

content

Canada's National Newsmedia Magazine

November / December 1982. No.H5 \$2.75

Distributed December 1982

CONVERSATION
with a one-time re-
porter, news baron
Ken Thomson

Journeyman — one
reporter's jour-
nalistic journey

Journalists in Chile
risk being fired,
arrested, tortured
or killed for doing
their jobs.

Small wonder that
Ontario politicians
duck Hoyrangues





Season's Greetings

From all of us at *content*.
We've appreciated your enthusiastic
support during our first year
at Humber College.

content

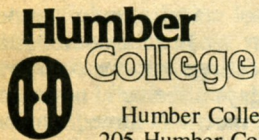
content

Canada's Newsmedia Magazine

Second class privileges pending

CONTENT is published six times per year
by Humber College of Applied Arts and Technology.

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Cover

Our cover is of press baron, Ken Thomson. In a rare interview, Thomson speaks candidly of his family and of himself. He admits he is a private person. "When I started out (as a reporter for one of his father's newspapers) I was a very conservative young man. I would have been just as happy not to meet people."

When his father died, Ken Thomson inherited the family business, which owns more than 200 newspapers and 31 magazines in Canada, the U.S. and Great Britain. In addition, the Thomson empire owns 12 publishing companies, an airline, the Hudson's Bay Company, and other corporations.

A note from the editor

It's hard to believe that this is issue number five of *content* at Humber. We begin a series of reminiscences by veteran journalist John Marshall, writing about his experiences as a Journeyman.

Lee Lester reviews coverage of The Falklands conflict in *Opinion*. Dave Silburt, a Toronto freelancer whose byline is new to *content*, profiles the controversial, irascible and Calvinistic Claire Hoy of the *Toronto Sun*.

For all of us who have speculated about the shy man who heads the Thomson empire, we have Steve Overbury's CONVERSATION with Ken

Thomson, recorded recently when the freelancer was researching a 300-word profile for *Business Journal*, publication of the Metropolitan Toronto Board of Trade.

Lynn Stevens, a Canadian living in Chile, writes frankly, but pseudonymously, about journalism under a repressive regime.

In *content's* next issue, our CONVERSATION with Roy Megarry and a profile of Newspaper Guild staff rep Linda Torney. And a somewhat disturbing glimpse into the future of public broadcasting in Canada.

News on the publishing front continues to be disquieting, primarily as a result of drops in advertising revenue. Lay-offs, stalemated contract talks and cutbacks in the surviving newsmedia organizations make our wish for a Happy New Year more fervent than usual. CP's Canadian Wire Service Guild local, though, has reached an agreement with management. For small blessings, thanks.

Keep those cards, letters and phone calls coming in. We depend on our readers to help us stay informed.

E.W.P.

Life in a Bubble

I learned quickly
that good things, like ego trips
don't last forever...

by Millie Stewart

Two years ago this month, I began a period in my life that can best be described as 17 months in a bubble. My dream of becoming an editor became a reality, but my newspaper had yet to be born.

On November 3, 1980 my career as editor of Metrospan's Consumer newspaper began - on a somewhat ominous note. I was terrified and my knees were knocking. I arrived at the corporate head offices in Willowdale to find my new office in a state of chaos. Desks were upside down, the filing cabinet wouldn't open and there were boxes of files all over the place.

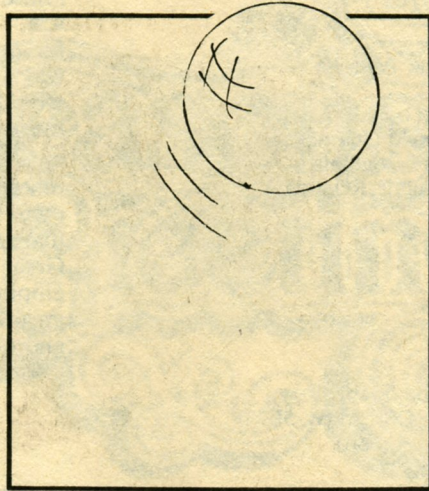
In a few days, things began to take shape.

The Consumers were an experiment, I knew when I agreed to take on the challenge. Jokes about the new papers as the president's babies and me as president's pet were so common that I got used to hearing them.

The official launch date for *The Consumers* was set for December 17, giving me a scant six weeks to give birth to a monster...make that several monsters.

The original concept of the *Consumers* was to provide additional competition for the corporation's major rival, Inland Publishing. In marketing terms, they were referred to as extended-reach vehicles for advertisers and a magazine on newsprint for the readers.

The Consumers were going to be distributed to the largest weekly audience of any paper in Metro Toronto or anywhere else for that matter...a whopping 225,000 per week. The thought of having so many potential readers was exhilarating. The territory covered by *The Consumers* ranged from Halton in the west to Scarborough and North York, then north through



Thornhill as far as Georgina (Lake Simcoe).

Establishing guidelines for any new paper takes time and hard work, but *The Consumers* had to be built from the ground up.

For Metrospan, it was the first venture of its kind; all other acquisitions had been either inherited or purchased. Countless meetings with marketing wizards, publishers and the president finally produced some concrete ideas and we were set to begin.

Being there at the newspaper's birth meant that I had to do a lot of quick learning. I had been taught the basics, and they helped, but overnight, I was expected to know *everything* about producing a weekly.

Knowing the ins and outs of process color was of prime importance; since the new *Consumers* were going to carry full color photos on the fronts. What did I know about process color? For crying out loud, I thought spot color was always red. With a great deal of help and a heap of patience I learned and learned well.

I couldn't begin to name everything else I was expected to know. Not every edition of *The Consumers* could be printed at Newsweb in the beginning because of press time and some were jobbed out. That meant I had to fully understand all technical terms involved in such an operation and be able to speak fluent offset printing. That, too, I learned.

Because so many people wanted their opinions to be considered, the number of meetings became overpowering. Some days it seemed I never saw my desk. The meetings turned into bull sessions with ideas coming from left and right and bouncing off the walls. For some unexplainable reason, these meetings were most productive, and before I knew it, we were ready to roll.

How did I feel when the first edition came off the presses? Mighty relieved, because the first six weeks had been pure hell. At the same time, I was excited, jubilant, overjoyed and damn proud of my achievement. And I did it without any editorial staff — so what if I almost had a breakdown?

Once the complexities of the project were realized, I was told to hire appropriate editorial staff. Believe me, they didn't have to tell me twice. I needed help in the worst way. I knew the writers hired for the project had to be the best and I knew just where to get them.

My Associate Editor, Shaaron Hay, I stole from one of the corporation's weeklies. She was ready for a change and probably as excited about this challenge as I was. We had worked together in the past, and I knew she would provide a much-needed calming influence, balancing my tendency to go off in several directions at once. Shaaron also possessed a fine sense of

the ridiculous, which caused her to coin the phrase 'we're living in a bubble'.

Along with all that, Shaaron had great talent for organization. She saw what needed doing and went ahead and did it.

Another writer was essential and we decided to hire Diane Marshall. She had worked with us one summer, and I enjoyed her writing. Diane managed to fit right into our crazy world and her sense of humor kept us from going mad.

Diane was willing to try just about anything and talk to anyone to get a good story.

The photographer, the fourth member of our team, had to have extra special talents. After careful consideration, we selected Terry Williams from among several applicants for the job. We never regretted our joint decision to hire Terry Williams. She was fresh from college, a newlywed, very young and almost as crazy as the rest of us. In other words, she fit right in.

Now we had the team of creative weirdos together and all the world was our stage. We thought we were something special in those early days and were content to ride on the ego train as long as it lasted. Someday we suspected, the bubble would burst, but we ignored that possibility. Everything we wanted for the project we got, was granted simply because it was a new venture on which Metrospan was prepared to spend money to make money.

Being the editor of the president's pet project had good points and drawbacks. Now, I called the president "John", where before, I had been a nobody reporter from a small town — and a woman, besides. A major showdown came when the other editors excluded me, without explanation, from an all-editor's meeting. So I crashed it, appeared in the board room and told all those men what I thought.

I left that meeting with the feeling that I had won. The majority of my colleagues were ready to accept me as just another editor doing a job.

Ironically, that meeting was my last assignment for Metrospan, because that evening I left on vacation and when I returned, the corporation had taken over Inland Publishing and was now called Metroland. It would be at least a year until the implications, for The Consumers, became apparent.

With the takeover, our strategy of competing with Inland naturally changed and we had to revise our thinking about the Consumer concept. Many people became involved in planning sessions at that time. Not only was I dealing with John Baxter, the president, but now I dealt, to a great extent,

with several publishers from both chains.

Publishers as a rule, are great people, but when you have to deal with five of them at the same time and all five have differing ideas, it can and does become confusing.

Each week, the staff asked if we were going to run general features or local stories. With five separate communities to serve, localizing material isn't easy; especially when there are only two people to do the writing. We did try the local approach because from the individual publisher's viewpoint it was better, but it just didn't work.

Keeping the features on general themes seemed to be the only feasible solution. Our stories were always original and we realized that nowhere

else would we have been given such an opportunity to try new ideas and develop such a wide scope in writing.

It isn't easy transforming people who have worked extensively in news into fantastic feature experts, but we did it.

Fashion writing and photos became an integral part of The Consumers and that meant everyone on the staff had to become an overnight fashion expert. Sounds easy? No way. The world of high fashion is an exclusive one and breaking into it requires a great deal of skill as Shaaron and Diane and I learned.

Convincing those in the world of fashion that we knew what we were doing took public relations, but eventually, our fashion spreads became fun.

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Would your newspaper use this picture to describe what a labour union is doing?



The activities of a labour union are much more than strikes and picket line confrontations with the police.

A union is:

- A classroom where workers learn to become leaders;
- Working men and women standing together to fight for each other's rights;
- Having a say about working conditions;
- Getting a fair wage and decent fringe benefits to protect you and your family in times of illness and need;
- People helping other people, regardless of race, creed or colour, and . . .
- A union is an organization made up of people much like yourself, who coach hockey and baseball, help senior citizens, belong to ratepayers organizations and so on . . .

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PS: Next time you're stuck for a story idea, why not find out what the local unions in your community are really up to!

Meddling by the British Ministry of Defence

by Lee Lester

When television covered its 'first war' in Vietnam it showed a terrible truth of war in a manner new to mass audiences. A case can be made, and certainly should be examined, that this was cardinal to the disillusionment of Americans with this war, the cynicism of many young people towards America and the destruction of Lyndon Johnson's tenure of office.

William Small, *CBS News Director*

The widely-held belief that the US lost the war in Vietnam on the screens of ABC, CBS and NBC persists. And the recent Falklands conflict would seem to indicate that the British Ministry of Defence in Whitehall was determined that it should not suffer in the same way as did the Pentagon. Only that or absolute bumbling incompetence can account for its treatment of the media in the South Atlantic war.

The perhaps more likley explanation that the press had to be 'handled' was possibly forecast by Philip Knightley in his brilliant 1975 study of war reporting, *The First Casualty*, when he wrote:

"Television's power seems to have impressed British observers even more than the Americans. The director-general of the Royal United Service Institution, Air Vice-Marshal S.W.B. Menaul, believes that television has a lot to answer for (in) the collapse of American morale in relation to the Vietnam war."

The then editor of *The Economist*, Alistair Burnet, "himself a TV man", wrote that the reporting of Vietnam had made it very difficult for two American administrations to continue the war, "which was going on in American homes," irrespective of the merits or demerits of why the United States was actually involved in Vietnam.

Robin Day, the BBC commentator, told a seminar of the Royal United Service Institution that the war on colour-television screens in American living rooms had made Americans far more anti-militarist and anti-war than anything else. "One wonders if in future a democracy which has uninhibited television coverage in every home will ever be able to fight a war, however just...The full brutality of the combat

will be there in close up and colour, and blood looks very red on the colour television screen."

And the Director of Defence Operations, Plans and Supplies at the Ministry of Defence, Brigadier F.G. Caldwell, said the American experience in Vietnam meant that if Britain were to go to war again, "we should have to start saying to ourselves, are we going to let the television cameras loose on the battle field?"

With a government in power as strongly against freedom of information as the present Conservative team, it is little wonder that conflict with the press raged during the Falklands operation. The story of that conflict has emerged in evidence the British war correspondents have subsequently given to a House of Commons select committee on defence. *UK Press Gazette* summed up what they had to say with the headline, "The delays, deceit, and how we lost the war of words."

Here are just a few excerpts from the evidence given by more than 30 journalists, newspapers and other organizations:

I found the Mod PRs lazy - loath to agree to anything that involved them in doing any work; obstructive — their stock reply to any suggestion was 'impossible' resulting in reporters having to set up everything themselves; dishonest — I was lied to by them on a number of occasions.

They had no grasp of the urgency of stories. I had rushed out stories only to see them put the copy in their pocket and say they will look after it after they had dinner. They were quite put out when told they should check the story and get it out first and eat later.

As far as I am concerned, I failed on every major aspect of the war. I had all of those stories, from the sinking of the Belgrano to the missile stack on Sheffield to the ceasefire and surrender of Port Stanley, but I was stopped from sending them in time for the next day's edition of my newspaper, the biggest circulation national newspaper in Britain.

Tony Snow, *Sun*.

The extraordinary thing is that the ministry of defence's civil servants, both locally with the Task Force and in London, seemed to err towards the...point of view that the whole thing would have been better without any press at all and should have been conducted with a news blackout. Clearly a better policy has to be worked out for future operations.

Robert Fox, *BBC*.

The Royal Navy failed totally and miserably to understand the mood of the nation. They failed miserably to grasp the opportunity to exploit the value news stories on the ability and morale of Britain's forces heading towards the South Atlantic would have back home...They were abetted all along the line by the Ministry of Defence press officers...Their role was to stifle us.

They seemed unable to drag themselves away from the cossetted environment in which they normally deal with defence correspondents. They were totally unequipped for a wartime role. They did not understand the requirements of newspapers, radio or television organizations. They had absolutely no sense of urgency or news sense. They had absolutely no sense of deadlines or how to project a story to obtain maximum impact. In my opinion, they were completely out of their depth.

In many ways, I found that covering the Russian invasion of Afghanistan was easier than going to the Falklands. The Russians knew fully well the value of publicity and gave us assistance. They tried to get their message across. Our senior servants and military heads did not.

Alastair McQueen, *Daily Mirror*.

We quickly discovered that even the most trifling details were regarded by ministry of defence men as potential newsy tidbits for Argentine intelligence and they slashed away at the facts with enthusiasm. Their zeal produced a fresh crop of absurdities.

Patrick Bishop, *The Observer*.

On land, the delays in getting copy back to London were appalling. Our correspondent would rush to write his

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Journalists in Chile risk being fired, arrested, tortured or killed for doing their jobs

by Lynn Stevens

Journalists in Chile today must accept self-censorship and one-sided coverage of the news or face being fired, arrested, tortured or even killed, simply for doing their jobs.

"If a minister tells a press conference that elephants are pink and fly, journalists must report it without question," says Patricia Verdugo, writer for the magazine, *Hoy* (Today), well-known for its opposition to Chile's 9-year-old military regime.

Pablo Portales, general secretary of the Santiago section of the Colegio de Periodistas (a large professional college representing Chilean journalists) says there has been a deterioration in journalists' work and working conditions.

In spite of government promises to the contrary, news conferences with no questions permitted and harassment of reporters continue to be the norm, Portales says.

