detailed plan of the contents and layout one month in advance, and to have 50 percent of each current issue set in type and made up several days before the issue date.”

In 1949, the Soviet press consisted of 7,200 newspapers, with 31,000,000 circulation. Of these, in 1947, 74 percent were printed in the Russian language, even though the Russian-speaking people constituted only 58 percent of the population. Nevertheless, the Soviets have been building up their foreign language press, and the number of languages covered has grown from 24 in 1913 to almost 80 in 1947; "The Soviet system has made it possible for virtually every minor nationality group to have its native language press." In coverage, the Soviet newspapers are distributed as follows:

All-Soviet newspapers, 25 with 7,513,000 circulation; provincial newspapers, 126 with 4,316,000 circulation; regional newspapers, 336, with 5,948,000 circulation; district and city newspapers, 4,333, with 8,620,000 circulation; factory and farm newspapers, 2,343, with 4,710,000 circulation.

Below the farm and factory newspapers come several hundred thousand wall newspapers found in every shop, office and farm.

The circulation ranges from an average of 300,000 at the all-Soviet level through the district and city newspapers which average about 2,000 copies per issue, down to the wall newspapers "which are handwritten or typed in but a single copy for the shop or farm bulletin board."

Pravda

The official organ of the Central Committee of the Communist Party has a circulation of about 2,500,000. Together, *Pravda*, *Komsomolskaya Pravda* of the Young Communist League (600,000 circulation) and *Pionerskaya Pravda*, the national Communist children's newspaper (850,000 circulation), account for one tenth of the total newspaper circulation of the nation.

A large percentage of the Soviet press is addressed to special audiences—party, army, navy, trade-union, agricultural, industrial, children, etc. The 150 newspapers addressed to young people and children in 1939 had a total circulation of 3,000,000. Specialized newspapers of various kinds "represent a very large part of all newspapers printed and of the total circulation."

Besides presenting the Communist party line, the Soviet press "is a clearing house for the exchange of advice and information, and no problem is too small to deserve a column of discussion." Whatever the news item, "it must make its contribution to political agitation."

Any item—a coming election, the celebration of a Soviet anniversary or the completion of a road in Central Asia—follows a standard pattern: "There is always the eulogy and glorification of the Soviet system and its products, the criticism of the inadequacies which still exist despite the great success so far achieved and finally, the crucial exhortation for still greater effort and firmer support of the regime."

The newspaper editors are all appointed by the Commu-

nist Party, and are thus responsible officials of the party. Nevertheless, the Central Committee is reported to employ more than 400 persons to carry on the continuous work of scanning the nation's press in order to keep the central authorities informed about the degree of compliance the nation's newspapers manifest with the directives of the party. In addition, each state, regional, and district or city committee of the party has its own press section to guide the work of its own and subordinate newspapers. Each newspaper also criticizes the newspapers below it in the hierarchy from time to time.

The newspaper staffs are small, even on the most important newspapers, and "it is apparently assumed that in a model newspaper at least half the contents will come from the pens of non-professional journalists." These are the "worker and peasant correspondents," of whom there were more than 2,000,000 in 1939. They contribute letters about their own plants or factories, and are supposed to criticize bad work as well as praise good work. "Bolshevik self-criticism operates within carefully defined limits which considerably restrict the scope of its impact as a democratic force in Soviet society," Mr. Inkeles points out, but such criticism as there is is a responsibility of the press. For that reason, "the nonprofessional correspondents are supplemented by letters from the average Soviet citizen who wishes to register a complaint, express a grievance or opinion, make a suggestion or ask a question." Such letters appear mainly in the regional and local newspapers, and not so much in the big central newspapers. "Frequently letters are published along with a response from some official promising corrective action, or with a note from the editors calling for such action." Only a small portion of the letters are printed, and the newspaper is supposed to send the rest to the responsible government official and see that they get attention. The writing of such letters carries some hazard for the Soviet citizen and "conversations with displaced persons indicate that frequently an individual assigned by the local party unit to write a critical letter would draft the letter only after a private conversation with the person being criticized."

Radio

"In the Soviet Union radio does not enjoy the overwhelming importance attached to it in the United States, but this is primarily a product of the technical deficiencies that have held back the development of Soviet radiobroadcasting."

The central broadcasting apparatus in Moscow in 1947 divided its air time as follows: music, 60 percent; political broadcasts, 19.4 percent; literary programs, 8.6 percent; children's programs, 7.9 percent; and others, 4.1 percent. These programs are not received directly by the average listener on his home radio, however, for few home radios exist. Instead, the programs are picked by local stations

and put out on telephone-wire systems hooked up to individual loudspeakers. Since most of these diffusion exchanges can only carry one program at a time, the Russian listener has only two choices: Listen to the program presented, or turn the loudspeaker off. In some places, "radio auditoriums" have been established where large numbers of people can come and listen to the same radio; by 1940 there were 6,000 such auditoriums.

"With approximately 10,000,000 sets of all types operating on Jan. 1, 1949, the Soviet radio audience at that time was probably close to 40,000,000. At the time of important announcements and addresses by major government officials, of course, the audience might be expected to be significantly larger both because greater interest might attract listeners to group-listening points and because of the ability of local propaganda officials to mobilize the population for radio listening." But "The radio audience is largely restricted to those living in district centers in the rural regions, in the better developed minority areas, and particularly to the urban population." The cost of a regular radio set of high quality is beyond the reach of the average worker and: "It is probable that such sets are largely in the hands of officials, members of the intelligentsia, and the more skilled workers. The remainder are used as collective or group-listening points in dormitories, clubrooms and so on, and on collective farms where wired receivers are not available." "The majority of collective farms (each including about 75 to 100 peasant households) in 1947 had no radio apparatus of any kind, neither regular sets nor wired speakers." The number of radio receivers for the national minorities of the country also is very low.

Since there is about one receiving set for each four families, "collective listening" is encouraged; many people who want to listen must go out to a friend's house, the reading room of a plant, the recreation hall of a trade union or one of the radio auditoriums. They may also hear programs piped in over the public-address system at their place of work, and in some cases portable sets are carried out to farm brigades.

"The low output of the Soviet radio industry in the face of the overwhelming demand for sets has led increasingly to emphasis on easily produced, simple and cheap re-

ceivers," and recently officials have urged large-scale construction of old-fashioned crystal receiving sets as a solution.

Movies

The orders of the Soviet film industry after the end of World War II were to produce "films which sing the passion of great construction and poeticize labor." In addition, the films are expected to demonstrate what the Communists call the unique character of Soviet life and Soviet democracy, and their superiority over the capitalist system.

These orders have proved difficult for the film makers to carry out. "Despite all precautions," Mr. Inkeles reports, "major films are regularly produced which are found politically and artistically unacceptable. In some of these cases the Central Committee of the Communist Party will directly intervene to criticize and even to order the withdrawal of the film."

The present status of the industry is indicated by these facts: "By 1946 there were 14 art-film studios, more than the prewar level, but only 12 of the 21 feature-length films scheduled were completed. The record for 1947 was even less impressive, with only six feature films completed by October, out of a total of 19 scheduled for the entire year." It was reported then that several studios were not working at all and that two large studios were making only a single film each during the year. These difficulties arise partly from "difficulties with the ideological content" and partly from technical troubles resulting from war losses of camera and film factories.

Lack of projection equipment also handicaps the industry. The number of projectors was cut in half by the war (30,909 projectors in 1939; 15,200 in 1946), and large segments of the population are without movie houses. Although the Soviet government has increased the proportion of equipment in rural districts from 10 percent in 1915 to 60 percent in 1939, "there are, for example, some 60,000 village Soviets in the country and the Fourth Plan did not estimate that more than 30 percent of these would have village cinemas by January 1951."

"Public Opinion in Soviet Russia" is published by the Harvard University Press.

READING, WRITING AND NEWSPAPERS

It Took Three Printings to Meet the Response to the Special Issue on Newspaper Writing

The Special issue (April) on newspaper writing required three printings to meet orders from newspapers and journalism schools. It yielded many letters, most of them congratulatory. The few dissents are published in this issue.

Among the many orders for staff or teaching use were these:

Baltimore Sun 10, Philadelphia Bulletin 10, Birmingham News 10, Quincy (Mass.) Patriot Ledger 20, Daily Oklahoman 20, Deseret News 30, Gannett Newspapers 60, Cincinnati Enquirer 30, Utica Observer-Dispatch 10, Milwaukee Teachers College 20, University of Washington 75, University of Oklahoma 20, Hartford Courant 10, Oakland Tribune 50, University of Kentucky 50, Providence Journal 34, Georgetown Visitation Convent 10, Daily Princetonian 60, Pittsburgh Post-Gazette 30, Dayton Daily News, 50, Labor Press Association 10, Hunter College 12, UP, Washington 10, Marquette University 50, Colorado University 60, Washington University (St. Louis) 50, Wilkes College 10, Florida State Univ. 10, Atlanta Constitution 20, Penn State 50, Ohio State University 60, Univ. of Minnesota 150, Stanford University 80, Santa Rosa Press Democrat 70, Richmond Times-Dispatch 50, University of Kansas 41, New York University 100, American Newspaper Guild 30, State University of Iowa 30, Chicago Daily News 20, Toronto Globe and Mail 80, Louisville Courier-Journal 10, Antioch College 5, Philadelphia Bulletin 10, University of Nebraska 62, University of Maine 10, University of Illinois 4, Chattanooga Times 2, Burlington (Vt.) Free Press 2, Minneapolis Star and Tribune 30, Boston Globe 20, University of Massachusetts 10, Boston Traveler 4, Newark News 16, Hartford Times 20, International News Service 3, Williamsport (Pa.) Sun 10, Indiana University 5, Record-Searchlight (Redding, Calif.) 10, Phillips University 10, Madison (Wisc.) Capital Times 10, Mt. Holyoke College 10, Baltimore News-Post 10, Commercial-News (Danville, Ill.) 2, Daily Bulletin (Blackfoot, Idaho) 2, Detroit News 10, Butler University 57, New Haven Register 30, South Bend Tribune 55, Reuters 10, Miami Star-Journal 30, Seattle Times 20, Canadian Press 10, San Francisco Chronicle 100, Christian Science Monitor 10, Milwaukee Journal 50, Lincoln University 10, Eugene (Oregon) Register Guard 10, Miami Herald 20, St. Paul Dispatch 20, University of Wisconsin 25, Kingsport (Tenn.) Times 10,

St. Louis Star-Times 20, Syracuse University 15, Arkansas Gazette 20, University of Nevada 10, Kansas State Teachers College 30, Washington Post 50, Emory University 10, Toledo Blade 100, New York Times 80, Youngstown Vindicator 20, Chicago City News Bureau 50, Binghamton Press 30.

From Dr. Flesch

One of my newspaper friends has shown me the April issue of *Nieman Reports*. What I have seen of it so far has aroused my interest and great respect. I should be very grateful if you could send me a copy.

RUDOLF FLESCH
Dobbs Ferry, N. Y.

From Elmer Davis

I don't know who wrote the piece on News Room Attitude in your current *Reports*, but it makes a great deal of sense. However, I venture to differ with him on his explanation of how and why Arthur Krock got the interview with the President.

Your explanation that "the incident emphasized the value of independence" doesn't seem to hold water, though I have heard it presented in a somewhat different way. It has been said that the President gave Krock an interview for the same reason that he gave Tito a steel mill—to detach a satellite from the opposing coalition. And it is a fact that the last paragraph of the interview contained kindlier words for the President than Krock ever said before, and that he has continued to seem favorable to the President ever since.

However, I don't think that is the point. What the President's motives may have been I do not know; but I think Krock earned the interview by displaying a quality which is rarer around Washington than independence; and perhaps more valuable in this town where much of what is going on must remain untold for security reasons, and where both officials and reporters tend to exaggerate the amount that must remain untold. That quality is imagination.

Krock, as I understand it, had a private conversation with the President at a party, and the President said some interesting things. Many of us have had such conversations at various gatherings; but we knew he was talking off the

record, and it never occurred to us that he would be willing to say the same things on the record. Krock had the enterprise to ask him, and the answer was yes. Accordingly I could not join in the great squawk that went up around town. It seemed to me the rest of us would look pretty silly complaining that Krock had more initiative and more imagination than we had.

ELMER DAVIS
American Broadcasting Co.
Washington, D. C.

From E. L. James of the *Times*

I have just been going through the very interesting April *Reports*. I am very much impressed with the excellence of the statements of the problems which exist in newspaper writing. However, as I am sure you will realize, the statements of difficulties are closely matched by the absence of any remedies. I presume this was partly due to the fact that the articles were mostly gotten up by younger men. But I think the statement of problems is good and that is why I am ordering 80 copies of the *Reports* at the quoted rate.

EDWIN L. JAMES
Managing editor New York *Times*

One of Best Things of Its Kind

I want to compliment the Nieman Fellows on their "Reading, Writing and Newspapers." It is one of the most serviceable documents of its kind I have ever seen. Its great value, in my opinion, lies, first, in the fact that it describes the modern problems of newspapers without trying to sell any Indian medicine cures; secondly, it challenges each daily newspaper concerned to meet the problem in its own way; and, finally, the report was done by working newspapermen and because of that fact is undoubtedly more readily acceptable to men of the craft. . .

On Monday I had a call from Luther Huston of our Washington bureau, who had laid hands on a copy and wanted to recommend it to me. . . I am going up to Columbia University to act as discussion leader at the opening meeting of the American Press Institute seminar for managing editors and news editors. I am going to use this report for my scripture lesson. Let me repeat, it is one of the best things of its kind I have ever run across.

TURNER CATLEDGE
Assistant managing editor New York *Times*

From Richard Neuberger

I want to tell you what a grand job I think the issue on newspaper writing has turned out to be. I think every newspaper executive and writer in the land should read it. My wife taught English in the local high schools for

nine years, and says the *Nieman Reports* has most of her writing textbooks "beat a country mile." It's a great thing. I only hope enough men in the trade read it.

RICHARD L. NEUBERGER
Portland, Ore.

Pungent and Provocative

Much of the stuff coming from Nieman Fellows of the past has been irritating. It seemed slanted, usually well to the left. Criticisms appeared to be pointless or malicious. Suggestions often were childish, usually impossible of fulfillment.

Now comes a series of reports which make sense. The Fellows are critical of newspapers, but understanding, too. Suggestions make sense. Anyone who reads *Nieman Reports* for April will find his thinking apparatus beginning to tick. Herewith some quotes. They are in no particular order. They simply are pungent and provocative remarks about a business to which all of us are devoted. (Three pages of quotations follow.)

L. R. BLANCHARD
General executive editor, The Gannett *Newspapers*, in *The Bulletin* for Gannett executives

Right Type

The special issue of *Nieman Reports* is the type of material most newspapermen wish were produced more often by the journeymen of the trade. I've had no more than an opportunity to leaf through it—but I'd like a chance to read it at leisure. Are there, by good fortune (or more likely, by good planning) additional copies available? I'd like very much to have one.

HUBERT J. BERNARD
San Francisco *Call-Bulletin*

From Editors

I want to compliment you on the April special issue of *Nieman Reports*. The articles on newspaper writing and the conditions which affect it are so crammed with stimulating views that I am going through it a second time, and I am ordering 50 additional copies for distribution among our editorial staff.

J. D. FERGUSON
President and editor *Milwaukee Journal*

For some time I've been trying to get hold of a copy of the famous April issue of *Nieman Reports*. Enclosed find payment. If what everybody else tells me is true, we shall be getting more of these copies to pass around here.

HERBERT BRUCKER
Editor *Hartford Courant*

I have just concluded reading, for the second time, *Nieman Reports* for April. I am very much impressed. We newsmen in the grass roots, tied down by 60 hour work weeks, should have such information at our fingertips always.

GUNNER MUSSELMAN
Managing editor Circleville (O.) *Herald*

Please send 20 copies. We're all enthusiastic and want to use it with members of the staff.

JOHN R. HERBERT
Managing editor Quincy (Mass.) *Patriot Ledger*

The April issue of *Nieman Reports* has generated considerable interest among staffers here. Please send 30 copies. We plan to distribute them to reporters and deskmen. Congratulations on a job well done.

