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Canada's National News Media Magazine

November 1977

Number 79

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with a serious point
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And:

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Letters

REPORTER TOSSES STONES BACK CONTENT'S GLASS HOUSE IS SCRATCHED

I would like to point out several serious inaccuracies in your Berger Report Coverage: Part 1 which relate to *The Vancouver Sun's* coverage of the inquiry.

For some curious reason you chose to illustrate *The Vancouver Sun's* May 9 coverage with a story by Jeff Carruthers, who writes on energy for FP Publications.

In fact, the final edition of the *Sun* on May 9 carried coverage of the inquiry report by our own staff reporter, Patrick Nagle. Nagle, who was shortly to be appointed the *Sun's* Ottawa Bureau Chief, flew to Ottawa specifically to take part in the inquiry lock-up of reporters on May 9. So your story is wrong to allege that *The Calgary Herald* was the only western paper to send a staff member to Ottawa for the inquiry findings.

Nagle took with him to Ottawa a Teleram machine and with it he was able to provide *The Vancouver Sun* with same-day coverage of the inquiry report.

In fact, the *Sun* and I believe *The Calgary Herald* were the only papers in Canada to carry same-day coverage of the inquiry report on May 9. Your story does not point this out.

Your statement that *The Globe and Mail* "pinned down the scoop on the morning of the 9th" is also wrong.

The so-called "scoop" carried by the *Globe* was actually the same Jeff Carruthers story, based on government sources, that was carried by all FP papers, including *The Vancouver Sun*.

Your story claims that the *Globe* provided "full staff coverage of the hearings throughout."

Ms. Diana Crosbie, information officer of the inquiry, tells me that statement is not true.

And, as one of several *Vancouver Sun* reporters who covered the inquiry periodically, for as much as three weeks at a time, I can personally vouch that no *Globe* reporter was present during my term of coverage. Ms. Crosbie, who says you did not contact her during your research, tells me that for general press coverage of the inquiry it "was a toss-up between *The Vancouver Sun* and *The Globe and Mail*."

Ms. Crosbie added: "And I would say that *The Vancouver Sun* had the most on-the-spot reporter coverage. Ron Rose of the *Sun* was the only reporter who had

the guts to come up north in the winter. Everyone else told me it was too cold to come up then. And no paper aside from *The Vancouver Sun* covered the environmental evidence on the spot."

She also said that CP did not staff the inquiry with a reporter.

Aside from these omissions, Ms. Crosbie says the *Content* story contains "a lot of errors" which she would be pleased to discuss with you.

Finally, I would like to point out that there is no such newspaper as the *Victoria Columnist*. Its correct name is the *Colonist*.

Moirra Farrow, Reporter,
The Vancouver Sun.

Content replies:

In the chart "Staff vs. wire: wire wins easily," which appeared in August's *Content*, the Carruthers story was entered for *The Vancouver Sun* because, in our fallible judgment, it was representative of the *Sun's* coverage in the edition available to us. As we recall, it was the line story.

Insofar as the newspapers we gathered — specifically in this instance the *Sun* — were not representative, we apologize. We have found, in our attempts at surveys of national coverage, that it is difficult, and was in one instance impossible, to get a specific edition of a given daily paper even 48 hours after publication. We try very hard to be fair.

Immediately upon publication of our issue carrying the survey of Berger Report coverage, we sent two copies to the Berger Commission with a request for comment. No reply was received. Upon receipt of Ms Farrow's letter we wrote Ms Crosbie personally to elicit her criticisms. In the intervening two months no response has been received.

In saying *The Globe and Mail* provided "full coverage throughout," we were mistaken.

The *Sun's* efforts are to be applauded. It remains, however, that apparently only two staffers were dispatched from Northern and Western Canadian papers on a nationally-significant story grounded in the northwest. 30

content

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NCEW

JOURNALISM IN CANADA SECOND RATE?

CALGARY — Canadian journalism got considerably less than a four-star rating from some of its own practitioners recently as a predominantly American audience was given a quick sketch of the news scene in this country.

The one-hour session held here as part of the 31st annual meeting of the National Conference of Editorial Writers last month saw Canadian journalistic writing described in less than glowing terms and frequently with some genuine disdain.

Pat Whealan, editor of the editorial page of *The Windsor Star*, noted that 37 of the 117 Canadian dailies were now using video display terminals in their production (including half of the 13 French language dailies) but added that this increased computerization was accompanied by a definite decline in quality. "For example, I have yet to hear of a paper that has later deadlines as a result."

He was especially critical of increased editorializing within news reports, which, he said, was contributing to the declining influence of editorial pages.

"There is very little news now," he said. "Speculation is now standardized and editorializing in news stories is now accepted. It seems now that a writer makes a basic assumption and beyond that we get a few facts. But that's not reporting. You don't get what was said. You now get buried in speculation and a search for a hidden meaning."

Mr. Whealan said press coverage of politics appeared to be based on "a stampee school of journalism" involving an Ottawa line. "The Ottawa line is something like this: All politicians are untrustworthy. The leaders are more untrustworthy than the others because of the untrustworthy methods they used to become leaders."

He drew amused smiles as he continued: "Another line goes like this: Joe Clark is on the way; he's a failure. Pierre Elliott Trudeau is on the way out; he's a failure too but he's a Quebecker and has an uncanny way of handling that Levesque. We don't know much about Levesque because he doesn't visit Ottawa much and we don't have an Ottawa line

on him. But he's a Quebecker and they're uncanny. So it's back to Joe Clark. Well, you know he's on the way out..."

Mr. Whealan felt the French-language press was more individualistic. "There are more bylines and signed editorials." He added that his newspaper — *The Windsor Star* had started signing editorials a year ago and was satisfied with the result but he noted that no other English-language daily had adopted the practice.

On an overview, Mr. Whealan said that Canadian newspapers seemed to have the same basic strengths and weaknesses of the U.S. counterparts.

Calgary Herald editor William Gold, the other panelist in the discussion, compared the Canadian and American press in more detail and for the most part found the domestic variety wanting.

Mr. Gold saw several major differences in journalistic practices between the two countries. Pre-trial publicity is restricted and minimal and this is "by and large accepted." Newspapers in Canada don't follow the American pattern of coverage which frequently involves interviews with trial participants about the strategies of the trial and about the evidence to be presented.

An even more evident difference was the more restrained scrutiny of private lives in Canada, Mr. Gold said. "The rule of thumb is that unless the spouse or children are drawn into political campaigning, we leave them alone."

"We recently had to do a lot of soul searching about covering the actions of the wife of our prime minister. There was much agonizing over the degree of intimate detail that this required. But at the same time, it was a story that needed writing."

Although the coverage of Watergate had created a certain amount of "it-can't-happen-here smugness," Mr. Gold said its major effect had been to "unleash a lot of half-baked investigations."

"Overall, I would say Canadian newspapers are about a generation behind your best papers in the prosecution of first-rate investigative reporting."

On a broader scope, Mr. Gold saw other differences:

— "Unlike the U.S., Canadian morning dailies have not grown at the expense of the afternoon papers but we don't really know why."

— Canada has only one major communications centre — Toronto — while

the U.S. is becoming increasingly diffused and less dependent on New York.

At the same time, he acknowledged, some of the same things that worry American publishers, also bother Canadians. "We're concerned about declining penetration and declining circulations. We're also doing a lot more market research. Overall, I'd say we're restructuring our product to meet the requirements of the reader."

On a question regarding national unity, Mr. Gold said he saw some beneficial effects from sympathetic editorials in American newspapers. "I think it is very important for the future of our country that it be seen that you opposed the disintegration of Canada. If your editorials contribute to keeping your administration in that posture, it would be beneficial." — John Balcers.

NCEW

LEVESQUE NOW MORE THAN ENTERTAINING

CALGARY — If a five-day conference held here last month has the desired effect, editorials appearing in the United States should reflect a deeper insight into the Canadian identity and its accompanying problems.

It was the first time the annual meeting of the National Conference of Editorial Writers had met in Canada during its 30-year history. The majority of the 120-odd participants (and some of their spouses) received a smattering of Canadian history, the country's economic system and the status of health services.

But it was the issue of Quebec separation that became the dominant theme. A parade of speakers, led off by Quebec premier Rene Levesque and followed by Alberta premier Peter Lougheed, federal opposition leader Joe Clark and newly-appointed intergovernmental affairs minister Marc Lalonde, provided "an original cast debate" (as one writer noted) on the unity question for the benefit of a predominantly American audience.