"For example, just last Thursday, two Associated Press reporters were arrested by airport police and held for six hours." Carlos Cisternas Tapia and Santiago Llanquin were trying to cover former Justice Minister Jaime Castillo's illegal attempt to return to Chile after a year in exile. While under arrest they were accused of distributing subversive pamphlets and treated like common delinquents. Upon release they reported that police had tried to photograph them with banners containing references to Chile's political exiles.

Severe political restrictions coupled with total economic insecurity has meant journalists become accustomed to not being able to cover all the news.

"They wait for a call from someone organizing a press conference, especially when it comes to political news," says Portales.

"The press is afraid to look at the reality of what's happening," he adds. "The authorities are very sensitive to what appears; they don't want to have any problems."

He spoke of frequent phone calls to owners and editors of radio stations and publications, warning about information that isn't allowed to appear.

"Journalists know the rules of the game," he says. "I've seen them ask a

union leader, for example, to speak less strongly, so they can use what he says."

Journalism students learn early about the new limitations on their chosen profession. In 1980, two students were kidnapped by civilians, interrogated and tortured. One of them was Eduardo Jara, a student with too many economic problems to be involved in any political, or other activities. He died, hours after being dumped on a deserted road. The lesson was clear.

More recently, students at the Catholic University held peaceful marches to protest the kidnapping, torture and rape of a young philosophy major. Days later, journalism student, Edmundo Urtubia, found himself kicked out of university.

Acting university president, Vice-Admiral Jorge Swett, told Urtubia that sometimes good people have to pay for the sins of the bad.

According to Urtubia, Swett also said: "...in a group, the tall guys and the bald ones are the most obvious (Urtubia is unusually tall)." That appears to have been the only thing that distinguished him from hundreds of other students who participated in the protest and continue their studies in peace.

Students who complete their degrees face TV channels with security services responsible for investigating anyone who applies for work. Newspapers and radio stations depend more on a system of self-censorship, in which each reporter and magazine—newspaper/radio station decides what it can and cannot say, according to prevailing political winds.

Cecilia Atria, of the Catholic Magazine, *Solidaridad* says: "You begin to feel guilty, begin to hide things which you know, which other people should know. Sometimes I'll do an interview for, say, an hour and a half, and find only a small part of it was useable."

"Self-censorship is a horrendous responsibility," says *Hoy's* Verdugo. "For any decent, professional journalist it's really dramatic. You have to guess what you can and cannot print. There's no clear policy and you never know from one day to the next where the limit is."

"You try to write between the lines. One month you can say more, more directly. Then things regress to the way they were two or three months earlier."

The pressure wears journalists down, say Verdugo, who recently received a number of threatening phone calls against her family and herself. Later, two men left a gutted fish at her house. Although there was no direct message, the return address (*Puerto Montt*) is a code name used by the secret police to indicate a death sentence (*Pena de Muerte*).

Other journalists mentions words you can't use, like "torture," "struggle," "political prisoners." But it goes deeper than words. Facts and events are also censored, or held back until they're deemed less damaging or unsuppressible.

One seasoned reporter from Santiago's most prestigious daily, the *Mercurio*, told a class of journalism students he knew about a major crime involving secret police, months before it reached the front pages of the papers. Asked why he never reported on it, he said: "There's just no point. No one dares say anything."

An investigative journalist was delving into stock market manipulations and scandal in a major Chilean city. Although she had recently been promoted, she was dismissed from her post after the secret police spoke to her employer.

Recently, the editorial writer of the *Mercurio* was removed from his post after the paper's owner was discreetly approached by Chile's military president, General Augusto Pinochet.

"The media just doesn't want to get into a bad situation with the authorities," Portales emphasizes. "There's a very strong interest in the business end of things. If your radio station is closed for six days, that's going to create a lot of economic problems, and problems with advertisers too."

Although it tries to maintain an appearance of non-interference, the government doesn't hesitate to close down those media which don't conform to its unspoken rules. On September 24th of this year, it closed down *APSI*, a small, independent magazine which makes no

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One reporter's journalistic journey

by John Marshall

You can take a well-worn air force greatcoat, hack a swath off the bottom to make a hood that buttons to the collar, and you've got a parka. Money-saving ploys like that were not the least important of the many things I learned by leaving the world of normal people and becoming a journeyman journalist.

I learned mechanical things: If you're having trouble finding the lead for a news story, you can often conjure it up by thinking of the headline for the item instead.

I learned life-shaping things: A vocation that encourages careful skepticism and exposes you to all aspects of society is likely to shake you loose from the verities of your upbringing, in my case, one that equated Christianity, capitalism and conservatism with the natural order of the universe.

And after 36 years of using my many satisfactions from the work to restrain my dissatisfaction with a "free" press that is totally free only to its owners, I also learned that you can become so disillusioned you have to quit. Which I did.

However, unlike the equally disillusioned Walter Stewart, who told a group of young reporters at the *Globe and Mail* that they should get out of the newspaper business, I still recommend print news gathering as a career for others. There is no job like it...

For just plain fun (I've operated the haunting whistle on a thundering steam locomotive and I've ridden the boom of a crane like a dragon fly on the nearly finished top of the CN Tower in Toronto)...

For adventure (I've joined the firemen inside a burning building — that eventually was gutted. And I've hugged the graffitied walls of Belfast to the angry crack of sniper fire)...

For the chance to play detective (I've exposed some harmful secrets of cults, con-men, criminal bikers and quite a few corporations)...

For the opportunity to study at length many subjects (including politics, psychic mythologies, addictions, future studies, the problems of aging, religions, town planning, native people)...

And for, yes, the cliché, the chance to meet so many interesting people. (I'm talking about news gatherers who have not devoted their careers to the

sports or financial sections.)

If I was just starting out at earning a living — from school or, as in 1945, from four and a half years in uniform — I'd go, into newspaper journalism. But, it would be nice to be better prepared. And that means not only having options opened by proper training, but eyes opened to the faults of the system and the people in it.

That greatcoat renovation chore was a case of needing something more practical than the obligatory newsman's collar-up-under-the-fedorah trenchcoat when, in mid winter, I switched from my first civilian job at the building industry's Daily Commercial News (Toronto's other daily) to a "real" news job on a weekly in the boreal climate of northwestern Quebec.

Of course, when I went out on assignment I felt that everyone thought I looked like a scrawny gut in recycled military issue. I did. Like an early version of Vonnegut's Billy Pilgrim. But it kept me warm. That was more than you could say about a reporter's pay envelope. For real warmth, even now, you have to go into public relations, or plumbing, or some other equally predacious pursuit. I began my 5 and a half day weeks at \$25, which, with a war-bridge and a baby also involved, meant dipping into the Victory Bonds.

A bit more than a year later at the Rouyn-Noranda Press, the Friday handout was up to \$40. However, considering the northern cost of living, it didn't mean getting a real parka. But it did cover the cost of firewood for the little kitchen stove that was supposed to heat five uninsulated rooms and melt snow that sifted onto our bedroom floor through cracks around the window.

However, still warm in the mind is the memory of the initial thrill (in part romanticism, in part look-at-me egotism) of the realization that I was earning my bread and butter and even an occasional beer by going around talking to people and putting words on paper. Anyone who does not anticipate that emotion — or the allied elation about laying out an eye-grabbing front page or organizing a newsroom-emptying operation right on deadline, shouldn't think of getting into the business.

Anyone already in the craft and who lets sense of wonder atrophy, should either quit or become a publisher. A

newspaper issue is a specialized living product that is much more than just some other consumer good — even if *Globe and Mail* chief Roy Megarry did equate newspapers with auto dealerships and widget manufacturers when he was expressing the Thomson Newspaper line against modest government proposals to limit chain ownerships. Administration expert Megarry said newspapers should be treated no differently than the car and widget operations.

If you can't become a publisher or a publisher's aide, you could maybe retire to a rim job where you can concentrate until pension time on mechanics. Good copy editors, I quickly apologize, are not only a joy to the mind, they are a writer's indispensable coach and back-up. But it's too easy on that side of the desk — as it is for other editors or writers kept in the same jobs too long — to become the equivalent of a worker at Litton Industries.

They can evolve into wage earners fitting words together just as they fit cruise missile components together, with skill possibly, but with no philosophical or emotional commitment to the product and its potentials. The key to retaining enthusiasm is the one that was instinctive in our childhood: curiosity. About everything. If you stop asking why, if you think you have arrived, you're finished.

There was Ken MacTaggart, a globe-trotting reporter with the *Globe and Mail* and later at the *Toronto Telegram* where I first met him. One late afternoon about 25 years ago, I was a recently-employed and harassed early night editor doing wind-up chores to put the final edition to bed. (That was when afternoon papers used to be afternoon papers before we did away with the inefficiencies of mechanical typesetting and copy paper.) I was disconcerted to discover that Ken, just back from another glamorous African assignment, was the only available reporter in the newsroom when I needed someone to take a routine three paragraphs worth of material on rewrite-desk phone. With some diffidence, to put it mildly, I asked if he was clear to do it. He reacted with the sincere and bubbling kind of enthusiasm that disdainful

juniors reserve for multiple axe murders. You learn from colleagues like that.

On the other hand, I can recall the many cynical and world-weary in the business who, whatever it is, have seen it all before. They pop up in clusters like amanita mushrooms after a late summer rain. One of their habitats, though not exclusively so, is the plane-bus roadshow of election campaigns where they practice the easy incestuousness of pack journalism.

Sometimes, of course, they are driven to it by editors, who are uncomfortable if their reporters' stories do not match detail for detail those of the opposition (where there is such) or those on the wire. These are the editors I call insurance men. They are paranoid about the possibility some more senior editor might ask them why Joe's story did not include, as the oppositions did, the fact that Joe Clark stumbled. They are the same ones who are always hav-

ing their reporters pulled out of meetings or beds to answer a question that is either frivolous or which could be answered from the newsroom Canadian Almanac. The *Toronto Star's* desk had been particularly guilty of that. Editors there always seem to be looking over their shoulders. They don't seem to operate by that old self-confident standard that you always have at least one big mistake coming to you. (At the *Sudbury Star*, as news editor, it was when I wrote an eight-column 96-point banner announcing there was to be a gas pipeline built from the West. Only I wrote "oil". And it wasn't caught.)

Editorial departments, in their mix of cynical pragmatism and probing idealism, and in the variety of their demands on their occupants, constitute a world of paradoxical contrasts.

I draw my observations from a visiting acquaintance with many plus tours of duty in nine, ranging from 15 and a half years at the capriciously banal/

brilliant *Toronto Telegram* to about five weeks at the *Oshawa Times Gazette* (Lord Thomson moved in just after I did after fleeing another Thomson paper, so I moved out). These newsrooms varied in size from a two-desk cubbyhole where I was editor, legman, ad salesman and office manager, to the kind where the superiors summoned their minions by speakers scattered through an acre of fluorescent ceiling.

These places of extremes can be both energizing and enervating, inspiring and stultifying. Anyone entering the craft can anticipate periods of adrenal excitement, but should be prepared for sessions of frustrated boredom.

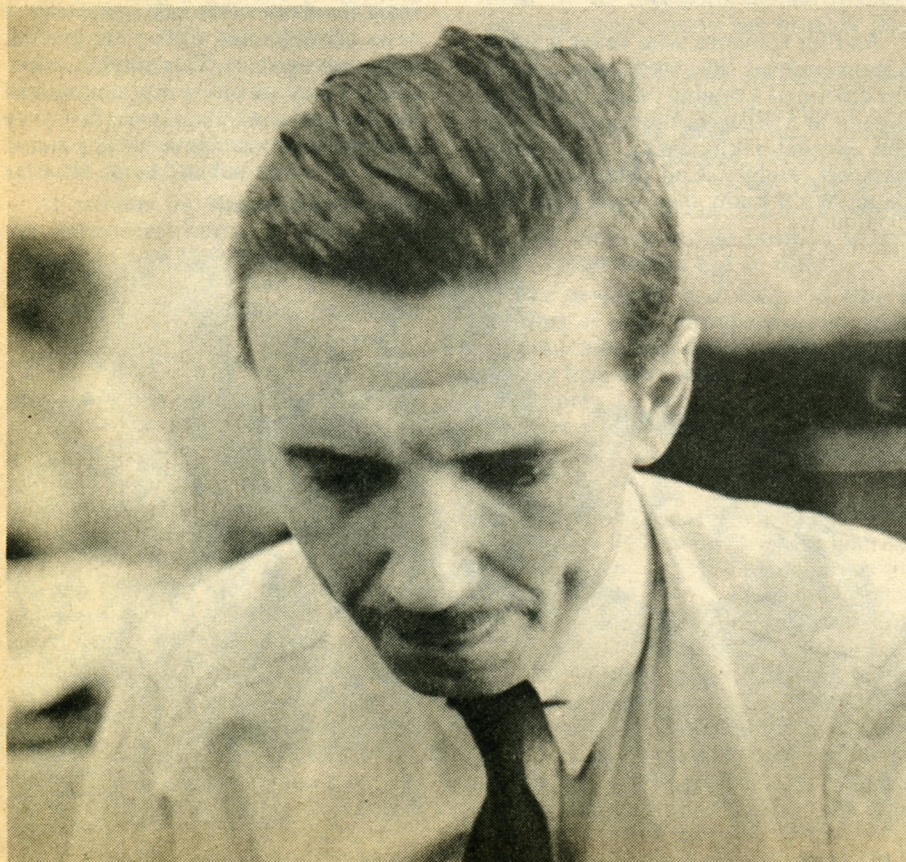
And periods of standing. My God, how often and for how long you stand! Usually in a crowd with pad and ballpoint shoved up under your chin in the crush. I can recall more than seven sweating hours (from 12:35 to 7:58 p.m. according to my notes) in April, 1968, in front of Pierre Trudeau's arena box, never moving away because I'd never get back, one sip of milk and one sip of his Coke staving off dehydration, until finally he was elected leader of the Liberals.

And on the editor's side of the desk there is the sitting, often for too much of the kindergarten routine of cut and paste (I switched to writing before the electronic equivalent of the scissors came in to use). There was too much railroading of copy, of heads, of giving out assignments, because of a lack of staff to do the job the way it should be done: thoughtfully.

And so much of the waiting on the writer's side was (and is) because of the editor's insecurities in following a convention that says news is not news unless it's ladled out daily—edition by edition, where such still honestly exist. So, instead of being used more productively, reporters are always waiting for juries to come out, waiting for closed-session doors to open, waiting for return phone calls, waiting through droning meetings for some possible crumb of interest, waiting for stake-outs for some inevitably fatuous denouement.

There was the irrationality outside the United Nations building doorway when Premier Kosygin and his interpreter interrupted their escorted

Young, lean and keen. John Marshall, news editor, The Sudbury Star in the early '50's.



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struggle towards a waiting limousine to shout over the heads of the crowd at me and my waving notepad. In Russian and in English they hollered that the Soviet leader could not give an answer to my shouted question about when he would be meeting President Johnson. Absurd. But better, I suppose, than the results of other time-wasting vigils and often arrogant or pointless no-comments. Which is still better than, I guess, a Trudeau shrug — or a Trudeau finger.

And then there is the numbing no-challenge pounding out of formula five-W fillers on 70-year-old Underwoods (the business offices get the electrics) or the tapping out of the same into newly-radiating VDTs (the typesetters got the business). Scalps, press releases, matchers, police and fire checks. Knowing the exigencies of the business, old hands can handle them without complaint or with MacTaggart enthusiasms, enjoying the relaxation. But it's another thing if, because of a poorly-administered or budgeted newsroom, he or she gets stuck with whole shifts or even a week of shifts being a cub reporter. The best of them at the perpetually under-staffed *Globe and Mail* where even specialized beat reporters find themselves as general junior reporters on a week of nights or on weekends. That sort of thing was going on even when the *Globe* was making so much money it could finance its own way into the costly national edition.