ALAN PRITCHARD
Daily News Editorial Association
Dayton (Ohio) *Daily News*

Enclosed find three bucks for copies of the April issue. I think it is the finest job of its kind that has been done. I want to send copies to friends of mine around the country who have been trying to do something with Dr. Flesch and his formula. Not being a good mathematician, I have not been able to get very far with the learned doctor.

DANIEL J. O'BRIEN
Sunday editor Boston *Globe*

I've not yet read through the *Nieman Reports*, but as far as I've gone, I think it is a swell issue. I liked the practical approach to matters that is displayed along with the apparent knowledge of the problem. Seems to me you have a fine crop of Fellows, or else they're just able to present things better.

WILBUR E. BADE
Editor *Guild Reporter*

I am greatly impressed with the contents of *Nieman Reports* for April. I think it is the most valuable turned out yet. Some of my own failures were in it. I would like to order 20 copies.

RALPH MCGILL
Editor Atlanta *Constitution*

I am enjoying the April issue a great deal and would like to see that some members of the staff read it, too.

LLOYD M. FELMLY
Editor Newark *News*

I read the *Nieman Reports* from cover to cover and found it intensely interesting. Naturally I do not agree with all of it, but it is one of the finest series of articles on newspapers that I have read in many a day.

HAROLD WHEELER
Managing editor Boston *Traveler*

The April special issue arrived this morning. I read it tonight. Enclosed is check for \$3 for 10 copies for our staff. Can I say more? Yes: Give us more like this. We weary but restless desk men need at least the expression of the sympathetic viewpoint, which you offer here.

FRANK A. ZIEGLER
City editor Williamsport (Pa.) *Sun*

From Schools

Please send 50 copies of the April issue of *Nieman Reports*. You may be interested to know that my students are almost unanimous in asking for copies.

JAMES N. McCLURE
Washington University, St. Louis

An excellent idea! I'm sending my order even before I've finished the issue.

ELIZABETH GREEN
Mount Holyoke College
South Hadley, Mass.

We want to be very sure to have a large quantity of the April *Nieman Reports* available for our students next year. Ordinarily we would order "through channels," and that always takes some time. If there is any chance that the supply might give out—we are going to want about 150, I believe—we'd like to get the order in more quickly. What are the probabilities?

MITCHELL V. CHARNLEY
Acting director School of Journalism
University of Minnesota

The special issue of *Nieman Reports* which has just arrived is undoubtedly the best thing you have done to date, and we shall certainly be ordering copies in quantity within the next several days, when I've had an opportunity to check with our faculty members on the number they want for each class.

WILLIAM V. SWINDLER
Director School of Journalism
University of Nebraska

Would appreciate 20 copies of your special issue. It is a first rate job. (later) Please increase order to 40. (later) Need 20 more.

GRANVILLE GARSIDE
Chairman *Daily Princetonian*
Princeton University

Congratulations on your special issue. In my humble opinion it is the best thing on news writing and editing that has come along from any source.

LEWIS S. PATTERSON
School of Journalism
University of Minnesota

From Former Nieman Fellows:

I think the current issue of the *Reports*, about newspaper writing, is the best so far. Keep up the fine work.

ED PAXTON
Paducah, Ky.

Congratulations on the last *Nieman Reports*. A copy was held up at the last Sigma Delta Chi meeting in Denver, and all newspapermen were urged to read it.

HOUSTOUN WARING
editor Littleton (Colo.) *Independent*

The special issue of *Nieman Reports* seems to me altogether remarkable. I have read it with interest and enthusiasm. You and Ted Morrison and all the boys deserve the thanks of publishers, editors and readers, of everyone, indeed, who wants the press really to communicate.

A. B. GUTHRIE, JR.
Lexington, Ky.

Can you send me a couple of extra copies of the very fine new issue of the *Nieman Reports*?

IRVING DILLIARD
St. Louis *Post-Dispatch*

PUTS SPEED FIRST

A Rewrite Man Objects to "History in a Hurry"

by Donald Fessenden

Every rewrite man learns eventually that in anonymity there is peace. If no bylines top his stories, he probably will never win a Pulitzer prize, but he will be required to dodge few brickbats. He has a position of comfortable security, and he knows it.

On few occasions is the rewrite man's occupational serenity disturbed. In my case, the jolt was provided by the *Nieman Reports* of April, 1950. Specifically, the quoting of my new leads on the *Herald's* story of the Brink robbery has impelled me to stick my neck out and ask for a voice in the discussion.

I say discussion, rather than argument. I agree with the general premise of the newspapermen-students who surveyed the printed output of our craft—that there is far too much poor writing in newspapers and something ought to be done about it.

I disagree with the view held by most of the Nieman Fellows that the methods of writing should be amended. I think the methods are correct. The execution too often is faulty.

I can't go along at all with the Fellow who wrote in "History in a Hurry" that it should be recognized "that quality is more important than speed in the long run." I go away down the road in the opposite direction on that one.

In the first place, the statement assumes the reader wants quality. Does he? Back in my days as a college student, regrettably a pre-Nieman Fellowship era, the finest writing of any newspaper was in the columns of the *New York World*. The old *World* kept to that high standard of quality right up to the day it folded.

DONALD FESSENDEN is on the rewrite staff of the Boston *Herald* and lectures on journalism at Simmons College.

What the Reader Wants

What the reader wants primarily from his newspaper is information. He wants to know, even as he did before radio and television, what is going on, what has happened in his world within the past few hours. If he already has heard the "what happened" on the radio, at lunch or over the back fence, he wants elaboration and interpretation.

He cares much less about how it is given to him than he does about how much is given to him. He doesn't expect it to be as up-to-the-minute as the almost instantaneous radio broadcasts. And I agree with the Nieman Fellows that he is not much impressed by one newspaper having a news story eight minutes before another newspaper.

The reader does, however, expect his newspaper to give him as much information as it can collect right up to the final minute when that information must go into cold type if it is to be printed in the edition he will buy. He regards this as the newspaper's obligation to him. I think he is right, that the newspaper owes it to him to give him the latest possible information, and as fully as the news gathering and writing machinery can produce it for him.

For a newspaper to meet this obligation requires speed, and frequently the sacrifice of quality. It may even require a slight lifting of the barriers against inaccuracy to allow some of the last-minute information to slide through into type.

Here I am walking a tightrope, I admit. But I have no intention of falling off into any such flimsy net as that tattered newspaper cynicism, "Never let the truth interfere with a good story." I'm not going that far. For one reason, a college generation and a half of journalism students at whom I have shouted, "Accuracy! Accuracy! Accuracy! The greatest of these is accuracy!" would haunt me.

I contend, however, that in the case of the Brink robbery, it would have been better to have given the reader of the first edition the latest available information, that "more than \$500,000" was taken, than to have given him nothing about the amount that was stolen.

As it happened, the official and more nearly correct figure of "more than \$1,000,000" became available, a half hour after our ordinary deadline for first edition copy, when Supt. Fallon made the announcement to the captains and detectives at police headquarters. A PAX telephone call to the composing room ordered the correction in the lead. There was no time for copy to be written.

That the "more than \$500,000" remained further down in the story was unfortunate. Of the several thousand persons who presumably read the *Herald's* first edition account of the robbery, the only one who has complained about the "contradiction," to my knowledge, was the author of "History in a Hurry," in the Nieman report.

For such "contradictions" and "faults" as the writer of "History in a Hurry" found in our Brink story, I plead that speed was the justifiable cause. I can't resist noting that the Nieman Fellow had no such defense for his placing of the robbery on a non-existent "Pine Street" in the North End, instead of Prince Street.

The fact that the reader does not insist on quality gives the newspaper no license to throw its daily forty or fifty yards of news at him any old way. Of course the newspaper should present its written material in a readable manner, clearly and concisely, and entertainingly when the occasion for entertaining presents itself. And right here is a fact about news writing that was ignored, or at best barely touched, by the writers of the *April Reports*. I think it should be stressed.

Bread and Cake

None of the Fellows, as far as I could find, gave sufficient recognition to the fact that there are two distinct kinds of news stories, as different as bread and cake. There is the straight news story and the feature story, and they demand separate treatment.

To try to tell a straight news story by the feature method results in a hodge-podge that bewilders the reader. To try to write a feature by the straight news method brings forth a dull, uninspired report and fumbles the opportunity to entertain the reader.

I can illustrate by this morning's Boston *Herald*. The lead story has the following lead paragraph:

"LONDON, April 11 (AP)—Moscow reported today a U. S. bomber disappeared over the Baltic sea after entering Russian territory and exchanging fire with a Soviet fighter last Saturday. That day an American Navy patrol plane vanished with 10 aboard."

At the bottom of the page, under a four-column headline, is an excellent feature story by John O'Connor, one of the best in the business at applying "the light touch," in other words, the feature story method. His lead paragraph in reporting that Tufts College is seeking cockroaches for a research project is:

"Gosh, professor, there was one on the wall a minute ago, but . . ."

I defy any of the Nieman Fellows, or any newspapermen, to transpose the methods of those two leads.

Back at the beginning, the Fellows and I agreed there is too much bad writing in newspapers and something should be done about it. Something is being done. The Flesch treatment has remarkably improved the Associated Press report. The United Press survey of "fog content" a few years ago worked wonders on the UP wire. The Fellows themselves concede in their April report that news writing, within its limitations, has become much better.

"Much better" is still too far from "as good as it can be under the circumstances." I know of no way to close the gap except through a process of education. We who are in the business of newspaper writing must learn at our typewriters.

I think we are learning. I submit that we can make greater progress if we stick to the methods that were here when we started newspaper work, and in most cases were in existence before we came in.

"ABOUT OUR EDITORIAL PAGE"

by Edwin P. Hoyt

One of the many lacks on the Denver Post when Palmer Hoyt went there was an editorial page. Now it has one. When able editor Fred Colvig was killed in a Dutch plane crash last year, Hoyt put the new page in charge of his son, Edwin P. Hoyt, who left a reporting job to take it over. He reports on it below.

I have just finished reading the article in the April *Nieman Reports* about editorial pages; and while it is fresh in my mind, I thought I would drop you a note to give you a few items about our own page.

Perhaps it is because I am new on this job or perhaps it is because we have a new page in the *Denver Post*, but I don't believe we are seriously afflicted with any of the troubles your writer describes in the article.

For example, we are not afflicted with Afghanistanism. We use a lot of material about foreign affairs, and all but one of our editorial writers on the *Post* has been abroad recently.

We always raise all kinds of old Billy-Hell about things that are going on in Washington, the State House, and in City Hall whenever things are not going properly. We don't have any particular gripe against city, state, or federal officials except when they are not doing their jobs. In other words, we are not out to get anybody, but we try to keep the public informed about the propriety of decisions made every day—through our editorial columns.

We don't have any sacred cows that I can think of off hand, although there are probably a few minor ones lurking in the closets. We don't care much for the corporation point of view either, and are often accused of Communism by some of our readers. On the other hand, others accuse us of Fascism; so I suppose we are doing all right along those lines if we use the time-honored measuring stick.

We don't have a specific length for editorials. Neither do we have a specific space to fill. We use two 17 1/2 em columns of editorials every day, but have a 17 1/2 em editorial column ready to use at all times and do use it unless we have important editorials we want to throw it. We on the *Post* never write an editorial unless we agree with the paper's policy. And I think the editorial writers on this paper have more freedom in forming policy than they do on most other papers.

We do reporting jobs all the time. One of our editorial writers, Leverett Chapin, has just returned from a two months' trip to England, where he reported objectively on Socialism and the British elections. At the present moment Lawrence C. Martin, Associate Editor of the *Denver Post*, is preparing a series of articles on education—the re-

sult of several weeks of intensive investigation. Bruce Gustin, who writes a daily column and editorials, has just returned from Boise, where he covered a portion of the hearings on the Union Pacific-Denver and Rio Grande Western Railroad dispute over the Ogden Gateway. And I returned to the *Post* in November after a six-months' stint as a reporter, rewrite man, and acting night city editor of the *San Francisco Chronicle*.

The *Post* also encourages and prints editorials from reporters and other members of the staff who have familiarized themselves with certain subjects.

We don't use a lot of big words in our editorials. In fact, we use slang from time to time on the basis that we try to write the kind of editorials that represent American thinking and talking.

Perhaps one of the reasons the *Post* editorial page has a different approach is that the page is new and the writers are not "professional" editorial writers.

We try to have a light editorial every day, although we don't always make it. We also try to use the expository editorial, not only as a filler, but as a very valuable means of analyzing issues. We find it extremely valuable in writing about Congressional bills.

Now to tell you something about readership: A survey in June, 1947, made by Research Enterprises, an independent polling organization, showed 51 percent readership of the *Post* editorial page. A survey in January, 1949, showed that 64 percent of the *Post* readers read the editorial page. This was a qualitative survey and it showed that 18 percent of the readers read the editorial columns every single day and read all the editorials. Another large group skip around, reading almost all of the editorials and other features when they are interested—about 20 per cent. The rest say that they read the editorials occasionally. The editorials rose in rank from second feature on the page (second to the letters-column) to first feature between 1947 and 1949. In other words, we on the *Post* editorial page are writing editorials for 60 percent of our readership—not ten percent. And we write them accordingly. A final point in this survey: 14 percent of the readers were able to name a recent editorial by title or subject. The editorial page as such has an even higher readership; 85 percent of the *Post* readers look at the page occasionally or regularly—68 per cent of them "look at" it regularly.

ALL THE SAME FACE

Newspapers and Newspapermen

by Louis M. Lyons

From the Don Mellett Lecture for 1950, given at Pennsylvania State College, May 21, by the curator of the Nieman Fellowships.

William Allen White, when I encountered him once in Boston with my friend Charles Morton of the old *Transcript*, both seeking an interview with the sage of Emporia, put his arms around us both and said, "We all have the same face. It is not an acquisitive face."

It is important that newspapermen should share that face. To any students going into newspaper work, I suggest one standard to set for their own future satisfaction: work for a newspaper that is run by a newspaperman—not a banker or industrialist. I don't know that we can prove that journalism is a profession. But the important thing is that the men in its act as if it were. The professional attitude is simply the feeling of responsibility toward the news, of an obligation to the reader; that the reader is their only client.

Feeling so, they need to give themselves a chance by selecting an employer who understands that feeling and shares it—who has "the same face" as William Allen White—the newspaperman's face. There are never enough such men running newspapers. But there will be more. There must be. The times demand it. If the reader has any rights—and I hope he will learn to assert them—one is that his newspaper be in the hands of a professional newspaperman, who is not using it for any other interest but to serve his readers.

It is a healthy thing for newspapers that the public is as critical as it is. It means that the institution of the press is important to them.

The press is by its nature a critic of other institutions, but it does not receive its own due of criticism. That is one of its difficulties. Who is to police the policeman?

A Landmark

The Hutchins Commission is a landmark in the history of American journalism. Its assignment was to examine the freedom of the press. Its report lifted the assignment to a higher level. It added Responsibility. Its title was "A Free and Responsible Press." It held that only a responsible press can remain free. It considered the adequacy of the press to inform citizens on public affairs and found it wanting. It criticized sensationalism and triviality not so much for themselves as for crowding out the necessary information for the citizen to determine public issues. And

it deplored the lack of an adequate forum in the press for the presentation of diverse views.

One of its reports—by William Ernest Hocking—particularly criticized the lowering of public taste by the failure of standards of the press.

It is notable—and depressing—that after a half century of unparalleled spread of education to ever higher levels, the tendency for much of the press appears to have been to tap new lows in taste and intelligence. Always with distinguished exceptions, the headlines are more garish; the selection of stories more sensational; and the comics more vapid and intrusive, in the bulk of the press. A publisher of a very good newspaper confessed recently that he found he could gain more circulation by adding four pages of comics than by putting the same money into more staff reporters.

The decline of the reporter—and so of the individual quality in newspapers—is a notable trend. Not only comics replace reporters but a multiple production of canned goods—columns, features, syndicated news and commentary. It is cheaper by the dozen. So papers buy canned content by the dozen and the gross. So right across the country there is a stereotyped sameness to most newspapers—the same columns, features, comics, fixtures. And a reduction in the individuality that comes from extensive reports of regional news by an adequate staff.