The irony of Mr. Levesque's first speech in Western Canada since his election as premier being directed at an organization that includes only a handful of Canadians did not escape many. The

Lede Copy

local news media used that as a frequent news peg before and after his speech, comparing it to his first major speech after his election victory in which he also chose to address an American audience, The Economic Club in New York. As William Gold, editor of *The Calgary Herald* noted, "It's very gratifying that you have come to Canada so that an element of the Canadian debate can be held on Canadian soil."

Mr. Levesque saw his major task as one of persuasion. "Since we are so different — we can't help it, we just are — we tend to be poorly understood and poorly explained."

A lot of news and opinion leaders are "instinctively" continentally oriented and melting pot oriented, he said, adding that misinformation about the Parti Quebecois and the separatism movement was the result of a reliance on two major sources for news: English Montreal and Ottawa. Both, he said, present a very biased view.

"English Montreal is the major concentration of English-speaking people in Quebec," he explained. "They see the fading away of an established situation. Their ancestors came in during the 18th century as members of a conquering army. Now they tend to see things in apocalyptic terms."

"Ottawa represents the old and crusty establishment whose major purpose is to hold onto power. Their vision tends to be a bit jaundiced and perhaps warped."

"Should anyone use these kinds of sources to understand what is going on?"

Mr. Levesque mused that the last time he had been in Calgary (three years ago) he was invited to the university "for a one-night stand — I was more or less entertainment." This time the press facilities were stretched as working journalists crowded in to hear him and then maneuvered for position at a press conference.

Lougheed, Clark and Lalonde created much less interest as dinner speakers on following days and almost half of the local media did not send representatives to cover the evening speeches.

A panel on natural resource supply concluded the day's working sessions.

On Sept. 14, the participants spent six hours on editorial page critiques — "what the conference is really all about." In these sessions each participant's newspaper is subjected to detailed analysis in small-group meetings. Program chairman Lawrie Joslin, *Calgary Herald* editorial page editor, noted that there did not

appear to be any major changes in the offing for editorial pages. "We're simplifying the make-up and making the paper easier to read. I'd say this seems to be the only general trend."

Joslin said the objective of the conference had been to present a capsule look at Canadian-American relations. Judging from clippings he had received since the sessions, he said it appeared the participants were well satisfied.

Among Canadian newspapers represented at the meeting were *The Vancouver Sun*, *The Winnipeg Tribune*, *The Citizen* (Ottawa), *The London Free Press*, *The Medicine Hat News*, *The Gazette* (Montreal), *The Calgary Herald*, *Edmonton Journal* and *The Windsor Star*. — John Balcers.

CDNPA STUDY CHECKS UP ON J-SCHOOLS

TORONTO — Seventy-eight per cent of the graduates of Canadian journalism schools are securing journalism-related jobs, according to a survey conducted by the editorial division of the Canadian Daily Newspaper Publishers Association.

Several questions that news media people keep asking about journalism education are answered in the report on the survey, the first formal research project of the division "and the first formal survey of its kind known to the authors in Canada."

The heads of Canada's 35 "full-program" journalism schools were mailed a pre-tested 25-part questionnaire in June. Twenty-four responded.

Some of the findings:

- Full-time professional journalists play a part in analysing curricula at 22 of the 24 responding schools.
- There was general agreement amongst the schools that no more curriculum time should be spent on theoretical aspects of journalism.
- The 24 schools have an average full-time student enrolment of 94, ranging from 10 (in Red Deer) to 575 (at Carleton).

Excluding the two largest schools, Ryerson and Carleton, average enrolment is 60. Fourteen of the 24 schools have two-year courses, three a one-year course (two of these three, Laval and University of Western Ontario, have



Cathy Russell

post-secondary or degree diploma requirements), six have three-year programs and one, Carleton, a four-year program.

- Half the schools administer entrance tests; half of those who don't are contemplating them.
- About a third of the schools have a beginning course to discover weak or poorly-motivated students and all have found these courses very useful.
- A wide variety of new courses has been introduced in the past three years. Economics, editing, photography and shorthand were all mentioned as new. A wide variety of courses has also been dropped. Social science, public relations and English were all mentioned at least twice.
- The average school employed 3.6 full-time faculty members, but 4.6 practising journalists in part-time teaching roles in the last academic year.

The study was planned and carried out by Dick MacDonald, supervisor of the editorial division and Cathy Russell, CDNPA's research analyst and co-ordinator, labour relations.

There are roughly 3,300 journalism students in Canada, MacDonald and Russell estimate. The figure does not include all students in advertising and public relations writing. If the number is raised to 5,000 to include these, Canada's per capita journalism school enrolment still is only two-thirds that of the United States.

But it appears Canadian journalism grads stand a far better chance of getting a job in their chosen field. In June 1976, for instance, 56 per cent of the 1975 graduating class of Pennsylvania State University were in non-journalistic jobs, according to Ben Bagdikian in a March 1977 article in *The Atlantic Monthly*.

The researchers were a bit surprised at the average failure rates (14 per cent in first year and 13 per cent in second) and the drop-out rates (20 and 9 per cent respectively), but these figures are in line with the general thirty per cent failure and drop-out rate which afflicts all disciplines at post-secondary institutions in Canada.

A preliminary report prepared by Russell states: "In the first school year most classroom time within the journalism departments appears to be spent in the fields of politics, economics and business, social sciences, the arts, urban affairs, courts/the law and the police. Little time appears to be spent on



Dick MacDonald

medicine, natural science or consumer affairs. In the second year politics, economics and business, police and courts and the law appear to be popular subject areas. The most classroom time outside the journalism department is used studying political science, economics and English and English literature." The study was carried out, MacDonald said, because one of the founding reasons for the editorial division was to develop and maintain close liaison between the daily newspaper industry and the schools. "The information we're getting should have some practical uses; people in a position to hire will have better bases for their decisions.

"The logical extension is to ask managing editors what they look for. We don't have a clear idea of that. Eventually can the two blend?"

MacDonald and Russell interpret the results to date as indicating that "in Canada what the schools are doing is pretty close to what the industry wants, as compared with the situation in the States."

The report was slated for release in late October to publishers, managing editors and journalism schools. Copies are available free to anyone writing Editorial Division, CDNPA, 321 Bloor Street East, Toronto, Ont. M4W 1E7.—B.Z.

CDN. MAGS: WE'VE STOPPED SINKING

TORONTO — Canadian magazines are gaining strength but have a long way to go before taking their place in Canada's national life to the extent that other countries' periodicals do.

This conclusion might be drawn from the record four-day annual general meeting here of the Canadian Periodical Publishers' Association Sept. 28-Oct. 1 attended by about 90 publishers. Two information-packed days were devoted to subscription sales and management and one day to advertising sales.

CPPA has 185 members, 65 more than last year, executive co-ordinator Sheryl Taylor-Munro reported. The association was founded in May 1973 by 10 magazines.

CPPA has gone "from tenuous to stable in three years, financially," Taylor-Munro said.

The association found it necessary to set up its own distribution system because Canadian magazines were consistently being denied access to Canadian newsstands. CPPA Distri-

bution now sends 85 titles to 150 accounts in every province except Newfoundland, distribution manager Graham Porter reported.

Outgoing president Denis Smith, editor of *The Canadian Forum*, said Canadian magazines were "taking up on a general recovery of Canada's culture."

Smith, who also teaches history at Trent University, Peterborough, said: "Canada has suffered serious cultural deprivation . . . The country lost its national memory for three decades, was ignorant of and neglected national problems and national opportunities. We've lived vicariously on the public life of other communities, primarily one other."

The recovery is "a precarious thing, but in the magazine field we have better defences than five years ago."

The two major problems continue to be lack of reliable access to newsstand distribution and lack of access to working capital, Smith said.

New president Ian Collins, a lawyer and publisher of *Quarterly of Canadian Studies*, was optimistic, noting "Rome was not funded and fully operational in a day."

CPPA has also established aggressive promotion and subscription sales campaigns. Its voice is increasingly heard in the trade. But the commercial environment for periodicals in Canada still favors foreign magazines stunningly.

A new Canadian service that will provide independent auditing of the circulation figures of smaller Canadian magazines was officially announced at the meeting.

The new service will be provided by the Canadian Circulations Audit Board Inc. (CCAB), following months of discussion initiated by CPPA.

Next year's meeting will be held in Edmonton and will concentrate on editorial. —B.Z.



Ian Collins

MAG AWARDS TO RIVAL OTHER MEDIA

A major awards program for the Canadian magazine field is in the making and a televised awards night ceremony is being projected for the spring of 1978,

(See AWARDS pg. 13)

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OF COWS AND COWSHIT

By ALAN BARTLEY

It is mid-February. I am standing in the middle of a barnyard trying to interview a recalcitrant township reeve on some pressing municipal issue or other.