And then, particularly on the smaller dailies and the weeklies (particularly in the Thomson provincials), there are the compulsory Chamber of Commerce luncheons: the service club bun throws. The free lunch is fine, even helpful, considering the pay scales, but then there is the necessity of writing up the guest speaker's clichés about government over-spending. If you try to get into your copy the fact that he arrived in a publicly subsidized Chrysler and likely wrote its use off his business tax, and parking costs too, you'll be told it's gratuitous commentary.

I even recall *Tely* managing editor J. D. MacFarlane (later journalism dean at Ryerson Polytechnical Institute) rejecting my proposal for a look at the way the petroleum corporations were obviously fixing prices at the pumps and pushing around their so-called independent lessees. That wasn't real news, he indicated, that was a matter of internal company operations. Sacred, he could have said. Many years later, my gasoline-station story finally made it, as a controversial page-one series in the *Globe and Mail*.

There is still a great deal wrong with the newspaper business, particularly its lack of public accountability, but there have been improvements, including the fact that on occasions some elements of private enterprise can be put under the kind of scrutiny normally reserved for government enterprises and outright crime.

The satisfactions on becoming a journeyman reporter can come from many things, rarely foreseen. There was the compliment while on a mixed vacation/ assignment from the *Sudbury Star* (a way both of us saved money) in being kicked out of a depressing pre-integration Mississippi town by a pot-gutted sheriff. There was the privilege of having Buckminster Fuller as a delightful and delighted house guest. There was the elation of threading the cordilleras of quake-shattered Chile in a tiny two-seater plane. And the utter joyousness of breathing the Arctic blast of the slipstream on the open loading ramp of a huge Yukon cargo plane thundering a few feet above the polar ice.

There is the quieter, though no less intense gratification, of having been given time for major series involving many interviews and the kind of research work that I missed by not going to university (or completing high school, for that matter).

And for someone who never wanted a conventional life, there was always the chance of a ringing phone scattering dreams at 5:30 in the morning. "Get to the airport right away — y'gotta passport, right?...Call when you get there. We'll know then what plane we

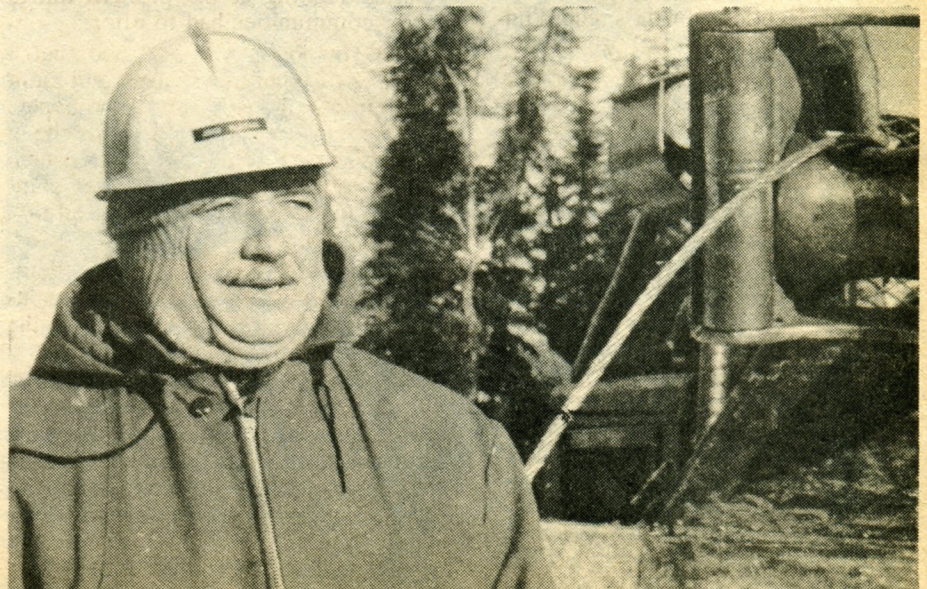
can getcha on. See you." And, mentally locating the emergency bag with the extra shaving gear packed, you holler into the controlled panicsville at the other end, "Hey, waitaminit! Where'my going'?" The don't-bother-me voice snaps something about Belfast and, "They're at it again."

Not that that sort of thing happens to many of us that often. As the laconic writer-broadcaster Gordon Donaldson once said in his Scot's burr in the *Tely's* old Melinda Street firetrap (now buried under the Bank of Commerce complex): "You know what's exciting about working here? It's coming in in the morning and never knowing to where in the world they'll be sending (well-timed pause) Peter Worthington.

That millionaire partner in the *Toronto Sun* used to be one of the best globally-assigned legmen in the business, a reporter who made his own "luck" by being in the right spot at the right time. (Who hasn't seen his face in the picture of Lee Harvey Oswald being killed). He was one of the best. Then, on his personal road to Damascus — actually the road to and from Moscow where he operated the *Tely's* bureau, he got religion. It's the political kind with a pantheon of devils: communism, Trudeauism and, strangely, Joe Clarkism. He changed.

Change can happen in any kind of career, I suppose. But I suspect that those involved in the inky gathering of news about human society are particularly susceptible. This applies especially if they are on the reporting side of the desk, out on the street, and even more so if they are generalists not confined to a one-subject beat. Because

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Less lean, equally keen. Marshall in a lumber camp in north-west Ontario.



“Hear Ye—Hear Ye”

Pembroke Observer

120th Year—No. 200 The Pembroke Observer—Tuesday, August 31, 1982 26¢ Per Copy—\$1.26 per week by courier

GOOD-NEWS

EDITION

Good news — bad news

by Eugene Ellmen

Last Aug. 16, a strange thing happened in the lives of the people of Cape Breton Island. On Aug. 31, the same unusual event occurred for citizens in Pembroke, Ont., a city in the Ottawa Valley. And Sept. 23, the same startling occurrence happened for residents of Orillia, a community nestled amid the ski hills of central Ontario.

The unusual event that linked three such disparate communities involved each of their daily newspapers.

For the first time since the *Cape Breton Post*, *Pembroke Observer* and *Orillia Packet and Times* began publishing, they served their readers with editions devoid of bad news.

No murders. No wars. No depressing unemployment forecasts (particularly unusual in light of Canada's record unemployment rate). And no stories criticizing local and national politicians for their policies encouraging murders, wars and record unemployment.

Instead, the three newspapers treated their readers to such stories as the start of a \$1.6 million Orillia township sewage project, an announcement of a Cape Breton job creation program and a forecast by Pembroke mayor Angus Campbell that his city is about “to undergo a good news period.”

The news was upbeat, optimistic and friendly. After a summer of depressing economic news the three newspapers decided to skip the gloomy forecasts and emphasize the good news in their communities.

“Our advertisers, and you our readers, have suggested in many ways that you agree, that it is time for a break in the doom and gloom style of news re-

porting, and so here it is, our first good news edition,” announced the *Pembroke Observer*, proudly.

“We left out some news today, but we doubt if you will even miss it, or for that matter if it was all that vital that you even read it.

The *Packet* echoed these comments: “We are responding to what appears to be popular demand, from Orillia and district residents who are a little tired of all the bleak news that the economy particularly has brought this summer.”

And so it went. After the three papers published their special editions, advertisers, business leaders and average citizens in Cape Breton, Pembroke and Orillia cheered the move. Their view was that it was about time newspapers started looking at the positive things their communities had to offer.

The response was so good that a number of other newspapers and radio stations telephoned each of the papers asking for extra copies. Plans may be in the works to repeat the experiment elsewhere. In fact, the *Observer* planned to run a second good news edition before the end of November.

But while the newspapers themselves and business leaders took an attitude of “It's all right, Jack” to the unusual editions, shudders went through many journalists who read the papers or heard about the move.

While many journalists agreed the media often emphasize bad news, they were unprepared for the “mayor-for-a-day” world of the good news editions. The experiment touched a sore point with many journalists who saw the move as boosterism, at best, and catering to advertisers, at worst.

The apprehension felt by many journalists toward the good news editions was increased by the welcoming response the special publications received. Many feared that if other newspapers copy the trend, there could be a new assault on journalism that challenges the status quo.

While the advent of the good news edition came as a surprise to many journalists, the practice of good news journalism is not new in Canada or other countries.

Canadian newspapers have published “progress” or year-end inserts emphasizing local business achievements for decades. Sometimes, advertisers have been allowed to read copy inserted into these editions if a particular story dealt with a business advertised in the paper.

In addition, radio station *CFRB* in Toronto has, since 1969, employed summer students as good news reporters who cover “the light side of news.” According to a *CFRB* release, this includes human interest stories, family activities in southern Ontario and community organization efforts.

And in the United States, Gannett Newspapers recently advertised a program for newspapers that reports the “good deeds from next door.”

Much motivation for this type of reporting has come from readers and listeners who have told newspapers and radio stations they are unhappy with what they believe is a stress on unhappy events.

“Now that spring is here, would you be so kind as to consider advising the Canadian public of some of the good things in life as well as the bad,” wrote

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Good news — bad news

Robert Smith of Mississauga in a letter to the *Toronto Star*.

Later in the year, after the *Globe and Mail* ran a page-one picture of high-jumper Debbie Brill holding her son, S.A. Higgins of Kitchener, Ont., wrote: "At a time when so many of our newspaper front pages seem to be occupied by photographs depicting the horrors of war and the vaporings of politicians, it was a particular pleasure to pick up my *Globe* and see your charming picture of Debbie Brill leaving the track in Brisbane...It's worthwhile reflecting on the fact that this represents sanity, achievement and human worth — not Beirut and Ottawa."

But while there seems to be a public perception that newspapers emphasize bad news, at least one content study suggests that newspaper coverage is actually a split between good, bad and indeterminate coverage, with each category sharing equally.

The study, by U.S. journalism professors Barbara Hartung and Gerald Stone, indicated that the bad news contained in nine Southern California newspapers in October, 1978 accounted for only 36.7 per cent of the total items. Good news items accounted for 33.8 per cent and indeterminate news accounted for 29.5 per cent.

Hartung and Stone said that while critics may call for more good news, readers actually read and remember more of the bad news.

"Our findings seem to refute the popular notion that there's too much bad news in newspapers, and we hope that's good news for the industry practitioners," concluded the professors in an article in the *Newspaper Research Journal*.

Despite the questionable demand for more good news, the editors and publishers of the three papers that ran recent good news editions accepted the public perception hook, line and sinker.

Ian MacNeil, the *Cape Breton Post* editor who started the ball rolling, said he initiated the idea for a good news edition after thinking how some Cape Breton industries, such as coal, are doing well, while much of his paper's reporting has been on the declining industries such as steel.

"We wanted to take a whack at the things that are doing well," he said in a telephone interview.

"A lot of people are of the opinion that there is too much doom and gloom," said *Pembroke Observer* publisher Bill Higginson. Higginson said the paper received a number of letters in response to the edition and all but one was complimentary. The critical letter writer complained that the paper broke a "sacred trust" by failing to report an aircraft being shot down in the Middle East.

"Christ, if we reported every plane shot down I doubt if anybody in the Ottawa Valley would care," said Higginson.

Even the reporters who were asked to come up with good news stories seemed to agree the special edition was a good thing.

"Our first reaction was that this was Mickey Mouse," said Brad Honywill, who was covering Orillia district at the time the *Packet* published its special

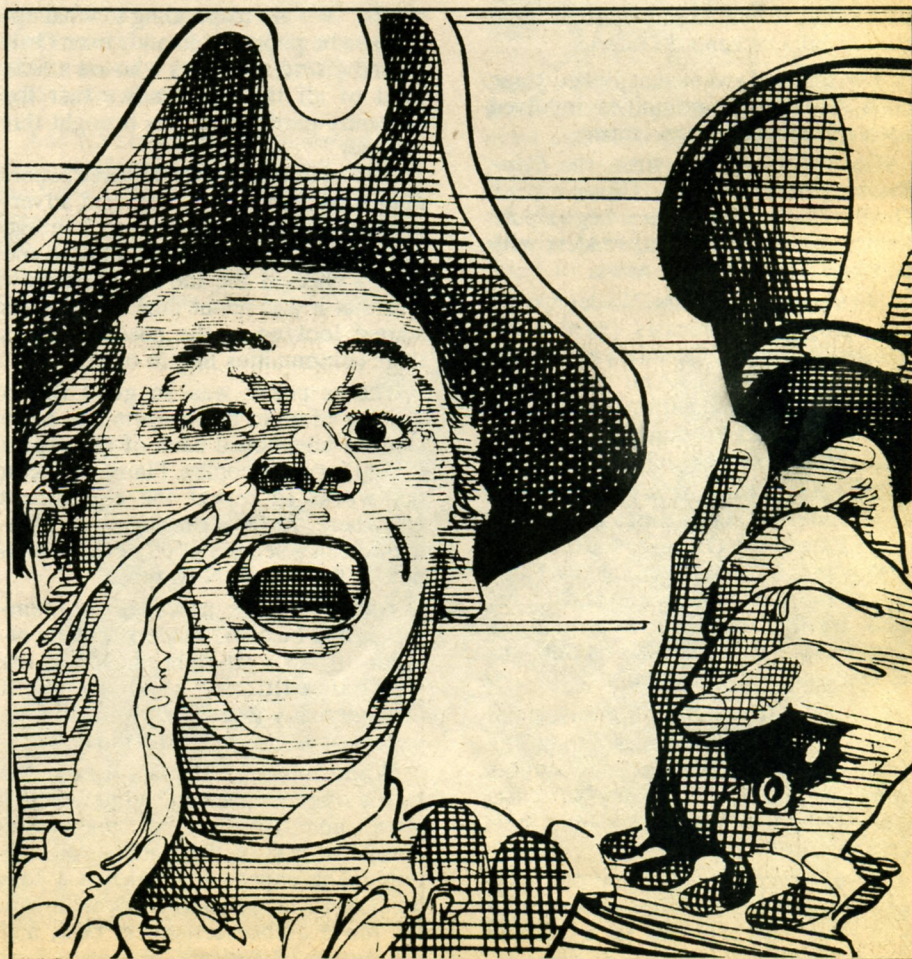
edition. "But after a while it turned into a fun thing. We enjoyed it."

While the reporters, editors and publishers of the good news papers strongly stand by their experiment, many journalists and media critics have opposed the move.

"I thought it was ridiculous because you're censoring the news in a way," said George Bain, who wrote a *Globe and Mail* column following publication of the *Post's* news edition. "You're depriving your readers of a true picture that is going on."

Bain, a former *Toronto Star* columnist and now Dean of Journalism at King's College in Halifax, said in an interview that good news editions deliberately create a false picture of the world.

"They're gratifying a wish to make their readers feel good about some-



thing," said Bain, adding that interest in bad events is the basic nature of news.

"Even in average conversation you're likely to run up to someone and tell the untoward things that have happened."

Parker Barass Donham, a former associate editor of the *Cape Breton Post* and 1981 Atlantic Journalist of the Year, said the idea of a good news edition, "stinks."

"It's completely contrary to what a newspaper is supposed to be about. It's not supposed to be a Caspar Milquetoast," he said in reference to the timid comic strip character.

Len Kubas, a Toronto newspaper consultant, said newspapers that have lost readers by failing to be controversial or by "generating feedback" in the past won't be able to win readers with good news editions.