This is in the trend of the times. It goes with reduction in the number of papers and with a sameness of news and views in most of them. It goes with a reduction of individual enterprise. Scoops are less valued. It is surely no accident that the greatest record for enterprise among our newspapers is the *New York Times*, which has resisted the trend to stereotyped canned products and has maintained and expanded energetic, independent staff reporting. It produces a paper out of its own initiative, without dependence on the syndicate salesman.

The syndicated material that fills so much of the insides of our newspapers has reached almost the proportions of the old boiler plate or patent insides of the most meager country weeklies. Most of it comes from New York or Washington. These are dynamic centers and produce good copy. But they are not all of America and the monotonous sameness of the published product is an unreal reflection of America.

Regional Reporting

A major lapse of the U. S. press at mid-20th century is its failure to report America to America. We do not have even as many regional correspondents in the U. S. as foreign correspondents. True the wire services are highly organized to spread the standard news of disaster, strikes, politics or crime. Indeed a rape in any corner of the country is apt to be front page news from coast to coast. But between sex trials and strikes what news flows from one region to another to picture the vast varied activity of America? You get it only on the stock market page because basic crops move in a speculative market.

The St. Louis *Post-Dispatch* is a distinguished exception. It reaches out into the national currents to take frequent soundings for its unique editorial title page. The New York *Herald Tribune* has a reporter in Chicago to cover the Middle West. The New York *Times* has also one in the Old South, one in the Southwest, one in Hollywood, and a few more spanning the continent. But that is about all. Even the far-flung correspondence of the Sunday *Times* appears to be written usually more in response to general queries from the New York office than from the correspondents' sense of the interest of developments in the region covered. By and large the immense variety of American life flows on without reporting to interpret one region to another. In fact the job of reporting on America to America was more comprehensively and purposefully done in an earlier day when the travelling correspondent, often the editor himself, sent descriptive articles to his metropolitan paper on the richly diverse hinterland he discovered.

This is so far a thing of the past that when the *Christian Science Monitor* tried it a few years ago, bringing home a foreign correspondent to report on America as he had done on Europe, it was a unique feature.

Neither do we get much regional reporting within a region. The Boston papers have even given up having their own independent Washington bureaus. In local reporting a heavy disproportion of what we read comes off the police blotter. It is the easiest news to get. It is first reported by the police and just lifted and rewritten. Other set stations for news are city hall, state house, maybe Chamber of Commerce and School Committee. But most of life falls between these stools of stereotyped reporting, and most of life goes uncovered by this conventional pattern of what makes news.

A few papers have farm editors, a distinguished one on the Louisville *Courier-Journal*, and he gets more than farm news. He gets into the whole organized rural life pattern—fairs, farm festivals, farm bureaus, crops, fertilizer demonstrations, individual success stories.

Some papers have developed weather forecasts into bright, interesting reports that take account of the seasonal

changes, the lateness of blooms, conditions of foliage, etc. But such developments have not been carried very far.

The Story of America

In a paradoxical reversal of the tenses, it is the American historian, not the newspaperman, who has plumbed the stream of the common life to tell the story of every-day America in between wars and presidential campaigns. That is the new history. It has made the fame of our Turners, Schlesingers, Commagers, Merks, Parringtons. And in history it is already two generations old. We like to say of news that it is history in a hurry. But is the accent to be, forever, so on the hurry that there is nothing out of Iowa but a sex trial, and nothing out of California but the love affairs of actresses? The story of America is bigger than that. And the resources to tell it are there to be tapped. Any newspaper could find in a dozen small town newspaper offices in Kansas a splendidly equipped regional correspondent. The news magazines have exploited this indigenous talent—often in peculiar ways—but with more enterprise than the newspapers. Richard Neuberger has shown what can be mined out of a sparsely covered region.

"Captive Journalism"

I suppose we will all agree with *The New Yorker* that the first duty of a newspaper is to survive. But the biggest news about newspapers recently has been of their deaths. Invariably the stated cause of death was the economics of publishing.

It is a depressing thing that in this great age of communication the number of places for professional journalists is declining with the diminishing number of newspapers, and young men, earnest and able to report and interpret, students of America with independent minds and alert intelligence, are having to turn for careers to those fringes of journalism that come under the head of public relations. We know the coal mines controlled by steel operators as "captive mines." Public relations is captive journalism. Much of it serves a useful purpose. But it is all controlled by the special interests it serves and the immense expansion of it has so tipped the balance of information available to readers that a great source of all our information is this "captive journalism." It all has an axe to grind. It may be a fine axe and worth grinding. But it is not independent reporting and if the field for independent reporting diminishes while captive journalism grows apace, it throws our total communications out of balance. Too much of what we read is pre-digested, to sell us something.

It is an unhealthy symptom of the national psychology that sees a diminishing of the market for independent reporting while the field of public relations expands. It pays better too. But many and many a young journalism

graduate would reject the better pay for any kind of newspaper job where he could have a free mind. Of course if it is the kind of newspaper that does not harbor free minds, one might as well take the higher pay for honest axe-grinding.

The Luck of a Good Paper

It may be that a community is no more entitled to a good newspaper than to a good airport or a good art museum. But these latter it may build for itself. In our society it must take its newspaper as it finds it. It is the great good fortune of New Yorkers that an Ochs came there from Tennessee to run a newspaper, and of St. Louisans that a Pulitzer came there to run a newspaper, and of Louisvillians that both a Bingham and an Ethridge serve their journalistic needs, and of Clevelanders that Louis Seltzer works there on the *Press*. Few Americans are more deserving of monuments—or need them less—than the rare newspaperman who has built a newspaper into a great institution of public service. It must be much easier to be a great banker or a great industrialist, for great newspapermen are rarer. Lucky is the community served by one. And luck is the only word for it. It is the sheer chance of the location of such a creative newspaperman that gives New York, St. Louis and Louisville great newspapers and omits giving them to Boston, Philadelphia and Cincinnati. There is no greater virtue in St. Louisans than Bostonians, or in Louisvillians than Cincinnatians.

There is nothing rational about it. It is just the good fortune of domiciling a great personality who chose a newspaper career. Every great newspaper we have had has been the projection of a distinguished personality. And we have had very few instances yet of the institution's continuing its distinction much beyond the life of its builder. Not all cities have been able to keep a tradition of a great newspaper.

Whether the character of so sensitive an institution can be continued in other hands is still a great question. A favorable answer appears to be in prospect for the *New York Times* after 15 years of Ochs' successor, and it is time to suggest that Arthur Sulzberger must have other qualities than his great modesty.

The dismal demands of economics have probably fated us to fewer papers, all seeking a common denominator of mass sales.

But there remains a wide variation in the content and character possible to such a paper, even after priority is given to successful purveying of advertising.

Is it to have responsible direction of its news production by a professional journalist, or by a hack who follows the whim or policy of a business manager? Is it to have a vigorous presentation of views on public affairs, or be a colorless reflection of the prevailing prejudices of the most

cautious downtown merchants? In short, is it to have any character of its own?

For Better Readers

The *New York Times* conducts an instruction course of lectures for teachers on the newspaper and public affairs. In one of its lectures this season its news editor asked the schools to produce better readers—to select newspapers that were meeting their needs in news.

Dartmouth College, undertaking to teach Great Issues, found it had first to teach students how to read newspapers—with discrimination and sophistication—so as not to be sucked in by propaganda and prejudice; so as to be able to follow the main threads of events and to find reliable and adequate sources for reports on the issues of the times.

They worked out a technique for this. And it is worth copying. Few things are more important than that people know how to read a newspaper so as to know what is really going on.

As the Hutchins Commission pointed out, the citizen's need is for more than surface facts. He needs often more than the report of the event an interpretation of it: the truth behind the facts, as they well said. He needs to know the meaning of events.

In an increasingly complicated world this suggests increasing use of specialists to explore and explain. The press has done little with specialists. Yet it can easily be shown that the most competent job of the press is in the few fields in which specialization has either been forced on it or has come naturally. Politics, for instance, which is the oldest and most complete specialization in the press. It has responded very little to the more recent needs of specialization.

The Need for Specialists

Science has come to demand specialists. But even here and even under the compelling impact of the atom bomb, the newspaper market for science specialists is very thin and very precarious. Yet here specialization pays off as definitely as possible.

The Nieman Foundation has been proud that of the half dozen newspapermen who specialized as science writers on their fellowships three won the Westinghouse award for science writing in the last three years. (Another I might add has just won one of the first Lasker awards for medical reporting.) But two of these three have left the newspaper field, which proved inhospitable. One is associate editor of a great national magazine. He had done a science column in a newspaper. But he was disappointed and finally frustrated with what he could get into the paper. No solid content of the steady progress of science could find an outlet there. That is a very common experience of science writers.

One of the other two went all the way with his specialty

into medicine. That is one of the hazards of developing specialists for journalism. If they go too far with it, journalism loses them to the special field itself. But surely the problem here is to make the journalistic specialty attractive enough to compete for the ablest men.

It is true I believe that the immense diversity of journalism, the unpredictability of news, the universal dimensions of the scope of newspapering, require that the bulk of a staff be mobile, adaptable people, alert, intelligent, possessed of perennial curiosity that permits them to become temporary specialists in many fields consecutively. Such a reporter may be required to know more than anyone else in town about a certain subject this month and to become equally absorbed in a quite different field next month. That is part of the fascination and attraction of newspaper work. But for competent background of the most complex matters, the office needs some specialists. They need not even be writers. They can be consultants. They may have other tasks, in research, statistics, polling, special columns. But they should be fully available and on call when the news desk needs them.

The future belongs to those who make it. I believe that the bell tolls in journalism only for those newspapers that fail to fulfill their high function.

Th Spirit of the Paper

In Cleveland where Editor Louis Seltzer sits is the center of leadership. He sets the pace in the Cleveland *Press* for progressive civic action and Clevelanders can point to the improvements that have grown from his zest for making his home town a better place to live. The morale on the Cleveland *Press* is as high as its circulation. It is a team and anybody on the staff can argue against the boss's ideas. When Seltzer has a good man on a job he lets him alone to run it. That makes a paper that men believe in. It does things and it believes in what it does.

In St. Louis on the *Post-Dispatch* editorial page, Irving Dilliard only begins to fight on the Ellen Knauff case after the Supreme Court has turned it down. And his fight, after two outs and two strikes in the ninth inning, has already carried the cause in reversal through the House and won a stay from deportation for this American veteran's wife.

In Tacoma, Bill Townes sets out to clean up the town and when the publisher timidly blocks his crusading, Bill prints a final blistering editorial on the duty of a newspaper to its community and resigns his editorship to find a newspaper owner to support vigorous editing. And he did find

one. I have just been visiting his paper, the *Press Democrat* in Santa Rosa, California, where he has proved that honest, vigorous reporting is what it takes for success in newspapering.

On the *Post-Dispatch*, the editorial title page editor says that Joseph Pulitzer is the greatest publisher in the country. That spirit—what their own men say of Seltzer and Pulitzer—makes a great staff and a great paper.

Irving Dilliard explains seven editorials on his page one day: "You need seven to keep up with the news."

He doesn't assign topics, saying that the idea is a part of the editorial and should be the writer's. That freedom and consequent responsibility is a part of what makes a great page.

Geoffrey Parsons, editor of the New York *Herald Tribune* editorial page, has the same respect for the ideas and individuality of his staff. He expects them to originate editorial ideas for themselves. And he leaves their writing alone, saying it is part of the man, and if he is a good man his manner of expression should not be changed to fit an arbitrary notion of the editor's.

This is a very different attitude from that on another leading paper where correspondents complain that the copy desk holds up an important story, because they aren't sure what the boss wants. And often when the boss is out of town a timely story dies on his desk because his editors were fearful of using their own news judgment. The staff of such a paper live in psychic confusion and frustration trying to guess the views and moods of the top man. It is consequently an erratic publication, and many good men have left it for lesser papers where they can at least know the score.

I recall James Morgan, editor emeritus of the Boston *Globe*, saying after sixty years of newspapering: "I wouldn't swap my luck for any other." At its best, newspapering is the best luck a man can have.

The zest and satisfaction of good newspaper work carry their own reward. I have just scanned 100 applications for Nieman Fellowships and have felt, as often before, the earnestness and faith of the best of our young newspapermen. They have as much to offer their institution as any generation. They can serve the press as greatly as its men of yore. They aspire to have it pull its full weight among the institutions that serve our society. All of us who feel pride in membership of the Fourth Estate have an obligation to join our voices in insistence that the conditions of the press of our day permit it to fulfill its vital function—that it render a true report of our times and serve as a true interpreter of man to man and of man's world to himself.

TWELVE NIEMAN FELLOWSHIPS FOR 1950-51

Newspapers of ten states are represented by the twelve Nieman Fellowships awarded by Harvard University for 1950-51. Editor Dwight E. Sargent of the *Portland Press Herald* and Reporter Hoke Norris of the *Winston-Salem Journal* are the first Fellows appointed from Maine and North Carolina. Simeon Booker, Jr., reporter on the *Cleveland Call-Post*, is the second Negro journalist to receive a Nieman Fellowship in the twelve years of these annual awards of a year of study at Harvard University.

The one foreign correspondent in the group, Dana Adams Schmidt of the *New York Times*, was the sole American correspondent remaining in Czechoslovakia when he left that country to avoid arrest by the Communists a few weeks ago. One of the four reporters in the group, Edwin O. Guthman of the *Seattle Times*, was awarded a Pulitzer prize for reporting in 1949.

The group includes one city editor, one telegraph editor, one state capital correspondent, two editorial writers, one small daily editor, one Associated Press news editor, one foreign correspondent, one city hall reporter, three general reporters.

This is the thirteenth group of newspapermen awarded Nieman Fellowships at Harvard since the bequest of Agnes Wahl Nieman, widow of Lucius Nieman, the founder of the *Milwaukee Journal*. One hundred forty-six newsmen from newspapers of thirty-six states have previously received the awards.

As has been the case with every group of Nieman Fellows, American history is the study planned by the largest number—five. Government, state and local, regional and community problems, labor, race relations, India and European history are the other fields of study proposed.

The selection committee, under the chairmanship of Louis M. Lyons, Curator of the Nieman Foundation, included Louis Seltzer, Editor of the *Cleveland Press*, Irving Dilliard, Editor, editorial page, *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, Marquis Childs, Washington columnist, and David W. Bailey, Secretary of the Harvard Corporation, and William M. Pinkerton, Director of the Harvard News Office.

The New Fellows

The Nieman Fellows for the 1950-51 college year at Harvard are:

MALCOLM C. BAUER, 36, city editor, *Portland Oregonian*. Native of Enterprise, Oregon, graduate in journalism of the University of Oregon, 1935 (Phi Beta Kappa), he began newspaper work on the *Eugene (Oregon) Register-Guard*. He has been on the *Oregonian* since 1936 except for four and a half years in the Army where he served in grades from first lieutenant to colonel and executive officer, G-5 Division, in SHAEF.

He plans to study the history and development of the Northwest.

SIMEON S. BOOKER, Jr., 31, reporter on the *Cleveland Call-Post*, was born in Baltimore and began newspaper work in high school. He served as publicity director for Virginia Union University as a student, graduated in 1942, when he joined the staff of the *Baltimore Afro-American*. He served in ordnance, aircraft and shipyard work during the war. On the *Call-Post* since 1944, his reporting has won him a Cleveland Guild award in 1948 and a Wendell Willkie award (for Negro journalism) in 1949. He is correspondent for *Ebony* magazine and the *Afro-American Newspapers*, has written numerous articles on housing, education and Communism among Negroes. In 1949 he was appointed by the mayor a member of the Cleveland Community Relations Board. He is a member of the executive board of the Cleveland Industrial Union Council.

He plans to study economics, sociology and politics.