It is snowing heavily. My notes have become a soggy pulp. We are surrounded by curious cattle. They have been staring for some time. They gently nudge against us with their heads.

Without looking down, I know I am standing in cow dung up to my ankles. Farm-born, I am not overly disturbed. But they never said at journalism school it was going to be like this.

The inevitable wag on the desk is only half joking. "You boys leave your boots at the door," he calls across the newsroom. Heh, heh, heh. The district staff, always appreciative of the urbane sophisticated wit of the desk when they hit town, chuckle with becoming humility.

It is, after all, one of the rare times anybody takes notice and it is not unpleasant. The chaffing is part of the burden to be carried by reporters working in the district.

The district is meant to encompass the rural areas and the small cities, towns and villages covered for urban dailies by outlying bureaus. Often, the bureau consists of one harried reporter quietly going mad.

He files stories back to his office by telephone, telecopier, telex or cleft sticks with varying degrees of success. The latter method has fallen into disuse of late because of a shortage of pliant natives.

The "cowshit copy" appears in the early or mail editions. The stories are usually jerked from subsequent editions to be replaced by the really important news from the city. They are never more seen by mortal man.

The urban-bound powers that guide daily newspapers often seem to regard staff-written regional news as something of a curiosity that deserves to be carried for that reason alone. It is a disturbingly quaint idea.

There are countless examples, some of them true, of editors virtually ignoring staff-written district stories that are seized upon by opposition papers, *Canadian Press* and radio and television

stations.

The stories are rife about the misconceptions in city newsrooms of district coverage. Oft told is the tale of a staffer in one town roused to cover a fire in another town. Not only was the fire 60 miles away but it was in another staffer's coverage area.

Another old favorite is the argument one stringer had with a supposedly experienced rewrite person about the existence of those enduring municipal oddities called townships.

The conditions of district work also seem to be something of a mystery to city newsrooms. There is the illusion of great freedom and flexible working hours.

To wit: a story, based on a medical

report, was filed to an Ottawa daily citing the unusually high number of heart attacks in a town 50 miles from the capital. The story went district edition but was pulled from the city edition.

Canadian Press and *Broadcast News* followed up the story. *The Globe and Mail* and *The Toronto Star* gave it prominent play. Radio and television stations across the province aired the story.

But, for reasons never explained, the story did not see light in the city of Ottawa. The incredulous district staffer involved took time away from a beer to characterize his editors. Any district staff can supply other horrible stories.

Setting your own hours can mean working a 10- or 12- or 14-hour day. The next day, which a reporter might consider free, can be punctuated with phone calls from early morning until midnight or later.

For district staffers who work out of their homes the situation is particularly bad. There is no escape from the phone. A city newsroom that expects its district men to be on call 24 hours a day seldom finds time to sympathize with a staffer who considers himself off-duty.

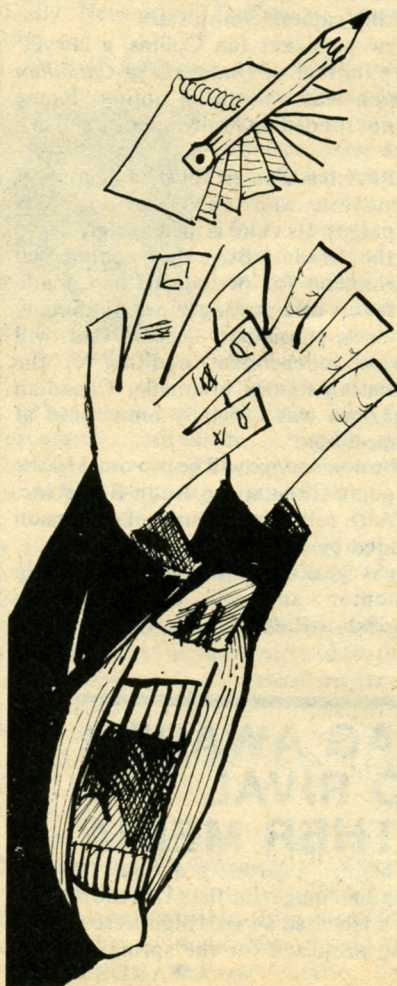
There is the frustration of working with stringers, the most delicate blooms on the journalistic vine. Some are fiends for the work, others less so. They are easily discouraged, especially when their contributions are mangled by incompetent rewrites or an indifferent desk.

There is often the problem, shared by stringers and staffers, of getting somebody to answer the newsroom phone, particularly late at night. Whither the ever vigilant press?

A stringer who stays up late to file a story gets understandably upset when he can't raise a response. Under similar circumstances, a staffer's ire knows no bounds. Unkind words are often uttered.

The staffer has his own peculiar problems with the newsroom, especially if he seldom gets into the office. A story that is edited to a fare-thee-well is usually not seen until long after it is in print. By the time a complaint is filed and taken up, the story is old news. Nobody cares.

The isolation from the office exacts a



CP Picture of the Month

toll. The relaying of office politics and gossip by phone helps but isolation from one's colleagues is often an unavoidable condition of the job. In some cases, a not unwelcome one.

City newsrooms sometimes seem to think district staffers have flourishing contacts with local cops. They obviously envision the staffer and a garrulous, apple-cheeked village constable talking agreeably about the night's events over morning coffee.

The truth is that rural and small town police forces seem to have more than their share of crypto-Nazis on the payroll. They are secretive, suspicious and seldom au courant with recent developments in police-media relations.

The general attitude of district residents confronted by a reporter from a city newspaper is unpredictable. In many cases there is suspicion that the city papers are only interested in stirring up trouble (usually correct) and ridiculing the local community and personalities (sometimes correct).

There are some district operations that allow staffers the time and opportunity to develop their own stories and follow them through. This is particularly important when staffers live in the coverage area and their newspaper is some distance away.

Then, there are those other district operations where anything that moves or opens its mouth is considered worthy of a story. The resulting pap is usually better suited to the less articulate weeklies. Its presence usually indicates a management bankrupt of imagination in the direction of its district coverage.

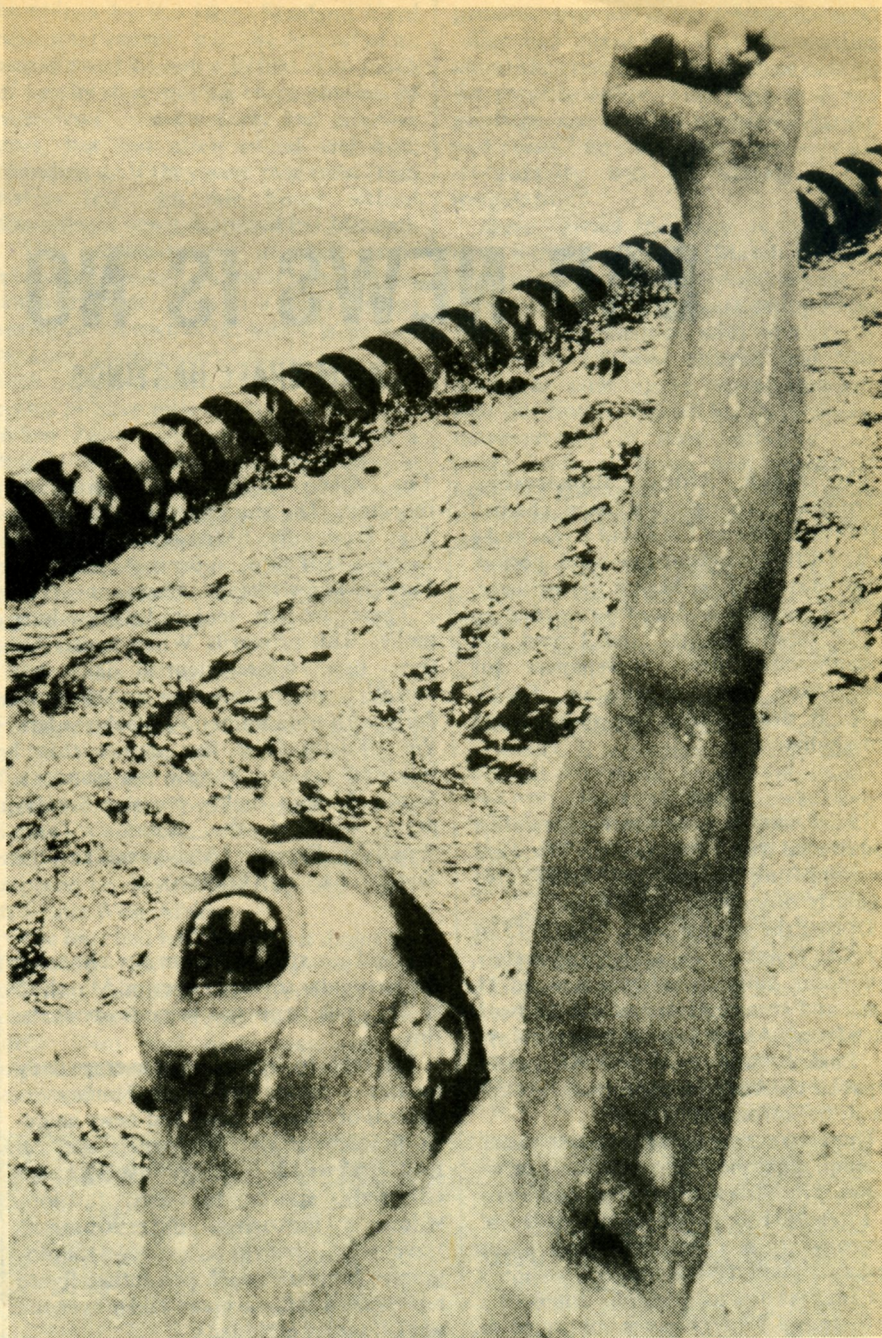
The miserable quality of newspapers, radio and television in most district coverage areas begs competent, aggressive coverage by the city newspapers that can afford it.