"It says to me that they have lost touch with their readers and are flailing around like a punch-drunk fighter."

Some of these critics said there is even more serious objection to the good news editions. That is that good news panders to the wishes of advertisers and threatens the independence of newspapers.

Saying the editions were "tremendously appealing to advertisers," Donham added, "they're another example of the kinds of conflicts in Canadian newspapers between journalistic interests and advertising interests."

Bain also said the editions cast doubt on the credibility of the newspapers because of the "extra columns of advertising" generated by the pro-development and pro-business editions. Even *Orillia Packet* publisher Jack Marshall conceded that advertisers were more pleased with the idea. "In fact, not only was it an easy sell, merchants were phoning us to get in on it," he was quoted as saying in the Oct. 25 edition of *Marketing*, a magazine for the advertising and marketing industry.

While critics accuse the newspapers of catering to advertisers, representatives of the papers vigorously deny the good news editions were run to generate advertising.

"It didn't hurt us, but we didn't do it to boost advertising, we did it as 'catchy' thing," said *Packet* news editor Mark Furlong.

Cary Lambie, manager of editorial services for Thomson Newspapers, said the good news edition is not a good way to sell advertising.

While all three papers reported enough extra advertising to produce more pages (the *Post* put out 32 pages compared to an 20, the *Observer* pub-

lished 20 from 10 and the *Packet* ran 26 from a normal 16 or 18), Lambie said he suspects a large amount of this extra lineage came from "slide advertising" that would have run in future editions of the paper.

MacNeil said there would be no overall increase in ad revenues for the year because of the edition. Apart from the news value and advertising objections to the good news editions, the critics were unanimous in saying that lumping the good news into a single edition is offensive to journalistic values that look for balanced reporting.

"We're always open to criticism for writing more on the dark side than the light side," said Nick Hills, a former employee of the *Pembroke Observer*, who is now manager of Southam news service in Ottawa. "But I think that (good news editions) are being as bad on one side of the coin as we have tended to be on the other."

Hills said that work in a Ottawa bureau tends to make reporters file stories critical of the government and he is attempting to prod his staff to dig for stories of successful government programs in addition to the failures. One recent example was a Southam news service story on the successes of the government's work sharing program, he said.

Was it Thomson's idea?

Following publication of the good news editions by the *Cape Breton Post*, *Pembroke Observer* and *Orillia Packet*, which are all Thomson Newspapers Ltd. publications, speculation mounted that the idea came from Thomson head office.

But Cary Lambie, Thomson manager of editorial services denies there was any involvement by head office in the special publications, and evidence indicates that the three papers conceived of the idea without prodding by Thomson headquarters staff.

"It sure as hell was not a Thomson company promotion," said Lambie in

an interview. "I can give you 99.9 percent assurance there wasn't a soul in this office that knew they were going ahead."

Ian MacNeil, editor of the *Cape Breton Post* the paper that put out the first edition, said he got the idea after thinking about some Cape Breton industries that are doing well, such as coal, receive little reporting.

MacNeil's brainchild appears to have set off the Orillia effort. Mark Furlong, news editor of the *Packet* said his paper was turned on to the idea after publisher Jack Marshall saw a copy of the *Post's* special edition while visiting a relative in Cape Breton.

And *Pembroke Observer* publisher Jack Higginson said he decided to do a good news edition after designing a standing headline for the front page reading "and now for the good news".

While it appears the three newspapers conceived of the idea independently, MacNeil said some extra copies of his good news edition were sent to Thomson head office for distribution to some other newspapers. In addition, all three papers have received telephone calls from radio stations and other newspapers interested in repeating the idea.

The experts say...


Donham echoed these comments when he said: "It may be that there are positive stories that we have missed. But it is the quality of newsworthiness that is important."

And perhaps the most important criticism of good news came from Bain, who commented on the essentially political nature of good news and bad news, especially in economic reporting.

"It would be absurd, to my way of thinking, to downplay the bad things happening in the economy because they wouldn't be set right."

Eugene Ellmen is a reporter-editor at the Toronto bureau of Canadian Press.

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The exasperating, opinionated columnist who is frequently right

by Dave Silburt

Politicians entering the Ontario legislature via the main entrance are confronted by a warning. The polite sign, reading "watch your step," seems aimed at visitors unused to the concrete stairway. But one wonders if it doesn't conjure up in Members' minds, the image of Claire Hoy in the press gallery. Watching.

The *Toronto Sun's* fire-snorting Queen's Park pundit is the dragon inhabiting a dingy office poised over the legislature entrance. There, he composes his "Hoyrangles" (his word) when he isn't watching the elected leaders as they practise their "art of the possible."

Evidencing his renowned respect for political institutions, Hoy greets his visitor amid a sea of suits and ties, toggled out in a New York Yankees uniform shirt (Hoy is an avid baseball fan), slacks and a moth-eaten tan cardigan. Claire Hoy puts on airs for no one, not for visiting writers and certainly not for politicians.

Later, feet propped on a mound of miscellany on a desk in his eyrie high atop the legislature, the Honorable Member from the *Sun* lays out in words what politicians — to their disomfiture — already know:

"My attitude is, if it moves, shoot it. If it doesn't move, kick its ass to get it moving, and then shoot it."

The man speaking has been kicking asses, rather than kissing them, for the better part of two decades in the profession.

The self-described small "c" conservative, right-wing Presbyterian Calvinist launched himself from Ryerson in 1964. Since then he has worked for the *Brantford Expositor*, the *Belleville Intelligencer*, the *Buffalo News*, *Kitchener-Waterloo Record*, *Toronto Telegram*, *Toronto Star* and, since 1975, the *Toronto Sun*. Some of his partings have not been amicable.

This is the man who, very early in his career at the *Belleville Intelligencer* in the late 1960s, tackled the thorny issue of a Wednesday afternoon store-closing bylaw siphoning business to out-of-town plazas. Hoy observed Belleville businessmen teeing off at an exclusive local country club on Wednesday afternoons, and wondered in print how bad the complainers' business could really

be. A teed-off publisher, himself a member of the local businessman's business association, demanded an apology. He didn't get one.

"I said, 'see ya' later,'" recalls Hoy. "That's how I left Belleville."

This is also the man who, as a reporter for the *Toronto Star* in 1974, accused the *Star* on television of slanting its political news. He was fired, and responded by suing for wrongful dismissal. Libel charges were filed against him. The case dragged on for years, with the *Star* finally losing the dismissal case and dropping the libel charges.

And this is the man who, in November 1977, was told by then-Speaker of the House Jack Stokes to get rid of his coffee, which Hoy was sipping in the press gallery, contrary to Stokes' newly-invoked House rules. Hoy's response: "Well, tell him he can shove it up his ass."

Hoy's disposition was well known before he became the *Sun's* political bogeyman. Allan Dickie, former CP bureau chief at Queen's Park, on learning of Hoy's appointment, unloaded this oft-misquoted quip: "Giving Claire Hoy a political column is like giving the Boston Strangler an Avon route."

Dickie, a long-time friend of Hoy's, who now directs media communications for the Ontario Solicitor-General, agrees with many of Hoy's detractors in that he cannot stomach the man's politics.

"Course not!" bellowed Dickie on being asked. Yet, politics and kidding aside, Dickie asserts that Hoy is as loyal a friend as he is a hard-nosed writer.

Dickie: "If I were in an alley being accosted by four thugs, he's the first person I'd expect to see coming to help me."

Tough guy, Claire Hoy. A man with fangs in his typewriter. Yet, after his first wife, Beverly, died tragically of cancer in 1976, Hoy used his place in the *Sun* to write words like these from a 1978 column: "Two years ago today, she died. I sat with her, alone, in her room at Mississauga Hospital. Part of me is still there. It always will be." Reading that, and other columns on family life and traditional values, one sees, under the crusty exterior, a man who is gentle, even sentimental.

Keep going. Underneath that layer is another layer of mean. In his five foot, 10-inch, 200-pounds-plus, fireplug-shaped frame, there isn't an ounce of indecision.

Hoy on homosexuals: "I think they're sick. They're entitled to be sick by themselves; I'm not as upset by their depraved lifestyle as by the fact they want special privilege in law."

Hoy on politicians: "People can come into the process with all the ideals in the world...politicians with integrity and honor, leave. Throw a person into a profession that's based on being a scuzzbag, and you're foolish to have higher expectations."

Hoy on editors: "I view editors in much the same way I view politicians."

He's half kidding in his damnation of editors. Maybe. But he's dead serious in his evaluation of the news media, when he says, "I don't think the media do a really good job of anything."

The fact is, in spite of his political leanings, his pet peeve isn't with homosexuals, abortionists, pinkos, blood-red socialists or those who are all of the above. He deals with all of those in turn, but reserves special scorn for journalists who don't get their facts straight, or who go for the easy, one-sided story.

One-sided shallowness is a problem that's rife in television, Hoy says. His brief stint as a commentator on Global TV in 1979 ended in less than a year because he didn't like what he saw in television — though he doesn't cite Global in particular.

"TV is shallow and superficial," he charges. "TV isn't into the news, TV is into pictures."

He cites recent Ontario coverage of the Bill 127 controversy as a prime-time example. Bill 127 would, among other things, force Metro-Toronto school boards to bargain as a unit with their teachers' union. It might also mean teacher cutbacks. Hoy says in television, only the *CBC National* looked at both sides of the issue. Others simply acted as a soapbox for protest groups waving placards as cameras in front of the legislature.

Issues Hoy felt were important — "featherbedding" by boards of education, maintenance of excess teachers at public expense — were left for print



Another Hoyrangué, this one on the Kent Commission, doesn't impress former *content* editor Dick MacDonald.

journalists to deal with. In his own desk-thumping column ("... a sanctimonious band of screaming pin-kos are cleansing their souls daily by attacking Bill 127") he took pains, even while telling readers why he thought the protesters spoke nonsense, to mention what the protesters were saying.

Many newspapers holding themselves up as examples of good journalism, insists Hoy, leave gaping holes in their news in a deliberate attempt to slant it. Though the *Toronto Star* dropped its 1974 libel charges against him, he has never retracted what he said about them. He is no more enamored of the *Globe and Mail*. "The *Globe* particularly offends me, because they are so sanctimonious and pretend to be something they aren't," he snorts.

Critical of the media, decisive in his own outlook, Hoy teaches journalism part-time at Humber College in Toronto. There, he finds himself trying to teach basic reporting to students who see in him only his right-wing views. Many students lean to the left, and believe it is their highest calling to espouse left-wing causes.

Believe what you want, says Hoy. But for God's sake, get all the facts and report them. He recalls an incident with

a student who handed in a feature on police brutality:

"The whole feature was based on interviews with CIRPA (the Toronto-based Citizen's Independent Review of Political Activities), the anti-cop people." (CIRPA was formed to pursue allegations of police harassment of minority groups). Hoy took his student to task for not getting the police side of the story.

"The student said, 'you don't like it because you're pro-cop.' I said at least talk to them, get their side. He said the cops would only lie. And I said, 'no more than CIRPA will. No less — but no more.'" Hoy shakes his head with exasperation.

"The Watergate stuff was extremely good, basic reporting. People forget that," he points out. "The administration denials were lies, but they were there. The administrator got hoisted on its own lies." His finger thrusts forward, as if to skewer an opponent with a telling point.

"Even if you think one side should be sainted, at least ask the other side."

But though he decries sloppy, slanted and shallow journalism, he doesn't think the Kent recommendations are a cure.

Recently, Hoy crossed viewpoints with fellow Humber College instructor, and former Kent Commission research editor (and *content's* founding editor), Dick MacDonald, in a debate on the Kent Commission before an audience of journalism students at Humber.

"The whole commission is a smokescreen," allowed Hoy. "A giant power-grab by government." Contrasting starkly in appearance as well as attitude with the staid, suit and tie MacDonald, a ruffled Hoy said independent newspapers are far from being less guilty than chain-owned papers of news slanting and suppression. Press rights panels, set up by government, would remain under the government's thumb, in Hoy's view. If it's a toss-up between big business or government controlling newspapers, business represents a lesser evil, he said. The other way lies eventual state control.

"If you're looking for a world free of news suppression, you'd better look somewhere else, in another time and place."

Not a popular view, in a climate where newspaper chains are being vilified, often justifiably, for taking the very spunk out of journalism that Claire Hoy typifies. MacDonald characterized

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with a one-time reporter, news baron Ken Thomson



by Stephen Overbury

Press baron Ken Thomson rarely gives interviews. Occasionally he speaks with writers for business publications. For that reason he consented to see me. But only after I had agreed to meet his conditions. The story would appear in the *Business Journal*, the publication of the Metropolitan Toronto Board of Trade. It would be a 300-word profile and would appear alongside nine other profiles of business leaders. Nothing about Thomson's personal life would be mentioned. The magazine would not use any pictures other than the black and white head shot Thomson had provided. And the interview would last no longer than 15 minutes.

Thomson's rigid approach is hardly

surprising. A few weeks before our interview, which took place at his downtown Toronto office last July, one of the Thomson papers announced it was laying off 50 of its employees. The news sent shock waves throughout the industry because the newspaper happened to be *The Globe & Mail*.

Naturally, the last thing the president of Thomson Newspapers wanted was a discussion probing into the current state of affairs in the newspaper industry. But the interview, which lasted 90 minutes, turned out to be just that. Material not used in the *Business Journal* is published here.

SO: You began your working life as a reporter. Did you enjoy that?

Thomson: Yes. I began as a reporter on

the *Timmins Press*, because my father had a newspaper and communications organization in radio and television. It was natural that I would do that at the time. If I had been on my own, I probably wouldn't have joined a newspaper. (It was) only by the merest coincidence.

But ... to answer your question, yes I enjoyed it very much. As a matter of fact it was a refreshing experience. It was my first exposure to people... I was a little shy. I'm somewhat more extroverted now, of course, with my experience behind me, but at that time I was a very conservative young man. I would be just as happy not to meet people as to meet them. So it forced me to get out and to communicate with them. And it gave me an appreciation of the job a reporter does, ... the impor-

I began as a reporter... because my father had a newspaper organization.

tance of the job the reporter does and a newspaper does...I think that it taught me that there was a great deal of responsibility (involved).

SO: You talk about the profession with some enthusiasm. Do you ever wish you had kept on reporting?

Thomson: That's so hypothetical that I really can't think objectively to answer that question. There's just no way I would have done that. It was a very nice experience while it lasted. I would have been happy to continue it for a longer period. I only did it for a year. I would have been delighted to carry on for two or three years. But even at that time I realized why I couldn't. I realized that there was a lot (more) to a newspaper organization. The reporting was the heart of it, but there were other aspects to it. A newspaper, to survive, had to be strong financially and that meant people had to sell advertising and advertisers had to get results...

SO: Do you recommend journalism as a profession in 1982?

Thomson: Well, it's vastly different than when I was in it. It depends on the type of person you are. If you really enjoy investigating things and communicating...I wouldn't at all hesitate going into the journalism profession.

SO: Do you still feel it's possible to have a successful career in journalism given that advertising is drying up and that newspapers are closing? You still feel it is a viable career?

Thomson: I think it is. There are always going to be good publications — good newspapers, good journals, good trade publications, and, I hope, some consumer magazines (although they have a tougher time. There are all kinds of opportunities for that type of creative work...If it were necessary to look for another type of job I think a journalist is in as good a position to retrain or reposition as almost any other professional in the country.

