content

Canada's National Newsmedia Magazine

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The proposed Daily Newspaper Act unveiled

Journeyman – Part Four of one reporter's journalistic journey

Freedom of Information Act – some recent trends

Media coverage of the Stephen Dawson case – was it too emotional?

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Canada's Newsmedia Magazine

Second class privileges pending

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Cover

Anne Pappert was author of a special report on media coverage of the Stephen Dawson case. She had only six weeks to prepare the report, which was unveiled at a conference of the Canadian Association for the Mentally Retarded. Dave Silburt talked to Pappert and to the journalists whose work she criticized.

Credits

Photos:

Ann Pappert: **Dave Silburt**

Ottawa Sunday Herald: **Ottawa Citizen**

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A note from the editor

The proposed Daily Newspaper Act has been unveiled. Not given first reading, not referred to a parliamentary committee – just unveiled for public examination and discussion. No doubt even more public and publisher discussion will follow, and with any luck at all, this government will *never* have to go to the wire with the Act, which is, at best, a watered down response to the recommendations of the Kent Commission.

The publishers, self-proclaimed guardians of freedom of the press, were quick off the mark to criticize, especially the provision for formation of a government-financed Canadian Daily Newspaper Advisory Council. Existing publisher-financed Press Councils, they contend, do the job quite well, without *any* government interference in the newsrooms of the nation. An interesting juxtaposition of news stories within the past week has provided cause for wonder and speculation. The Ontario Press Council *has* agreed to review/recent happenings at the Brampton Times as requested by the Center for Investigative Journalism. That's the good news. The bad news is that it will consider the matter only if John and Judi McLeod waive their right to sue for wrongful dismissal, and Judi McLeod withdraws her complaint before the Ontario Human Rights Commission. Executive Director Fraser MacDougall explains that's standard procedure for complaints considered by the Council.

Meanwhile, in what Hon. James Fleming regards as unfortunate timing, Combines investigators launched raids on seven daily papers. But it was only a couple of days before they were ordered to return the materials seized, in response to Thomson's constitutional challenge of the raids.

Content's interview with CBC president Pierre Juneau came too late for inclusion in this issue, but it's an interesting one, and will make good reading next time.

Toronto freelancer Dave Silburt has been at it again. In this issue he examines the Pappert report, which severely rapped media coverage of the Dawson court battle. Author Tom riley looks at Canada's Freedom of Information provisions – and those of other countries.

E.W.P.

OPINION

by Murray Goldblatt

Pierre Trudeau's freeze-out of the national media in the Parliamentary Press Gallery is the latest phase of a long-running prime ministerial duel with the press. It's been a debate marked by an absence of acceptable behavior on both sides.

From the outset of his first administration 15 years ago, Prime Minister Trudeau's attitude to the national press corps has ranged from mere disdain to outright contempt. Corridor 'scrum' sessions were sloughed off in the late 1970's — and regular press conferences substituted. But these weekly affairs became less and less frequent and this year they have almost been ruled out.

Periodically, Trudeau's aides have suggested in response to complaints that there was no need to subject the PM to such interventions as regular press conferences. After all, they argued, didn't the PM appear regularly in the Commons each day and undergo Opposition party quizzing on "everything?"

Trudeau biographers and other political observers have provided other explanations.

Columnist Richard Gwyn suggested Trudeau disliked criticism, inherent in most media stories and commentary. What's more, he was unrelentingly competitive; he wanted to win any encounter with the press.

George Radwanski, a more sympathetic biographer, who is currently editor-in-chief of the *Toronto Star*, recalled that Trudeau had once said the press can "exercise a tyranny." Radwanski sees Trudeau as refusing to butter up the press, but concedes the Prime Minister is not above manipulating it. Most telling of all, Radwanski finds Trudeau often thinks reporters ask stupid questions.

Trudeau theorizes that anyone who presents himself as qualified to perform a given task must be presumed to have all the expertise desirable for that task. Applied to journalists, according to Radwanski, "that means expecting them to be thoroughly knowledgeable about any subject on which they want to question him..." As a result, when reporters fail to meet that lofty test, the Prime Minister doesn't hesitate to cut down the questioner with "abrupt impatience or withering sarcasm."

On another level, there's no doubt Trudeau feels the media tend to pry into his private life — his wife, his ballyhooed dates, his vacations at ski lodges, or on the beach with one of his children while on a Southeast Asian tour.

But all of this bypasses a basic point. Whether Trudeau feels those questions are prying, silly, uninformed, irreverent or negative, he has an over-riding duty to meet the national media for regular exchanges. The 'showbiz' of Question Period in the Commons, well-orchestrated appearances at Liberal rallies or service clubs across the country are no substitute for those exchanges.

The press serves as a monitor of the government and prime minister, first among equals in Canada's cabinet system. The media at its best can unearth new information or throw light on vague or contradictory announcements and allusions inside and outside the Commons. The press can provide a check on exaggerated claims.

In other words, it is imperative that the PM meet the press regularly.

But this imposes a special responsibility on the media. Reporters in the Press Gallery and elsewhere need to do their homework much better than in the past decade. Major public policy questions and large areas of government are left almost untouched by members of the media — except for an honorable minority in print and broadcast arenas.

For example, take a short checklist of subjects with impact on Canadians and their system of government: Constitutional change, parliamentary reform, federal-provincial financial arrangements, energy pricing policy, cabinet committee operations and the newly developed 'envelope' plan for linking policy to resources.

Most members of the media have just skimmed the surface of these complex questions. Pack journalism is in full sway. If there's no press release or press conference, it's not worth pursuing — especially over the long term. Trudeau has been known to reply seriously to well-researched questions. But the current media stance gives any prime minister an easy opportunity to sneer at the 'untutored' press.

To be fair, blame for this state of affairs cannot be traced to the national press alone. It must be shared by editors, publishers and broadcast executives who put their staff in pressure situations — demanding 'quickie' results and militating against thoughtful work.

If both sides in this media-Prime Minister equation play their part, it should be possible to work out an intelligent set of exchanges. Instead of an automatic parade of weekly press conferences, these could be scheduled twice a month with the addition of informal corridor interviews — the old 'scrum' — when there is a major news day involving the PM. This would be a far better recipe for sane dialogue than the present childish standoff.

Murray Goldblatt previously worked for the Globe & Mail, first as Ottawa parliamentary bureau chief and then as national editor. He is experienced in quizzing the current Prime Minister as well as Lester Pearson and Joe Clark. Currently he is a professor of journalism at Carleton University.

An excerpt from a rare press conference given by the Prime Minister at the end of April, 1983:

Question: Do you plan on being the leader in the next election?

Trudeau: I have made no plans. I have not had much time to think about that, but we will be meeting again, I suppose, sometime, somewhere.

Speaker from the floor: Is that a promise, Prime Minister?

Trudeau: Was it really worth waiting for? I mean, are you happy now that we have had this great time?

I see one hand applauding. Thank you.

The Globe & Mail's garbage incident: to what lengths should a journalist go to get a story.

by Dick MacDonald

A few years ago, the *National Enquirer*, once described in these pages as a journalistic fabrication factory, rummaged through Henry Kissinger's garbage cans in search of, presumably, discarded state and personal documents.

Great scorn was visited upon the paper by much of the American news media, which viewed the action as irresponsible and as, at the very least, sensationalist for its own sake.

Yet the reporting techniques used by the paper did produce a positive result: journalists in the United States were prodded into reassessing ethical behavior in the gathering of news. And they had to consider public perceptions of press standards in light of the *Enquirer's* activities.

In May of this year, *The Globe & Mail* published portions of the Ontario budget before Treasurer Frank Miller presented the document in the Legislature. A *Globe* reporter, reported to have been testing the security of the printing plant, had obtained the material from garbage bags outside the plant of the Carswell Printing Company.

There was an immediate and vocal response to the *Globe's* reporting methods. By far the bulk of it was outrage and cynicism.

There was discussion in newsrooms and media boardrooms, much of it was light-hearted, some of it serious and critical of such practices.

Whether we support or reject *The Globe's* behavior, surely the incident should stimulate debate about ethics in Canadian journalism. It seems to me that we don't spend enough time wondering why we do what we do. Or how we do it. Or what the consequences may be. Ethics aren't something we pull off the shelf and dust up whenever a crisis occurs that might jeopardize an already fragile public trust in the press.

John C. Merrill, a highly respected American journalism educator, has said that: "Ethics should provide the journalist certain basic principles or standards by which he can judge actions to be right or wrong, good or bad, responsible or irresponsible."

Of course, when we enter the journalistic ethics, we move into murky philosophical speculation. Yet, as Merrill says, "In spite of the unsure footing and poor visibility, there is no reason not to make the journey. In fact, it is a journey well worth taking for it brings the matter of morality to the individual person; it forces the journalist, among others, to consider his basic principles, his values, his obligations to himself and to others."

At this writing, *The Globe & Mail* case is before the courts — on legal, rather than ethical, questions. The paper, editor-in-chief Richard Doyle and reporter Robert Stephens are being sued by Carswell. The company alleges trespass, conversion and conspiracy to commit conversion.