BOB EDDY, 33, telegraph editor, *St. Paul Pioneer Press*. Born in Lake Benton, Minnesota, he was graduated cumma cum laude at the University of Minnesota, 1940, where he later earned an MA degree. He enrolled in the CCC in 1935-36 to earn enough money to enter college. He covered campus news for the *St. Paul Pioneer Press* and joined its staff the day he was graduated. He has served the news desk of that paper for ten years except for a year of military service.

He plans to study history and English.

ROY M. FISHER, 31, city hall reporter, *Chicago Daily News*. Born in Stockton, Kansas, he was graduated at Kansas State College 1940, and began newspaper work on the Pratt (Kansas) *Daily Tribune*. After four years and a half in the Navy, ending with the rank of Lt.-commander, he joined the *Chicago Daily News* staff in 1946.

He plans to study history and government.

EDWIN O. GUTHMAN, 30, reporter, *Seattle Times*, was born in Seattle and was graduated in journalism from the University of Washington in 1941. He began newspaper work as a sports writer on the *Seattle Star*, then served four and a half years in the Army. Wounded in the campaign in Italy, he was then assigned to *Stars and Stripes* and *Yank* and wrote the first series of "Army Talks" dealing with current topics for discussion in GI groups. He returned to the *Star*, and, when it discontinued in 1947, joined the *Seattle Times*. He won a Pulitzer prize for his work last year on the story that cleared Dr. Melvin Rader of the University of Washington of the charge of communism made by a State Un-American Activities Committee.

He plans to study the history of the Northwest and government.

SYLVAN H. MEYER, 28, editor, Gainesville (Ga.) *Times*. Born in Atlanta, he was graduated in journalism at the University of North Carolina, 1943. He served in grades from apprentice to lieutenant in the Navy for three years, then joined the new daily in Gainesville as reporter. In three years he became editor and has made its editorial page an effective voice on regional issues of North Georgia.

He plans to study local government and regional problems.

EMERY HUGH MORRIS, 35, State capital correspondent of the Louisville *Courier-Journal*. Born in Bowling Green, Kentucky, he attended Purdue University three years and began newspaper work on the Attica (Ind.) *Ledger-Tribune*, becoming its managing editor. He has been with the *Courier-Journal* since 1940, with three years out in the war, serving as naval air intelligence officer.

He plans to study history and government.

HOKE M. NORRIS, 36, reporter, Winston-Salem (N. C.) *Journal*. Born in Holly Springs, N. C., he was graduated at Wake Forrester College, 1934. He began newspaper work in Elizabeth City, N. C., worked a year on the Raleigh *News and Observer*, then for the Associated Press from 1937 to 1946, except for three years in the Army as private-lieutenant-captain. He joined the *Journal* staff in 1947.

He plans to study labor and social issues.

DWIGHT E. SARGENT, 33, editor of the Portland (Me.) *Press Herald*. Born in Pembroke, Mass., he went to high school in Woodsville, N. H., and Jonesport, Maine, was graduated at Colby College in 1939 and started work immediately on the Biddeford *Journal*. He continued on Maine newspapers except for 49 months of military service, and became editor of the editorial page of the *Press Herald* in 1949.

He plans to study state government.

DANA ADAMS SCHMIDT, 34, New York *Times*, foreign staff. Born in Bay Village, Ohio, he was graduated at Pomona College, California, in 1937 and earned an MS

in Columbia University graduate school of journalism, 1938. A traveling fellowship from Columbia led him into work as a foreign correspondent, first with the United Press in Berlin, then to Turkey and the Balkans. He served in North Africa and Italy as a war correspondent. In 1944 he joined the New York *Times'* European staff, covered the Nuremberg trials, the Greek civil war, the war in Palestine, then went back to Central Europe where he was the sole American correspondent in Czechoslovakia when he left there to avoid arrest a few weeks ago.

He plans to study European history and America's role in world affairs.

ANGUS MacLEAN THUERMER, 33, Associated Press news editor in Chicago. Born in Quincy, Ill., he was graduated at the University of Illinois in 1938, studied at the University of Berlin in 1938, and in 1939 became assistant to Louis Lochner of the AP Berlin bureau until he was interned with the press corps in 1942. He served four years in the Navy and was discharged in 1946 as lieutenant. He has been with the AP in its Chicago bureau the last four years.

He plans to study India as a preparation for foreign service.

WELLINGTON WALES, 32, editorial writer, Auburn (N. Y.) *Citizen-Advertiser*. Born in Hollywood, Calif., he attended Binghamton (N. Y.) high school, was graduated at Dartmouth College in 1938, and Columbia University school of journalism, 1941. He began newspaper work in the circulation department of the New York *Times* in 1938, served as an editor of Acme Newspictures, then during four years in the Army was combat photographer, served on the staff of Gen. Joseph Stilwell in Burma, edited an Army-Navy newspaper in the Pacific and was chief of newspapers under the military government of Korea. He had three more years with the New York *Times* and a brief period with *The Reporter* magazine, before joining the *Citizen-Advertiser* in 1949.

He plans to study community problems and sociology.

Meyer Berger's Pulitzer Story

N. Y. Times, Sept. 7, 1949

VETERAN KILLS 12 IN MAD RAMPAGE ON CAMDEN STREET

Shoots 4 Others in Revenge
for 'Derogatory Remarks'
About His Character

BOY, 2, IS AMONG THE SLAIN

Panicky Women, Children, Men
His Targets — Captured by
Tear Gas Hurlled Into Room

By MEYER BERGER

Special to THE NEW YORK TIMES

CAMDEN, N. J., Sept. 6—Howard B. Unruh, 28 years old, a mild, soft-spoken veteran of many armored battles in Italy, France, Austria, Belgium and Germany, killed twelve persons with a war souvenir Luger pistol in his home block in East Camden this morning. He wounded four others.

Unruh, a slender, hollow-cheeked six-footer paradoxically devoted to scripture reading and to constant practice with firearms, had no previous history of mental illness but specialists indicated tonight that there was no doubt that he was a psychiatric case, and that he had secretly nursed a persecution complex for two years or more.

The veteran was shot in the left thigh by a local tavern keeper but he kept that fact secret, too, while policemen and Mitchell Cohen, Camden County prosecutor, questioned him at police headquarters for more than two hours immediately after tear gas bombs had forced him out of his bedroom to surrender.

Blood Betrays His Wounds

The blood stain he left on the seat he occupied during the questioning betrayed his wound. When it was discovered he was taken to Cooper Hospital in Camden, a prisoner charged with murder.

He was as calm under questioning as he was during the twenty minutes that he was shooting men, women and children. Only occasionally excessive brightness of his dark eyes indicated that he was anything other than normal.

He told the prosecutor that he had been building up resentment against neighbors and neighborhood shopkeepers for a long-time. "They have been making derogatory remarks about my character," he said. His resentment seemed most strongly concentrated against Mr. and Mrs. Maurice Cohen, who lived next door to him. They are among the dead.

Mr. Cohen was a druggist with a shop at 3203 River Road in East Camden. He and his wife had had frequent sharp exchanges over the Unruhs' use of a gate that separates their back yard from the Cohens'. Mrs. Cohen had also complained of young Unruh's keeping his bedroom radio tuned high into the late night hours. None of the other victims had ever had trouble with him.

Unruh, a graduate of Woodrow Wilson High School here, had started a GI course in pharmacy at Temple University in Philadelphia some time after he was honorably discharged from the service in 1945, but had stayed with it only three months. In recent months he had been unemployed, and apparently was not even looking for work.

Mother Separated From Husband

His mother, Mrs. Rita Unruh, 50, is separated from her husband. She works as a packer in the Evanston Soap Company in Camden and hers was virtually the only family income. James Unruh, 25 years old, her younger son, is married and lives in Haddon Heights, N. J. He works for the Curtis Publishing Company.

On Monday night, Howard Unruh left the house alone. He spent the night at the Family Theatre on Market Street in Phila-

delphia to sit through several showings of the double feature motion picture there—"I Cheated the Law" and "The Lady Gambles." It was past 3 o'clock this morning when he got home.

Prosecutor Cohen said that Unruh told him later that before he fell asleep this morning he had made up his mind to shoot the persons who had "talked about me," that he had even figured out that 9:30 A.M. would be the time to begin because most of the stores in his block would be open at that hour.

His mother, leaving her ironing when he got up, prepared his breakfast in their drab little three-room apartment in the shabby gray two-story stucco house at the corner of River Road and Thirty-Second Street. After breakfast he loaded one clip of bullets into his Luger, slipped another slip into his pocket, and carried sixteen loose cartridges in addition. He also carried a tear-gas pen with six shells and a sharp six-inch knife.

He took one last look around his bedroom before he left the house. On the peeling walls he had crossed pistols, crossed German bayonets, pictures of armored artillery in action. Scattered about the chamber were machetes, a Roy Rogers pistol, ash trays made of German shells, clips of 30-30 cartridges for rifle use and a host of varied war souvenirs.

Mrs. Unruh had left the house some minutes before, to call on Mrs. Caroline Pinner, a friend in the next block. Mrs. Unruh had sensed, apparently, that her son's smoldering resentments were coming to a head. She had pleaded with Elias Pinner, her friend's husband, to cut a little gate in the Unruhs' backyard so that Howard need not use the Cohen gate again. Mr. Pinner finished the gate early Monday evening after Howard had gone to Philadelphia.

At the Pinner's house at 9 o'clock this morning, Mrs. Unruh had murmured something about Howard's eyes; how strange they looked and how worried she was about him.

A few minutes later River Road echoed and re-echoed to pistol fire. Howard Un-

torney Samuel J. Foley of the Bronx that Hewitt remained in Seattle three or four days after he made the charge against Rader. The truth was that Hewitt was spirited out of town the next day by the committee.

3. A statement by Foley that Rader did not teach summer school at the University of Washington in 1938 as Rader had contended. University payroll records show that Rader taught summer school until July 20, 1938.

4. A statement by Foley that the perjury charge against Hewitt should not be given much weight because it had not been returned by a grand jury. Under New York's system, the use of grand juries in criminal cases is routine. Grand juries are used rarely in Washington State; prosecutors file informations or complaints direct in Superior and Justice Courts.

Evidence Collected by Committee

The evidence submitted by Judge Levy had been collected by the Canwell committee and sent to New York.

Before reaching his decision, the judge also heard brief testimony from Hewitt and two other Negro former Communists, who stated that they had seen Rader at the Communist school. An impassioned plea was made by Foley.

The *Times* checked Rader's story and found it could be corroborated by documentary evidence and testimony of reputable citizens.

Dr. Carl Jensen, a prominent Seattle eye specialist, had tested Rader's eyes and given him a prescription for new glasses on August 15, 1938.

Rader said he had broken his glasses while at Canyon Creek and had gone to Seattle to get new ones. The record of his treatment was in Dr. Jensen's files.

Election Records Cited

Rader voted in the primary election of September 13, 1938, city records disclosed.

The two dates, plus University records showing that Rader taught summer school until July 20, and had signed for a book at the University Library July 29, made it highly improbable that Rader travelled to New York that summer.

The Communist school was reported to have lasted six weeks. Hewitt definitely established that it was in the summer of

1938 that he assertedly saw Rader at the Communist school.

Rader said he and Mrs. Rader and their daughter went to Canyon Creek July 30 or 31, and stayed until about September 5.

Card Most Damaging

Weighing most heavily against Rader was the small typewritten card which Canwell committee investigators took from the files of Canyon Creek Lodge two days after Hewitt testified before the committee.

The card bore Mrs. Rader's name and listed her address as 6017 30th Av. N.E. A date "8-16-40" and "(40)" had been penned on the card plus the notation "prof at U. of Washington, guest for 1 month."

The Canwell committee assumed that the card meant the Raders had been at Canyon Creek in 1940, not 1938. The address was the tip-off that the committee was wrong.

Home Address Changed

An examination of 1938, '39 and '40 telephone books and city directories showed that the Raders lived at the address on the card in 1938, had moved to 1402 E. 63rd St. in 1939 and were living at 1750 E. 62nd St. in 1940.

Mrs. Quincy Mueller, elderly former owner of the Canyon Creek resort, told this reporter that the card did not indicate when the Raders stayed at the lodge, but was from an index she had used for correspondence purposes.

Shown a photostatic copy of the card, Mrs. Mueller declared that the notation "8-16-40" referred to the date when she last wrote the Raders. At that time, she recalled, she offered to sell them a lot near the resort.

Further indication that the Raders had been at the lodge in 1938 came from Mrs. Ida Kirby, who had been housekeeper at Canyon Creek.

Mrs. Kirby remembered that after the Rader's vacation was over, she drove them to their home in Seattle. It was on 30th Avenue—their 1938 address.

Mrs. Mueller and Mrs. Kirby, who both still live near the lodge, had given affidavits to the committee investigators within four days after Hewitt testified. On that occasion they remembered the Raders, but were uncertain of the date the Raders had been at the lodge, because neither woman

had had occasion to think about the Raders' visit during the intervening years.

1938 Date Remembered

Later, after recalling incidents of the Rader's visit, both women were certain it was in the summer of 1938.

The main lodge building burned in February, 1938, and Mrs. Mueller remembered showing Mrs. Rader the charred wreckage. The ruins were removed later in 1938 or the next spring, Mrs. Mueller said.

Both women believed that Rader or Mrs. Rader had signed the lodge's loose-leaf register. According to Thomas J. Grant, present owner of the lodge, pages from the register were given to the Canwell committee's investigators.

The committee never has disclosed whether Rader's signature was or was not on the register.

Old Records Sought

Mrs. Kirby said she accompanied the committee investigators to the lodge to help them find old records which Mrs. Mueller left when she sold the lodge to Grant in 1942.

"We found pages from the register," Mrs. Kirby declared. "As one of the men ran his finger over the pages, I overheard him say: 'There it is—Rader—'38!'"

Efforts by the *Times* to find the register have been unsuccessful. Canwell declined to give any information about the register other than that he believed it had been returned to Grant.

Grant stated about last August 29 that the register had not been returned to Canyon Creek. Yesterday he refused to state whether the register still was in the Canwell committee's possession. Grant has said previously that he did not want the register returned.

Meanwhile Rader's account was strengthened by additional information. Coupled with Canwell's unwillingness to explain the questions which had been raised, the evidence added up to positive indication that Rader has told the truth.

The Seattle *Times* ran five other stories on the Rader case in the same issue and Guthman added two stories dealing with later developments. They concerned the missing hotel register which he kept after, even though Rader was already cleared.

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A few minutes later River Road echoed and re-echoed to pistol fire. Howard Un-

ruh was on the rampage. His mother, who had left the Pinner's little white house only a few seconds before, turned back. She hurried through the door.

She cried, "Oh, Howard, oh Howard, they're to blame for this." She rushed past Mrs. Pinner, a kindly gray-haired woman of 70. She said, "I've got to use the phone; may I use the phone?"

But before she had crossed the living room to reach for it she fell on the faded carpet in a dead faint. The Pinner's lifted her onto a couch in the next room. Mrs. Pinner applied aromatic spirits to revive her.

Panic Grips Entire Block

While his mother writhed on the sofa in her house dress and worn old sweater, coming back to consciousness, Howard Unruh was walking from shop to shop in the "3200 block" with deadly calm, spurning Luger in hand. Children screamed as they tumbled over one another to get out of his way. Men and women dodged into open shops, the women shrill with panic, men hoarse with fear. No one could quite understand for a time what had been loosed in the block.

Unruh first walked into John Pilar-chik's shoe repair shop near the north end of his own side of the street. The cobbler, a 27-year-old man who lives in Pennsauken Township, looked up open-mouthed as Unruh came to within a yard of him. The cobbler started up from his bench but went down with a bullet in his stomach. A little boy who was in the shop ran behind the counter and crouched there in terror. Unruh walked out into the sunlit street.

"I shot them in the chest first," he told the prosecutor later, in meticulous detail, "and then I aimed for the head." His aim was devastating—and with reason. He had won marksmanship and sharpshooters' ratings in the service, and he practiced with his Luger all the time on a target set up in the cellar of his home.

Unruh told the prosecutor afterwards that he had Cohen the druggist, the neighborhood barber, the neighborhood cobbler and the neighborhood tailor on his mental list of persons who had "talked about him." He went methodically about wiping them out. Oddly enough, he did not start with the druggist, against whom he seemed to have the sharpest feelings, but left him almost for the last.