SO: A lot of people are saying that Thomson newspapers are nurturing profits at the expense of journalistic quality.

Thomson: That line of thought goes back to the early days of my father's career, when he was doing the impossible...There have been books written on

how he got started with no capital. How he employed anybody and paid them anything, I don't know. But somehow or other he survived, and of course, he wasn't the last of the big time spenders. No way he could ever be that then. But we've gone a long way since then. In the present, naturally you'd expect me to deny that (that Thomson nurtures profits at the expense of journalistic quality) and I am going to deny it, because I think it is basically an untrue

“Reporting was the heart of it but there were other aspects... a newspaper to survive, had to be strong financially and that meant people had to sell advertising and advertisers had to get results.”

statement. I'm not saying that in our organization we don't have places in the editorial...the advertising, the business, the public relations — anything you want to name — where we couldn't be better than we are. It varies because our papers are individual organizations. If you were to pick out individual instances I'm sure you could embarrass me. On the other hand, if you were to pick out other individual instances I think I'd be more than proud. On balance...we try to produce good solid community newspapers. We also try, unashamedly, to make as healthy profits, within the context of producing solid community newspapers, as we can.

SO: When you're talking about community newspapers, I presume you're not embracing the concept of investigative journalism?

Thomson: That, in the full sense of the term, is really the prerogative and within the capacity of larger newspapers, generally speaking. We were associated with the *Sunday Times* and *The Times of London*. They invented the word, “insight.” They carried insight, investigative journalism, to the ultimate. They'd have a team working on one story for six months. So I know about investigative journalism and it

takes, believe me, special newspapers, special resources to do it with a capital “I” for investigative. That can be done perhaps in Canada by such organizations as *The Globe & Mail* and the *Toronto Star*, and so forth. (And in the smaller community), they have to operate within the context of their editorial staff. You could not expect them to duplicate those (larger) efforts. Within their own context, though, I would expect and hope that they do a certain amount of that (investigative journalism).

SO: Still, I see very little investigative journalism in Canada as you've described it in operation in Britain.

Thomson: No, they don't do as much as they do in Britain.

SO: Why?

Thomson: I don't know. To be honest with you, I can't completely answer your question.

SO: Would you like to see more?

Thomson: I don't think it would do any harm. It's very expensive and I think newspapers have to have fair financial substance to be able to do it in great depth. On the *Sunday Times* they would put a section of the Insight staff onto a story and send them all over the world. They'd work for weeks or sometimes months. In the end, they'd publish a book. That's how deeply they went into it...But the British are masters of investigative journalism. They are the creators of it. Maybe Canadian journalism will follow somewhat along those lines in due course. They haven't, as you say, up till now.

SO: Can they, with the cutbacks we've witnessed, such as the staff reductions at the *Globe & Mail*?

Thomson: Well, not at this moment, no. If you're asking me the question in July of 1982 with regard to Toronto newspapers, if you want to personalize it, I can't see investigative journalism necessarily getting a shot at this time. I mean it's just sort of contradictory to the circumstances of the moment. But let's hope to goodness that's not going to last forever. And then after that, it's up to the *Globe*. I almost feel embarrassed talking about this, because you should have Roy Megarry (the publisher of the *Globe*) speaking (about

■ continued on page 18

this). I'm just giving you my views. For God's sake, don't indicate in this story that I'm talking about what the *Globe* should do. You'll just crucify me!

SO: Thomson Newspapers is still expanding into the United States. Yet advertising has dropped, *Today Magazine* has folded...

Thomson: Well, we didn't want that to happen. We were happy to keep it going. The *Toronto Star* triggered that. There was an agreement that anyone of us could trigger it with a notice period. The *Toronto Star* triggered it to protect themselves, reviewed it again, and said, "Yes, we do want to go through with it and pull out." We only had three papers (left) on it. There's no way we could have stopped that.

SO: So you're optimistic the newspaper industry will continue to grow, even with PAY-TV?

Thomson: We are optimistic. I don't think you should be complacent because things can change. We found that out. But we think newspapers are a permanent institution in North American life. They may have to change their approach slightly, their format, their style...I know there are some people who feel they're going to get all their news on the tube, that they're going to sit there and push a button. I think that TV's going to be a very important information service, whatever form that technology reaches in the future — for shopping, instant news and so forth. But I can't see anybody sitting for one or two hours solidly reading what he could otherwise read in a newspaper at his leisure...I cut out a page about the British Open Golf Tournament from the *Globe & Mail* this morning, to send to somebody. I can't do that with television. When I see something on television, the first thing I do is run out and read it if I'm interested. The first thing. And I can't see that changing.

SO: Do you still get excited when you buy another company or newspaper?

Thomson: Yes...Outside of the FP transaction, which may be the last Canadian transaction we do, in view of what might happen in the future control of newspaper purchasing in this country, most of our acquisitions are in the United States. They're newspapers in communities which for the most part I've never visited. The United States is just loaded with vibrant small communities...and they have their own newspapers. So when I hear of a paper which we've bought in Indiana, I've probably never seen the town or heard of it. I have to talk with our people and ask: "What's it like? What size population (does it have)? What size is its circulation? Does it have a nice main street?" I try to get in the spirit of it...It

really is a bit of a thrill when we're able to expand, because that's what we think we're here for.

SO: Are you upset about the way things are going in Canada?

Thomson: I am upset, and I don't think I'm alone in that. I'm talking now in the broader base...not about the acquisition of newspapers.

SO: What about newspaper acquisition?

Thomson: I can understand why there would be a concern that we shouldn't go on indefinitely, of course. I can even recognize that that wouldn't be right either. But you might permit me to say that I wouldn't have thought that Thomson Newspapers had reached that point where there should be such dire concern that they (the government) would say, "No more." However, be

"The British are masters of investigative journalism...Maybe Canadian journalism will follow somewhat along those lines in due course."

that as it may, that is acceptable and understandable. But what I do deplore very much is the fact that the U.S. publishers have been precluded from coming into Canada and buying newspapers. They had a law passed in this country a number of years ago which virtually makes it impossible for non-Canadians to own more than 25 per cent of Canadian newspapers. There wasn't any danger at the time of any great takeover of the Canadian press by Americans.

SO: Thomson Newspapers controls a lot of newspapers. How many would you like to own before you could say that that would be enough?

Thomson: Well, I don't like to quantify it...The fact is that Southam is sitting out there. We have control of our shares. They don't. That's in the market place. The Southams have to be regarded, politics and restrictions aside, as a potential takeover target. I would think there would be cause for public concern if we were to take over Southam. Now, it's never going to happen. We know that. I'm talking theoretically. From our point of view, it would be nice. On the other hand, it would be totally impractical, even without restrictions, even without government blockage. I would think it highly undesirable from our point of

view, as from everybody else's for us to ever think of doing such a thing.

SO: Speaking of newspaper acquisitions, what went wrong when you took over the *Peterborough Examiner* in 1968?

Thomson: The *Peterborough Examiner* has worked out now. It was very difficult at first, so difficult there was a strike there. The *Peterborough Examiner* was not a typical Canadian daily newspaper situation at all. It had Robertson Davies contributing personally and taking a deep personal interest in the editorial page. With services from *The Observer* and *The Times* he ran that paper like no other Canadian daily newspaper. You know he's one of the greatest writers in the country. He's famous. Not only in Canada, all over the world...In terms of what they (readers) expected and had been receiving it was a dramatic experience to lose that. How can you ever expect to replace Robertson Davies in a newspaper the size of the *Peterborough Examiner*? There's no way it's ever going to happen. It only happened because he happened to be the son of Senator Rupert Davies, who owned the paper...automatically people would say, "Oh, my God. Look at the paper now that (the) Thomsons have it!"

And then on top of that, I understand (although you can trip me up on my memory, this was a Guild organizational situation that moved in almost immediately. We had great problems. We fought them. It's our job to look after the paper...We did what we thought was right. It caused great heartache and great upheaval of the staff. Most of the staff, an awful lot of the staff, who knew everybody in town and every organization, went. We had to get new staff from outside. I've lived in North Bay, in Galt and in Cambridge and I know how important it is to know the community when you work in it. It takes a while to get to know the clerk of the council and all the rest of it. You've got to get to know them and get their confidence...For a long time we were disastrous...The press and the paper are much better now than when we first took over.

SO: What happened with *The Times* of London which your father purchased in 1966?

THOMSON: *The Times* of London was a terrible situation. Just a disaster financially. The proof is there for everybody to see. *The Times* of London was a great newspaper, prestige-wise, and, many people thought, journalistically. It certainly had many features which were world famous and unique. It was coming under great economic pressure under the Astors. They could



see that it was starting to lose money. It was a family responsibility. The Astors, Lord Astor, didn't want that responsibility. So he looked to get out and have somebody else take over. My father dreamed of having a London daily newspaper and a fine one. And what finer one prestige-wise than *The Times*? It was only losing 100,000 or 200,000 pounds at the time. My father had always been successful in business and running things persistently. Inflation in those days wasn't like it became later. He couldn't possibly have anticipated that the economic position or the intransigence of the unions... would be what they turned out to be. Some mistakes were made originally, I'm sure, in trying to popularize the paper a little too much. But that was incidental to the whole labor atmosphere and the economic disaster of Fleet Street. Nobody is having a great time on Fleet Street, even today. And *The Times*, I'm certain, is still losing an awful lot of money. We tried and we tried. We couldn't get anywhere with the unions. We'd get labor stoppages. Eight people would stop the paper one night. Then they'd be satisfied. The next night or week another dozen from the other corner of the building thought that they'd have a crack at it. It was just absolutely utter chaos. We tried, we threatened, and we did everything we could and we just couldn't do more. Eventually we just took such a pasting

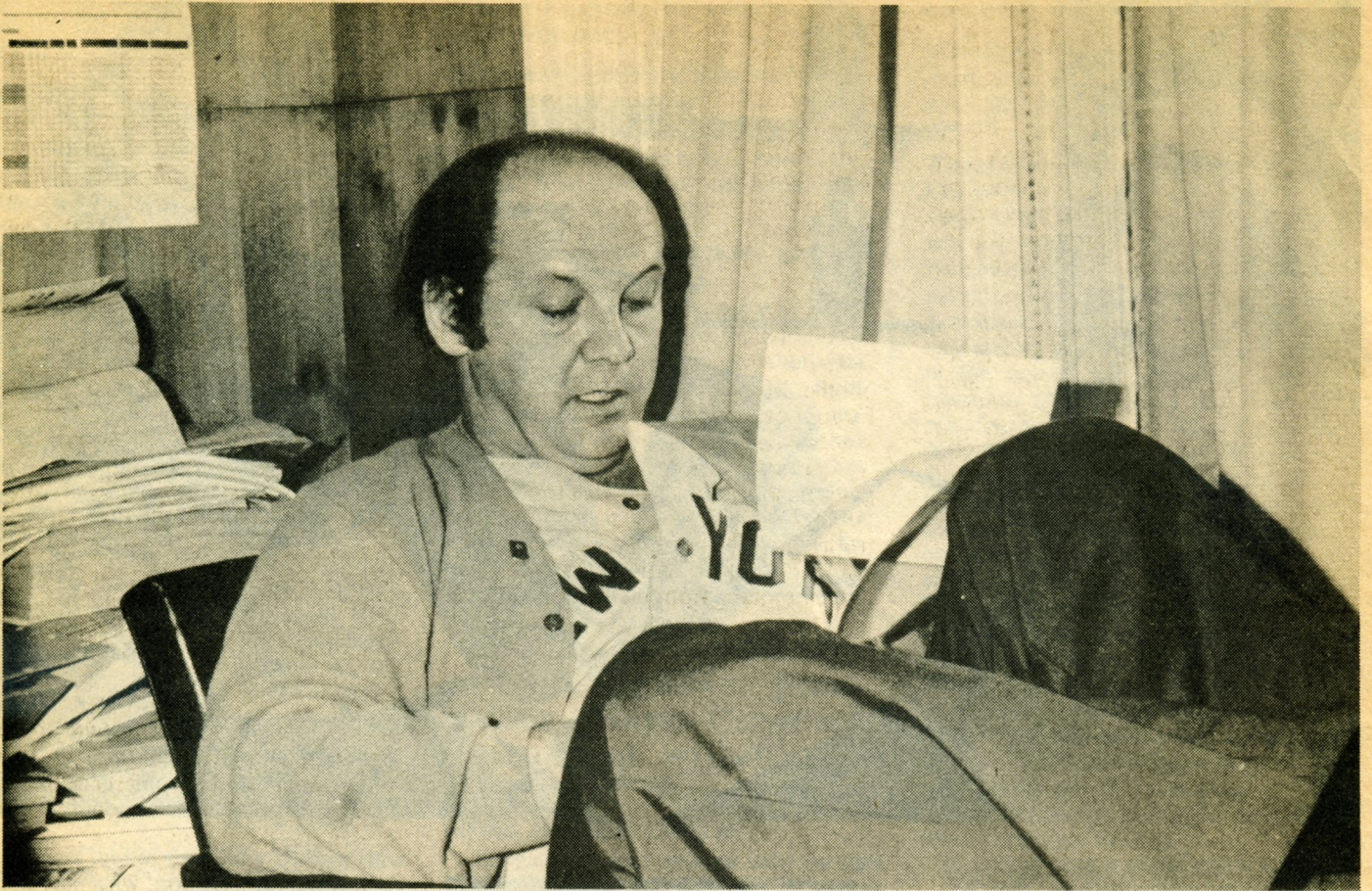
that we tried another tack — suspending (publication) until we got the proper agreements. It seems now that we tried to bite off more than we could possibly chew. I don't know why we couldn't see it at the time with unions being what they are over there... They'd just as soon see you out of business before they'd give in to certain things. We finally got the thing back somehow, after a horrendous loss, and we started going along. All of a sudden we had other problems. And of all things — the journalists struck! The editors and journalists would say, "Oh God, can't we get this paper out." They'd see things which they'd write which wouldn't even appear (in print). We were doing things for the company and shareholders but we thought if we were doing it for anyone else as well — the readers of course and advertisers, they're number one — it was for the journalists, because the strikes were crippling their contributions, absolutely nullifying them. Yet they went out on strike. They had 18 per cent — I can remember the figure right now — on the table. They had 18 per cent on the table that we were offering and they sent on strike for more. And at that time, other industries in Britain were settling for 10 per cent, in the public sector to set an example, just like they're trying to do in Ottawa, (only) instead of six per cent they were settling for 10 (per cent). And they went on strike. We thought if these people,

who worked with their heads, couldn't understand the situation, what we were trying to achieve and the circumstances in which we were fighting, who in heaven's name on the staff would? So we said, "Look. We've had enough. If somebody else can take it over, bless them." So we got out as best we could. Rupert Murdoch (the Australian publisher) took it over. We still think that he's the best man that we could have chosen. If anybody can make it work, Rupert can. He's tough. He's smart. He can be as nasty or as oppressive as anybody or any union. And he's a journalist. Not an absentee journalist. He may live in New York and so forth but if there's trouble he's right there, he comes right over. So he's a personal representative.

SO: But of course you would rather run *The Times* yourself.

THOMSON: Oh lookit. I often wonder what my father would have done. I suspect he would have brought things to a head sooner because nobody can tolerate those kinds of losses. And Rupert can't tolerate them. If he gets them he won't tolerate them. Nobody should be expected to. I'm hoping he can cut them down to manageable proportions.

Stephen Overbury is a Toronto writer.




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■ *continued from page 15*

the Hoy reaction as "nothing short of hysterical."