The local media, with brilliant exceptions, are usually sycophantic boosters with a sub-vegetable understanding of government, politics, journalism and the English language.

The great flaw in most district operations is the neglect of stories that are of most significance to local residents. This is further complicated if editors do not understand the difference between urban and rural coverage.

Land is the single most important commodity in rural areas. A story often ignored is how it is used, by whom and for how much. Legion are the editors who wouldn't know a land severance if they tripped over it.

There is a fascinating interplay between land, politics and money. Speculation in farm land, strip
(See COWS, page 12)



Photographer: Chris Haney, *CP Montreal*.

Situation: Haney squeezed in among the timers at the end of the pool to capture a close-up of Graham Smith's triumphant reaction as he learned he had set a world record for the 200-metre individual medley. Haney is photo editor for *CP Montreal*.

Technical Data: Nikon F with 50-mm lens at f5.6 and 1/500th

of a second on Tri-X film rated at 1600 ASA.

Award: *Canadian Press* "News Picture of the Month," August, 1977.

Congratulations: This space is contributed regularly in recognition of excellence in photo-journalism by The Canadian Life Insurance Association, representing the life insurance companies of Canada.

BAD NEWS IS NO NEWS

By MICHAEL HASTINGS

The South African Broadcasting Corporation's single television channel has been on the air for about a year and a half. During a recent one-week period, from March 15 to March 21 inclusive, 1977, I watched and audio-recorded all SATV news telecasts, and I read five Johannesburg daily newspapers for comparison. My conclusion: SATV News is drab, somewhat sloppy, and grossly biased.

SATV

The SABC is government-controlled and funded with public money. There are no competing TV stations. SABC also regularly broadcasts radio news.

During the sample week (March 15 to 21) SATV was on the air approximately five hours daily (roughly 6 p.m. to 11 p.m.) and commercials had not yet been introduced. About half the programs are in English and half in Afrikaans. Separate channels for other racial groups are to be introduced later.

There are two news telecasts each evening. On one night the early news shows is in Afrikaans and the later show in English. Next evening the order of languages is reversed. The later show repeats a good deal of the earlier show's content. As far as possible, interviews with bilingual interviewees are filmed or recorded twice — once in each official language.

During the sample week, average duration of a single news show was 14.7 minutes, excluding components like weather and sports news. On Sundays the weekday news schedule is replaced by a single news review, with added mini-documentaries and backgrounders. On Sunday, March 20, it was in English, and the hard news core ran 6.7 minutes.

The newspapers

The five Johannesburg dailies I followed during the sample week were:

The *Rand Daily Mail* (English, morning), *The Star* (English, afternoon), *Die Transvaler* (Afrikaans, morning), *Beeld* (Afrikaans, morning), and *Die Vaderland* (Afrikaans, afternoon).

These are the major Johannesburg dailies with primarily White readership (one new White-oriented daily has recently started publishing, and there is a daily with predominantly Black readers, *The World*). The five dailies that I followed do not publish on Sundays. South Africa's highly popular Sunday press includes the *Sunday Times* (English), *Rapport* (Afrikaans), and the *Sunday Express* (English).

Statistics

I had no special reason for choosing the particular seven-day period March 15 to 21. I just happened to be ready at the time.

The table (p. 9) shows the average daily quantities during the week (Sunday excluded) of "hard" news and news analysis in each of the five papers and on SATV News. It excludes material like editorials, sports, business, fashion, women's motoring, entertainment, travel, etc., but includes news photographs. Similarly, each percentage figure represents a daily average taken over the week (Sunday excluded).

Column A shows total hard news in column centimetres, corrected to a single standard to compensate for differences in type size and column width, and in the case of SATV, column A shows average duration in minutes.

Column B shows the average percentage of the hard news that covered Black-ruled Africa, south of the Sahara and north of the White-dominated South.

Column C shows average percentage

of the hard news covering the rest of the world (Arab North Africa and other continents).

Column D shows B plus C — total "foreign" coverage. "Domestic" coverage (the White-dominated South, including Rhodesia) equals 100 minus D.

Column E shows news that could be seriously embarrassing to the South African government — mostly allegations of criminal violence by police or illegal police meddling with the administration of justice.

Since my survey lasted only a week, I attach little significance to these figures, except for the following points:

- SATV gave proportionately more attention than the papers did to Black-ruled Africa. This may be due to a desire to portray Black-ruled Africa as corrupt, violent, and inept. But since TV carries much less news than the papers do, TV is obliged to concentrate on a smaller number of major stories. During the sample week the Soviets and Cubans were making inroads in Zaire, thus emphasizing the communist threat to the White-ruled South.

- *The Star* considers itself a paper of record — the Good Grey Eminence that publishes profound analyses from Outer Slobbovia. This is underscored by columns A, B, C, and D.

- Column E shows that the *Daily Mail* is probably a major irritant to the government, while SATV and the *Vaderland* systematically ignore all news likely to shed an ugly light on officialdom. Generally, the *Vaderland* casts itself in the role of the Common Afrikaner's Companion, employing folksy Afrikaans idiom. It carries lots of human interest and perpetually bewails things like inflation.

Remarkably, *Beeld* and the *Transvaler* score higher in column E than does *The Star*. If this pattern persists beyond the sample week, it would seem that the Good Grey Eminence is less prepared than its Afrikaans sisters to provoke the government. This was a surprise to me

because I have long accepted a persistent South African myth that subdivides the press into a blindly "patriotic" Afrikaans press and an equally blindly "hostile" English press. If this was true in the past, I imagine it is less true nowadays, but generally editorials in Afrikaans papers still support the governing Nationalist Party while those in English papers are pretty universally opposed.

Many observers have remarked that, given the severity of South Africa's internal problems, the press is surprisingly free, vigorous, and critical and that the judicial system is notably healthy and uncorrupted. I think both contentions were amply seen to be true during the sample week. The *SABC's* bias was no surprise either. Many South Africans accept it as a fact of life.

Both TV and the White-oriented papers provide meagre coverage of events among the non-White population. Admittedly the Whites' wealth, education, and political power cause them to be the chief newsmakers, but while Blacks generally know a good deal about the everyday existence of the Whites (because they work for them), extremely few Whites have the foggiest notion of what is going on amongst Blacks, who make up the overwhelming majority of the population. So universal is this hermetically-sealed ignorance that most Whites never give it any thought.

The news and its treatment

SATV News video consists largely of a news reader with a profusion of chroma-keyed stills behind him, including especially many maps. Perhaps they have a cartomaniac in Graphic Design.

When location-shot moving video is

good, it is often imported (e.g., Belfast bombings by the IRA, Scotland Yard helicopter patrols, and the funeral of an assassinated Lebanon leftist). Too much of locally shot moving video consists of interviews — some lively and effective ones, but too often stilted and dull, sounding as if they were rehearsed from scripts (e.g., an Air Force official discussing a newly-acquired F-1 Mirage).