Newlywed Wife Shot Dead

From the cobbler's he went into the little tailor shop at 3214 River Road. The tailor was out. Helga Zegrino, 28 years old, the tailor's wife, was there alone. The couple, incidentally, had been married only one month. She screamed when Unruh walked in with his Luger in hand. Some people across the street heard her. Then the gun blasted again and Mrs. Zegrino pitched over, dead. Unruh walked into the sunlight again.

All this was only a matter of seconds and still only a few persons had begun to understand what was afoot. Down the street at 3210 River Road is Clark Hoover's little country barber shop. In the center was a white-painted carousel-type horse for children customers. Orris Smith, a blonde boy only 6 years old, was in it, with a bib around his neck, submitting to a shearing. His mother, Mrs. Catherine Smith, 42, sat on a chair against the wall and watched.

She looked up. Clark Hoover turned from his work, to see the six-footer, gaunt and tense, but silent, standing in the doorway with the Luger. Unruh's brown tropical worsted suit was barred with morning shadow. The sun lay bright in his crew-cut brown hair. He wore no hat. Mrs. Smith could not understand what was about to happen.

Unruh walked to "Brux"—that is Mrs. Smith's nickname for her little boy—and put the Luger to the child's chest. The shot echoed and reverberated in the little 12 by 12 shop. The little boy's head pitched toward the wound, his hair, half-cut, stained with red. Unruh said never a word. He put the Luger close to the shaking barber's hand. Before the horrified mother, Unruh leaned over and fired another shot into Hoover.

The veteran made no attempt to kill Mrs. Smith. He did not seem to hear her screams. He turned his back and stalked out, unhurried. A few doors north, Dominick Latela, who runs a little restaurant, had come to his shop window to learn what the shooting was about. He saw Unruh cross the street toward Frank Engel's tavern. Then he saw Mrs. Smith stagger out with her pitiful burden. Her son's head lolled over the crook of her right arm.

Mrs. Smith screamed "My boy is dead. I know he's dead." She stared about her, looking in vain for aid. No one but Howard Unruh was in sight, and he was con-

centrating on the tavern. Latela dashed out, but first he shouted to his wife, Dora, who was in the restaurant with their daughter Eleanor, 6 years old. He hollered "I'm going out. Lock the door behind me." He ran for his car, and drove it down toward Mrs. Smith as she stood on the pavement with her son.

Latela took the child from her arms and placed him on the car's front seat. He pushed the mother into the rear seat, slammed the doors and headed for Cooper Hospital. Howard Unruh had not turned. Engel, the tavern keeper, had locked his own door. His customers, the bartender, and a porter made a concerted rush for the rear of the saloon. The bullets tore through the tavern door panelling. Engel rushed upstairs and got out his .38 caliber pistol, then rushed to the street window of his apartment.

Unruh was back in the center of the street. He fired a shot at an apartment window at 3208 River Road. Tommy Hamilton, 2 years old, fell back with a bullet in his head. Unruh went north again to Latela's place. He fired a shot at the door, and kicked in the lower glass panel. Mrs. Latela crouched behind the counter with her daughter. She heard the bullets, but neither she nor her child was touched. Unruh walked back toward Thirty-second Street, reloading the Luger.

Now the little street—a small block with only five buildings on one side, three one-story stores on the other—was shrill with women's and children's panicky outcries. A group of six or seven little boys or girls fled past Unruh. They screamed, "Crazy man!" and unintelligible sentences. Unruh did not seem to hear, or see, them.

Autoist Goes to His Death

Alvin Day, a television repair man who lives in near-by Mantua, had heard the shooting, but driving into the street he was not aware of what had happened. Unruh walked up to the car window as Day rolled by, and fired once through the window, with deadly aim. The repair man fell against the steering wheel. The car seemed to wobble. The front wheels hit the opposite curb and stalled. Day was dead.

Frank Engel had thrown open his second-floor apartment window. He saw Unruh pause for a moment in a narrow alley between the cobbler's shop and a little two-story house. He aimed and fired. Unruh stopped for just a second. The bullet had

hit, but he did not seem to mind, after the initial brief shock. He headed toward the corner drug store, and Engel did not fire again.

"I wish I had," he said, later. "I could have killed him then. I could have put a half-dozen shots into him. I don't know why I didn't do it."

Cohen, the druggist, a heavy man of 40, had run into the street shouting "What's going on here? what's going on here?" but at sight of Unruh hurried back into his shop. James J. Hutton, 45, an insurance agent from Westmont, N. J., started out of the drug shop to see what the shooting was about. Like so many others he had figured at first that it was some car back-firing. He came face to face with Unruh.

Unruh said quietly, "Excuse me, sir," and started to push past him. Later Unruh told the police: "That man didn't act fast enough. He didn't get out of my way." He fired into Hutton's head and body. The insurance man pitched onto the sidewalk and lay still.

Cohen had run to his upstairs apartment and had tried to warn Minnie Cohen, 63, his mother, and Rose, his wife, 38, to hide. His son Charles, 14, was in the apartment, too. Mrs. Cohen shoved the boy into a clothes closet, and leaped into another closet herself. She pulled the door to. The druggist, meanwhile had leaped from the window onto a porch roof. Unruh, a gaunt figure at the window behind him, fired into the druggist's back. The druggist, still running, bounded off the roof and lay dead in Thirty-second Street.

Unruh fired into the closet where Mrs. Cohen was hidden. She fell dead behind the closed door, and he did not bother to open it. Mrs. Minnie Cohen tried to get to the telephone in an adjoining bedroom to call the police. Unruh fired shots into her head and body and she sprawled dead on the bed. Unruh walked down the stairs with his Luger reloaded and came out into the street again.

A coupe had stopped at River Road, obeying a red light. The passengers obviously had no idea of what was loose in East Camden and no one had a chance to tell them. Unruh walked up to the car, and though it was filled with total strangers, fired deliberately at them, one by one, through the windshield. He killed the two women passengers, Mrs. Helen Matlack Wilson, 43, of Pennsauken, who was driv-

ing, and her mother, Mrs. Emma Matlack, 66. Mrs. Wilson's son John, 12, was badly wounded. A bullet pierced his neck, just below the jawbone.

Earl Horner, clerk in the American Stores Company, a grocery opposite the store, had locked his front door after several men, women and children had tumbled breathlessly into the shop panting "crazy man * * * killing people. * * * " Unruh came up to the door and fired two shots through the wood panelling. Horner, his customers, the refugees from the veteran's merciless gunfire, crouched, trembling, behind the counter. None there was hurt.

"He tried the door before he shot in here," Horner related afterward. "He just stood there, stony-faced and grim, and rattled the knob, before he started to fire. Then he turned away."

Charles Petersen, 18, son of a Camden fireman, came driving down the street with two friends when Unruh turned from the grocery. The three boys got out to stare at Hutton's body lying unattended on the sidewalk. They did not know who had shot the insurance man, or why and, like the woman in the car, had no warning that Howard Unruh was on the loose. The veteran brought his Luger to sight and fired several times. Young Petersen fell pell-mell down the street to safety.

Mrs. Helen Harris of 1250 North Twenty-eighth Street with her daughter, Helen, a 6-year-old blonde child, and a Mrs. Horowitz with her daughter, Linda, 5, turned into Thirty-second Street. They had heard the shooting from a distance but thought it was auto backfire.

Unruh passed them in Thirty-second Street and walked up the sagging four steps of a little yellow dwelling back of his own house. Mrs. Madeline Harrie, a woman in her late thirties, and two sons, Armand, 16, and Leroy, 15, were in the house. A third son, Wilson, 14, was barricaded in the grocery with other customers.

Unruh threw open the front door and, gun in hand, walked into the dark little parlor. He fired two shots at Mrs. Harrie. They went wild and entered the wall. A third shot caught her in the left arm. She screamed. Armand leaped at Unruh, to tackle him. The veteran used the Luger butt to drop the boy, then fired two shots

into his arms. Upstairs Leroy heard the shooting and the screams. He hid under a bed.

By this time, answering a flood of hysterical telephone calls from various parts of East Camden, police radio cars swarmed into River Road with sirens wide open. Emergency crews brought machine guns, shotguns and tear gas bombs.

Sergeant Earl Wright, one of the first to leap to the sidewalk, saw Charles Cohen, the druggist's son. The boy was half out the second-floor apartment window, just above where his father lay dead. He was screaming "He's going to kill me. He's killing everybody." The boy was hysterical.

Wright bounded up the stairs to the druggist's apartment. He saw the dead woman on the bed, and tried to soothe the druggist's son. He brought him downstairs and turned him over to other policemen, then joined the men who had surrounded the two-story stucco house where Unruh lived. Unruh, meantime, had fired about thirty shots. He was out of ammunition. Leaving the Harrie house, he had also heard the police sirens. He had run through the back gate to his own rear bedroom.

Guns Trained on Window

Edward Joslin, a motorcycle policeman, scrambled to the porch roof under Unruh's window. He tossed a tear-gas grenade through a pane of glass. Other policemen, hoarsely calling on Unruh to surrender, took positions with their machine guns and shotguns. They trained them on Unruh's window.

Meanwhile, a curious interlude had taken place. Philip W. Buxton, an assistant city editor on The Camden Evening Courier had looked Unruh's name up in the telephone book. He called the number, Camden 4-2490W. It was just after 10 A.M. and Unruh had just returned to his room. To Mr. Buxton's astonishment Unruh answered. He said hello in a calm, clear voice.

"This Howard?" Mr. Buxton asked.

"Yes, this is Howard. What's the last name of the party you want?"

"Unruh."

The veteran asked what Mr. Buxton wanted.

"I'm a friend," the newspaperman said. "I want to know what they're doing to you down there."

Unruh thought a moment. He said, "They haven't done anything to me—yet. I'm doing plenty to them." His voice was still steady without a trace of hysteria.

Mr. Buxton asked how many persons Unruh had killed.

The veteran answered: "I don't know. I haven't counted. Looks like a pretty good score."

"Why are you killing people?"

"I don't know," came the frank answer. "I can't answer that yet. I'll have to talk to you later. I'm too busy now."

The telephone banged down.

Unruh was busy. The tear gas was taking effect and police bullets were thudding at the walls around him. During a lull in the firing the police saw the white curtains move and the gaunt killer came into plain view.

"Okay," he shouted. "I give up. I'm coming down."

"Where's that gun?" a sergeant yelled.

"It's on my desk, up here in the room," Unruh called down quietly. "I'm coming down."

Thirty guns were trained on the shabby little back door. A few seconds later the door opened and Unruh stepped into the light, his hands up. Sergeant Wright came across the morning-glory and aster beds in the yard and snapped handcuffs on Unruh's wrists.

"What's the matter with you," a policeman demanded hotly. "You a psycho?"

Unruh stared into the policeman's eyes—a level, steady stare. He said, "I'm no psycho. I have a good mind."

Word of the capture brought the whole East Camden populace pouring into the streets. Men and women screamed at Unruh, and cursed him in shrill accents and in hoarse anger. Someone cried "lynch him" but there was no movement. Sergeant Wright's men walked Unruh to a police car and started for headquarters.

Shouting and pushing men and women started after the car, but dropped back after a few paces. They stood in excited little groups discussing the shootings, and the character of Howard Unruh. Little by little the original anger, born of fear, that had moved the crowd, began to die.

Men conceded that he probably was not in his right mind. Those who knew Unruh kept repeating how close-mouthed he was, and how soft spoken. How he took his mother to church, and how he marked scripture passages, especially the prophecies.

"He was a quiet one, that guy," a man told a crowd in front of the tavern. "He was all the time figuring to do this thing. You gotta watch them quiet ones."

But all day River Road and the side streets talked of nothing else. The shock was great. Men and women kept saying: "We can't understand it. Just don't get it."

FOR PUBLIC SERVICE

Two Reporters Win the Pulitzer Award for Their Papers

Reporters Roy J. Harris, of the St. Louis *Post-Dispatch* and George Thiem of the Chicago *Daily News*, won for their newspapers a joint Pulitzer prize award in journalism for distinguished public service in 1949. The prize, announced May 1, was based on their disclosure that at least 51 Illinois newspaper publishers and editors were on the state payroll at various times during the administration of Gov. Dwight H. Green.

Roy, who is 47 years old, has been a member of the *Post-Dispatch* staff for 24 years. He was graduated from the University of Illinois in 1925 with a degree of bachelor of arts in journalism. He is married and has four children.

Managing Editor Benjamin H. Reese announced a \$500 bonus for "excellent work." The sum is equivalent to the amount Roy would have received had he been awarded the reporter's prize.

Three Previous Awards

This was the fourth time the *Post-*

Dispatch received the Pulitzer award for the "most disinterested and meritorious public service rendered by an American newspaper." Previous awards were in 1947 for the campaign to save the lives of coal miners after the explosion at Centralia, Ill.; in 1940 for the St. Louis smoke elimination campaign, and in 1936 for exposing wholesale fraudulent vote registration in St. Louis.

The news stories of Harris and Thiem attracted national attention and led to an investigation by the American Society of Newspaper Editors. The investigating committee's report commended the *Post-Dispatch* and the *Daily News*, and held that the disclosures would have a "wholesome" effect on the American press. It emphatically condemned acceptance by newspaper men of money for state jobs "involving little or no service to the public." Failure of the press associations to carry the story immediately after it broke was charged in the report to faulty news judg-

ment rather than to any considered intent to suppress news.

Roy said that he and Thiem recalled that names of two or three newspaper men had been found on the state payroll in a general *Post-Dispatch* investigation before the November 1948 election.

\$480,000 Paid to Newsmen

A file of publishers and editors was checked against the 60,000 names on the payroll for 1947, and turned up 33 persons who were named in the first published stories April 14, 1949. The list, after five weeks of investigation, grew to 51.

The reporters found that newspaper men on the state payroll had collected more than \$480,000 from 1941 to 1949 in amounts running into five figures. With few exceptions, the recipients held "gray train" jobs. Their chief services were the printing of editorials and news stories praising the Republican administration.

—P. D. NOTEBOOK,
June 1950.

The Pulitzer Prize Editorial

Jackson Citizen Patriot, Feb. 20, 1949

FIRST THINGS FIRST

A year ago the *Citizen Patriot* proposed that a period during Memorial Day be set aside to pray for peace.

Our suggestion was approved by the Congress of the United States in the form of a resolution sponsored by Sen. Homer Ferguson and Rep. Earl C. Michener. The resolution called upon President Truman to proclaim a period of Memorial Day for prayers for peace.

The White House issued the proclamation. From Arlington cemetery the chief of chaplains of the United States Army delivered the Prayer for Peace, the phrasing of which we proposed.

America, commemorating the memories of the men who have fallen on far scattered battlefields that this nation and its way of life might endure, prayed that further sacrifices of war be avoided.

What's more logical than that Memorial Day be marked by such a Prayer for Peace?

We recite these circumstances only for the purpose of urging that again this year the President proclaim a period of Memorial Day as the proper occasion for nationwide supplication for peace.

Last year the original suggestion was made only two weeks before Memorial Day. This year we make the suggestion early enough to permit normal, routine procedure in Congress and again we remind our readers that this is inspired only with realization that armaments and men alone cannot mold the shape of things to come in this world. First things should come first, and a nation which believes in God should not depend upon the materialism of earth to save it from the great tragedy of war.

We repeat in part the editorial of last May:

"The United States is generally classified as a 'Christian nation.'

"If this means anything at all, it means that the vast majority of our people accept the basic tenets of Christian faith. Beyond that there is a large minority of Americans

who worship in the Hebrew faith. Both Christian and Hebrew believe in God as the maker of Heaven and earth.

"Yet as a nation we seem utterly unaware of God or His place in the making of history."

As individuals many Americans worship. Many pray to God daily or more often.

Why then should not America pray as a nation in the time when as a nation we are in dire need of help and guidance?

We do have one day in the year supposedly dedicated to Thanksgiving when we as a people are expected to offer thanks to the Supreme Being for the blessings showered upon us.

But we have no day or hour or minute when as a people we turn to prayer.