Well, that's nothing new. Hoy has been called worse, and the central thing about him is his monumental, damn-the-torpedoes indifference to what people think of his views. Sure, he defends himself. Called a racist, bigot, reactionary and the like, Hoy says the name-callers resort to argumentum ad hominem because they cannot dispute his facts.

In any case, the racist charge doesn't stand up. From shortly after the death of his first wife, until late 1981, Hoy helped raise the young son of his live-in housekeeper from Antigua, along with his own daughter, Kathy, now 14, and his son, Paul, now 16. Says Hoy: "One of the great ironies of the Western world is that I'm called a racist and had two black people living in my home."

(The arrangement ended in 1981 when he remarried. Claire and Lydia were married in May and welcomed Zachery Hoy, seven pounds, four ounces, to the world on October 9. "She had a short pregnancy," Hoy says with a grin. Not so illiberal, after all).

Name-calling still flows from the owners of the many toes he has trod upon over the years. He makes no apologies. He criticized his own editor, Peter Worthington, for tilting at political windmills in Toronto's Broadview-Greenwood riding, and the column was published. He so annoyed former Ontario Liberal leader Stuart Smith, during Smith's March 1981 spate of politicking, that Smith took to calling him "that pathological reporter from the *Sun*," and refused to get off the campaign bus until Hoy was clear of it.

Hoy takes it all with equanimity. Keep your facts straight, write what you feel is right, and don't look over your shoulder. Those are the rules according to Hoy.

A visiting writer folds his notebook, thanks Hoy for his time, and advises him when the story will appear. "I hope you approve of it," the writer adds. Hoy shakes his head gravely. "Don't seek approval for what you write."

Dave Silburt is a free-lance writer in Toronto.

The saga of *L'Evangeline*

by Esther Crandall

MONCTON, N.B. — When *L'Evangeline* failed to publish last September 27th, it appeared on the surface, to be much like any other newspaper closing, brought on by Canada's deep recession. But there was a difference.

The 95-year-old newspaper, the only French-language daily in Atlantic Canada, had been having the usual money problems. But these problems led to layoffs when management and employees fell out over a work-sharing proposal and a labor/ management dispute erupted.

The whole thing came to a head at the height of New Brunswick's 1982 election campaign which, as everyone knows, is a time for political promises and for plums, two of which fell *L'Evangeline's* way.

Hot after the French vote, as were all of the party leaders in the campaign, Premier Richard Hatfield said at a Progressive Conservative rally in northeastern New Brunswick that it was important to the province and to the Acadian community to have *L'Evangeline* operating again.

He offered to name a Quebecer to arbitrate the dispute (he brought two men from Quebec to do this when the October 12 election returned his party to power), and pledged government money to *L'Evangeline* — up to \$500,000 in guaranteed loans — if the dispute could be settled.

The French-language daily, with a circulation of up to 19,000, served

about 250,000 Acadians, many of whom do not read English. Since going daily in 1947, the paper had accumulated a deficit of nearly \$800,000. In the first eight months of this year, the paper lost \$200,000 in revenues and ran up a \$107,000 operating deficit. Employees earn from \$13,000 to \$24,000 per year.

The government of France has subsidized *L'Evangeline* over the years and on the Monday it failed to publish, Denis Losier, president of the Societe des Acadiens du Nouveau Brunswick, was getting ready to go to France to ask government officials for help with a number of things, including financial help for *L'Evangeline*. But when he returned, Losier said he dropped the money request from his list, pending a more stable situation at the newspaper.

The 12 directors (Assumption Mutual Life Insurance manages the paper) made the surprise announcement around 4 p.m., the hour *L'Evangeline* went to press.

The directors told their side of the story in news releases which cited economic problems, the need for new money and "an operative undertaking by the union to abide by the fact that the employer has the obvious recognized right to manage," while the union, Syndicate des Imprimeurs Acadiens, held press conferences.

Union president Maurice Theriault, a sports reporter, said in an interview that labor problems began about two months earlier when management asked the union's 81 members to agree to a work-sharing plan.

"We knew that in order to imple-

ment a work-sharing plan, the company had to present Canada Manpower with a plan," Theriault said. "We asked to see a copy of the plan they gave to Canada Manpower — that's all we wanted; we didn't refuse to take part. But they didn't show it to us. They didn't seem to have one."

The company then laid off six employees, "but they abolished three jobs that were essential to getting the paper out — advertising layout, proof-reading and composition," Theriault said.

On the day the paper failed to publish, the company wanted to use management people "to do the work that was still there in those abolished jobs. But we said it was against our collective agreement but we could negotiate. That was when they announced the paper wouldn't publish," Theriault said.

The situation deteriorated further when, a few days after the two Quebec negotiators arrived in Moncton, the union said at a press conference that the company had added new conditions for reviving *L'Evangeline*.

The company wanted the union to create conditions to assure long-term profitability of the paper, even if the 6-month-old collective agreement had to be reopened.

Robert Fortin, a national representative for the union, said the company wanted to renegotiate 10 sections of the collective agreement, including language that dealt with layoffs. Fortin said he felt the only real problem was the company's decision to abolish the three essential positions.

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To name or not to name ...

that's not an easy question

by Beth Burgess

LONDON, Ont.—Nearly 90 journalists spent the afternoon of Nov. 20 grappling with the issue of whether or not to publish the names of accused persons, and perhaps surprisingly, the trend was towards not naming them.

Guest speaker Knowlton Nash and a panel of lawyers and journalists contributed to the debate at a regional seminar here, sponsored by the Centre for Investigative Journalism.

Nash introduced the topic by saying that except for some exceptions, the right to know rarely overrides the right to privacy.

The two lawyers on the panel, Alfred J. Stong and Wally Libis, both called for legislation prohibiting the publication of names until trial or perhaps until the accused was convicted.

William Heine, editor-in-chief of the *London Free Press*, defended the traditional position of the media, saying that anything less than publication of names at the time of arrest would endanger our open system of justice.

Perhaps the most unexpected comments came from John Kessel, a crime reporter for the *Toronto Star*, who admitted that after thinking about the issue, he has decided to use more discretion in naming the accused.

The arguments both for and against naming were well presented, however, and the reporters and students in the audience agreed that there were no easy answers.

In his address, Nash stated that there were very few circumstances where the right to know was more important than the right to privacy.

The exceptions, he said, are when evidence of an abuse of power is uncovered, when the private behavior of a public official endangers his or her performance, or when the personal

history of a public official is important and relevant in evaluating his or her current duties.

"But these circumstances must be exceptions to a general rule that the right to privacy is supreme," he said.

Kessel began the panel discussion by saying that he uses the names of the accused just because that's the way it's always been done.

"Canadian journalists on the whole are a responsible lot," he said, but added that a problem arises when papers don't follow court cases through the system and report if an accused person is acquitted.

"There has to be a commitment to the accused if we use names," said Kessel.

Small staffs, inefficient follow-up systems and editorial priorities are often at the root of the problem, said Kessel, but added that even if the outcome is reported it often ends up in the over-matter basket.

Strong, a lawyer and former Liberal MPP from Richmond Hill, felt there was no excuse for the media's failure to fully cover court cases.

"I have defended people, who have been found not guilty, and have suffered as a result of having their names published prior to the trial, because there never is and never has been as much interest in an acquittal as there has been in the initial charge," he said.

Strong went so far as to introduce a private members bill in 1978 and again in 1980 designed to prohibit the publication of the name of an accused person until his trial began or until he pleaded guilty to the charge.

Libis, a London criminal lawyer, agreed that the damage to a person's reputation as a result of publicity over an initial charge was too high a cost.

But Libis wanted even greater restrictions. He argued that a person should not be named in the media until he had been found guilty.

"If the person is convicted, then he has to stand and face the consequences. If he is acquitted, why should he have to face the consequences? Nobody is suggesting that we make these proceedings secret. All we're saying is that they not be published in the media unless the person is convicted," he said.

Heine, the fourth member of the panel, was not convinced.

He said that anything less than full freedom to publish names at the time of arrest would give the police the opportunity to abuse their authority.

"There are too many places in the world where people disappear into jail...where their fate is unknown," he said.

Heine also pointed out that the proposed legislation would not really protect the reputation of the accused.

"If anybody thinks that they can be arrested and not have if known very quickly in any community of any size then they're just kidding themselves," said Heine.

The problem with gossip, he added is that it tends to get the facts wrong.

"Far better for people to know exactly what the charge was than to have to rely on the rumor mill," he said.

Perhaps the most interesting suggestion on how to solve the dilemma came from the audience. Rob Martin, a professor of law at the University of Western Ontario, proposed that the libel law be amended so that the media could be sued if they didn't give an acquittal the same type of coverage as the initial charge.

by Fran Murphy

Computers on the Job: Surviving Canada's Microcomputer Revolution, by Heather Menzies (James Lorimer, 1982. Paper, \$9.95. Cloth, \$18.95).

Being a computer illiterate, who thinks that hardware is what you buy at Canadian Tire, I wasn't sure about my qualifications in reviewing a book on computers.

As it turns out, *Computers on the Job* was written for people like me, who have so far remained oblivious to the computer revolution. In direct, straightforward language Heather Menzies (also author of *Women and the Chip*) demystifies the new technology and examines the kind of work we will be doing with computers in the future.

In the first part of the book, the author looks at the process of computerization in offices, factories, banks and supermarkets. A large portion of this segment is also devoted to computers

and communications — TV, telex, cable, microwaves and satellites. The potential of computer technology (i.e. videotex and teletext) in context with the information society is discussed. Important questions on freedom of information, corporate concentration and the computer limitations in a society that still values diversity are raised.

The second half of the book looks at the future in terms of education and the training required to get computer-related jobs, and then discussing both existing and future employment opportunities. The author also looks at such potentially serious problems as job sharing, labour legislation and VDT radiation.

This is an informative and important book that will enlighten many on the often confusing and bewildering world of computers. As the author concludes: "If we don't master this technology as a

tool, we will be mastered by its ends and subjugated to its technique."

The Quebecois Dictionary, by Leandre Bergeron. (James Lorimer, 1982. \$17.95, paper. \$28.00, cloth).

In the *Quebecois Dictionary*, the author brings a wide selection of the colorful dialect spoken by the Quebecois.

Translated from his bestselling *Dictionnaire de la langue Quebecoise*, the author presents over 6,000 words and expressions. The dictionary provides definitions, pronunciation and origins of entries. An introductory essay on the language of Quebec, pronunciation guide and a bibliography are also a part of the book.

If you aren't sure whether in Montreal you should *smogarette* or *cache-pet* after you have *fait l'acte*, then this dictionary on Quebec language is for you.

JOURNALISM IN CHILE

■ continued from page 7

secret of its opposition to the military dictatorship.

APSI began as an internal bulletin on international affairs in 1976, but by 1978 the need to include national news was obvious. In early 1979, DINACOS (the government media control agency) gave verbal permission to publish national news.

The magazine published and flourished, circulation climbing from a tiny 600 (in 1976) to over 2,000 (in 1980). In 1981, the government forced the magazine to close. But when *APSI* supporters went to court, it was found they had violated no legal disposition and the magazine began to publish again in 1982. Circulation had grown to 8,000.

Then, this September, the Minister of the Interior published Decree 574, which specifically prohibits not just the national section, but the entire magazine.

When asked why the magazine had been allowed to publish for so long, *APSI* director Marcelo Contreras offered two possible theories.

"When we were small, we didn't represent a threat to anyone," he says. "Now, with a circulation of 8,000, sales in the kiosks and subs throughout the country, they may think we could cause problems."

"The other thing is, I think they expected us to censor ourselves more. We've never crossed the legal limits,

but we've taken advantage of all the room there is," he emphasized.

Verdugo's theory is that magazines like *Hoy* and *APSI*, like "the little black boys of Harvard" are tokens which can be pointed to, to "prove" there's freedom of the press in Chile.

APSI isn't the only case of direct government interference in the media. In the last few weeks alone, the government has prohibited the distribution of a book which was a collection of articles already published in various magazines, "suggested" to Radio Chilena that it not broadcast a news analysis program, and prohibited the production of Radio Agricultura's "Controversy" program.

All new publications must have government authorization to appear, and that is frequently denied. Even an application for a women's magazine was turned down, not because of content, but simply on the basis of who might work on it.

In spite of these and other experiences, a recent list of countries where freedom of the press is severely limited did not include Chile. The list was published by the Interamerican Press Society (SIP).

"The thing about SIP is it has a strong built-in bias," says Portales. "If the big private businesses can say what they want to, there's no problem as far as SIP goes. They're not concerned with whether journalists are censored or frightened, or that most sectors have no access to the press."

Portales adds that General Pinochet's claim that there's freedom of the press in Chile is true — for some. "There have been occasional differences of opinion (between pro-government papers and the military regime), but they're not serious enough for Chile to appear on the list."

The result of the self-censorship, arbitrary dismissals and closures, the kidnapping, the threats, the vicious murders of people with few (if any) political antecedents, is that the work of a journalist becomes a constant "intelligence game" as *Hoy's* Verdugo says.

Atria goes further. "Journalists are losing their values. They don't remember what it was like to work in a democracy. They accept things like not being able to ask questions."

But many journalists (like Atria and Verdugo) search until they find a way to work with dignity.

While the major dailies continue to print verbatim government news releases and strictly controlled national news, a number of major radio stations and news magazines are doing what they can to report the facts.

Far from supporting Pinochet's claim that the country has been "normalized," they are a constant reminder of just how far from "normal" the Chilean situation is.

Lynn Stevens (not her real name) is married to a Chilean and has lived in Chile for two years. A fiction and poetry writer, she also freelances for CBC-Radio.

OPINION

■ continued from page 6

stories and get them on a helicopter to take them back to the satellite communications centre at San Carlos only to discover when he arrived in Port Stanley that they had been delayed for several days. It was reported to our correspondent that one of his dispatches had been seen by another journalist in the pocket of a Press Officer two days after he had sent it by helicopter from a forward position.

The general feeling among correspondents was that they were taking considerable risks only to see their copy seriously delayed and become all but useless or that the ministry was releasing stories in London which they had been told they could not report.

The Times.

The press respected the MoD's case for secrecy and caution but there was a strong feeling at one stage that stories and pictures of what was happening to our forces were critically slow in coming through.

This resulted in a greater dependence on 'unofficial' sources of information, including Buenos Aires, because it was increasingly felt that, whatever else was happening, Britain was losing the war of words and pictures.

Sunday People.

The addition of just one other organization, such as the Associated Press of America, would have made this a genuine news operation rather than appearing as a British propaganda exercise.

Reuters.

More light on what took place, whether through incompetence or design, has been shed by other media figures. Thus, BBC managing director of external broadcasting Douglas Mugeridge commented: "To believe... that representatives of the British media with the fighting forces could — and should — be used to lie and mislead reveals a dangerous naivety which is very worrying."

"No doubt the idea solely was to confuse the enemy. But it was not realized that, in doing so, the effect would have been not only to mislead the public in Britain but also to determine the credibility of this country abroad and put into questions the very basis of the democratic society which we were seeking to defend."

And BBC radio news editor Larry Hodgson claimed news and pictures from the Falklands were deliberately

blocked while ITN reporter Michael Nicholson maintained Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher expected only good news to be sent back from the war zone. Both men appeared on a TV program which revealed that the MoD had tried to stop newsmen from joining the task force because it was a 'secret operation.'