Carswell claims that as part of its preparation for printing the Ontario budget documents, various drafts and proofs were printed and that they were to be disposed of by a private disposal firm. The suit says the proofs were put in bags that were placed on the company's loading dock.

Ethics aren't something we pull off the shelf and dust up whenver a crisis occurs that might jeopardize an already fragile public trust in the press."

Public reaction, as expressed in letters to the editor, ran about 4 to 1 against *The Globe's* original story. Jack Kapica, who handles *The Globe's* letters, said more than 70 were received.

A fairly typical letter said: "Your garbage bag journalism destroyed in one issue the fine reputation which you have carefully developed over a great many years. A pity. For *Globe* editor Richard J. Doyle to now try to justify the step for the sake of security, when it could have been done without disclosing (budget) figures, is ludicrous."

On the other hand, there was a letter from Peter Desbarats, dean of the School of Journalism at London's University of Western Ontario. "It is often necessary," he wrote, "for journalists to wade through garbage to expose sloppiness or corruption in high places, and I'm sure that *The Globe & Mail* will continue to place good government above squeamishness."

The Canadian Press moved a story in late May which surveyed opinions of publishers, editors and educators.

J. Patrick O'Callaghan, president of the Canadian Daily Newspaper Publishers Association, spoke as publisher of the *Calgary Herald* as he described *The Globe's* work as "sleazy journalism." But Wendy Jackson of the Centre for Investigative Journalism said, "I don't think there's any big ethical issue here."

Ron Robbins of the University of Regina's department of journalism and communications, commended *The Globe & Mail* for an enterprising story. By contrast, the *London Free Press* editorialized that "*The Globe* was not in pursuit of information on some clandestine government action which might endanger the public interest. It was looking for a scoop."

Scoop or otherwise, certainly one of the questions raised by the incident has to be, to what lengths should or can a journalist go for a story that ostensibly is in the public interest? In its Statement of Principles, CDNPA, the publishers association, says, "The Press claims no freedom that is not the right of every person." Would *The Globe* activity have violated that ethic? Perhaps that is an academic question, because *The Globe & Mail* was not a signatory to the Statement of Principles when it was adopted in 1977. (To be sure, the paper had a different owner and publisher then).

Personally, I think *The Globe's* behavior was unethical. If we have principles in this business, then they are to be rules of general application, not adhered to as the occasion suits a particular purpose.

This is how John Merrill puts it: "When the matter of ethics is watered down to subjectivism, to situations or contexts, it loses all meaning as ethics.

"If every case is different, if every situation demands a different standard, if there are no absolutes in ethics, then we should scrap the whole subject of moral philosophy and simply be satisfied that each person run his life by his whims or 'considerations' which may change from situation to situation..."

Dick MacDonald teaches journalism at Humber College in Toronto. Founding editor of content, he has worked with newspapers across Canada, was manager of editorial services with the Canadian Daily Newspapers Association, and was research editor for the Royal Commission on Newspapers. He is co-editor with Barrie Zwicker of The News: Inside the Canadian Media, published by Deneau of Ottawa.

All the news that fits:

a journalistic autopsy of a report critical of the media

by Dave Silburt

A report intended to criticize news coverage of the Stephen Dawson case in Vancouver has instead generated discussion on whether pots should comment on the cleanliness of kettles. The report, written by Toronto freelancer Ann Pappert for the Canadian Association for the Mentally Retarded (CAMR), focuses on coverage of a B.C. court case in which parents of a retarded, handicapped six-year-old fought to regain custody of the boy from the province, after wanting to withhold life-saving neurosurgery so he would 'die in dignity.' Pappert's study concludes that all media stories were slanted. It says quotes were taken out of context, facts were selectively omitted and facts presented were buried in emotional language. And a *content* study of the affair reveals the reporters criticized were not contacted by Pappert before her report went to press, and suggests her criticisms apply to her own report.

Pappert, 37, has logged over 10 years on the freelance circuit. Her work has appeared in *Quest* magazine, *The Globe & Mail, Toronto Life* and other publications. She has developed broadcast stories for the *CBC's* "Fifth Estate." She is an executive director of the Centre for Investigative Journalism. And she did not solicit this assignment; the CAMR approached her.

CAMR communications co-ordinator Kathleen Ruff said the association was seeking an experienced investigative journalist, and Pappert's name kept surfacing. "She had been involved with the CIJ, and she had an interest in the question of ethics," said Ruff, adding, "We were horrified at the reporting (of the Dawson case)."

According to Ruff, virtually all coverage described the boy as little more than a vegetable, reinforcing his image as less than human and sculpting public opinion so as to make acceptable the parents' contention that as such he should die. The CAMR believed evidence showing Stephen as a happy, if retarded, boy who was responsive and had a right to treatment, was glossed over or omitted.

Those are the reasons why they approached Pappert. And those are precisely Pappert's conclusions. She wrote: "Beyond any doubt, the analysis shows that the press failed to provide accurate, unbiased coverage in the Dawson case." She also wrote that television coverage was generally more accurate, because the TV format provided less opportunity for distortion.

Her study dealt with 135 pieces of news copy from the *Edmonton Journal, Montreal Gazette, The Globe & Mail, Toronto Star, Vancouver Province, Vancouver Sun* and *Winnipeg Free Press* from March 6 to April 6, 1983 and *CBC* coverage from March 14 to 19.

Beginning in mid-April, she worked to release the report in time for a planned CAMR conference on the right to treatment for the handicapped, to be held at Toronto's Sheraton Centre. She had about six weeks.

Ian Mulgrew (*Globe & Mail*): "In this case, reporters managed to get across the anguish and emotional tenor of the trial...I happen to think news stories that are emotional are damn good."

In the introduction to her report, she wrote: "Numerous telephone calls were made to journalists in an effort to obtain their accounts of how their stories were developed, written and handled, but none responded." In a foreword to the report, Patrick Watson wrote that it brings into focus the media's failure to meet an acceptable standard, but that reporter's accounts should have been an important part of the report. In an addendum to the report, Pappert said early attempts to reach "the three reporters picked to interview" (Bill Fox of *The Toronto Star*, Ian Mulgrew of *The Globe* and Ben Tierney of Southam News) were unsuccessful, but Tierney and Mulgrew were finally reached as the study went to press. Their comments appear in the addendum.

Pappert said her deadline was tight, and the time-consuming job of acquiring all the news clippings had to be done before she spoke to reporters, which is why she targeted only three.

"I picked Bill Fox because I thought *The Star's* coverage was fairly sensational," she explained. *The Globe* and Southam News were picked because of their wide impact. To those who criticize her failure to contact reporters before the study went to press, she responds, "They're right. But there was a serious time constraint."

The Star's Fox was by far the most difficult for *content* to reach. It took two messages left at his Washington office; he did not return the calls for 48 hours. Asked if there could be any impediment to Pappert reaching him, Fox said *The Star* can "track me down in Timbuktu, or anywhere, sometimes to my dismay." Fox, who leads a peripatetic existence centred on *The Star's* Washington bureau, was in Vancouver for the Queen's visit when he became aware of the Dawson case. Though he had not read Pappert's report when contacted by *content*, he said he was flabbergasted to think anyone could infer reporter bias from his stories. "I found myself torn and changing my view almost with each witness," he said. Though he was one of Pappert's selected interviewees, his copy was not specifically criticized in her study. In an interview, she said that because Fox suddenly entered the case without background, "he did a better job than anyone had a right to expect of him." This comment was not part of her report.

Wrote Pappert: "By far the most excessive example of emotional reporting in the Dawson case belongs to *The Toronto Star* in its April 6, 1983 copyrighted story by Ellie Tesher...no effort is spared to emotionalize the story..." Asked for some response for *content*, Tesher responded thusly: "It would have been more appropriate for Ann to have contacted me." Told she was not one of the three selected for an interview, Tesher wondered aloud why Pappert would not choose the one she named most excessive in emotional reporting.

Tesher told *content* she became "enraged" when Kathleen Ruff came to *The Star* and took her to task over the accuracy of her story. According to Tesher, she was angry because Ruff contrived to interview her without first identifying herself as a CAMR representative. (Ruff says she did identify herself, but Tesher insists she would never have agreed to an ax-grinding session with a

PR rep; she thought Ruff was a concerned parent). Ruff said Tesher was hostile: "She kept saying she resented the fact I had come down to discuss her story." What Ruff discussed was that the CAMR thought the news focus should be a handicapped person's right to treatment, not a human interest focus on the Dawsons. She said the writing was too emotional, and "dangerous", because it promoted the idea that retarded people should be denied what would for normal people be ordinary treatment.

Tesher, who apparently does not take impromptu journalism lessons from non-journalists, said she made no judgment calls, nor would she. Her interview with the Dawsons, published only after the court rendered its decision, she says addressed the question: "What do you have to feel to want a child to die?"

Pappert admitted she should have talked to Tesher, but said she didn't know Ruff had approached Tesher until after the fact. "By then there was too much ill feeling."