The newscasts are at their most amusing, though unintentionally so, when the video cuts to a news analyst seated at his own desk, with a large sign reading "commentary" above him. One such commentator, Chris Rencken, seems to have little feeling for TV style. When Zaire was invaded he wrote a lengthy analysis of communist strategy in Africa, using gargantuan, convoluted sentences. The writing style was almost as indigestible as the Soviet plot itself. He read the analysis from a teleprompter at breakneck speed. I had to listen to my audio recording three times to make sense out of it.

The material in column E involves mostly allegations of police misdeeds. Perhaps the week's most significant item of this sort was the decision by Chief Justice Rumpff in the Supreme Court to uphold an appeal by four members of the South West Africa People's Organization, thus setting aside sentences imposed on them by the Supreme Court in South West Africa.

The four had been convicted under the Terrorism Act for involvement with activities intended to overthrow the administration of South West Africa by force. Two had been sentenced to imprisonment and the other two were sentenced to death.

Mr. Justice Rumpff noted that certain persons employed in the defence lawyers' office had channeled vital information about the conduct of the defence case to the security police. This "breach of the privilege which exists between attorney and client," he stated, was "not only an irregularity but an utterly gross irregularity."

Beeld carried the story as the main news item on page one (March 18). The *Mail* carried a lengthy report on page 2. The *Star* editorialized, castigating those who would meddle with justice. A *Transvaler* editorial claimed that "the judgment once again proves formally that our South African bench functions independently of state authority . . . [and] both at home and abroad it furnishes guarantees that refute all scare stories and propaganda about a police state."

Neither the *Vaderland* nor *SATV* mentioned the event. Both also totally ignored all of the following stories, which appeared in other papers during the week:

- In a Johannesburg court, three policemen pleaded not guilty to 17 counts of assault. It was alleged that they had, amongst other things, dropped hot candle wax onto a Black man's face to make him talk. They had woken up a Black man, taken him out dressed only in his underpants, and driven him around Alexandra township while repeatedly assaulting him. They hit him with an iron bar and a stick and shot at his dog. They allegedly assaulted and threatened a White restaurateur (*Star*, *Mail* and *Transvaler*, March 15, 16, 18, and 19).

- In Windhoek, South West Africa, two young "Coloured" policemen were sentenced to jail in the Supreme Court for assault on two Ovambo men during

Breakdown on News for 5 Dailies & SABC, March 15 to March 21, 1977

	A Quantity	B Black %	C Overseas %	D Foreign %	E Bad News %
<i>Daily Mail</i>	2105 cm	5.1	13.7	18.7	6.1
<i>Transvaler</i>	2657 cm	3.1	5.2	8.3	2.2
<i>Beeld</i>	3120 cm	3.3	8.9	12.3	1.5
<i>Star</i>	3322 cm	7.0	31.0	38.0	0.6
<i>Vaderland</i>	2323 cm	5.1	11.3	16.4	0.0
<i>SATV (English)</i>	15.1 min.	17.0	25.7	42.6	0.0
<i>SATV (Afrikaans)</i>	14.3 min.	13.1	16.3	29.4	0.0

Column A shows total amount of news, in column centimetres for print and in minutes for electronic. Column B shows percentage of news about Black-ruled Africa. Column C shows percentage of news covering the rest of the world. Column D

shows percentage of foreign news (C + D). Column D records the percentage of news embarrassing to the South African government.

questioning December 15, 1976. One of the Ovambos died the same day (*Mail*, March 16).

- In Maritzburg, a police lieutenant denied that he had given electric shocks and a lie detector test to a man detained under the Terrorism Act (*Mail*, March 19).

- In King Williams Town, a court was inquiring into the death of detainee Mr. Mapeta Mohapi, who allegedly hanged himself in prison. Mohapi had instituted proceedings against the Minister of Justice for alleged assault. Detainee Miss Thenjiwe Mtintso, a *Daily Dispatch* reporter, told the court a security policeman had throttled her with a towel. She was hit in the face, kicked on the body after she had fallen, made to stand three days and nights without food, drink or toilet facilities, and her head was hit against a wall. She was warned by a Captain Schoeman that if she continued to lie she would go "the same way as Mohapi." Police had questioned her mostly about Donald Woods, editor of the *Daily Dispatch* — his communications, private life, work, articles, and social life. She alleged police had lied to her that her three-year-old son had been killed in a car accident, "but later they said the child was well" (*Mail*, March 15 and 17).

- A police lieutenant denied in the Pretoria Supreme Court that he falsely represented himself to detained Black students as a member of a commission of inquiry into racial unrest (the Cillie Commission) in order to get confessions from them on charges of "sabotage" (*Mail*, March 15).

These and other similar stories were totally ignored by *SATV* and the *Vaderland*. They also ignored a story, given extensive play by other media, that the West German government had expressed dissatisfaction with the South African government's reasons for suddenly deporting a Professor Wolfgang Thomas of the University of the Western Cape. They had not disclosed their reasons to the public, but had given a confidential explanation to Bonn.

SATV could hardly plead that such items were crowded out by other important news. During the week its telecasts carried some items whose insignificance it would be difficult to surpass. There were shots of repairs on a Taiwanese trawler that had run aground at Cape Town, a report on the amalgamation of two building societies, an interview with the visiting president of the Soroptimist International organization, a story about a slump in car sales, an interview with the president of a frozen-food company that had discovered markets in Europe, a dismal opening speech at an astronomical observatory that had been converted to a theatre, and a description of research by the National Water Commission,


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accompanied by some puzzling footage of moving machinery and flowing water. I can accept coverage of ice sculptures in northeast China, because the sculptures make rather pretty light effects on film, but dreary footage of the TV advice board gathering around a table for a meeting I cannot buy.

At times the South African government invokes a law, known as the Group Areas Act, to shift members of a particular race group from one area to another. During the week some Indian merchants were being evicted from a Johannesburg area where they had done business for scores of years. The government had provided a new business area in an adjacent region, but the Indians had resisted the move. Television coverage of the evictions showed police with dogs and shots of Indians apparently protesting with waving arms, but no interviews with merchants.

Beeld gave the merchants' point of view quite fairly. A *Transvaler* reporter quoted a merchant who called him and other White bystanders "White dogs," and the reporter could not resist adding: "While the crowds were cursing police, thieves began stealing at one of the shops. Immediately, the White police were

implored to come and help."

During the week Johannesburg's voters elected members of the Johannesburg City Council. The three main contenders were the Nationalists (who rule the country), the United Party (the official opposition), and the Progressive Reform Party (the most liberal of the three). The latter got the most votes, but the other two parties took over as a coalition, to avert Progressive Reform control. *SATV* telecast interviews with spokesmen for both the Nationalists and the United Party, but instead of interviewing a Progressive Reform spokesman directly, they asked each of the other two spokesmen for comment about the current outlook for the Progressive Reformists.

On March 17 *The Star* editorialized: "Congratulations to SABC-TV for its constructive, unblinking look at the local domestic servant scene this week. This difficult and contentious subject was handled with admirable objectivity. More of this calibre would be welcome." And indeed — miracles never cease — the *SABC* had shown on March 15 a half-hour film titled "Yes Madam, Yes Madam," seeking to promote understanding by White employers of their domestic servants. Not a profound intercultural analysis, but certainly a most positive piece of work. I almost toppled from my perch when they actually quoted recommendations by the Institute of Race Relations, a body that the government is not fond of. The film ended on a shot of a Black female servant patiently working away in the kitchen while a clock near the stove ticked away significantly.

Two other documentary items were shown on the Sunday news special. One of these, produced in collaboration with the South African Freedom Foundation, was called "Freedom and Democracy in Africa," and its central message was that Black-ruled Africa is a sad and hungry mess of military and civilian dictatorships. The other item was a "Report on the Chicken Run," i.e., a report on persons emigrating from South Africa, apparently because of South Africa's internal problems. Immigration and emigration statistics were quoted, and some interviews were shown. The program affirmed the government's position, which might be phrased "good riddance of cowardly chickens."

The story that dominated the country's headlines throughout the week was the government's introduction of a bill in parliament to control the South African press. The bill was championed by Minister of Information Dr. Connie Mulder (fortunately it was later shelved).

The proposed new law would have given authorities the power to indefinitely suspend publication of a newspaper which had exaggerated, distorted, or misrepresented the facts. It provided for heavy fines on editors and publications.

In a rare — perhaps unprecedented — show of unanimity, the South African press opposed the scheme. Even the *Vaderland* joined in the outcry, but the *SABC* did not.