If we are a Christian nation, isn't a national moment of prayer a logical, natural course?

Differences in creeds or systems of worship or dogma need not enter into this discussion if as a people we believe that

there is a God who shapes the course of our lives.

It should be possible for Protestants, Catholics, Jews and others to join in a common appeal to a common God.

The world is troubled today. America is deeply troubled. The threat of war hangs over all of us. Yet we want peace. We are not a warlike people who become sacrifices in war. We are ready to be tolerant of all nations which do not menace us regardless of divergent ideologies.

So far as this newspaper is concerned, it believes that the preparation for defense of our country is wise and is not in contravention of basic religious beliefs. We appreciate, of course, that some good people disagree with us. They do not believe a fire department is needed to protect us from war's flames even though conflagration threatens.

But first things should come first.

And the first defense against disaster should be prayer. The first appeal for peace should be to the Omnipotent Master of the universe.

Myth of the 12 Year Old Mind

Of all the miscellaneous bits of misinformation, based on statistical data, which have managed to establish themselves in the public mind, surely none has accomplished greater damage than that morsel of folklore which sets the average mental age of the American people at 12.

This piece of statistical tomfoolery about mental age is an interesting example of how the public can be misled. It arose from the results of tests given by the army to inductees in World War I. These tests were intended, however, to determine the basic mental skills of prospective soldiers. And since such skills develop only a little after the individual reaches the age of 10 or 12, the results proved nothing startling. Most significant, they proved nothing at all about the general level of knowledge, nothing about the mental age of the average American.

Actually, these tests proved no more about the mental age of a representative group of Americans than would be established concerning the capabilities of a carpenter on the basis of a series of tests involving his ability to drive a nail, saw a board and perform other rudimentary tasks of his trade. They took no account at all of what is piled on top of these basic skills to make a skilled artisan—or a mature human being.

Yet this unfortunate generalization about the mental age of 12 has come to be accepted as indisputable fact. It has been dinned at us from so many different sources that it is seldom questioned. It has become a basic concept on which nearly all industries engaged in public information and entertainment operate.

From the *Toledo Blade*.

THE CAPTIVE PRESS

How a Senator Can Monopolize the Loudspeaker

"I've never seen the press corps quite so frustrated," a Washington reporter told me the day of the second Lattimore hearing. "It's as if we lacked words to describe what's going on. But it's not the words; it's the frozen patterns of journalism that inhibit us."

Perhaps "frozen patterns" is as good a phrase as any to describe what prevents the press from giving an accurate picture of the McCarthy affair. It is not simply that some newspapers make a practice of exploiting this sort of thing—that the Scripps-Howard chain, for example, acted as if it had been ordered by Roy Howard to play the McCarthy story for all it was worth, or that the Chicago *Tribune* Washington man, Willard Edwards, supplied McCarthy's speech writer with the material for the Lincoln Day address at Wheeling, West Virginia, that precipitated the whole investigation. All that was part of the everyday fortune of a certain section of the American press.

What can the responsible press do in handling the McCarthy story? The reporter, the wire-service man, the managing editor give various answers. When it deals with politics, the press network of the United States is a system of loudspeakers that transmits and amplifies the words uttered in the public arena. The trouble is that an increasingly large number of people know how to capture that instrument and scream all they want into it. In Washington, its chief originating point, Senator McCarthy, who has an acute sense of copy deadlines, talks to newspapermen. Forty-five minutes later his words are being read in Des Moines, Iowa. Technically, the system is very efficient, but, like most modern contrivances, it is not yet immune from abuses.

The problem begins with what the press puts on its amplifier—basically, with what news is. Recently, a Washington managing editor undertook to define it for me: "What happens in the world and what people say, do, and think about it." This definition is so broad that it doesn't help much in the day-to-day making up of a

With a fresh eye and a questioning mind, Douglass Cater joined the Washington press corps just as McCarthyism seemed to be taking over the whole organism of public opinion making in America. The qualities that made him the strongest man in his Harvard class four years ago stood him in good stead as he refused to be terrified by the Terror and insisted on understanding the failure of the press to cope with it. This is his first piece as Washington correspondent of *The Reporter*, June 6.

newspaper. Which statement, actions, and thoughts should be run; which left out? Most important of all, which are worth putting on the front page?

To this last question, newspapermen have no pat answer. The layman suspects that often the amplifier is monopolized by the men with the loudest voices and the least scruples.

Students of the press attribute this to the competitive drive for circulation, which is, after all, the daily bread of the newspaper. But the motivations are not always so easily explainable. Take the case of the Montgomery (Alabama) *Advertiser*, a morning paper in a one-publisher city. When McCarthy commenced his rampage, that paper played the story down, giving the Senator's charges a brief story near the center fold. All through February, the story stayed at the center of page one with a single-column head, but in March it moved inexorably upward. For sixteen days of that month, it rated a top-of-page one, three-column head, holding the upper-right-hand position for eleven days. The *Advertiser* was not fooled by McCarthy: It took an editorial stand supporting Acheson. Nor was it engaged in a circulation drive. It clearly had succumbed to the contagious excitement of the radio stations, the wire services, and the out-of-town press. By its treatment, and that of similar

papers all over the country, the circle was completed, bringing the excitement back to the Congressman on Capitol Hill.

Headlines, of course, represent the maximum output of the amplifier system. McCarthy hasn't been the first to discover that the hurled charge—no matter how outlandish—is heat for the headline writer, whose job is made easier by the vocabulary of accusation—"puts the finger on," "Spy," "pinko," "bared secrets," and the rest. MCCARTHY NAMES LATTIMORE TOP RUSSIAN AGENT is controversial and unexpected (a headline rating of two). LATTIMORE ASSERTS MCCARTHY LIAR is controversial and expected (a headline rating of one). If Lattimore had said McCarthy was telling the truth that would have had a bigger headline rating and, consequently, a bigger headline.

Senator Tydings decided that it was the time factor which put the defendant at a disadvantage in the battle of the headlines, and tried to do something about it. By hearing the accuser and the accused on alternate days, he hoped that the reply would catch up with the charge before irrevocable damage was done. But the Senator's attempt to keep pace with the rhythms of the press backfired. A denial never has the newsworthiness of an accusation. Besides, relieved of the necessity of stating his entire case before the rebuttal began, McCarthy has manufactured new charges each time the old ones began to wear thin. For more than three months now, the victory of the headlines has been incontestably that of the Senator from Wisconsin.

One of the frozen patterns that have hampered press coverage of the McCarthy charges is the distinction between the "straight" reporting of the ordinary reporters and wire-service men, and the "interpretive" or "evaluative" reporting of the privileged few. A wire-service editor defined "straight" reporting for me. "The job of the straight reporter," he said, "is to take the place of the spectator who is unable to be present. Like the spectator, he does not delve into motives or other side issues except as they become a part of the

public record." Unfortunately, the spectator is a casual witness, usually excited and bewildered by any unexpected event. A professional callousness can free the "straight" reporter from excitement, but not from bewilderment if he is only a spectator and not, as in the old days of reporting, an investigator.

Faced with a phenomenon as complex as McCarthyism, the "straight" reporter has become a sort of strait-jacketed reporter. His initiative is hogtied so that he cannot fulfill his first duty, which is to bring clearer understanding to his reader. It results in a distortion of reality. Some examples:

The "straight" reporters did not see fit to point out that Willard Edwards of the *Chicago Tribune* furnished the material for McCarthy's original speech—a fact probably known to nine-tenths of them.

The "straight" reporters could not say one word about the Nationalist China Lobby which was feeding McCarthy with material, until Lattimore mentioned it in open hearing. Even then "straight" reporters were limited to quoting Lattimore, giving the reader no basis for judging the credibility of his accusation.

"Straight" reporters did not investigate the sources of the abundant financial aid which McCarthy is receiving, or the expert assistance provided by men like Kent Hunter of the Hearst newspapers. On the other hand, it could and did publicize the fact that Tyding's committee got twenty-five thousand dollars for operating expenses. It thus gave the impression, deliberately created by McCarthy, that he is a lonely crusader fighting against powerful odds.

"Straight" reporting does not attempt to "play" the witnesses according to their credibility. For example, it recorded the happenings of May 1 in this order: Headline and lead went to Freda Utley, an ex-Communist who described Lattimore as a "Judas cow." The middle of the story brought out the fact that Demaree Bess, an associate editor of the *Saturday Evening Post*, had testified that he knew Lattimore in Moscow in 1936 and he never saw the "slightest evidence that he was becoming even the mildest form of fellow traveler." In the breakover (inside page) was the fact that Representative Frank Karsten (Democrat, Missouri) had announced that McCarthy's eighty-one cases were

among the one hundred and eight investigated more than two years ago by Republican-controlled committees. "Straight" reporting gave leading emphasis to the witness with the most spectacular and sensational, not necessarily the most reliable, testimony.

Eighty per cent of the nation's dailies depend exclusively on the "straight" reporting of the wire services out of Washington. Unless they depend upon the syndicated columnists, their editors presumably have no means of making a balanced assessment of McCarthyism.

A wire-service reporter parries with this argument: "We have respect for the American people," he says. "We believe they are capable of making up their own minds without our help." The problem is that when the reader is given facts selected only for their headline value, how can he have anything but a crooked vision of the case?

The American Society of Newspaper Editors has in its Ethical Rules a section entitled "Fair Play": "A newspaper should not publish unofficial charges affecting reputation or moral character without opportunity given to the accused to be heard; right practice demands the giving of such opportunity in all cases of serious accusations outside judicial proceedings."

Responsible newspapers try hard to live up to this creed, failing only when the accused, like Lattimore, turns out to be in the wilds of Afghanistan. In practice, it works as follows: Late one afternoon Senator McCarthy may name a person—Dorothy Kenyon, Haldore Hansen, or Donald Duck. All through the evening the victim's telephone rings. He is told briefly the nature of the charge made against him, and asked for a brief reply. Next morning, the papers describe in detail the McCarthy charges. Usually in the subhead and somewhere in the tail of the story, note is made of the fact that the accused person disagrees.

Some excellent interpretive reporting on McCarthyism has been filed from Washington. On February 23, three days after McCarthy first brought his case to the floor of the Senate, the *Providence Bulletin* carried a story by its Washington correspondent, Harold Graves, Jr., disclosing Willard Edwards' position behind McCarthy. Graves also pointed out that the eighty-one cases mentioned by McCarthy were those the State Department discussed

with the House Appropriations Subcommittee in February, 1948—a fact which Senator Tydings used over two months later to persuade Truman to release the loyalty files. On March 31, Graves filed a story describing the influence of the National China Lobby upon McCarthy—one week before Lattimore testified to the same thing. On April 6, the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* carried a story by Ed Harris giving more details of the silken hand of the China Lobby. The *Post-Dispatch* was able to point to an exposé of Chiang Kai-shek's insidious operations in Washington which it had carried early last fall.

Early in March, Richard L. Stout of *The Christian Science Monitor* and Carroll Kilpatrick of the *San Francisco Chronicle*, by taking the trouble to check a transcription made by a radio station in Wheeling, West Virginia, pointed out McCarthy's lie in denying to Senator Lucas that he had said in his Lincoln Day speech: "I have here in my hand a list of 205 that were known to the Secretary of State as being members of the Communist Party and who nevertheless are still working and shaping the policy in the State Department." A group of Democratic Senators used this same transcription two months later to corner McCarthy in a battle on the Senate floor.

But these and a few other instances of good "interpretive" reporting (which, after all, only followed the tradition of plain reporting, without adjectives) had little effect. Washington correspondents, who don't hesitate to quote each other's conversation in the press club bar as "usually well-informed sources," fail to read each other's dispatches. Besides, "interpretive reporting" has an "exclusive" quality. Once it is used, other "interpretive" reporters regard it as the writer's private property and shy away from it even though it may be valuable in throwing light on a situation.

Busy as he is catching the news of the day, the newspaperman rarely can refresh his mind on what happened yesterday. This type of reporting has little chance of getting across to many unless it is done by columnists, who have little time for digging. As a result, the columnist frequently dishes up as "news" the stale trash of a previous period. Not even the *New York Times* adequately tied in McCarthyism with the past campaign of vilification the China Lobby waged against the Institute

of Pacific Relations. Not one newspaper or magazine seemed willing—or courageous—enough to do a research job of its own comparable to that done by Lattimore's assistants in preparing his rebuttal. Yet most publications have morgues and staffs quite sufficient to cover such a contingency.

The McCarthy affair has elicited some unexplainably bad reporting from the two deans of the Washington corps. Arthur Krock of the *New York Times* was not present when Louis Budenz appeared before the Senate subcommittee. His column the following Sunday justifiably contained no mention of Budenz's evidence or the lack of it. Quite unjustifiably, however, it was based on a quotation from Senator Ralph Flanders, who, though also absent from the hearing, handed down "the general verdict of the political community." Said Senator Flanders: "I find it disturbing." Krock continued: "Many fair-minded persons have been hostile to the manner in which McCarthy has presented his charges and up to now have been persuaded—by his inaccurate arraignment of the State Department which he repeatedly was obliged to revise downward—that the Senator had little basis for it. Yet there is evidence that these persons are beginning to lose confidence in their appraisal."

Mr. Krock, failing to weigh Budenz's charges and appealing vaguely to a non-existent "general verdict of the political community," might just as well have written his column from an editorial armchair in New York. There, he might have realized that the words of Arthur Krock have a far more disturbing effect on public opinion than anything Louis Budenz might say.

Even more surprising has been the attitude of Bert Andrews, chief correspondent of the *New York Herald Tribune* in Washington. In 1947, Andrews wrote a Pulitzer Prize-winning series of columns for the *Herald Tribune* on the witch-hunting aspects of the State Department's loyalty program. The blame fell largely on a man named Dean Acheson, who, as Un-

der-Secretary of State at the time, bore administrative responsibility. Later, Andrews revamped the articles into a book entitled *Washington Witch Hunt*.

In 1950, the voice of Bert Andrews had strangely changed its key. The uninitiated might even think he had joined the ranks of the hunters. On April 4, the *Herald Tribune* carried a story under his by-line reporting that during a secret session of the Senate Foreign Relations Subcommittee, J. Edgar Hoover had refused to absolve one man. Since Andrews didn't say which man, suspicion fell on all whom McCarthy had accused. On April 9, Andrews came up with a story that was headed: HICKENLOOPER MAY QUIT PART IN RED INQUIRY. In newspaper parlance, this type of story is known as a "plant." Hickenlooper, a Senator hard pressed for re-election, wished to let other subcommittee members know that if he didn't get his way, he would pick up his marbles and go home. The story failed to mention whether or not the other members, including Republican Senator Lodge, were satisfied with the subcommittee's progress.

On May 4, Andrews came up with a story headed: STATE DEPT. TO LET SERVICE SEE 'SECRET' PAPERS SENATE COULDN'T. The lead announced: "The State Department is declassifying certain restricted and confidential documents to make them available to counsel preparing the defense of John Stewart Service, who will soon appear before a department loyalty board." On May 7, the *Herald Tribune* carried a letter from Conrad Snow, chairman of the loyalty board: "Mr. Service has not been given and will not be given access to the loyalty or personnel files which were gathered by the F.B.I. and other investigatory bodies and which were refused by the President to the Senate Committee. Mr. Service is entitled, however, as a matter of elementary fairness, to see and put in evidence any reports or other papers in the files of the State Department which were prepared by him or in connection with the missions on which he served, which may be material to his defense."

Amid the shortcomings of the press, the fist of McCarthy continued to wave defiantly from the headlines. The brave efforts of many newspapers to retaliate by shaking the mild, well-mannered finger of the editorial seem puny in comparison. Something more than the inside editorial is needed to counteract the front-page headline.