In that portion of the report dealing with Tesher, Pappert wrote: "Thus Tesher describes Stephen: 'He is blind, deaf, has cerebral palsy — a disorder of the nervous system — and massive brain damage from which he can never recover. He will never walk, talk, hold a spoon or toy or gain control over his limbs or bodily functions. He needs constant drugs to prevent seizures.' Those are Tesher's words, not those of the Dawsons..." If Pappert had asked Tesher, she would have been told those words came from medical reports by doctors closely involved with Stephen.

Ian Mulgrew of *The Globe* returned *content's* first call in 30 minutes, from a booth near Squamish, B.C. By way of explanation, he said he checks his message service regularly, and "when I get a call from someone I don't know in Toronto, I assume it's important." Mulgrew said he received no messages from Pappert until after her report was written.

"I got up one morning, and I'm sitting at my desk with my first coffee. Jeff Sallot was in town, and he was in the office. And this lady calls and says she wrote this report, and that there's a story on it in the morning *Globe* (May 26). And I find out then that there's this woman who has done this quickie study."

When the comments attributed to him in the addendum were read to him on the telephone, Mulgrew's voice dissolved into laughter, then he recovered and said, "I love reporters." In the addendum, Pappert said Mulgrew agreed coverage of the Provincial Court trial was "sensational, and coverage of the later hearings continued on that emotional level." But Mulgrew said the sensational material he referred to was a single story in the *Vancouver Province,* which he thought played up the Dawson's marital discord. Most coverage, said Mulgrew, was fair.

To allow Stephen to die, his parents withdrew consent for the surgical repair of a tube, or shunt, draining accumulating cerebrospinal fluid from the boy's cranial cavity. Their reason, reported in the media, was that he was hopelessly blind, deaf, incontinent and unaware, but Pappert made the point that testimony showed his poor condition was largely a result of the blocked shunt. She said this was not reported in the press. But the first *Globe* story on March 11, by freelancer Mark Budgen, said in part, "...the child had been showing signs of improvement...until the shunt malfunctioned."

Furthermore, court testimony by the neurosurgeon originally scheduled to do the surgery revealed that even if the operation was done, Stephen would not improve, only remain alive in the same

state. The testimony refuted remarks by other doctors of less expertise in neurosurgery, who implied the boy could improve after an operation. These facts, vindicating Ellie Tesher's and other reporter's descriptions, are in the printed Supreme Court decision, but not in Pappert's report.

The CAMR report says testimony describing Stephen as 'semi-vegetative' was harped on, while other testimony, detailing his condition weeks or months before his shunt blockage, was not reported. The reporters who were there counter that the only relevant descriptions were those accurately reflecting his present and future condition.

Added Southam's Ben Tierney: "In a trial, as any reporter will tell you, you go beyond the evidence presented in court at your peril." (That way lies contempt of court). Tierney admits attempts to contact him might have been unsuccessful. He tells a similar story to Mulgrew's about his first contact with Pappert:

"Ann did call me and she said: (A) the report was written and (B) it had been suggested to her that she have some media input."

Tierney added: "I think coverage tended to reflect the emotions in the trial. This wasn't a city council meeting; there were some pretty heartrending moments."

Fox, a veteran reporter of 16 years experience, agrees. "There were pretty emotional moments, alright. At one point, the mother testified she wanted a doctor to kill Stephen."

Mulgrew: "In this case, reporters managed to get across the anguish and emotional tenor of the trial...I happen to think news stories that are emotional are damn good."

No *Vancouver Sun* reporters were named in the report, but aspects of *Sun* coverage were criticized. Reached very easily in the *Sun* newsroom, reporter Rick Ouston, one of those who covered the Dawson case, was surprised to hear of the report. Told a *Sun* headline was deemed manipulative ('Expression of mother's love: I'm fighting for my son to die') Ouston explained slowly: "The headline, written by a slot man and not a reporter, came from the mother's testimony." Told descriptive language about Sharon Dawson's crying on the witness stand was deemed too emotional, Ouston explained even more slowly, as if to a child: "It is very rare for someone to break down in tears on a witness stand. When it happens, it gets reported."

The CAMR report says testimony describing Stephen as 'semi-vegetative' was harped on, while other testimony, detailing his shunt blockage, was not reported. The reporters who were there counter that the only relevant descriptions were those accurately reflecting his present and future condition.

Pappert asserted the issue should have been 'The Right to Treatment,' not 'Parents versus the State.' Mark Budgen, the freelancer who wrote the first *Globe* story and who knows Pappert ("I've known Ann for four years; she knows how to get in touch with me") is angered by this.

"My anger stems from the fact that someone from the East wrote about this without understanding the issues here." The news focus was correct, said Budgen, because the B.C. Ministry of Human Resources had been apprehending many such children, involving itself in custody disputes and fulminating controversy.

Confronted with this information, Pappert said she didn't know this until after her report was done, but still thinks her evaluation is right. "Initially there might have been a reason to see it as 'Parents vs. the State,' but I think to continue seeing it that way was lazy."

Media critic Barrie Zwicker, who did a commentary on *CBC's* morning radio show which was in accord with Pappert, was surprised to learn of the gaps in her report. His commentary was based on the report and an interview with its author. In hindsight, he said, "If she isn't complaining about the reporting of (unpalatable) facts, she certainly appears to be." But he added: "Part of the reason why people demand a higher level of accuracy in critics is that they just don't like criticism."

Tesher was quick to point out that Pappert was paid $2500 for the job, but Pappert was quick to offer the information, too. Said Pappert: "There's nothing I can do to counter people who say you pay someone and you buy whatever integrity they have. But that's not the way I work."

Among her report's recommendations:

- That the media make a conscious effort to include input from groups of and for the handicapped in considering which issues deserve coverage;
- That the media make use of organizations of and for the handicapped in order to obtain accurate information and expert knowledge on issues affecting people who are handicapped;
- That the media assign reporters who have the background information necessary to be able to deal with the issue fairly, intelligently and in context.

JOURNEYMAN

In the fourth part of this series, we find journeyman Marshall poaching fish and selling ads in the northern mining town of Val d'Or.

Young, lean and keen. John Marshall, in the early '50's.

by John Marshall

I had three luxuriously deep spruce-bow mattresses and a good cooking fire ready when veteran prospectors, Chic and Doc, canoed back to the clearing where the spring sun had erased the snow. The winter's snow was still deep in the surrounding Northwestern Quebec bush about 40 kilometres from Val d'Or. After a late supper, I prepared the overnight camp while they paddled out on the dark lake to run the 100 foot gill-net.

Run the gill-net??

The eerie reflection of our lights from the spawning pickerels' eyes, the bite of the icy water and the stab of their spines has awakened the dazed wonderment in my mind. What in the name of humanity was I doing out here poaching fish? I was the respectable young editor of the *Val d'Or Star,* fresh from being a service club member and Boy Scout leadership course director at Rouyn-Noranda where I had been co-editor of that community's weekly.

Unlike instances in later years, it was not a case of taking questionably justified chances for the sake of getting a story. Like the hairy night I spent with a pair of marijuana dealers delivering bales of Acapulco Gold around Toronto; or the time I bluffed my way into a house where a man lay dying on the kitchen floor while his armed killer was in the basement, and I "borrowed" framed family portraits while trying to look like a detective, while being surrounded by the real ones who were all looking drawn-gun edgy.

The editor's job, which was my third in three and a half post-war years, included not only reporting work but also advertising sales (half pages for the nightclub plus favorable reviews of their four-act shows), as well as bill collecting.

No, I wasn't after a story in 1949. I was after a rest. For more than a month I had been working seven-day weeks while living without my family in a small hotel room in a 15-year-old mining town. The editor's job, which was my third in three and a half post-war years, included not only reporting work but also advertising sales (half pages for the nightclub plus favorable reviews of their four-act shows), as well as bill collecting (a previous ad salesman had drawn regular commission on hot shot sales, but hadn't collected). Since the pay cheques were intentionally given out late on Fridays, I often had to hustle on weekends to cover them. One week, the bank manager, grinning fiendishly, told me I had them all covered — except for my own. Exciting but enervating.

Consequently, it took no coaxing when the escape to the bush for some "fishing"

was suggested by Chic Bidgood. Chic is a member of a well-known prospecting family and the product of mining school and many tundra and bush trails. He is also a raconteur, bon vivant, wonderful cook, and could use a typewriter almost as well as he could use a magnetometer or prospector's pick. He was also irreverent — a trait he displayed while filling in as editor at the little tabloid weekly before I arrived. He satirized the local elite by inserting imaginative items about barbotte dealers, moose pasture mine promoters, and other rascals columns. One of his more memorable heads was: "Pimp picked up with blonde equipment."

He and others who lived off the land before there was any Val d'Or, had a sublime disregard for such parvenu conventions as fish and game laws. It was too easy to want an affinity with these blithe spirits who, I found, had greater historical significance than, say, the Board of Trade types. Even the bank roller for my paper, the late Lorne K. Smith, was a highly respected prospector and contractor.