The MoD, of course, maintains it presented the truth as clearly, accurately and as quickly as possible under the circumstances. More than 600 dispatches, 50 hours of broadcasting and 500,000 words of written copy were sent back by the war correspondents.

"We had to deal with every case on its merits; every decision was difficult and sometimes we made mistakes," the ministry told the select committee.

"We do not wish to claim we did everything right. There were difficulties compounded by operational pressures and some of the arrangements could have been improved upon."

The MoD's explanations have not satisfied British journalists. Thus, Press Association editor-in-chief David Chipp said that what had happened was a dreadful muddle but he still could not make up his mind whether it had been a conspiracy or incompetence. However, it had been clear from the start that the press was not really wanted. There was a complete lack of confidence and trust in briefing, and facilities in London had been appalling.

Journeyman

■ continued from page 10

then, change, shifts in viewpoints and in contacts, are themselves the catalyst for change in the individual.

If you get trapped in club journalism — the endless shop talk of political press galleries and of daily sessions at the local hangout, or even in the mutual support systems needed by too many foreign correspondents — it's a tough fight to avoid the dulling of critical faculties and old enthusiasms. The same applies to being ensconced behind any one editorial desk for too long — bad for the individual, worse for the paper.

A journeyman (derivatively French) is someone between apprentice and master on daily hire. There is also the connotation of travel being involved. I was a newspaper journeyman, after many years of apprenticeship, who travelled. Through physical space, paper to paper, and within papers. And through head space.

And Alex McDonald, London editor of the *Birmingham Post and Mail* added that he detected part conspiracy, part cock-up. Where the two met was unclear.

That the MoD has learned little, if anything, was shown when it released an embargoed list of awards given for service in the Falklands. The dailies, led by the *Sun* just disregarded the embargo with *Daily Mail* editor Sir David English remarking that it was characteristic of the civil service's PR performance in the whole Falklands campaign. The breach of the embargo was even welcomed by the Tory chairman of the select committee, Michael Marshall, who could see no reason for it being imposed in the first place; perhaps a clue to the committee's response to the media's complaints.

Footnote: All 27 British journalists who covered the conflict are to receive the Falklands Campaign Medal. The BBC's Robert Fox and PA photographer Martin Cleaver have also been nominated by the Army for MBE's "for actions which helped the task force." True to form, the MoD would give no more details although it is conjectured that Fox, who speaks Spanish, acted at various times as an interpreter for the Army while Cleaver helped with his photographic expertise "above and beyond the call of duty."

I'm still at it. And it's salutary to look back. I wrote some editorials more than 30 years ago that would not, I'm afraid, be out of place in today's *Toronto Sun*. I once considered without astonishment and without exposing the offer(!), an RCMP officer's suggestion that I might help read through some union files seized in a hunt for subversives (read Commies). I once accepted as par for the course the free loads allied to reviews of nightclub shows. I once protested much too mildly and did not go public when a colleague was pressured into resigning, because he had written a story (a correct one) that reflected on an advertiser and part owner of the paper. I once never even thought there was an issue in the matter of whether or not newspapers should be made more accountable to the public, or that freedom of the press was a freedom only fully enjoyed by the owners of the press.

I do now. But it was a long journey. This and further accounts of the trip may help others taking the same road.

NEW BRUNSWICK

by Esther Crandall

- The *Moncton Times* and *The Transcript*, both owned by the Irving interests, are combining on January 3rd into a single daily which will publish in the morning. The new paper will be called the *Times-Transcript*. Publisher E.W. Larracey said he did not know how many of the 160 employees would be affected by the move.

The *Times* was founded in 1877 and *The Transcript* in 1882. The two competed until amalgamation came about in 1945. The *Fredericton Daily Gleaner*, the *Saint John Telegraph* and *Evening Times-Globe*, are the only other English language dailies in New Brunswick, and they are all owned by the Irving family.

- Moncton lost the French-language daily, *L'Evangeline*, but it could resume publication when labor problems are solved and the New Brunswick government makes good its promise to guarantee loans of up to \$500,000 for the paper.
- Gordon Johnson, outspoken Editor in the late 1970's of the *St. Croix Courier*, a semi-weekly published in St. Stephen, is now an ordained minister. Johnson, 32, is in his first posting at Tabernacle Baptist Church in north Winnipeg.

OTTAWA

by Donna Balkan

- Carol Goar is the new Ottawa Bureau Chief of *Maclean's*. She replaces Robert Lewis, who has gone to Toronto as the magazine's Managing Editor.
- Parliamentary reporter Dave Rinn has left *CJOH-TV* for Cable News Network in Los Angeles.
- Guy Lepage has gone to *CJOH* from the *Ottawa Citizen*. The station's evening news show, "Newsline," has gone from 60 to 90 minutes. He will be co-hosting the show with anchorman Max Keeping and Linda MacLennan.
- A new bi-weekly newspaper has appeared on the Ottawa scene. Called *Beau Joust*, the paper has a press run

of 25,000 and concentrates on arts and local affairs. The Editor is Dean Ennis and the Art Director is Wendy Pettinger.

- Neil MacDonald is back on the *Citizen's* reporting staff after a stint on the city desk at the *Montreal Gazette*.
- Other changes at the *Ottawa Citizen* include: former columnist Geoff Johnson has gone to the paper's weekly entertainment supplement, *TGIF*; Lynn McCauley has gone to general assignment from sports; former lifestyles writer Jane De Falco has rejoined the general news staff; Also on general assignment are: former court reporter, Dennis Foley, former business writer, Graham Hughes, former night desk, Julian Beltraine, and former neighborhood news reporter, Kelly Egan. The neighborhood news page has been cut to 1 column, and its former editor, Heather Bishop is now on night copy desk.
- Also at the *Citizen*: Bob Marleau has left the police beat for the Hull bureau while Stephen Bindman takes his place, and Chris Hall goes to the court house; the Med beat has been assigned to former general reporter Laura Robin; former *Financial Post* reporter Debbie Dowling is now with the business section; reporters Pat Best and Bobbi Turcotte have retired, but are still freelancing for the paper.
- Former *Citizen* city hall reporter, Wendy Jackson has taken a leave of absence to become executive officer of Ottawa N.G., replacing Bridget Petersen. The Guild's Canadian director Bill McLeaman has left that position to become the union's executive officer in Vancouver.
- Cathy Squires is back in Ottawa after taking a year off to travel. She's now reporting for *CBOT-TV*, having previously been a reporter for *CJOH*.
- Gail Flitton has become Queen's Press Secretary in Canada, replacing Vic Chapman.
- Dan Turner's Monday night *CBC* local public affairs show, previously called "The Dan Turner Show," has been renamed "For the People."

MONTREAL

- Jean-Francois Lepine, a journalist for *CBC's* French network is the new *CBC* correspondent for all *CBC* news services in Peking. Lepine replaces Don Murray who will take up another posting as a correspondent for the *CBC* English network.

TORONTO

- Kenneth Larone, Managing Editor of *TV Guide* has been appointed Editor of the Toronto edition of *TV Guide*.
- Lynda Ruddy has been appointed Corporate Director of Communications at the *Toronto Sun*.
- Torstar Corporation of Toronto recently sold its subsidiary, Comac Communications, to Bell Canada Enterprises of Montreal. The transaction is expected to be completed by the end of December. Comac is the publisher of *Quest*, *Homemaker's*, *Madame au Foyer*, *City Woman* and *Western Living*.
- Dawn MacDonald, editor of Comac's *City Woman* for five years, has been dismissed after a brouhaha which drew considerable media attention. The firing provoked MacDonald to sue for wrongful dismissal. In the meantime, several well-known writers, many of whom have freelanced for *City Woman* under MacDonald, have organized a fund to help with her legal expenses. A benefit will be held Sunday, January 16th, 1983 at the recently reopened Toronto women's club, 21 McGill. The musical program, *Mainly Mozart*, gets underway at 2:00 p. m. The Friends Committee includes: lawyer Kathryn Robinson, Adrienne Clarkson, M. P. Pat Carney, Natalie Freeman, Marjorie Harris, Judith Timson, Elaine Dewar, Anne Collins and Doris Anderson. After legal expenses have been covered, the funds, being held in trust, will go to provide a scholarship for a woman journalist. Address for contributions is: 23 North Sherbourne St., Toronto, Ontario M4W 2T3.
- Carla Micheli has been appointed Features Editor and Richard Skinulis

has been named Departments Editor at *Business Journal Magazine*.

- Keitha McLean resigned from her position as editor of *Flare Magazine*.
- Shelagh Rogers, the voice of *CBC-Radio's* "International Concert," is the new host of *CBC's* "Mostly Music." She replaces Peter McCoppin and Ken Winters, who plan to pursue active roles in conducting and broadcasting.
- Marge Anthony, Vice President, Network Relations at *CTV*, has been named President of the Broadcast Executives Society.
- "The Accident," a documentary produced by students of the Radio and Television Arts and Journalism departments at Ryerson, was awarded a Certificate of Merit in the category of "National Network, Informational or Educational Television," at the 17th Annual Gabriel Awards in Chicago. Produced, researched and directed by the students, "The Accident" dealt with trauma after an accident and was televised last June on *CTV*.

WINNIPEG

by Edmund Oliverio

- John Coutanche has been appointed Director for Radio for *CBC-Manitoba*, effective January 1. Currently he is Executive Producer of *CBH-Halifax*.
- After 4½ years, *Arts Manitoba*, a journal of the province's visual and performing arts is back with a 72-page edition at \$4.50 per issue. Financed by a \$20,000 grant from the Cultural Affairs Department of Manitoba, *Arts Manitoba* will be a quarterly review of the arts.

- James Haggerty, staff photographer of the *Winnipeg Free Press*, has won an American National Press Photographers regional feature award for a controversial fashion photograph.

VANCOUVER

- In October *Vancouver People Magazine* hit the newsstands. Published by John Farley, former editor of the now defunct *Influential Business*, and Pearl Gray, a former real-estate salesperson, the magazine is aiming at a paid subscription of 20,000 by the end of its first year.

AWARDS

- Three individual awards for excellence were awarded *CTV* at the 25th International Film & TV Festival of New York. The winners were:
Gold Medal for Best Dramatic Special:
"The Life and Times of Edwin Alonzo Boyd."
Silver Medal for Action/Adventure Series:
"The Littlest Hobo." This is the 3rd consecutive award that "The Littlest Hobo" has been awarded at this festival.
Bronze Medal for Documentaries:
"Our Man in China."
- YORKTON INTERNATIONAL SHORT FILM & VIDEO FESTIVAL, held in Saskatchewan. Selected winners:
● Special Jury Award
"The Electronic Web," written produced and directed by Ray Haz-zaw.
- Best Editing
"The Shroud of Turin," Richard Wells, film editor.

- Best Cinematography
"Rideau Journey," from the *CBC* series, "Man Alive." Norman C. Allin, Wally Donaldson, John Wilson.

- Certificate of Merit
"Noel Buys a Suit." Playing with Time Films. Written by Amy Jo Cooper, produced and directed by Linda Schuyler and Kit Hood.

- Best Actor
Ron Cook in "A Time to be Brave." Film Works of Toronto in association with *CBC Children's Television*.

- Golden Sheaf Award for Best Film
"P4W: Prison for Women." Spectrum Films. Produced and directed by Janis Cole and Holly Dale.

- Video Production
"The Catch." *CKWD-Winnipeg*. Stan Thomas.

1982 CANADIAN FILM AND TELEVISION ASSOCIATION AWARDS, presented in Toronto. A selection of the winners:

- TV Variety — Over 30 Minutes
"Billy Bishop Goes to War." Produced and directed by Norman McCandlish for BBC and Primedia Productions.
- Best Documentary — Under 30 Minutes
"Introducing Janet." A co-production of Cine-Flics Toronto and *CBC-TV*.
- TV Drama — Under 30 Minutes
"David," a co-production of Atlantis Films Toronto and *CBC-TV*.
- Outstanding Overall Production
"Challenge: The Canadian Rockies." Produced by Wendy Wacko.

SOUTHAM FELLOWSHIPS for JOURNALISTS

Here's an opportunity for journalists to take a mid-career break from deadlines and pressures and spend an academic year, from September 1983 to May 1984, at the University of Toronto in any course study of their choice.

The Fellowships underwrite all university fees and pay two-thirds of each Fellow's gross annual salary for the eight months, up to a maximum of \$34,620.

Details are available in a brochure obtained along with a application form, from:

Southam Fellowships,
University of Toronto
Simcoe Hall, Room 107
Toronto, Ontario. M5S 1A1.

(Closing date for applications is March 1, 1983).

COPY EDITOR

Minimum of 10 years experience with Metro dailies.

Experienced in VDT's.

Must know news, sports and financial areas.

Skilled at layout.

Spoken French a big asset. Must at least be able to read French.

Salary about \$750 weekly.

Please forward resume to:

Box 98, c/o content, 205 Humber College Blvd., Rexdale, Ontario. M9W 5L7.

Dear content:

I hope it's not too late to throw some mud on an article that appeared in your May / June issue, "Science Writers Meet," by Donna Balkan. Two points made by people quoted in the article were infuriating.

First, Montreal broadcaster, Pierre Pascau was quoted as saying, "If science reporters had done their job, maybe urea formaldehyde foam insulation would never have been used in Canada." In fact, if scientifically illiterate reporters had not been taken in by scare stories, people who used the foam would not now be stuck with worthless homes. The case against the foam is tenuous. The evidence that damned it would be laughed out of any scientific court.

Second, one Michael Whalen was quoted as saying his lack of scientific background was an asset to his medical reporting, because if scientists cannot make him understand their work, the public won't understand it. I wonder if the same logic should apply to political journalism. I hope not. It is a reporter's job to make his material understandable by first understanding it himself. Ignorance is no asset. If editors demanded the same expertise in science writers as they do in political workers, half the people now working science beats would instead be chasing police cars, and urea formaldehyde foam would never have been an issue.

Dave Silburt
Toronto, Ontario

An Apology and Caution

It was a piece of journalism worth repeating, but it didn't get the break it deserved. John Saunders' examination of Canada's uranium gag order, published in the May/June and July/August issues of *content*, was beset by production errors that included big chunks of type printed out of order. Worse luck, the defects were not obvious; some readers may have been led to wrong conclusions. *Content* apologizes to anyone who may have been inconvenienced or embarrassed, and especially to John Saunders. Interested readers are referred to his original story in the *Montreal Gazette*, January 27, 1982, from which *content's* version was adapted.

Dear content:

Re: Your profile on Tom Denton, in the July / August issue. I believe Tom Denton, was also involved with the campus newspaper at Acadia University: *The Athenaeum*.

Doug Simpson
Former editor of *The Athenaeum*

Dear content,

The stories in the September/October issue of *content* by writer John Marshall arising from the case of John Munro versus the *Toronto Sun* compels a reply on at least three points.

1) One story refers to a special report prepared for publisher Douglas Creighton by reporters Lorrie Goldstein and John Paine. Mr. Marshall says the document contained the results of their investigation *after* the infamous story on Mr. Munro appeared but were not introduced into court by their defence.

Perhaps I'm a little old-fashioned in my thinking, (after all, I'm 44 now), but I thought the way to develop a story was like this: you did your research, gathered all your documentation, wrote the story, had it edited, did at least a partial re-write, had it edited once more, had it approved by the lawyers, and then published it. Since when is it considered professional journalism to run a story based on rumor — and totally false at that too — and then when the man threatens to sue, put an army of reporters on him to turn up incriminating evidence hopeful that an obvious lawsuit will be stopped in its tracks?