Herbert Elliston, editor of the *Washington Post*, is aware of the newspapers' shortcomings. He suggests that the objective presentation of the "straight" reporter must be supplemented by more and better interpretation. "Honest interpretation," he says, "looms much bigger than spot news as a newspaper function in these responsible days of the American democracy." To handle the complexities of McCarthyism, Elliston believes that the newspapers should assign "second" reporters as soon as the situation is fairly well seen. The second man's function would be to fill that narrow but deep crevasse between the "straight" reporter and the editorial writer. He should do the background work, the sleuthing for motives, the "atmosphere" creation. By reading this reporter's accounts run side by side with the "straight" story, the reader would have a much better opportunity to reach an honest conclusion. For the small daily wholly at the mercy of the wire service, the problem would remain unsolved. There is no reason, however, why the larger paper's "interpretative" reporting should not be syndicated to smaller papers, just as many feature stories are now syndicated.

The press of America has long constituted itself a merry Fourth Estate, largely immune from criticism. Today, the advent of McCarthyism has thrown real fear into the hearts of some—fear of what a demagogue can do to America while the press helplessly gives its sometimes unwilling co-operation. Perhaps Joseph McCarthy, Senator from Wisconsin, is not a demagogue. But who knows? One greater than McCarthy may come.

—DOUGLASS CATER

RULES OF THE GAME

Or, How to Meet the Press

by William M. Pinkerton

More businessmen are meeting more reporters today than ever before. There is more real news of business in the newspapers and magazines and on the radio. There is more interest in giving business news to the general public. And there is a growing awareness of the significance and excitement of business affairs.

Under these circumstances, the typical businessman, whether big or small, sooner or later meets the press. It may happen while he is rationing coal for the state in an emergency, or serving as trustee of a hospital or a college, or speaking at a luncheon club, or running the Red Cross drive. It may happen suddenly when fire or robbery hits his firm, when a strike is called or a founder dies. It may happen when a new product comes off the production line or a new personnel policy catches the public interest.

Dealing with Reporters

Most businessmen today meet reporters on a basis of equality, with the best of good-will. Newspapermen, for their part, generally want to report business fairly, accurately, and fully. The result is that fundamentally the press relations of business, and the business relations of the press, are better than they have ever been. It is disheartening, therefore, to think how often specific encounters between businessmen and reporters result in disappointment or annoyance on one side or both.

The common complaints of businessmen who do not like the way they get into the news run like this: "The papers never get things right." "You can't trust reporters." "They didn't put in half of what I told them." "They missed the whole point of it." "I didn't say that at all."

The actual fact is that most of the time the papers do get things right; you can trust reporters; they do not have room for everything; one man's point is another man's side issue; occasionally someone is misquoted, but more often the real trouble is surprise at the naked look of the spoken word in print.

This is from an article on "Businessmen and the Press" in the *Harvard Business Review* for May. WILLIAM M. PINKERTON, director of the Harvard News Office, was a newspaperman for a dozen years; was a Nieman Fellow in 1940-41.

Reporters' complaints against the sources of news can be equally extreme and equally wrong.

The simple thesis here is that most of the misunderstanding, when there is misunderstanding, arises because businessmen and other news sources do not know how reporters work. When you buy or sell goods, you make certain assumptions from experience about the other fellow's role. Most businessmen know now how a labor leader—any labor leader—ticks. When you consult a doctor, you expect him to act like a doctor. Lawyers act lawyer-like. What assumptions can be made about reporters?

Rules of the Game

Let us say, first, that reporters are human. There are good ones and bad ones, bold ones and bashful ones, competent ones and careless ones, responsible ones and irresponsible ones, cynical, hopeful, quick-witted, slow-witted, and mediocre ones. As in anything else, you cannot know too much about your man. But most of them carry a set of rules around in their heads. These are the rules of their game—which, if you are going to play it, you ought to know.

Here is the way the reporter's role looks to a reporter:

(1) *Reporting is a competitive calling*—Every reporter hopes first for an exclusive story. Failing that, he hopes to write a better, clearer, more significant account than any competitor. If he omits significant matter from his account, he runs the hazard of reading it next day in the other fellow's newspaper.

(2) *Good reporting needs goodwill*—Each reporter has his own stock of good repute around town. It is a working asset. It gets him tips and stories and angles of

stories that other reporters cannot get. A certain amount of specious goodwill can be had by getting stories into the paper, keeping stories out of the paper, and "writing up" helpful people. But the goodwill that counts is a reporter's reputation for fairness, accuracy, and thorough reporting.

(3) *No reporter stands alone*—The reporter needs the respect of his colleagues in the city room. In any showdown the respect of other newspapermen is more important to him than your respect—or that of his publisher. Likewise, the reporter's stake in a story is shared by his editors. If he is pushed around, his grievance may well become their grievance too. No matter how hard a good editor may strive to be dispassionate in handling the news, the "bad" news source is always in danger of suffering in print for his crime. And the "good" news source is likely to benefit in the long run.

(4) *A reporter's job is to report*—In an interview he is reporting you. He is not expected to mold the results to some preconceived notion—yours or his. His skill is measured by his ability to report the words in their setting. If what you say is vague or inept, for instance, his job is to report your vague or inept remarks without comment or cover-up. On the other hand, if you make a carefully qualified statement, he has an obligation to report its full import in context.

(5) *The interview belongs to the reporter*—His proper function is to ask questions, including, on occasion, embarrassing, impertinent, and rude questions. You have a right to refuse to answer; he has an equal right to report your refusal. If he finds you talking outside his interest, he has a right to save time all around by getting you back on the track. An interview conducted in the manner of dictating the morning mail is likely to result in no good to anyone. On the other hand, if the reporter quits without getting the story whole and straight, you have a right to call his attention to the neglected parts and to tell him what you believe he should know. It is a

two-way meeting. But the reporter always has the last word. He writes the report.

(6) *The reporter is also a judge*—What you say is winnowed as you talk. What is important (in the reporter's judgment) is noted; what is not important is ignored. The fact that a reporter does or does not take notes is no sure sign of his judgment. He may take voluminous notes because he thinks you expect it. He may, if he is good, take few notes and remember much. He must weigh your words against each other to decide what deserves space in the paper. If the story involves other sources as well, he must later weigh your words against theirs. Because of the nature of his job, these judgments must be made almost instantaneously.

(7) *The reporter is an important cog but not the machine*—In short order, his judgment of the importance of what you say must be weighed against the judgments of hundreds of other reporters on hundreds of other news sources. The final judgment must rest with an editor. Your reporter may think your story wonderful and write columns about it. It still may appear in the paper as a one-paragraph squib, or not at all. The reporter's only influence here is his own ability to see and to state the news interest of the event in competition with hundreds of other reporters and hundreds of other events.

(8) *The reporter is the public's stand-in*—Officially, he knows nothing. He is an outsider, a layman. Even if he is a specialist—a labor reporter, a business reporter, or a science reporter—he cannot be a specialist in you and your problems. His role is, if anything, to play dumb. It is up to you to make him understand the special circumstances, the technical reasons, just as it is up to you when you meet stockholders or customers. If you fail to make him understand you, he will fail to make his readers understand you too.

(9) *The reporter's audience is the general public*—His primary concern must be to interest, amuse, and inform a mass group whose average education is eighth grade, more or less; whose newspaper-reading time is half an hour, more or less; who have no interest, per se, in you and your problems. Thus, he can never successfully take your point of view. If he is a good reporter, he will try to understand your point of view and try to report it

fairly but only within the limits of his reader's interests, knowledge, and comprehension.

(10) *The time element is all-important*—Usually a reporter is working to meet the deadlines of today's paper. What he needs today will be worthless to him tomorrow or next week. This is not always true; but it is the only safe assumption to make. If a reporter has more time on a story, he usually will say so.

(11) *The reporter's interest is centered on what is new*—He is looking for a "news angle," for a "today" reference. Thousands of man-hours are spent every day across the United States by reporters listening patiently to good people telling them interesting bits of local lore, fascinating theories about how something happened to happen six months before, and other pleasant irrelevancies. The time is not wholly wasted, for from such bits and pieces a reporter builds up his store of knowledge of the community and how it works. Yet such a divergence can be most annoying when a reporter, facing a deadline, is seeking to get quickly essential facts pertaining to today's events. News is not just events, however, and the interest of newspapers in trends and meanings has grown mightily in recent years. As professional students of trends, businessmen might expect occasionally to set reporters on the trail of significant changes affecting the community.

Businessman's Attitude

Given such a man as reporter, what is the sound course for the man of affairs confronted by the press? There are some who say that if you cannot be sure of "friendly" treatment, there is no sense in talking to reporters at all. This, unfortunately, is no answer, for the press has many ears. If you refuse to tell your story, the likelihood is that someone else will tell it—but that person will tell it his way, not yours. Hence, every man and every organization has a real stake in the functioning of the press.

The opportunity to talk to the press is a valuable privilege, whether or not you want to, or can, talk about the subject of inquiry. Press questions should be encouraged. The way to encourage them is to treat them seriously, accept them with good grace, and answer them promptly, even when the answer must be "I don't

know," "No comment," or "I can't talk about that." There is nothing wrong with "I don't know," especially when it is followed by "but I'll try to find out and call you back." The best way to make sure that reporters call you when your interests are at stake is to make sure that all calls from reporters get prompt and serious attention.

Specific Guides

Given a willingness to work with the press, a few simple guides may help:

(1) *Try to anticipate the newspapers' interest*—When a change in company policy has public interest, a thoughtful statement in layman's terms should be prepared in advance. A careful, honest effort to explain policy will make more sense than an improvised, hit-or-miss comment after the news has "leaked." This is equally true, of course, of a new patent, a scientific discovery, a technical invention, or the retirement of the president.

(2) *When you originate the news, tell everyone at once*—Nothing will create more ill will than giving a statement of general news interest to only one of several competitors. This is as true in a one-paper city like Omaha as in a city like Boston or New York that has a half-dozen papers or more. Where do your employees live? Is there a suburban weekly that ought to have the news? Remember the radio stations.

(3) *When one newspaper questions you about a story, exclusively, do not pass it on to the others*—The city editor's hunch and the individual reporter's lead are their own property. They expect the news sources will answer queries without telling "the opposition" about them. If "the opposition" calls up later on the same matter, of course it is as much entitled to an answer as the first inquirer. On new ideas developed by the reporters themselves, the proper course for the news source is to cooperate with all comers but never to tip one reporter's hand to another reporter.

(4) *Never promise an "exclusive" you cannot deliver*—Generally, it is dangerous to promise to give any reporter some future news on an exclusive basis. You may have other calls before your exclusive news is delivered. And what will you say to the second reporter who calls, or to the third?

There may be rare situations where only one newspaper is of vital concern to an or-

ganization. In such a case, you may want to give your news exclusively to that newspaper. In any event, the point is this: If you promise an exclusive, be sure you can deliver it. And do not tell any reporter he will get "first crack" or an "even break" on the news unless you see to it that he does.

(5) *Never mislead*—We could say, "Tell the truth," but that is not realistic. There are times in the life of every man when he cannot tell all he knows. There are times when a man cannot talk at all about certain subjects. Reporters know that and make allowances for it. But they will resent a deliberate falsehood. "No comment" is a well-worn cliché, rubbed almost free of meaning by overuse in Washington. But there are times when "No comment" is the most astute remark in the world. Guard it precious; do not overuse it; but if you feel the temptation to lie, say "No comment" until you get your imagination in check.

(6) *Be helpful about bad news*—Being uncooperative will not keep news out of

the papers. There may not be much to gain immediately in helping reporters with legitimate facts about a mishap, a tragedy, or a scandal. But in the long run their confidence in you depends on your taking them seriously at all times. Even in the short run a reporter is bound to feel more sympathetic toward a good news source than toward a clam.

(7) *Stay on the record*—"Off the record" is a dangerous device, capable of maiming its user. Do not use it unless you know how. If you never use it, you will never miss it. If you must use it, remember this: (a) You cannot put a remark "off the record" after you have said it; "off the record" only counts when it comes before your big disclosure. (b) Any reporter has the right to refuse your "off-the-record" disclosure; if he hears it without protest, however, it should be binding. (c) "Off-the-record" remarks have meaning only when you are the sole source of the opinion or information offered. (d) You cannot expect to use the "off-the-record" tactic to get a reporter to give up a news lead

that he can get from a dozen other sources.

On the other hand, "for background only" or "not for attribution" may make sense. There are times when every man who meets reporters has a helpful news tip to suggest for which he cannot take responsibility. Maybe it is none of his business; maybe he is too close to it; maybe it is a development he has observed but does not want to make speeches about. In such a case, he may legitimately ask a reporter to leave his name out of it. He becomes, not the source for a news story, but "a usually reliable source" or "a company official."

(8) *Talk for quotation*—Use "background" rarely. Avoid "don't quote me but . . ." When you are talking to a reporter, assume that every word you say will be quoted in the newspaper. It will not be. But you will keep your own relation to the reporter clear if you assume that it will be.

—*Harvard Business Review*,
May.

Henry Morgan Views the Press

by John Crosby

Henry Morgan, a sardonic, sometimes misguided but always honest man, lumbered to his feet before reporters, columnists, editors and publishers at the annual dinner of the New York chapter of Sigma Delta Chi, the national journalistic fraternity, and delivered a speech. It lasted all of a minute and a half, a fine length for a speech, and it was a fine speech.

Henry spoke his mind about us freely and, while there were some barbs in this small essay, it was on the whole a flattering and (I hope) intelligent estimate. I'd like to pass it along.

"I was asked here this evening," said Mr. Morgan, "mainly because it's common knowledge that I am an authority on this stuff. A number of people here work on newspapers. That isn't nearly as bad as what I do. I have to read them. Some people produce radio programs. I have it much worse than they do. I work for them—newspapers and radio—the two greatest influences of our time, I figure. You see before you the creature you have made. I am the average warped man.

"Because of you people in this room I believe Owen Lattimore is a Communist. I also believe he is not a Communist. Because of you people I believe F. D. R. was a genius and also that he ruined the country. I believe that there is more crime in this country than ever before and that our police are the best in the world. I believe that Eisenhower would make a great President except that I have read that military men don't make good Presidents and besides he will run if enough pressure is brought, he will not run, he can't run, he refuses to run, he doesn't want the job, you can talk him into it, he's trying very hard to make it look as though he doesn't want it, he's happy at Columbia, he's miserable, he's got a cold, he feels great.

"You have made it possible for me to take five cents and buy, in one package, a new picture of President Truman, my horoscope for the day, fifteen comic strips and the stock market reports. And I've read some terrible things about you. You work for money. Advertising dictates your policy. The department stores dictate your editorials. Don't you think you'd be hap-

pier with some other system? Wouldn't it be nicer to have a bureau of some kind supervise your work? Then, if the bureau didn't like it, you could adjust or get killed.

"Still in all, it's better than having people point at you and say: 'There's a man who works for money.' Somehow it's getting to be very un-American not to work for money. It's also un-American not to work and to live on unemployment insurance. It's un-American to have social security and it's un-American to have such a small amount of social security. I strongly suspect this is all your fault.

"In short, you people in this room have put me, the average man, in a peculiar position. I now have to make up my mind for myself. As long as you keep doing that, as long as you keep forcing the man in the street to make up his mind for himself, that's as long as we'll have the only working definition of democracy that's worth a damn.

"Thank you."

—*N. Y. Herald Tribune*,
May 23.

Letters

Conscience of the Press

To the Editor:

Nieman Reports is fast becoming the conscience of the press. I would feel uneasy if I thought the postman had ever mislaid a single number addressed to me. Two bucks is a small price for a periodical that exalts high standards of journalistic performance.

RALPH D. CASEY,
Director, School of Journalism,
University of Minnesota.

Want More on Small Papers

I'd like to express my appreciation for the splendid work being done through *Nieman Reports*. The Rev. Alfred J. Barrett, S. J., editor of the *Catholic Journalist* and chairman of the journalism division here, joins me in congratulating you.

There is, it seems, too much parochial thinking in the newspaper world. The *Reports* give up a cross-section of views from many parts of the country. They widen our knowledge and deepen our understanding of common problems.

Keep up the good work. Give us more about the really wonderful work many of our smaller newspapers are doing. Too many journalism students think only in terms of "the big time" newspapers. They overlook the opportunity for significant service in the fields outside the metropolitan areas.

EDWARD A. WALSH,
Instructor in Journalism,
Fordham University.