Anyway, when Chic and old-timer Doc Hendricks got "the carvin (craving) for fresh fish," I went along for the escape without any rational thought about it being out of season or that real bushmen considered rod and line an effete inefficiency.

To add to the unconsidered potential for what, in any other town (and perhaps even in lusty Val d'Or), could have been a mini-scandal, the man who had agreed to drive us out and to pick us up the next day, was known locally as the "King of the Highgraders." (Highgrade is illicit gold, treated with about the same mix of indulgence and interdiction in the North as moonshine liquor is in Kentucky). Mr. Big was accompanied in the front seat by the lady with whom he lived in a hotel room down the hall from mine, and also by an exotic, black nightclub entertainer, who was sharing their room during her booking in Val d'Or, which had been arranged by Mr. Big. (His wife lived at their home in town).

Just as such company was far removed from my Baptist upbringing in Toronto, the weekend adventure was a great change from my work. But it was no physical rest. We hardly slept for running the net and there was a two-mile carry for all the gear, including a kicker that was never used, and two sacks of fish, whose spines kept digging into my spine. The fish were nearly all given away, except for a few that were sold to a restaurant to cover a bill for a tow when our car got stuck. To poach for profit was considered to be immoral.

On morning-after reflection, it wasn't soothing for the psyche either, though there were no embarrassing consequences. But press people, like others in interesting jobs with equal accountabilities (i.e. policemen, politicians, priests and pedagogues), should cultivate a self-cautioning introspection before jumping into any extra vocational activities and relationships. We must not be made into second-class citizens and denied privileges granted to others, whether that means the right to join a political party, a gay rights group, or, heaven forbid, the moral majority. But we should be prepared for the consequences, the necessity to announce our conflicts of interest and possibly denounce those with whom we are affiliated.

We have to be ready to lose friends, as I did in my next job at the *Northern Daily News* in Kirkland Lake. It was a minor but chastening example. I had accepted a friend's offer of a room in his hotel for occasional sessions with our editorial staff — a gregarious but penurious (that Thomson pay scale) group. There was a dumbwaiter linked to the service bar where we could even keep our own cheaply purchashed case of beer.

When Chic and old-timer Doc Hendricks got the "carvin for fresh fish," I went along for the escape without any rational thought about it being out of season or that real bushmen considered rod and line an effete inefficiency.

Although it had nothing to do with us, my friend was charged with a contravention of the liquor act. Thinking that I owed him a favor, he asked to have the matter kept out of the paper. I had been wrong to forget my accountabilities. I ran the story.

Of course, some people in this business don't seem to give a damn, and unfortunately at a significantly higher level of twisted truth and consequences.

The old *Toronto Telegram* got one of its own editors elected as city mayor. It didn't want just to fight city hall, it wanted to run it. Later owners, the Bassetts and Eatons, used that paper to promote or to protect a variety of their outside interests. Their obsessions involved everything from an attempt, which was fortunately aborted, to destroy the city's great old City Hall, to an absurd effort to get Grand Prix racing cars onto Canadian National Exhibition streets.

This principle of a free press being freely used and abused by the principals has been demonstrated in many ways. The Saint John daily, owned by New Brunswick's Irving family, once gave approving play to another Irving company's clean-up of an oil spill. It did not tell its captive readers it was an Irving operation that spilled the oil.

And while I was groping my way into the business in Val d'Or in 1949, I was getting no ethical model from the *Toronto Star*. That was the election year it gave us its classic three-line banner head: "Keep Canada British/Destroy Drew's Houde/God save the King." *The Saturday Evening Post*, in an unprecedented two-part series on a newspaper, had called it the "last home of razzle-dazzle journalism." I was hit by a small flash of that dazzle.

The Star used a story I had filed as a stringer for British United Press (now UPI) about flying with forestry officials over bush fires that were burning themselves on to page one across the country. The editor punched it up by inserting a bit, apparently from a *Star* staffer, that had us coughing with smoke at 3,000 feet. I had difficulty apologizing to my embarrassed news contacts. It was the old story of the out-of-town paper not worrying about local reaction; like the time the same paper's hit and run squad paid a woman to pose in prayer at the grave of an accident victim. She was well known in town, but not as a professional *mourner*.

Such experiences made me conscious of out-of-town audiences when I was later working for the Toronto papers. I enjoyed the rewards once when some Newfoundland expatriates invited me out for a bash because they felt a *Telegram* piece I had done about outport life was "really some good, for a mainlander."

On the other hand, a reference I made metaphorically to an elderly Quebec man's age as though it could be seen on a birth certificate, elicited one of the nastiest letters I've ever received. I was told by a Montrealer I was a stupid fool for not knowing such certificates weren't used then.

Nowadays, journalists have a broader knowledge about topics beyond their own communities than we of the old school. But nothing prepares you better than "being there."

And yet, bodily presence doesn't guarantee perceptiveness, as I was to learn years later after I gave a lift to a Toronto deskman who was responsible for handling cityside copy. He thanked me, not so much for the ride, but for what he had learned about local affairs — I was then city hall bureau chief. I was more than a little bemused when, confessing to a great ignorance about local matters, he added, "I really should read the paper more."

Along with a questioning curiosity and a yen for observant travel, a compulsion for omnivorous reading has to be a vital component of any good reporter's makeup. But there are obviously many who confine their reading to the sports

pages, or just to newspapers in general. This could explain the print platitudes about Sweden having the highest suicide rate; wolves being dangerous to humans; Jeane Dixon, and other so-called psychics, having special powers to read the future; suburbanites being more conformist than the occupants of mid-town highrises; row-house filing cabinets; and the civil service being less efficient than, say, General Motors.

There are also the geographical gaffs, and the cartographic cliches that still, for example, have the Sudbury area pictured as a barren moonscape. Such naivete in the big time inspired a fey Noranda photographer to put webbing snowshoes on the old nag that pulled a sidewalk snow roller. The big dailies ran his picture straight. I suppose they think moose and caribou also wear snowshoes.

When I worked as stringer for the *Toronto Telegram, Time*, and BUP, I often encountered these blind spots. It was common to be asked to check something the deskman thought was in my backyard when it was really a couple of hundred miles away.

However, I learned a lot more from my part time employers than they ever learned from me. In particular, a weekly paper journeyman should seek out the edge-sharpening that comes with the deadline pressures and other professional demands of a daily or wire service and with the superlative nit-picking of a news magazine. Demands on me ranged from a two-word BUP wire, "How search," to a two-page *Time* telegram inquiry including, "could use a little more physical description of auditorium where meeting held."

There were the patient guiding letters from *Time's* Gerry Gask invariably with some word of encouragement ("for the second time in a fortnight you did a real nice job for us"), which is the kind of thoughtfulness too many editors lack. These were my first lessons in filing off the top of my head, at times from an outdoor phone booth at 20 below, to a superlative BUP rewrite man in Montreal. On a good story they'd clear the outgoing circuits and he'd relay my stuff a sentence at a time. The ringing bulletin bells in the background were good for the adrenalin.

Such contacts can lead to jobs. I was offered a position at BUP. but turned it down. They paid even less than the Northern weeklies did.

I received only $30 plus expenses (which saved money for my own weekly) for four days work for a BUP story on a mine disaster rescue drama. I was beating the opposition because, dressed like a Northerner, and walking like I belonged, I was getting past security to where I could sip coffee with the haggard rescue workers while they talked about the smoky hell below. BUP got the page one play in all of New York's weekend papers. I didn't complain about the money, but I was unhappy I hadn't been given a byline. A byline in Manhattan would have been nice at that stage of my career. BUP's Bill Shaughnessy unhappily explained to me that he'd kept my name off because he thought I was also filing to the *Toronto Telegram*. Sometimes I did, but not on that particular story. I had offered it to them, but they decided to save money. It wasn't like the later *Star* war years when, as the *Star* did this time, they would have had a dozen people on the scene.

The Star squad included an editor who was set up in the hotel where I was also working. I got back at the Toronto paper for the way it had made me look stupid in the bushfire story. I discovered I could overhear their conversations on the editor's phone whenever I picked up my own, until the hotel operator plugged me into an outside line. It only took a bribe of a box of chocolates to arrange it so that I was not given a line unless I gave the go ahead by ratting the receiver hook up and down. Some of the information the *Star* mob picked up was quite helpful. One time I had the great gratification of hearing Toronto ask for a matcher for one of my pieces.

Fun. Still most of my weekly newspaper work was plodding as well as endless. I felt a great relief when I was given approval to hire a junior joe-jobber — on the stipulation that I find one for about $25.00. About the same time the phone rang. It was that wonderful old corncob smoking grumbler, C.M. Freeman calling long distance from Toronto. Thirty years my senior and mentor at my first post-war civilian work at the *Daily Commercial News*, he was asking me for a job. "Don't worry, you'll be the boss," he told me. He said he had to escape Toronto and the DCN for both his physical and mental health. He'd take the copy boy pay. It would cover his room, and maybe his board.

His first morning on the job, he made two announcements. For the first time in years he'd slept through the night without having to go to the toilet. Secondly, he was going to do something about our lack of a decent social column. He picked up the phonebook and dialed the first number in it, "Hello, this is the *Val d'Or Star* calling. Say, have you had any visitors lately...?"