The *Vaderland* argued that the bill's provisions were so wide open to subjective interpretation that it would result in censorship through fear. *Beeld* proclaimed on March 12 that the already-existing press code was sufficient to uphold standards of responsibility, but on the same day it quoted Dr. Mulder as saying that the present code "is not acceptable to the government, amongst other reasons, because its procedure is too cumbersome, and an unrealistically long time elapses before a matter can be concluded."

Press writers emphasized that South Africa's considerable press freedom was favourable for South Africa's image abroad, and that the measure would harm the country's reputation. "The (London) *Daily Telegraph* referred to South Africa's newspapers as being the most free and outspoken in Africa," said the *Sunday Times* on March 13. In *The Star* on March 21, Allen Pizzey wrote that if the bill became law, South Africa's claim to having the most free press in Africa might be taken over by Zambia. On March 15, the *Vaderland* quoted Jack Foisie of the *Los Angeles Times* as saying (I re-translate from Afrikaans — presumably he spoke in English) that he was very sad to hear of the intended legislation, but he immediately added that South Africa was one of the most free countries for a newspaperman. "I admit that here in South Africa there are some people who get carried away with certain reports, but in general journalists here are very conservative . . . after being here for seven months I can say that South Africa has the most free press in Africa."

On Sunday, March 13, Dr. Mulder appeared on *SATV* to explain his proposed measure. He said the *SABC* itself would be excluded from the scope of the legislation, because the *SABC* works under government license, and the corporation had undertaken to incorporate the new measures into its agreement with the State.

On March 15 the *Mail* reported that "opposition MPs attacked the television interview . . . in which . . . Dr. Mulder discussed the press bill. Mr. Lionel Murray, the United Party interior affairs

spokesman, said Dr. Mulder's solo performance in the interview was a blatant example of one-sided news presentation . . . Mr. Rene de Villiers, Progressive Reform Party said: 'If it wishes to be fair it would have put up a spokesman for the newspaper industry . . . has it any intention of doing so?' A spokesman for *SABC-TV* said last night that no one had asked for television time to discuss or talk on the Newspaper Bill. 'If we do have such a request we will consider it.'

In an editorial next morning, the *Mail* asked: "Does this mean balanced reporting only on request?"

On March 15 a news item in *Beeld* stated: "The *SABC* does not intend to give a Press Union spokesman an opportunity to clarify his point of view on the Newspaper Bill, an *SABC*

spokesman says. Mr. Jan van Zyl, director of *SABC's* news services, said that the interview telecast Sunday evening with the Minister of the Interior, Dr. Connie Mulder, was representative of developments in this particular matter ('was 'n weergawe van die ontwikkeling van die saak' — the wording of this news item is slightly puzzling). Mr. van Zyl told *Beeld* that the question of whether the *SABC* was prepared to invite a spokesman of the Press Union was a matter of speculation. 'I'm not going to commit myself', he said. Mr. Andre Walters, *SABC* public relations man, said that anyone, including the Press Union, may approach the *SABC* to state its point of view. The request will be considered according to its merits, and if granted such spokesman would receive equal time to state his view, Mr. Walters

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said. He said that there is no fixed policy about equal time on television for people holding differing viewpoints. 'The circumstances and the merits of each case determines whether we will grant equal time,' he said."

Next morning, under the heading "Misunderstanding," *Beeld* reported: "The SABC's attitude on 'equal time' for the Press Union . . . was not correctly reported as a result of a misunderstanding on the part of *Beeld*. In view of the fact that the situation is steadily developing, the SABC cannot at this time commit itself to fixed programming, says Mr. Jan van Zyl, director of SABC's news services. As the matter develops further, all newsworthy aspects will be explored."

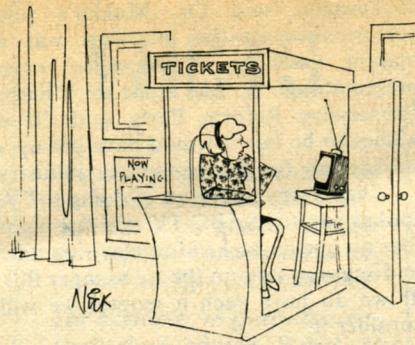
Star, March 18: "The SABC is considering giving TV time to groups opposing the newspaper bill. It will be done as a debate on the magazine programme 'Midweek'. It is understood that a senior member of the administrative staff has approved a plan to screen a debate. The member is said to have suggested holding it back to see if there is a second reading of the bill in Parliament."

Shortly thereafter the bill was withdrawn.

During this controversy Dr. Mulder repeatedly insisted that the bill's purpose was to eliminate mischievous distortion, so as to avoid friction between races and to prevent damage to South Africa's image abroad. While they opposed the bill, many Afrikaans papers conceded that "some newspapers" were guilty of "abuse" of freedom, but no one (or almost no one), whether English or Afrikaans, seemed to think of asking for examples of such "abuse." This kind of philosophical vacuum creates quite an eerie impression, but perhaps it is not all that obtrusive inside the environment of South Africa's journalistic cuckoo-land. I suppose that journalism practised in a totalitarian communist environment must be similar. Following are some examples of admissions of guilt:

- Columnist Dirk Richard (*Transvaler*, March 15): - "Afrikaans newspapers, no matter how 'enlightened', dislike the manner in which a section — a small section — of the English press often treats the colour situation. How long have I not warned in this column against commentary and reporting that amounts to subtle agitation by means of one-sided emphasis? By constantly representing the White man as the oppressor and the Black man as the oppressed, a Black resistance needs must be nourished."

- Editor Willem de Klerk (*Transvaler*, March 15): "I accept and believe that the government has no dark motivation for its



press bill . . . Certainly there are grounds for impatience and discontent with the press. In the battle against the Nationalist Party there have been instances in the opposition press where South Africa's interests have not been served. Afrikaans newspapers have also committed errors of judgment."

- A *Beeld* editorial: "He (Defence Minister P.W. Botha) is concerned only about some who deal recklessly with the interests of South Africa and of civilization. We have to agree with him that we do have such people in the press . . ."

Only twice during the week did I see references to the question of providing examples. On March 16, Hugh Robertson, writing from New York in *The Star*, mentioned a Columbia University professor who spoke of "the fact that the government cannot cite a plausible reason for the proposed legislation, cannot provide acceptable examples of abuses by the press, and cannot explain why existing legislation had proved inadequate . . ." The other reference (I have mislaid the clipping) quoted a government spokesman — I believe it was in Washington — saying that he could not provide examples for fear of lawsuits.

In my opinion, a country with racist laws and administration must inevitably generate stories that will harm the country's reputation abroad, even without the slightest distortion. On the other hand, a press gag increases the scope for the spreading of malicious false rumours by revolutionaries and nowadays it is becoming increasingly difficult to shield oneself from the proliferating global information network. I sincerely believe that South Africa can solve its problems to the ultimate satisfaction of all, but by now it will demand exquisite care and an imaginative leadership that is heroic and unprecedented. The price may be high, but it can be done.

Michael Hastings is a freelance TV journalist who has worked as a reporter for the Hamilton Spectator and as a producer for CBC and SABC. (30)

COWS (continued from p. 7)

development, subdivision approvals and the granting of land severances all involve politics. The circumstances deserve examination.

The politics of the district are more subtle and less flamboyant than in cities but seldom dull. The political atmosphere is traditionally secretive, especially in solidly rural areas.

Nailing down a story is difficult when the locals close ranks against any snooping by an outsider. Locals — including media types — don't snoop. They just assume the worst and keep their mouths shut.

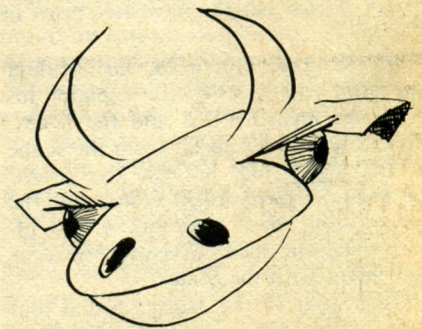
The elements of good stories are the same, in city or out. What changes, of course, are the subjects, circumstances and emphasis. The characteristics of district stories usually confuse the suburbanites who handle copy. Woe to the story outside the deskman's urban experience.

There are stories common to both city and district that have distinctive rural aspects — education, health care, policing, fire protection, etc. The stories are as valid in the district as downtown. To discriminate against them because they aren't visible from the newsroom window is nonsense.

The district, as portrayed in too many papers, bears little resemblance to what is really happening in an area. To treat the district as a source of bright, entertaining features on horses, cows, donkeys and colorful old characters is a simple-minded approach that has almost nothing to do with reality.