Serious Error

To the Editor:

Just a note to express appreciation of your special April number. We got thirty copies for the staff and are holding a meeting later this week to discuss the impact of the *Nieman Reports* on the *Globe and Mail's* methods of handling news.

Incidentally, I made a serious error in only ordering thirty copies. If you have any spares, I would like another fifty.

The Commonwealth Press Conference, with 92 delegates from Great Britain, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, India, Pakistan, Ceylon, Malta, the West Indies and other spots, including Fiji, has been meeting in Canada for the last three

weeks. I handed a copy of your April number to the Ceylon delegate and then passed on several more to other delegations. I got universally good reaction and a request for more copies.

R. A. FARQUHARSON
The *Globe and Mail*
Toronto, Canada

Required Reading

Please renew my subscription and send another to circulate among the staff as "required reading."

MAURICE FRINK,
Managing Editor,
Elkhart (Ind.), *Daily Truth*.

About Pegler

To the Editor:

In your January issue you have reprinted what purports to be an editorial from the *Louisville Times*, of December 10, attempting to explain "Why does the *Times* publish Pegler?"

As a veteran newspaperman the job of taking a fellow craftsman to task is highly repugnant. In the course of a long career many of us have sinned against our own conscience by expressing political opinions which we later disowned.

Nobody will deny Mr. Pegler the right to hold certain opinions—however subversive they may be—but when it comes to historical facts he will be expected to abide by certain rules of truthful and honest reporting as it behooves a writer catering to a large audience.

Every citizen is free to pass judgment on men in public life, from President down to ward heeler, and some historians have been known to show little respect for some of our national heroes, whose memories are cherished by most of us.

Westbrook Pegler, however, seems to have made it his life work to degrade and besmear the name of Franklin Delano Roosevelt, carrying his vendetta so far as to violently attack all the surviving members of his immediate family.

Mr. Pegler's sense of patriotism is a matter between him and his civic conscience. As a newspaperman, however, he can be held to account for the exceedingly unethical method he is using to satisfy his own pet hatreds.

The epithets of "ghoulish" and "fiendish" have been used too often by others than myself in characterizing these methods. As a fellow newspaperman, I resent the wide berth granted by a number of newspapers to the perpetual and repetitious smears and innuendos indulged in by Mr. Pegler against a deceased President of our country. And this sentiment is shared by more Americans than those who care to write to the editors and protest against it.

STEPHEN L. DEBALTA,
National Press Club, Washington, D. C.

Profit and Loss

Regarding your invitation about "critical comment" on your last number: I do think that any 60-page issue "devoted wholly to a discussion of the conditions that affect newspaper writing" is seriously remiss in its scope if it devotes—as you did—only four paragraphs (on page 9) to the financial aspects of the trade. I refer to the part you labelled "costs," but which should more properly be called "profit and loss."

The fact of the matter is that no understanding of the press as it is constituted today is complete without a full-scale presentation of the evolution of the publisher-as-an-editor to the publisher-as-a-business man. The two previous stages in American journalism—"The Political Revolution" of the early 1800s and "The In-trial Revolution" of the late 1900s—have now been succeeded by "The Business Revolution" (my phrases) and these have a significance not even embroidered in your book.

The great editors are gone today—Pulitzer, Dana, Greeley, Bowles, etc.—and nowhere can you find a publisher who does not stem from the business office. It is this phenomenon that is causing huggermuggerism, shoddy copy-reading, condensation of the news, increased emphasis on columns, features, comics and syndicate stuff; it is this feature which has transformed the highly individualistic newspaper into chains owning radio stations, syndicates, foreign rights, etc., it is this feature which makes the editor, the m. e., the staff bow in deference to newsprint supply, to ink and labor, to a dozen by-products of the press.

PAUL GOULD,
Long Island University.

Obituaries

Nathan Robertson

Nathan Robertson, one of the best known and ablest of Washington correspondents, died in April after a long period of ill health. He was a Nieman Fellow in 1944-45. This article on him by Alan Barth, of the *Washington Post*, a Nieman Fellow in 1948-49, appeared in the *Guild Reporter* of April 14.

I remember a testimonial dinner given by the Washington Newspaper Guild in honor of Nate Robertson about six years ago when he had won the Heywood Broun award and was getting ready to leave for Harvard on a Nieman Fellowship. Congress, the cabinet and the court were all represented there; and of course there was a flock of Nate's fellow-members of the working press who came because they loved him personally in addition to respecting him professionally.

Some generous and heart-warming things were said, as is the custom on such occasions. Few newspapermen live long enough to hear themselves extolled, and I'm glad that Nate was on hand to listen to those tributes. He listened with the slightly quizzical and skeptical air that was characteristic of him. But he knew that what was said there was said in affection and it must have given him pride and satisfaction.

* * *

Perhaps the pleasantest speech of the evening, as I recall it, was given by Henry Morgenthau, Jr., then secretary of the treasury. He refused to join in the delight everyone else had expressed about Nate's prospective year at Harvard. "Nate is the newspaperman who knows enough about taxes, appropriations and finance to be a kind of watchdog of the public purse," the secretary said drily, "and the way I figure it, his year at Harvard is likely to cost the American taxpayer a couple of billion dollars."

Nate Robertson was an older member of what is sometimes called a new school of newspapermen. This is to say he brought

to the calling education, certain professional attributes and an intensive interest in the unapparent meaning of events.

He saw the happenings about which he wrote not merely as "stories" in the conventional news sense but as parts of a pattern of development, the trends and implications of which it was his business to interpret.

He got his early discipline in work for press associations before he joined the original Washington bureau of *PM*—an enterprise to which he contributed immeasurably in hope and idealism and emotion and talent. He observed faithfully the basic requirements of accuracy and objectivity. But he never made objectivity an excuse for indifference.

His feelings were involved, often passionately, in the events he covered. When he detected chicanery or meanness or injustice, he undressed and exposed them—as, for example, in the case of the fire insurance underwriters' phony attack on the anti-trust laws, for which he won the Broun award in 1944.

The weariness and cynicism and apathy that sometimes mask themselves as sophistication never touched Nate. He was quick with enthusiasm or indignation. He loved and respected his calling—the definitive mark of the artist or craftsman, whichever you prefer—and regarded it as one of the vital elements in the democratic process.

Nate liked to wrestle with facts. He developed a kind of knack or patience for looking into statistics that would have seemed bewildering or tiresome to most reporters. He managed to illuminate them and make them meaningful when he wrote.

Tough stories—a tax bill or the federal budget or the hidden handout in an appropriation measure or the implications of an economic report—were his specialty. He looked inside these things and got excited about them and conveyed his excitement to readers.

I think there would be pretty general agreement among Washington correspondents that at least in his own field Nate Robertson was the best in the business.

I don't know how to end this lame and impersonal and inadequate piece about Nate. He read this column pretty faithfully and used to tell me when he liked it or disliked it. And I guess he wouldn't

have liked my using it to spill my private sentiments in public.

Anyway, a great many of you knew him and valued him personally. All of you who didn't know him valued him as a man who had played an important part in the growth of the American Newspaper Guild.

Newspapermen don't need eulogies. The good ones write their own in terms of the work they do. Nate had behind him a long catalogue of good battles won and lost. They will stand as testimonials to the sensitivity and conscience and devotion he contributed to American journalism.

Henning Heldt 1910-1950

The death of Henning Heldt, May 6, cut short a promising career of one of the finest men in American journalism. He was only 39. His wife, Agneta, who married him during his year at Harvard on a Nieman Fellowship (1941-2), is left with two small children. He must always have known that his chance of a long life was slight, for his residence in Florida was dictated by health. A two and a half year's illness soon after graduation from the University of Pennsylvania had left his heart weakened by rheumatic fever. A native of Nyack, New York, he had to leave the rigorous northern climate to find a newspaper job with the Jacksonville (Fla.) *Journal*. Five years later his application for a Nieman Fellowship gave his editors and his publisher a chance to give a testimonial to his capacity and quality.

"A newspaperman of exceptional character, as a reporter he has been outstanding for accuracy, industry and insight into economic, social and political problems," wrote his city editor. "His character, personality and breeding qualify him for leadership. His penchant for liberalism comes congenitally and his ambition for academic research is worthy of consideration."

"He is of exceptionally keen mentality and has the capacity to measure up to the task which he has set for himself," wrote his managing editor. "It is entirely in line with his character and his record to be unusually alive to the social problems of the day."

His publisher wrote: "I am greatly impressed with his ability as an editorial man.

Some three years ago a chapter of the Guild was organized in the *Journal* office. Frankly, management and the original organizers of the Guild were making a mess of things . . . Then the first Guild president left to work in another city and Heldt was made president. Because of his willingness to go into every detail necessary in negotiations, we were soon able to get together and work out a very satisfactory agreement. When the agreement was completed it was put into operation without a hitch anywhere down the line. Since then it has been renewed and further adjustments made. During these negotiations, I found that Heldt had a great sense of fairness and since then I have found him very much interested in social economic problems as affecting the working man. He tells me he would like to study further along this line. We will be glad to grant him a leave of absence to take up these studies. We feel it would be of great benefit to him and, upon his return to the paper, he will be a more valuable employee."

Henning was then working on general assignments and doing a weekly political column. At Harvard he studied American history, and regional problems of the South. In the book of essays, *News-men's Holiday*, produced by the Fellows of his group, he wrote the chapter entitled "End of a Legend" which told the story of the American Newspaper Guild, then in its first decade.

Returning to his paper, he later joined the staff of the larger *Miami Herald* and served it the remainder of his life. He was the author of the chapter "Miami: Heaven or Honky Tonk?" in the book, *Our Fair City* published in 1947. It describes the problems, social, political and economic, which rapid growth, rapid industrialization and the immense influx of wealthy tourists brought to his State. Those were the issues which he dealt with as a reporter and he was one of the best. But his colleagues among newspapermen, including his associates at Harvard, will remember him best for the sweetness of his disposition, the serenity of his life and those qualities of fairness and team spirit to which his publisher attested nine years ago. The influence of his character will remain an asset to journalism and a source of pride to all who have shared in the Nieman Fellowships.

Nieman Notes

1939

Irving Dilliard, editor of the editorial page of the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, served on the Selecting Committee which picked the Nieman Fellows for 1950-51.

The Don Mellett Memorial Lecture for 1950 was given at Pennsylvania State College, May 21, by **Louis M. Lyons**.

1940

The *Meridan Times*, published by **Oscar Buttedahl** won first place in the best all-around weekly newspaper in Idaho in its circulation class. The award, made by the State Editorial Association, was announced at its annual convention in Boise.

Volta W. Torrey, managing editor of *Popular Science*, served on the managing committee of the new Lasker Foundation awards for journalism in the field of medicine and public health, during its first year.

The *San Francisco Chronicle* advertises its Washington correspondents' team of **Carroll Kilpatrick** and **Vance Johnson** (1941) as "two top-notch correspondents . . . wise in the ways of Washington news."

1941

Alexander Kendrick, CBS correspondent in Vienna, was home on leave in May and June.

William M. Pinkerton, director of the Harvard News Office, wrote the lead article in the *Harvard Business Review* for May, on "Businessmen and the Press."

One of the Sigma Delta Chi awards for distinguished journalism announced in May, went to **John H. Crider**, editor of the *Boston Herald*. He was cited for his "forceful, highly readable and impressive analysis of an important subject—a philosophy of government."

1942

Robert Lasch joined the editorial page staff of the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* in May, after eight years in a similar capacity on the *Chicago Sun* and *Sun-Times*. He began his newspaper work on the *Omaha World-Herald*, where he served as reporter, State editor and editorial writer.

1943

Mr. and Mrs. **William A. Townes** entertained the San Francisco Bay area Nie-

man Fellows and their wives at Santa Rosa on May 18. Those attending were Mr. and Mrs. **Robert de Roos**, Mr. and Mrs. **Jack Foisie**, Mr. and Mrs. **Ray Brunn**, Mr. and Mrs. **Robert C. Elliott**, Mr. and Mrs. **A. H. Sherry (Mary Ellen Leary)**, and **Louis M. Lyons** from Cambridge, Mass. Earlier in the afternoon, **Bill Townes** held a staff meeting of the 27 staffers of the *Santa Rosa Press-Democrat* and introduced the visiting Nieman curator for a talk and a question period. During the session, Congressman **Richard M. Nixon** dropped in, campaigning, and took over the question period.

Oren M. Stephens joined the State Department's information division this Spring after two years of association with **William A. Townes** in Santa Rosa, Calif., as editor of the afternoon edition, the *Santa Rosa Republican*.

After six years in their foreign service, **Ernest M. Hill** was brought back to this country by the Knight papers, first to cover the United Nations, then to their Washington bureau.

With 14 years of newspaper and public relations work in Florida behind him, **James Etheridge, Jr.**, became managing editor of the Orlando (Fla.) *Sentinel-Star* early this year.

1944

Herbert Yahraes and his wife, **Dixie**, were joint winners of the first Lasker award for magazine writing in the field of medicine and public health. Their prize article in *Collier's*, described their daughter's affliction with epilepsy. Another joint article of theirs, in the July *Women's Home Companion*, "Does Swimming Cause Deafness?" describes precautions to guard children against ear infections from bathing.

1945

Robert Bordner of the *Cleveland Press* won the Cleveland Newspaper Guild's 1950 award for best public service with a series of stories on lake-front pollution.

Three hundred citizens of Lexington, Kentucky, held a dinner to honor **A. B. (Bud) Guthrie, Jr.**, upon the Pulitzer prize award to his novel, *The Way West*.

1946

Assignment: Near East, by James Batal, was published this spring by the Friendship Press, 120 pages, with many illustrations. It tells the story of Protestant missionary work in the Moslem countries of the Near East and interprets their influence on the lives of many people in this area. Much of the material was gathered by Batal on his OWI assignment during the war. He has also contributed sections on the Near East to two other books, *Most of the World* and *Your Newspaper*.

Frank Hewlett was appointed Washington correspondent of the Salt Lake *Tribune* in April. Native of Idaho and graduate of its State College, he began newspaper work in 1931 on the former Idaho *State Journal*. In Manila for the United Press in 1941, he covered the Bataan campaign, the taking of Guadalcanal and Gen. Stilwell's Burma march. After the war he worked for *World Report* at its start, then for the Henry Kaiser organization.

1947

Ernest H. Linford, editorial writer on the Salt Lake *Tribune*, was a guest speaker at Colorado Newspaper Week at Boulder,

Colo., May 12-13. His role was to analyze and criticize editorial pages of the Colorado papers. Among his host-editors was Houstoun Waring (1945), editor of the Littleton *Independent*, who received the first award of the Crosman memorial trophy for excellence in editorial writing.

Robert C. Miller is covering the fighting in Korea for the United Press. He was assigned to the Pacific as a war correspondent in the Second World War. Later he covered the war in Palestine.

1948

Lester Grant and Christopher Rand (1949) of the New York *Herald Tribune* won two of the 1950 George Polk awards for notable reporting by New York writers, given by Long Island University in memory of George Polk. Grant's was for his series on cancer which earlier won the Westinghouse prize. Rand's was for his part in the five man series in the *Herald Tribune* on "Asia's Red Riddle." Besides his newspaper writing, Rand has contributed several articles on China to *The New Yorker* this year.

Rebecca F. Gross, editor of the Lock

Haven (Pa.) *Express*, was one of the editors invited to address the first American Press Institute seminar on women's pages. Miss Gross is against them and doesn't have any.

1949

Delbert Willis of the Fort Worth (Tex.) *Press* won the local Sigma Delta Chi award (\$100) for the best feature writing of 1949, with a series on alcoholism. The *Press* then sent him out on a speaking circuit to the journalism schools of the State, to lecture on feature writing.

Peter Lisagor of the Chicago *Daily News*, has been assigned since Spring to the paper's Washington bureau, where Edwin A. Lahey (1939) is one of his office mates.

1950

Within a month after completing his Nieman Fellowship, Donald J. Gonzales appeared in a double-truck advertisement of United Press in *Editor and Publisher*, as follows: FROM WASHINGTON—Donald J. Gonzales scored a one-hour beat on the disclosure that the United States would help the South Koreans by sending arms.