Copy spewed out of his typewriter like ore from the Lamaque Mine crusher. It gave me time to think. Among other things, I thought about why our paper supposedly wasn't financing its own way, about why, as its two civic-minded silent partners were told, it had to be subsidized by the jobwork in the printing plant run by the only active partner in Malartic about 28 kilometres away.

When I was at the *Rouyn-Noranda Press* I had offered to help the new owner research the profitability of individual printing jobs. After touring some of Ontario's better weeklies, I produced a breakdown of costing for all of our operations. My lengthy report also covered everything from labor relations ("Midland management explains almost monthly, the company position as to profit and loss...to give men idea of what's going on.") to wage levels ("Lino ops average $35.00 to $37.50...pay $2.00 a column to feature columnists").

I applied what I had learned there to the *Val d'Or Star*, and found myself telling the friendly bank manager I could make a profit by having our paper printed at the local French-language printing shop rather than at our own. Naive. Shortly afterwards, I was told the operation could no longer afford me.

Mr. Freeman, nearly biting his pipe stem through with anger, said he would walk out with me. I convinced him to stay. For 25 years until he died, he regularly apologized for letting me talk him into staying.

I returned to my home base in Toronto and began to send out job applications. Shortly afterwards, I received a phone call from Kirkland Lake in Northern Ontario. "How'd you like to come back north?" asked Geoff Yates, publisher of the *Northern Daily News*. He needed a city editor.

Soon I was headed for my first sweet and sour experience of being an employee for Thomson Newspapers.

International Freedom of Information: some recent trends

by Tom Riley

Although Canada's Freedom of Information Act, called the *Access to Information and Privacy Act*, was passed in Parliament and given Royal Assent on July 7, 1982 those wanting to utilize the act to get access to the multitude of government reports and documents are still waiting to do so. As of this writing, the law, though on the statute books, has yet to come into full force.

Parts of the act were proclaimed as operational, such as the changes to the Canada Evidence Act and repealing Section 41 (2) of the Federal Courts Act in which a minister will no longer be able to sign a certificate withholding certain sensitive documents from the courts.

The section of the act which allows Parliament to approve the naming of both the Information and Privacy Commissioners has also been proclaimed.

However, it is this latter part which is now causing all the problems. The resolution appointing the people to these two posts (now confirmed as being Inger Hansen as Information Commissioner — she is the Privacy Commissioner under the Canadian Human Rights Act — and John Grace, currently with the CRTC and former editor of the now defunct, *Ottawa Journal)* has yet to be presented in Parliament.

Early in the year an agreement was reached between the Government and Opposition House Leaders to have the resolution brought in the last day of Parliamentary business in the current session. When this agreement was reached it was thought the session (now the longest in Canadian history) would end momentarily.

The Opposition has raised questions in the House trying to get the resolution forward and also has held talks outside the Commons to get the matter resolved. The Government seems intransient on the matter claiming there is too much business on the parliamentary timetable. Government House Leader Pinard has promised to bring it in by the end of June.

Once the Commissioners are named, there is still a matter of proclaiming the access part as operational (the key section to Canadians) and this too has been promised by the Government. Their position is that it will come into force 30 days after the appointments are approved by Order-in-Council.

All that this amounts to is legislative foot dragging and the perception, amongst many, is that the Government is simply using these techniques to delay actual implementation for as long as possible on the basis that they are not overly enthusiastic in the first place.

Coupled with the delaying tactics has been revelations, through Svend Robinson, NDP MP, that the Treasury guidelines on fees to be charged to access requestors could well be beyond the reach of the average Canadian with as much as $5.00 per page being charged and $250 per quarter hour for computer searches. (See Editor's Note).

Treasury Secretary Herb Gray, responding to the revelations in Parliament, said these were only suggested fees and not the approved ones. However the whole matter has left a sour taste amongst Freedom of Information advocates and a sense of frustration among those who want to get on with gaining access.

Many people, including journalists, across the country are taking advantage of a dictum from Prime Minister Trudeau, when the legislation was first introduced in July 1980, instructing civil servants to go ahead and release information on the basis that the act was already in place. (Prime Minister Clark had originally initiated this during his short-lived regime when his government brought in Bill c.15, which was their version of FOI). Some information is coming out, but the problem at the moment is if one is denied access, there is no appeal mechanism. For the moment, those who want to gain access have to be content with what they have.

Canada is not alone in experiencing problems with access legislation.

Both Australia and New Zealand passed acts in 1982, but for both, the passage into law was not an easy matter.

In Australia the fight for freedom of information law goes back to 1972 when then Labour Prime Minister Gough Whitlam ordered a study be done into the feasibility of enacting legislation for Australia along the lines of the American Freedom of Information Act.

Although it took ten years for this act to become a reality the similarities to the U.S. act are almost non-existent.

After many government studies, a change in government and much delaying, a bill was introduced into the Australian Senate by the Fraser Government in 1978.

That bill was considered so weak, especially in a lack of a comprehensive review mechanism and exemptions to access, which were so broad it made the bill almost useless, that public clamor and pressure forced the Government to refer it to the Senate Standing Committee on Constitutional and Legal Affairs for special study.

That committee travelled all over Australia and heard briefs and testimony from 169 groups and individuals resulting in a report (tabled in late 1980) recommending over 100 changes to the proposed bill.

The Government then delayed for a year before finally bringing in, after yet another general election, a revised bill, which only contained 32 of the recommended changes (and those were considered to be cosmetic and minor).

A long battle then ensued in the Senate. The major change won on that front was that though appeals were to be made to the Administrative Appeals Tribunal (in the event of access denial), they could not hear an appeal if a minister signed a certificate saying the documents in question were exempt in the interests of national security, international relations, national defence, federal/state relations or certain economic information which could prejudice the economy or the economic affairs of the government.

One concession of the government was a proposal to create a Documents Review Tribunal in which a panel of judges and ex-judges could review, in camera, the documents a minister exempted under the above, and decide if he was correct in

doing so. The final decision on release would still be with the minister, but it is felt by some that although the concession is not a major one, it does create a pressure point which could result in the minister releasing documents.

Other weak points in the act are that no documents created prior to the legislation are subject to release under the act with the exception of personal information dating back five years (another concession won in the Senate). The exemptions are still considered too broad and vague in much of the wording.

Journalists on the whole in Australia have expressed dissatisfaction with the law and say Canada's Act is much better (though there is not a full awareness outside Canada that ministerial documents in Canada, as a result of a last minute change to the Act in June 1982, are totally exempt not only from access but any form of appeal).

There is good news for FOI travellers in Australia with the election of the Labour Government of Prime Minister Robert Hawke. The Prime Minister himself has been a strong advocate of an effective access law (he was the patron of a Committee for FOI formed in Victoria six years ago) and, in addition, the new attorney general, Senator Gareth Evans, when in opposition had proposed 80 amendments to the Bill when it was passing through the last Parliament. He has said publicily he will bring in substantial amendments to the law very quickly. If the changes he brings in are anything like what he advocated in the Senate, then Australians could end up having the best piece of legislation in any of the three Commonwealth countries who have passed such laws.

The main obstacle is going to be the bureaucrats who were definitely the main stumbling block to the legislation as it now stands. During its whole parliamentary process, it was they who erected endless barriers and put forth a multitude of arguments to stop it. When it became politically expedient for the government to go ahead with the law, then the bureaucrats erected more subtle barriers in the form of the current wording of the law.

Much can be said of the New Zealand law, called the Official Information Bill, which was first introduced two years ago, dropped because of the general election of 1981, and then revived and passed under the personal guidance of Prime Minister Robert Muldoon. That law comes into operation on July 1, 1983.

Although the actual construction of the law is good, it allows not only for an appeal mechanism but also for repealing their antiquated Official Secrets Act and a system of educating both civil servants and the public to the law, its major flaw is that the prime minister and the attorney general have the right to withhold any document through the signing of a certificate. This is so all encompassing it could destroy the whole efficacy and concept of the Act.

However, it is possible this could be used only in very sensitive cases and means the fight over this will be political. Meanwhile the citizenry of New Zealand could benefit overall by obtaining the information which, up to now has been denied them. As usual, there is a qualifier. In this case the qualifier is that it is usually the sensitive information that is the most important in keeping government accountable.

In the final analysis, this is what the struggle for information laws has come down to — the battle to keep the laws strong and viable enough so that governments will become more open and more accountable. Thus the fight for these laws has been a two-tiered one — a struggle to achieve the above and the right of the average citizen to know what his or her government is doing and why.

The battle over access to government information is actually going on in many fronts, and though many have tried to say it's time has actually passed, in fact the access movement is still very much alive and kicking. Although the above only covers Canada, Australia and New Zealand, there is much going on elsewhere.

In the U.S. attempts to amend and weaken their FOI Act by the Reagan Administration have failed in the last two sittings of Congress and attempts this year appear doomed to fail.