Besides, anyone with even a minimal understanding of libel law should know that you cannot introduce into court evidence that you did not have in your possession at the time of publication.

2) Mr. Marshall describes me as "now in non-sensitive reporting at the *CBC*." Since when is covering train derailments, the Ontario Supreme Court, the Ontario legislature, municipal politics, education, religion, labor, business and a host of other types of daily assignments, considered "non-sensitive." Isn't it about time that Mr. Marshall and many others in this industry accept the fact that a reporter is just that — a reporter. And that the same tough standards apply to us all regardless of the assignment. The term

"investigative reporter," I submit, is a term fixed in the minds of those who persist in living in a world of make-believe and fantasy.

3) Yes, I testified as a witness for the plaintiff. I described to the court a system of checks and balances used when I was at the *Globe & Mail* and Clark Davey was Managing Editor. Had those checks and balances been applied to the Munro case, publication of the story would have been blocked saving the *Sun* \$75,000 in damages plus an almost equal amount for its own and Mr. Munro's legal expenses.

Mr. Marshall describes the system as "convoluted." There is nothing convoluted about it at all. It is simply common sense. When you publish a story — any story — you have to be able to prove the facts.

The Ontario Supreme Court Justice trying the case didn't find anything convoluted about it either. Quite the contrary. In fact, Mr. Justice John Holland put the news industry on judicial notice by ruling that is precisely how a story like the Munro story should have been handled.

That same issue of *content* does not contain a single dollar of advertising support from any of the newspaper chains. But there is a full-page ad on the back cover sponsored by Dow Chemical of Canada Ltd. And it contains a very profound statement: "Behind every great brand name there's a very tough watchdog!"

The ad tells how Dow Chemical jealously protects the reputation of one of its top quality products — styrofoam. Something tells me there are a number of newspaper executives in this country who might well learn something from the executives at Dow Chemical. But then I guess you should start by having a brand name and a reputation worth protecting.

Gerry McAuliffe

Dear content:

Please regard this letter as a formal and serious complaint concerning the article in your July/August issue entitled "Twice Poor: Poverty and the Press" and bearing the byline Debbie Parkes. Please regard it also as a formal and serious request that you rectify, publicly and immediately — by means acceptable to the Ontario Press Council

— several specific inaccuracies and total fabrications contained in this article involving me as an individual, of me as a senior editor of the *Toronto Star*, and of the *Toronto Star* itself.

Midway through her disjointed diatribe that the press simultaneously “avoids the issue of poverty,” but either does or does not give it enough space,” and that when it does, rarely gives it fair coverage (all Ms. Parkes’ quotes, verbatim) a former *Toronto Star* reporter David Allen then is quoted as saying he quit that paper’s “poverty beat”...“when a City Editor came to the *Star*” and made it clear he wanted such stories slanted against the poor. I quote:

“Pat Scott had different ideas about poverty,” says Allen. “He began from the view that all poor people were bums who sat on their front porch drinking beer and all the women did was get pregnant and breed.”

The sole such example cited by Allen is “of a fourth-generation welfare family in Toronto’s Cabbagetown.”

“I approached this story,” Allen says, “as saying, ‘What’s the matter with the billions of dollars we’re spending on education and welfare that they’ve never reached this family?’ Pat Scott’s view of it was, ‘Well, here are all those promiscuous women and bums. We should expose them for being a drain on the taxpayers.’”

Allen’s conclusion, as reported by *content*, is that “newspapers are a part of the system that can’t challenge the system,” and so “I refused to do some stories.”

So: All of a sudden it isn’t one loutish City Editor too insensitive for Allen but “the system” — including the newspapers themselves. Is Allen suggesting seriously that the *Toronto Star*, of all papers — which has probably done more for the underdog, and particularly for the poor — than any other paper in Canada, would hire, let alone retain as its City Editor, an individual holding the views he has attributed to me?

Can he even document his charges? If so, why is any documentation so conspicuously absent from your article?

For that matter, what ever happened to a cardinal rule of Journalism: that in any dispute, both sides at least be given the opportunity to comment? I wasn’t — even though *content* knew where to reach me because I am on its mailing list. I knew nothing of this article until I read it in print.

I do, however, know a few things it somehow neglected to mention, such as the fact that the *Toronto Star* did not have a “poverty beat” when I was its City Editor, that Allen would not have been on it even if we had because of his

demonstrated disability to distinguish editorial opinion from factual news; that I did indeed initiate and run a series of articles on poverty in Toronto but that Allen did not “refuse to write some stories” but was removed from the series’ roster after his first story proved unacceptable; and that the *Star* was commended by the Ontario Government for its series shortly after Allen decided to join “the system” himself by going to work, as a flack, for the Ontario Government.

So I have been misquoted and the *Star* maligned without anyone’s even bothering to pick up a telephone and ask me for comment. I regard this as an extremely grievous attack on my ethics as a Journalist (to say nothing of my qualifications as a teacher of future

Journalists, who also receive copies of *content* in the belief that it is at least a professional publication.)

Since when has it been open season — especially for a self-appointed media conscience and watchdog such as *content* — to publish unchecked, unsubstantiated, totally one-sided gossip disguised as fact?

And who is watching the watchdog?

Patrick Scott
Journalism Department
St. Clair College

Content welcomes your letters and comments. Please address all letters for “You Said It” to: The Editor, *content*, 205 Humber College Blvd., Rexdale, Ontario. M9W 5L7.

New Brunswick Election

by Esther Crandall

SAINT JOHN, N.B. — New Brunswick’s 1982 election campaign sprouted a startling sidebar when the province’s Liberal party aired radio advertisements packaged like news reports and indignant journalists took them on.

The Association of Radio and Television News Directors of Canada (ARTND) got involved and called in the Canadian Radio, Television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC).

By the time the election was held on October 12, Duncan Matheson, news director of *CFNB* Radio in Fredericton was talking seriously about taking to court either the Liberal party or Liberal campaign chairman Senator Norbert Theriault, or both, for a Theriault statement that said a commentary Matheson did on the matter was politically motivated.

At issue were Liberal advertisements which ran something like this: “This is Jim Turnball reporting from the Liberal party campaign. Liberal leader Doug Young said today...Speaking in...” There followed a clip from a Young speech, a close, then a disclaimer — “Authorized by the Liberal party of New Brunswick,” or, “the official agent” for whatever candidate.

Turnball had taken a six-week leave of absence from his job as reporter for *CFBC* Radio Station, Saint John, to work for the Liberal party. While she did not have the same high profile, Gail Robichaud, Tracadie, N.B. stringer for the Saint John *Telegraph-Journal*, also took time out to work for the Liberal party. Tely editor, Howard Trainor said “We’ll just watch her political writing in the future.”

When word of the Turnball / Liberal ads reached David Ferguson, ARTND president and news director of *CKCO* radio in Kitchener, Ontario, he issued a news release decrying the ads. He requested the Liberal party withdraw them from radio stations across the province; virtually all carried them.

Liberal leader Doug Young refused, on the grounds that the ads were legal, because disclaimers at the end brought them in line with CRTC regulations.

Ferguson contended, however, “It is unethical for the Liberals to be using a broadcast journalist in a political campaign...it is deception of the worst type...and jeopardizes the credibility of legitimate journalists covering the N.B. election.”

The ARTND then asked the CRTC to change the regulations so that journalists could not report for political parties.

Fredericton news director Matheson was the first to go on air with a commentary that supported Ferguson’s statements which may be why Senator Theriault assumed Matheson had filed the complaint with the ARTND.

“The only reason I did not was because I did not get there first,” Matheson said. “I did not know about the ads until regional director Tom Peck of Amherst called me, along with Bob Bishop (news director, *CBC* radio in Fredericton), who first drew the matter to the ARTND’s attention.”

The Liberal party requested an apology from Matheson. He responded by running the commentary a second time. Other news directors followed Matheson’s lead. *CFBC* radio in Saint John was the only station known to have done a commentary in support of their reporter Turnball.

Life in a Bubble

■ continued from page 5

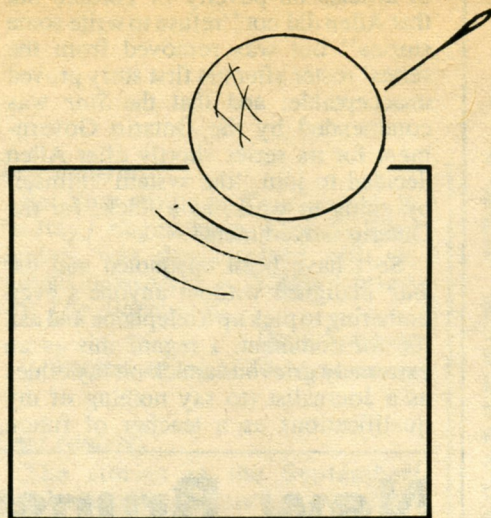
Our photographer did most of the legwork. It was Terry who arranged for the models and found locations. Our writers took turns arranging for the clothing and gathering the necessary information from the fashion houses, and in the end it all fell together.

At the time we launched *The Consumers*, the editorial departments of several papers in the corporation were becoming computerized and it was logical that we follow suit.

We had some pretty scary moments in Consumer-land because of those blasted computers. I loved the little darlings, but not when they created havoc in my world.

Originally we stored all *Consumer* material on floppy discs and when we were finished with any portion of the stored material, we erased it to make room for more. Those floppy discs are so fragile that if you breathe on them the wrong way they be damaged.

That's what happened to us. We had three weeks' stories stored on a floppy disc when the crisis hit. I called up story after story for editing and found only gibberish. I realized, to my horror, that



not one single story could be saved.

Three weeks work had been obliterated. The computer wizards tried everything to save our material, but couldn't. All those stories would have to be re-written and that was going to take ages.

In my anger, I took the wretched disc, threw it on the floor and jumped up and down on it, shouting obscenities at the computer. When I was finished doing that, I picked it up and flung it, like a frisbee, down the hall. Every inch the poised, efficient editor in action.

After that session, we were assigned a safe little slot on the sealed hard disc. That did help. The sheer volume of material to be typeset for five different editions of the paper each week was a major problem. Because the ad layouts were different in each *Consumer*, the editorial layouts naturally followed suit, so in some cases we were typesetting stories five times. The electronic typesetter set each story five times and spewed it out on a long tape. We didn't have a table long enough to accommodate all this junk, so the floor became our work surface. It was difficult for Madame Editor to retain her dignity while crawling around on the floor to cut up copy.

With a small staff and so many pages to be done each week, we all became proficient at doing layouts. Even the interns, who spent time with us, learned layout. The entire process of producing five *Consumers* each week became a team effort.

I learned quickly that good things, like ego trips, don't last forever. On March 3rd of this year the death knell sounded. Effective March 31st, there would be no more *Consumers*. What a shock that was. I was given the chance to tell the staff before the official announcement the following day. Terry cried while Diane and I lapsed into a state of numbness. Shaaron had just found a new job, so she was all right.

We had to put out those last four editions of our *Consumers* and they had to be as good as all the others. People called or stopped by to offer their sympathy and on many occasions I was afraid I'd never make it, but somehow I did.

Diane and Terry were able to find other jobs within the corporation, but I chose to escape. At the time, I thought I was accepting severance, because I couldn't find a suitable position, but I know now I just wanted to get away from it for a little while.

Someone had burst the magic bubble and I couldn't breathe the strange air.

Do I regret taking on the challenge of *The Consumers*? I can say now that I wouldn't have missed it for anything. I learned many new skills, both human and management. I met so many wonderful people, and just the experience of launching something as exciting as *The Consumers* was invaluable.

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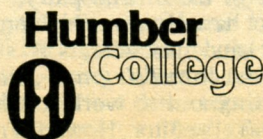
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Course counselling and registration,
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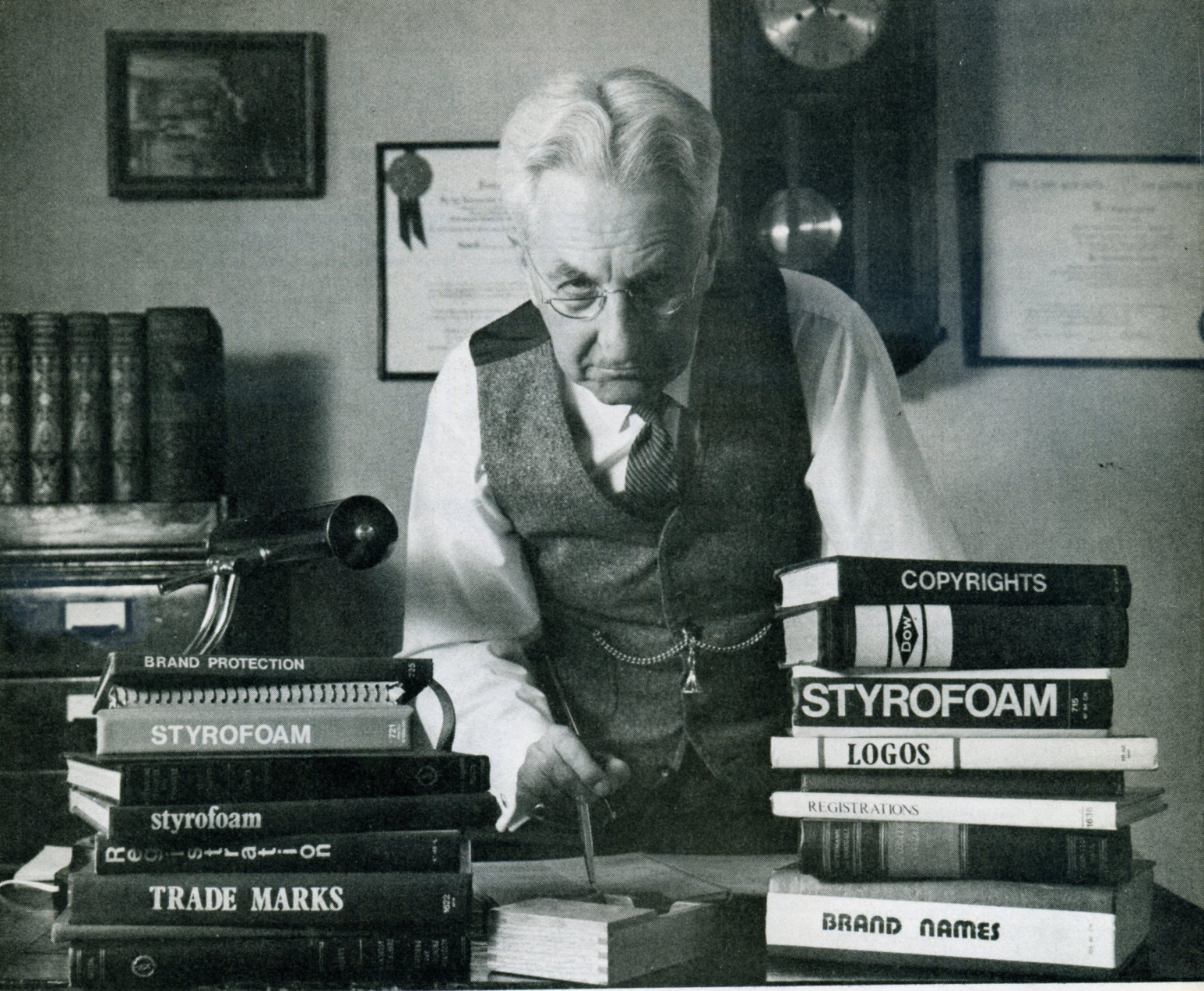
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