Now, the question of leaving boots at the newsroom door should be looked at in the same light as the lack of spittoons in the office. A man starts to miss them during a day in the city, especially if he has been in the district awhile.

A newspaper with pretensions to competent district coverage simply can't afford not to have at least one out by the door, hard by the boot scraper. Just like home.



Alan Bartley is a former reporter for the Ottawa Citizen with two years' experience covering the district. (30)

AWARDS (continued from p. 5)

probably mid-April.

Eleven categories of excellence have been established for work done in 1977. They are general magazine articles; humor; sports; politics; reviews, columns and editorials; fiction; poetry; art direction; studio photography; illustration and photo-journalism.

The new National Magazine Awards Foundation (NMAF) is in operation with *Toronto Life* publisher Michael de Pencier as chairman and powerhouse Elsa Franklin as national organizer.

Involved at the genesis several months ago was Andrew Macfarlane, dean of the journalism school at the University of Western Ontario. UWO is sponsoring Category 1 (general magazine articles) with the President's Medal and two \$1,000 prizes, one in French and one in English. Laval's school of journalism is associated with the President's Medal in a semi-official way.

Sponsors are being sought who will contribute a \$1,500 cash prize and an equal amount toward administration of the awards. Seed money is being provided by three magazine publishers.

Educational institutions across Canada will be enlisted for judging. The Nova Scotia College of Art and Design, for instance, might be invited to judge entries in the art direction category.

Representatives of the Canadian Periodical Publishers' Association and the Magazine Association of Canada sit on the foundation planning group. The Periodical Writers Association of Canada voted at its annual meeting to support the program but not to have a representative sit on the board, for fear of conflict of interest.

Franklin, a long-time right hand of Pierre Berton in his television work, wrote in an end-of-September progress report that an objective of the awards was to "catch up with, and we hope outperform, those other forms of communication [such as] newspapers, radio, television, records and films, which already have national awards programs." — B.Z.

PEEWACK GOAL: MEMBERS AND MONEY

TORONTO — Canada's organized freelancers voted unanimously at their annual meeting Oct. 1-2 to boycott the Irving chain's five newspapers and Irving's *Atlantic Advocate* magazine.

The executive of the Periodical Writers Association of Canada was instructed to

send a "strong letter of censure" to the Irving chain. The action followed an Atlantic region report from Jackie Webster of Fredericton. She told 25 members on the second day of the meeting that only one freelancer was still selling material to Irving's Fredericton *Gleaner* since 11 editors and reporters were fired from there *en masse* Aug. 12 (See Sept.-Oct. *Content*, page 17).

At some sacrifice all Atlantic members of PWAC had boycotted Irving's papers and the magazine, Webster said. The firings grew out of differences of opinion between new management and then existing staff over editorial policies of *The Daily Gleaner*.

Forty-three of PWAC's 119 members registered for the meeting. Although the future of their association is not assured, they forged ahead with much the same spirit that gave birth to the organization against predictions it couldn't happen, in May last year. They:

- Voted unanimously to support 50 per cent as the minimum kill fee acceptable to members.

- Voted unanimously that members accept not less than 10 per cent of a publication's usual minimum for a given type of article, as an idea fee.

- Decided overwhelmingly not to back down on the principle of minimum fees.

Fees of some major buyers of articles, including *Maclean's*, have increased since PWAC's formation and the organization shows every sign of continuing to press hard for more control over members' published work and for more money. In return the organization undertakes to provide production promises in writing and a roster of members with minimum qualifications.

PWAC is encouraged by preliminary contacts with The Newspaper Guild and formed a committee to try to create "some sort of alliance" with the Guild, in the words of outgoing PWAC president Joanne Kates. "We have common goals; we've identified common interests; we're not enemies," she said.

New president Heather Robertson said the top priority in the coming year is to sign up the majority of major Canadian magazines to use the standard contract created by PWAC.

Second, she said, is money. "It is tremendously important that we raise our fees. It has become more profitable to write books than to write for magazines. I look at my friends — economists, editors, TV producers — all making two, three and four times as much as I am. Why should an editor who often can't write his way out of a paper bag make \$25- or \$30-thousand a year for fucking up our copy?" — B.Z.

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Column by Richard Labonté

Slow forwarding of mail resulted in an out-of-date item appearing last month in connection with Tim Creery's *Report on Confederation*. The Association for a Report on Confederation was in fact recognized as a charitable organization in mid-August — the item was written shortly after, but without that information — and the first issue of the magazine may have appeared by now.

* * *

Radical weekly journalism — surely the best kind — is faltering on the East Coast and groping on the West Coast; but it's still alive.

The newest-comer in the field of left-leaning tabloids is *BC Today*, a year-and-a-half old and still, it seems, growing. The Sept. 1-15 issue reports circulation in April at 5,500 and sets the modest goal of 1,000 new subscribers by Christmas.

The reader-supported biweekly —

there are few ads, an editorial decision — has just hired a full-time reporter and, according to publisher Peter McNelly, will add four pages to the usual 16 when there's enough money.

McNelly, a former aide in the Dave Barrett government, has brought past affiliations to his present pre-occupation; *BC Today* leaves little doubt that its sympathies lie with British Columbia's official opposition.

But that's more because the newspaper shares many concerns with the New Democrats — welfare, unemployment, environment — than because it owes the NDP any allegiance; in fact, some of the most delightful and witty writing comes when McNelly, editor William Barringer or any of the many columnists have reason to take off after the fumbles of the left.

More basic to *BC Today* is its strong

analytical coverage of the affairs of government; there is a feeling that a Barrett back in office would have to contend with the same well-crafted barbs now directed at Bill Bennett.

BC Today is in many ways a throw-back to the 1960s: political sauciness at a time when cynicism is the norm, moral outrage challenging the immoral, monolithic power structure.

Part of the appeal of *BC Today* — and what sets it apart from the strident and often smeared counter-establishment journals of the '60s — is that it is, in a non-perjorative sense, slick.

It is neat; it is grammatical; it is urbane; it is witty; it is restrained. It is respectable; it may survive.

Less respectable, and less likely to publish past the Christmas season, is the *plain dealer*, a by-its-fingernails survivor of the alternate journals which once flourished on the East Coast.

The Fredericton weekly lacks the polish of *BC Today*, but none of the spit.

The Sept. 2-8 issue, for example, exposes the shortcomings of the Saint John, New Brunswick fire department; places a much stronger emphasis on labor news than does its West Coast counterpart; and covers the Fredericton city council with the sarcasm it deserves.

The writing is heated, head-long and sometimes ill-mannered. But there is no question the weekly's emphasis on community as well as provincial affairs — and its crafty inclusion of a TV guide, comic-strip page and classified ads — qualify it as "New Brunswick's Other Newspaper."

The *plain dealer*, for all its feistiness, is more fascinating because it still exists than because of what it stands for. Gone are its East Coast ideological colleagues like *The 4th Estate* of Halifax, *The Mysterious East* of Fredericton, the *Alternate Press* in St. John's and *Square Deal* in Charlottetown.

It's still publishing, perhaps for four months more, because a public appeal this summer after publication was suspended brought in over \$20,000 in small donations.

That, and momentum, has kept publishers Skip Hambling, Gus Hambling and Bert Deveaux going.

Periodicals, books and news releases which must be sent for comment should be mailed to Richard Labonté, Tatty Hill, RR #2, Calabogie, Ont. K0J 1H0. (50)

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(continued from pg. 16)

Canadian Press and the Canadian Daily Newspaper Publishers Association, died in hospital Sept. 30, at age 92. Ker had retired from *The Spectator* in 1951.

Helen Connell, formerly city hall reporter with *CKSL Radio* in London, has joined *The London Free Press* as a reporter. The *Free Press* has initiated a new community news column written by **Dale Martin** and **Penny Gudgeon**.

Diane Nagorsen, formerly at the *Atikokan Progress*, now is a reporter-photographer for the *London News*.

The Hamilton Press Club, now located at 23 John St. N., is looking for a new site.

Mel Morris has been city editor of the *Toronto Star* since June, where he had been Saturday editor.

An annual community service award

Classified

TELEPHONE ORDERS NOW ACCEPTED. Until Dec. 9 (guaranteed insertion), Dec. 12 (insertion not guaranteed) for next issue. Distrib. Dec. 20. First 20 words, including address, free up to three consecutive issues. Each additional word, 25¢ per insertion. Indicate **boldface** words. Display heads: 14-pt., \$1 per word; 18-pt., \$1.50 per word. Box number, \$2.50.