In Europe laws already exist in many countries. In Sweden the law dates back to 1806 and is part of their constitution. Still the Council of Europe, which is made up of members from 23 countries, have recommended all of its member countries pass legislation and, more significantly, the European Economic Community is about to bring out a report this year, which will recommend access laws for all member states. This should be a suitable prod to the United Kingdom, which has resisted any such laws with a vengeance.

Thus the freedom of information movement continues to grow and expand.

Once the Canadian government gets around to letting the legislation come into force, there will be a review for changes by Parliament (called for by law) in three years time.

This means that there is a lot of elbow room to keep alive the movement for an effective law. In 1980 Canada was considered to be the leader in the Commonwealth on this issue. With the changes on Cabinet documents being exempt and taking so long to enact, she has since lost this footing. Perhaps she can regain that position with widespread media and public attention.

In the final analysis, the important thing is not the international perception of Canada as the good guy with effective legislation, but a law that truly allows access and creates a climate for more accountability.

In these times of economic recession and the rising rate of unemployment, that can only be a good thing for Canada, and, for that matter, other countries which either already have such laws or are considering laws.

Tom Riley is a freelance writer and information consultant. He is also the executive secretary of the International Freedom of Information Institute, and heads up Riley Information Services.

EDITOR'S NOTE: *Since this story was written, Treasury Secretary Herb Gray released the fee schedule and administrative guidelines for the Access to Information Act and Privacy Act, effective July 1.*

Under the Information Act, the Government will not release information received from other governments; RCMP information; trade secrets; and information already made confidential by law.

Under the access to information rules, for the first 5 hours, the individual pays $5 for restricted federal material. For each additional hour, he is charged $10 plus $16.50 a minute for computer time and $20 an hour for computer programming.

At last — the National Newspapers' Act

National Newspapers' Act revealed — or is it?

by Eleanor Wright Pelrine

"You can't have a free press if too much is owned by too few", said Multiculturalism Minister Jim Fleming, as he unveiled federal government proposals for legislation to limit the size of newspaper chains and establish a Canadian Daily Newspaper Advisory Council. The proposed Daily Newspaper Act, approved in its current form by cabinet at the end of June, followed closely the positions espoused by Fleming in a series of speeches and interviews that began a year ago. Main features of the legislation are:

- Newspaper chains with more than 20 per cent of Canadian circulation will not be allowed to expand by acquiring papers, starting new ones or converting non-daily papers into dailies.
- Chains with less than 20 per cent of the circulation market will not be permitted to expand beyond 20 per cent.
- The Restrictive Trade Practices Commission will be authorized to look into entry into the newspaper business of any non-media corporation, to monitor provisions for editorial independence from the non-media interests, and to recommend remedies if such publications do *not* have editorial independence.
- A Canadian Daily Newspaper Advisory Council representing newspaper publishers, journalists and the public will be established and financed through an endowment fund of up to $20 million.
- The Council will be empowered to deal with complaints by the public against daily newspapers that, in the opinion of the council, do not belong to a credible provincial or regional press council and to carry out research into the newspaper industry and the practice of journalism.
- The federal government will give newspapers grants of up to $150,000 for the establishment of regional or international bureaus.

Opposition critic Perrin Beatty described contents of the bill as odious, dangerous, and possibly illegal. He promised to urge that the opposition fight it every inch of the way.

Beatty and publisher critics of the bill said that if the government wants to deal with concentration in the newspaper industry, it should amend the Combines Act to include a specific provision relating to newspapers.

Tom Kent, chairman of the royal commission on Newspapers, said that the proposed act is a step in the right direction.

Former journalist Jim Fleming, charged by cabinet with responsibility for shepherding a response to Kent's recommendations through the political process spoke to ***Content*** from his Ottawa office, to discuss the proposals.

Why, we asked, did he choose this method to release the proposed legislation, rather than having pushed for first reading, while parliament was still in session.

Fleming responded that, even if he had gotten first reading, the bill couldn't have been debated during the last session, because parliamentarians already faced a back-up of budget and other legislation. "It's basically public knowledge that it wouldn't have gotten to debate, nor would a number of other issues the government has taken a decision on, until the next session."

"...We were overtaken by time. I finally got cabinet approval Thursday morning (June 30th). Wednesday morning, they cancelled Thursday's sitting of the house, so I couldn't have gone that route, even if I had chosen it. I was working down to the last ten days of June, getting it through the cabinet, so I had it printed as a draft. There was no great plot to avoid the House."

Fleming says that things are on stream to get mention of the act in the throne speech this fall, and then move to first reading. As to whether there might be extensive changes and watering down, as the result of the prolonged public debate, Fleming is clear.

"I don't foresee changes on the 20 percent rule."

Reacting to publisher suggestions that newspapers should not be singled out, but concentration dealt with through Combines legislation the minister says he has been through all that. "I invited the publishers to have their eminent lawyer, J. J. Robinette, suggest how we do that, and I haven't heard from him in a year. So obviously, we're going the best route we can, and our lawyers say while we're on fresh territory, that it is valid. Depsite the hyperbole of people like Patrick O'Callahan, the publishers themselves say there's too much concentration. In fairness to them, it was some time ago, after the Kent recommendations came out, that they first said there could be too much concentrations of ownership, but none of them would say how much was too much. Roy Megarry said it could be 20, it could be 25, it could be 30 per cent. So we just took his low number."

As to whether the release of the Act was orchestrated to tie in with seven raids on newspaper offices, Fleming said: "Lord, no! That was bad luck. I think that the public that listens will find it reasonable that you don't want everything in the hands of one or two, and they like the idea of being able to vent a grievance, but I get uncomfortable when police march into a newspaper office, but I didn't know anything about it, and I suspect that they didn't know anything about the timing of my release. I have made a point of never talking to Consumer and Corporate Affairs Minister Oulette about any of this. My job is not to be a policeman of editorial content or business operation.

All inquiries specified in the proposed Newspaper Act would be under the terms of the Combines Investigation Act, by the Restrictive Trade Practices Commission, a creature of the Combines legislation.

We've leaned over backwards, to make reference to existing competition regulations. This legislation follows pattern, approach and context of those regulations, except that we're singling out this special industry, and arguing this specific case.

Before charges under the act could be laid, the process outlined for a public inquiry would have to be exhausted. The one exception would be a possible charge of contempt if someone refused to come before the Commission to explain their purchases. A corporation or individual proposing to acquire or start a newspaper would be obliged to tell the Commission about it. Ignorance of the law would constitute no excuse from future proceedings. Decision of the Restrictive Trade Practices Commission would provide a green light or caution to the proposed acquisition. The Commission is empowered to recommend action to the federal government, to halt or further investigate proposed acquisitions.

A cursory examination of the proposed sections on acquisition of a newspaper by a non-media corporation shows that there may be loopholes. When a cursory examination, combined with the owner's statement says there is no relationship, no pressure, and no interference with editorial content or policy, there would be no recourse against the owners, despite the possibility of more subtle but equally insidious pressure from the owners.

"If the RTPC were not satisfied with their submission, surely they wouldn't just accept it carte blanche, they'd do what they always do, they'd inquire further," says Fleming. "They have the capacity to respond to complaints. It's just a matter of a decision by the RTPC that the relationship outlined is not adequate.

Cross-media ownership has already been dealt with through a cabinet directive to CRTC.

To speculation that establishment of the Canadian Daily Newspaper Advisory Council is on hold, and may be withdrawn, Fleming says that the proposal is not only a ghastly prospect, but is even better than the Quebec Council, frequently held up as a model for voluntary councils. "Ours is better because in an adjudication, the public interest would have the deciding vote." Cabinet had to approve Fleming's proposals, and he would have to go back to cabinet to withdraw the provision. He says again, as he did a year ago that the government-appointed Council would serve those areas not currently served by a credible or effective Press Council. In the case of newly established councils in the Atlantic provinces and British Columbia, Fleming points to the fact that publishers pay for them, the publishers have selected the chairmen, the publishers are selecting their own representatives and then their representatives are selecting public representatives. "Can I really then, go back to cabinet and say that these are credible Press Councils," asks Fleming rhetorically.

"Some of them are very angry, saying that the government betrayed their trust, because they have already set up press councils. It may be that the best will in the world they'll put excellent people in as public nominees. If I'm questioning them, I've got to be credible too. If they are prepared to put in the journalistic element and prepared to give councils a greater sense of independence, why not just carry on with the legislation into committee and let the committee make up its mind?"

"I hope that we end up with voluntary councils across the country. I hope that Manitoba and Saskatchewan develop, and I hope they'll consider letting the journalists control them."

Most advisory councils consist of political friends of the government in power. Fleming denies that this one is likely to go the same way. "If the publishers' representatives and the journalists' representatives control the appointment of the chairman and vice-chairman, are they likely to select friends of government? The only place that we can appoint anyone is to appoint the chairman and vice-chairman if, after 90 days the other two groups have failed to agree. Some publishers have suggested that they will *never* participate. If the publishers stay out, we may end up with a journalists' and public council."

It is not necessary, the minister explains, for the chairman and vice-chairman to be elected from among the 50 people appointed to the Council from various regional groups, they might, instead, from a nominating committee, and come up with a list of candidates.

It has not yet been determined how journalist members would be selected, although imput from professional organizations and unions may be a factor.

The white knight of press freedom – real or imagined – will spend the next few months making forays into political and public opinion. What comes out in next session's throne speech may be considerably different from the current proposal.

The birth of the *Ottawa Sunday Herald*

by Donna Balkan

"Welcome to the Herald bold!
We trust in God you do not fold."

Whoever wrote the poem on the door of the *Ottawa Sunday Herald* couldn't have said it more appropriately. In a city which has seen three newspapers die in the past five years — two of them within a year of their debut — it was beginning to look like divine intervention would be the only hope.

Not that there hadn't been talk of a new paper for the capital since the *Ottawa Journal* published its final edition on that Black Wednesday in 1980. The rumors flowed as fast as the beer at the National Press Club bar, and there were even a few attempts to raise funds and recruit staff. But like most of the ideas that were born in that august watering hole, nothing ever materialized.

Until Lowell Green came along. When the crusty dean of Ottawa's radio open-line circuit announced his plans to publish a Sunday tabloid, the wags were taking bets on how long it would last. Ottawa proved it wasn't a tabloid town with the failure of *Ottawa Today*, the star-studded effort to take on both the *Journal* and Southam's *Citizen* in the fall of 1977. Despite a staff which included such top-drawer journalists as Charles King, Lindsay Crysler and Carol Goar (now Ottawa bureau chief of *Maclean's*), *Today* lasted a mere six months. And the last attempt to crack Ottawa's Sunday market, *The Sunday Post of Canada*, suffered a similar fate.

But on March 27, 26,000 copies of the *Ottawa Sunday Herald* rolled off the presses and even the most hardened cynics are beginning to change their tune. Whether Green has God on his side is yet to be seen, but so far, the angels seem to be smiling.

In less than three months, the *Herald's* circulation has jumped to 55,000: 40,000 divided between newsstand sales and subscriptions and 15,000 distributed free in selected neighborhoods — and management is projecting 75,000 circulation by the fall. Although Green is reluctant to talk dollars and cents (he still refuses to divulge how much money went into the paper, although he admits that a good chunk of it was his own), he says the *Herald* is already showing a profit.

"We didn't go in for any big, expensive frills," Green said, sitting behind a desk in the cramped, basement office which serves as the *Herald's* pied a terre. The office, located in a less-than-fashionable section of Ottawa's west end, was provided for "next to nothing" by the local jeweller who owns the building. There are no executive offices — the advertising department is separated from the newsroom by a clapboard partition — and the only sign of extravagance is a handful of VDTs. The *Herald's* total staff number less than 20: in addition to circulation, advertising, production and clerical staff, there are six full-time editors and two reporters.

"I don't know what it is about Ottawans, but we always dwell on past failures," Green says philosophically. "It doesn't make any more sense to ask why there should be more than one paper in Ottawa than to ask why there should be more than one store. It's another opinion, another voice, and we need that here in Ottawa."

Although the paper appears to follow the standard tabloid formula — a large feature photo on page 1, snappy headlines, lots of sports and a Peter Worthington column on the op-ed page — it's not really the *Sun* clone many Ottawans expected.

There's no "*Herald* girl" ("The advertising department wanted it but it was nixed by editorial," says one *Herald* insider) and the bylines are more than a little familiar to Ottawa readers. The paper's editor is Mike Pasternak, the taciturn veteran of *The Citizen*, *The Journal* and *Ottawa Today;* business editor Geoff Baxter; political editor Al Rogers; and sports editor Jim Bishop has last been seen on *The Journal* desk (Bishop had previously been at *The Citizen* as well); the senior reporter is Jo Ann Gosselin, best remembered for her defence coverage on the Southam wire; and the featured editorial page columnist is none other than the ubiquitous Charles King.

If it's enough to make at least one press club habitue snicker that the *Herald* should be renamed "Whatever happened to...", Green isn't defensive about his choice of staff.

"I got the best people available," he said, "We probably have the best editors in the city right now."

When asked about the preponderance of *Journal* refugees (production manager Bill March and production editor Chet Kulesza had also been at *The Journal* as has Queen's Park columnist Eric Dowd), Green snapped: "*The Journal* was a good newspaper — it died because of a very cynical deal at high levels ...but we're not *The Journal* — there's a different publisher — a different point of view."

Part of that difference stems from Green's broadcast background: the *Herald* also carries columns by a number of local radio and television personalities and advertising sales manager Marc Charlebois was recruited from private radio.

"I don't like this idea of print and radio being two different worlds," says Green. "We're all in the information business. We're all in the entertainment business. You still have to provide good, interesting information and get your facts right."

But private radio isn't the only influence on the *Herald's* content. Realizing that Ottawa readers want more than light entertainment and human interest stories — *The Citizen* is often criticized for being too "light, bright and trite" — Green added several other features not normally found in a tabloid: the *Christian Science Monitor* and *London Sunday Times* news services, syndicated columns by Bogdan Kipling and Louis Rukeyser, and a column "from a woman's point of view" by former *Citizen* and *Ottawa Today* staffer Eleanor Dunn, who had left journalism to become a business agent for a local union. He's also promising to beef up the *Herald's* local coverage, and send reporters out on investigative stories.

Despite the Worthington column — and Green's own reputation for having right-of-centre views — the *Herald* doesn't follow one political line. In one issue, an editorial bemoaning high property taxes was followed by one against capital punishment. Another issue ran a centre spread depicting the treatment of anti-nuclear protesters at the hands of U.S. Marines — a photo spread which could have been just as comfortable in *Canadian Dimension* or *Mother Jones*.

The *Herald's* advertising policy is surprising as well. The *Herald* now has an advertising to editorial ratio of 50 per cent, in contrast with *The Citizen's* 70 per cent advertising content. Sales manager Marc Charlebois says the ratio could swing in editorial's favor in the future.

"How often in the history of newspapers has editorial said, 'We want 60 per cent' and the ad people said, 'Go for it!,' "Charlebois said.

Despite the aura of optimism around the *Herald*, there still are lingering doubts. It's hard to forget *Ottawa Today*, which started with the same kind of promise and disappeared six months later. But Green insists his paper will survive.

"I don't know what it is about Ottawans, but we always dwell on past failures," he says philosophically. "It doesn't make any more sense to ask why there should be more than one (English language) paper in Ottawa than to ask why there should be more than one store. It's another opinion, another voice, and we need that here in Ottawa."

But even Green admits that one thing could prove the *Herald's* downfall: the possibility of *The Citizen* publishing a Sunday edition. That's exactly what happened on June 12, the day after the Progressive Conservative leadership convention. Although *Citizen* editor Russell Mills has repeatedly stated that the special edition was for one time only, Green isn't so sure — especially when the advertising rates for the June 12 *Citizen* undercut the *Herald's*.

"They're testing the market," Green said, with more than a hint of bitterness. "If it's one time only, why did they drop their rates to 50 cents a line? We're not afraid of fair competition, but that kind of undue competition really puzzles me."

If the *Herald* does fold, he says it could have dire consequences for Ottawa readers.

"If we don't make it, you will never see another newspaper in this city."

The Lethbridge Herald's
continuing battle with a giant

by Jeff Adams

Conservative-minded residents of the western Canadian city of Lethbridge, Alberta are more likely to be ranchers and miners than philosophers. But several are locked in an ideological battle with an international publishing empire in hopes of improving their local newspaper.

The bitter attack is against *The Lethbridge Herald* and its owner, Thomson Newspapers, which claims 33 per cent of Canada's newspaper market through ownership of 40 dailies and 12 weeklies.

Its U.S. affiliate, Chicago-based Thomson Newspapers Inc., has another 86 papers. Thomson British Holdings Ltd., owners until 1981 of London's prestigious *Times* and *Sunday Times*, publishes 47 weeklies and dailies thoughout Great Britain.

There are also Thomson publishing companies in several nations including Australia, Germany, France, the Netherlands, and South Africa plus other interests ranging from North Sea Oil to Canadian department stores.

Compiling a complete list of the assets of principal owner Ken Thomson of Canada would take some time, but one thing is clear: *The Lethbridge Herald* with its circulation of 28,388 is just one small soldier in a very large worldwide army.

Yet that soldier has been battling constantly during recent months.

There have been demonstrations and picket lines outside the paper, public meetings and subscription cancellations. Twelve of the paper's 42 editorial staff have left during the last six months and three court actions are underway to resolve whether people quit or were fired.

The issue has been raised before city council and at least one local pastor raised the issue in church, urging his congregation to become involved in the protest.

Yet these elements are minor compared with the last few days. In that time, the philosophical squabble has turned downright ugly.

Graffiti spray-painted on the outside walls of the *Herald* condemned the Mormon faith of managing editor John Farrington, the British-born newspaperman, who arrived in Lethbridge last August from Thomson's Toronto office, and was labelled an "Eastern bastard" by protester Jim Penton, a University of Lethbridge history professor, who says he regrets the insult.