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PUBLICATIONS

Media Probe: searching articles on the role of public communication and mass media in Canadian society. Published quarterly, \$3 a year. 85 Thorncliffe Park Drive #1402, Toronto M4H 1L6.

offered by directors of the North Bay and District Chamber of Commerce has been named in honor of the late **Betty Alcorn**, former city editor of *North Bay Nugget*. The first recipient will be named in October.

Ottawa Today, the capital's new tabloid daily, says it will publish a Sunday edition in the spring and deliver it to subscribers' homes. The paper's president, **Bill Morrison**, said the paper's first-week sales were more than the 30,000 daily needed to break even.

John Di Fazio, 38, has been appointed publisher and general manager of *The Sentinel-Review*, of Woodstock, succeeding **R. Garnet Dundas**.

Colin Ludlow, editor of the *Collingwood Times*, leaves to be reporter for the *Owen Sound Sun-Times*.

QUEBEC

The three oldest tabloid weeklies in Montreal, with a combined circulation of 56,000, closed down mid-September. The three sisters, *La Patrie*, *Le Petit Journal*, and *Photo-Journal*, were 98, 51, and 42 years old respectively. Although owner-publisher **Normand Robidoux** blamed "unreasonable union demands," according to **Richard Cleroux** of *The Globe and Mail*, the papers "were victims of poor management decisions going back to 1952 and a chronic failure to spot trends and keep up with them." The papers ignored television in the news columns and advanced deadlines from Saturday night, thereby losing the edge they had on late-breaking news to Saturday editions of dailies. **Cleroux** says that during the 60's, implementation of roto color Saturday edition supplements and growing public reliance on television for features meant family weeklies could not compete with the Peladeau pop weeklies, containing gossip and news behind the television screen.

Pierre O'Neill, a former press secretary to prime minister Trudeau, is director of television and radio news for *CBC French* network after two years as head of a CIDA journalism school in Dakar, Senegal. It is rumored that **O'Neill** still has close ties with Mr. Trudeau and may try to weed out alleged separatist bias in *Radio-Canada* broadcasting. **Mr. O'Neill**, however, claims that this is not true and that he is not even a Liberal.

Fernand Roy, *La Presse's* chief negotiator, stated that a 48-hr. walkout by reporters and photographers meant that *La Presse* and *Montreal-Matin*, housed in the same building, could not publish Oct. 7. The 200 *La Presse* workers, affiliated with the Confederation of National Trade Unions, protested management's refusal to consult the newspaper's sports writers about the choice of a new sports editor. The sports writers have elected their own editor and say they will only take orders from him. The workers have been without a contract since Dec. 31.

ATLANTIC

The Fredericton Press Club passed, with one dissenting vote, a motion of censure

Omnium

against the management and owners of *The Daily Gleaner* in response to the Aug. 12 firing of eleven *Gleaner* reporters and editors. Copies of the motion have been sent to the management of the *Gleaner*, the owner, **J.E. Irving**; and press clubs across Canada. Supporters of the motion saw the press club as the only organization through which journalists could express their objection.

Of the eleven *Gleaner* staff fired, most are back at work. **Peter Bryant** is now at *The Globe and Mail* in Toronto, **Peter Riley** and **Milton Thomas** at *The Windsor Star*, **Roger Alain** at the *North Shore Leader*, **Doug Milander** at *CBC Radio* in Moncton and **Allan Chambers** freelancing in Fredericton.

LEGAL

Gerry McAuliffe of *CBC's* the fifth estate is collecting funds to finance an appeal by photographer **Alex Kalnins** against his conviction for obstructing police while attempting to cover a potential story. **McAuliffe** had rounded up \$600 as of Oct. 5, but he estimates the cost of the appeal at \$1700. **Kalnins**, in addition, has spent about \$1500 fighting the charge. Contributions can be sent to **Gerry McAuliffe** marked personal, c/o 5th estate, 790 Bay St. 6th floor, Toronto, Ontario M5W 1E6.

MAGAZINES

The last issue of *Amex/Canada*, the American exiles' (draft resisters and deserters) magazine will roll off the presses in November, nine years after its first appearance.

After a couple of promising but problem-plagued years, *Canadian Review* has ceased publication. Publisher **Graydon Carter** sold his house to pay debts, he said, and was planning to leave the country to relax.

OBITUARIES

Julius Sterling (Woody) **Woodward**, former editor of the Saskatoon *Star-Phoenix* for 18 years, died Sept. 18 at the age of 95.

Albertan **Mo Faryna**, 22, radio reporter with *CJV Radio*, Melford, Saskatchewan, was killed in a head-on collision on his way to cover a town council meeting in a neighbouring community. **Faryna** had previously worked with a Medicine Hat radio station.

MISCELLANY

French wire service *AFP* beat the seismic waves of China's Nov. 15, 1976 Tang-Chan and Tientsin earthquake by 4 minutes, according to a story carried by *Le Monde* last year. The earthquake began at 14h53 (Paris time) and the flash from Peking of *Agence-France-Presse* was transmitted by Paris at 15h01. The waves showed on the seismographs of the Detection and Geographical Laboratory of the Atomic Energy Commissariat at 15h04:45. The "P" waves move at only eight or nine km/sec, while the electrical signals travelling over the wire move close to the speed of light — 300,000 km/sec. (30)

Omnium gatherum

QUOTES

"For what you realize when you have read through the entire range of English Canadian press reaction to Valliere's charges (which I have just done) is that the argument is in the main not over whether what he says is true, but whether it is respectable. The amount of comment on questions of fact is negligible. The real issue is, does it all come within the bounds of what one may say with some degree of credibility in public in our society. And in fact it turns out there are certain statements which, whether they are true or not, will simply be dismissed by the mainstream media because they are defined from the outset as outside the realm of what is possible." — Rick Salutin in *This Magazine* on *The Execution of Pierre Laporte* by Pierre Vallieres.

BRITISH COLUMBIA

The British Columbia and Yukon Community Newspaper Association met Sept. 22-24 in Richmond for its annual convention. Journalism legal problems was the main topic of discussion and speeches.

Metro, a Vancouver tabloid weekly, began publication Sept. 8, with publisher Christopher Stepien, 25, and editor Clive Cocking, 38, who plans to concentrate on the "personalities that shape our lives."

Dave Todd, formerly with *The Vancouver Sun*, is now with *B.C. Today* digging up new stories and angles.

Ken Rystrom, former managing editor of the *Vancouver (Wash.) Columbian*, is with the communications department at Washington State University.

MacMillan Bloedel's 15th annual journalism award for community newspaper writers in British Columbia went to Lorraine Aspden for her three-part series published in the *Kamloops News*. The articles explored the moral, legal and emotional problems of reuniting adopted children with their natural parents. Second prize went to Mary Ann Ruiter of the *Lakes District News-Houston Today*. Three honorable mentions were awarded to Pat Turkki of the *Kales District News-Houston Today*, Gordon Hamilton of the *Ladysmith-Chemainus Chronicle*, and Abby Day of the *Goldstream Gazette*.

THE WEST

Gerry Haslam, 32, editor of *The Winnipeg Tribune* since April '76, resigned Sept. 30 to be corporate communications director of MacMillan Bloedel Ltd. in Vancouver. Dona Harvey, 33, managing editor of the *Trib* since 1975, is the new editor.

The *Sunday Morning Star* begins publication in October in Edmonton and publisher John LeBel says the initial press run is about 60,000.

Dennis Gruending, producer of *CBC's* early morning *Saskatchewan Today*, moves to *CBC* newsroom. Caroline Brown, who produced *Saskatchewan Today* last season, succeeds Gruending.

The managing editor of the *Moose Jaw Times-Herald*, Joyce Walter, along with her husband Ron, has purchased the weekly *Esteven Mercury*.

Steve Rhodes, editor of *The Swift Current Sun* for 2 years, has been transferred to the Toronto office of Thomson Newspapers. Keith Pinsent, formerly editor of the *Orangeville (Ont.) Banner*, becomes editor of the *Sun*.

Adrian Ewins is leaving the *Leader-Post*

Oct. 24, to be staff reporter on *The Western Producer*, the Saskatchewan-based farm publication. Marie Wilson joins the *LP* as general reporter, and Azzo Rezori, formerly with the Truro N.S. *Daily News*, joins as staff correspondent in Swift Current.

ONTARIO

Barbara Byers, formerly a staff writer for *Broadcaster*, has been appointed editor of the magazine.

The *Orillia (Ont.) Packet and Times* has changed its name to the *Packet*.

Frederick Innes Ker, former editor and publisher of the *Hamilton Spectator* and former director and president of *The (See OMNIUM, page 15)*