Farrington claims his 13-year-old son was beaten up at school and a petition was initiated to get the boy expelled. Phone threats have prompted Thomson head office to hire security guards for Farrington and publisher Donald Doram.

"It could get worse, but I hope not," conceded Cleo Mowers, editor of *The Herald* for 20 years before his retirement in 1980. Mowers asked recently that his name and editor emeritus title be dropped from the paper's masthead because of "accumulated pressure on my conscience."

"My name on the masthead implied concurrence with the kind of paper it had become."

The Thomson chain bought the 76-year-old *Herald* in 1980 with all other assets of FP Publications Ltd., including the prestigious national Canadian daily, *The Globe & Mail*. Mowers said since the takeover in Lethbridge, and especially since Farrington's arrival eight months ago, "It's been steady, pernicious destruction of what most people thought was a good newspaper."

The Herald's 150-odd critics, most of them members of the locally-organized Committee for Responsible Journalism, claim their paper is ignoring or downplaying important international news in favor of trivial local reports.

They accuse management of ruthlessly cutting editorial costs to increase profits, noting syndicated columnists have been dropped and other news services curtailed.

Evidence — such as the paper's announcement it will close its bureau at the Alberta provincial government legislature in Edmonton — appear to support the Committee's claims, but Farrington has issued an emphatic denial.

Coincidentally, putting profits before news was the main complaint levelled at the Thomson chain in a 1981 report on the Canadian newspaper industry prepared by a Royal Commission of the Canadian government.

Farrington said the Kent Commission, which had scathing criticism for his employer, but praise for its Canadian competitor, Southam News Inc., was only formed for "Thomson-bashing."

As to local concerns: "Everywhere there's a newspaper there's someone with a complaint."

Farrington insisted most of the critics in Lethbridge, whose 56,000 residents can drive an hour west to the Rocky Mountains or south to the U.S. border, are influenced by a small group of local university professors "who are out to make a name for themselves."

He said they are less interesed in improving the paper than in name-calling and in organizing nationally-reported demonstrations.

Farrington said the attacks against his son, which school officials question, and the slurs against his Mormon faith and east Canadian employer are an "integral part of the issue."

But Penton, a spokesman for the Committee for Responsible Journalism, said the incidents are isolated and unfortunate side effects. He added: "From the very beginning John Farrington has tried to personalize this thing...to defer attention from the fundamental issues."

Those issues, said Penton, involve local residents' right to a high-quality paper with an international as well as local outlook — a right he says people worldwide should share.

Farrington insisted he is providing that. He also said Thomson, which reported after-tax profits in North America last year of $99.4 million (Cdn.), has a right to run its own business affairs.

Meanwhile, protestors are threatening to start their own weekly paper while publisher Doram has appointed a special assistant to poll the community.

Mowers said the cloudy issue in a western Canadian prairie town has left at least one thing clear: when newspapers anywhere don't meet their readers' expectations, government legislation of the press is probably the only way to make them do so.

"And when governments step in, they usually do it with bigger feet than we expect."

content

Canada's National Newsmedia Magazine

November / December 1982. No. H5 $2.75

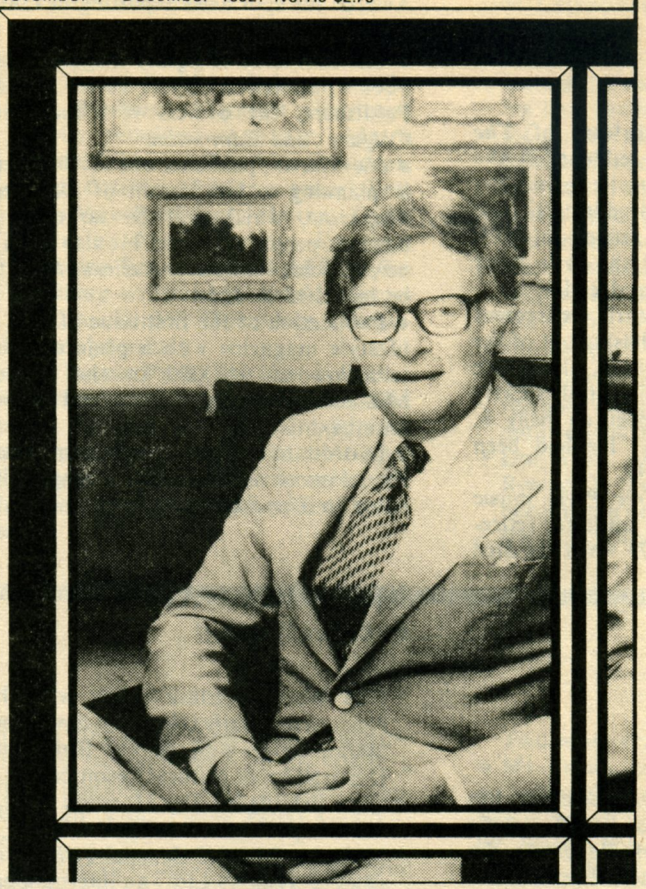
Distributed December 1982

CONVERSATION with a one-time reporter, news baron Ken Thomson

Journeyman — one reporter's journalistic journey

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

Small wonder that Ontario politicians duck Hoyrangues



design: linda jackson

OMNIUM GATHERUM

LONDON, ONTARIO

• Past and present staffers of *The London Free Press* were saddened by the recent deaths of former colleagues Leon (Lucky) Turner, who retired in 1982, and Lenore Crawford, who retired in 1974. Both of their careers at the *Free Press* spanned more than three decades.

"Lucky" who took early retirement last year following the phasing out of the *Free Press* afternoon edition, also wrote a weekly stamp column until shortly before his death of cancer on May 8, 1983, his 65th birthday. He had been with the paper since 1947.

Crawford was the *Free Press* music and art critic from 1941 until her retirement in 1974. She was 73 when she died May 4.

OTTAWA

• The Canadian Bar Association has released its fourth edition of *The Media Guide for Legal Affairs Reporters*. To obtain the guide, contact: Communications Director, C.B.A., 1700-130 Albert St., Ottawa. K1P 5G4.

VANCOUVER

• The publisher of the *Vancouver Sun* will move to Montreal to become publisher of *The Gazette*, effective August 1. C.W. Davey will replace current *Gazette* publisher Robert McConnell, who moves to Toronto as vice-president of Southam. Davey will be succeeded by *Sun* publisher E.H. Wheatley, who will retain his position as president of Pacific Press.

• The *New Westminster Columbian* was saved from bankruptcy when its creditors accepted an offer to be paid 50 cents on the dollar over a three-year period.

• Charles (Charlie) Edwards, a distinguished pioneer in broadcast journalism died of a stroke in June. He was 77. "Uncle Charlie" was the first general manager of Broadcast News Ltd., and a major force in building the sister agencies into national news networks. He was a member of the Canadian Newspaper Hall of Fame and the annual Charlie Awards for spot news reporting in radio and TV are named after him.

• The first issue of *Equity* magazine has been published by Pacific West Publishers, the owners of *Vancouver, Calgary* and *Edmonton.*

• Joe Martin, publisher of *B.C. Business* is planning a fall launch of *Dividend Magazine*, which will be targeted at business people at leisure. He also plans a new tabloid, *Vancouver Business Meet* to be launched in June.

• Publication of the first issue of *Uni*, a lifestyle magazine with a projected distribution of 513,000 in the Lower Midland area has been postponed for two months.

• In order to compete in suburban areas, *The Vancouver Sun* has changed its name to *The Sun.*

NEW BRUNSWICK

by Esther Crandall

• Dan Woolley, editor/writer with the *Fredericton Daily Gleanor* is now information officer with the New Brunswick Department of Natural Resources.

• Steve Belding left *The Moncton Times-Transcript* to return to freelancing.

• Malcolm (Mike) Daigneault, editor-in-chief of Visnews Ltd., an international TV news agency in London, England, owned by *CBC, BBC,* the Australian and New Zealand Broadcasting Corporation and Reuters, is now news director of the *Saint John Telegraph-Journal* and *The Evening Times-Globe.* Daigneault with over 20 years experience in newspapers and broadcasting, has been managing editor of the *Montreal Gazette,* and earlier worked with the *Toronto Telegram.*

• In a shakeup at *The Kings County Record,* a weekly published in Sussex, N.B., freelance writer Dorothy Dearborn replaced Margaret Davis as editor; Jim Morrison, vice president of Henley Publishing, which owns the paper, took over publishing duties from publisher Alan Lynch.

SAINT JOHN

by Esther Crandall

• Nelson Wyatt, formerly with Canadian Press, Montreal, is editor of *The St. Croix Courier*, in St. Stephen. Also joining the semi-weekly newspaper is Elaine Bateman, formerly with *CKBW-Radio* in Bridgewater, N.S., and Tammy Wells, who transferred from another department within the St. Croix Publishing Company.

• Sharon Pond is associate producer for *CBC-Radio's* Information Morning Show in Fredericton.

• The Atex V.D.T. system with 19 terminals in the newsroom and 10 elsewhere in the plant have been installed at *The Saint John Telegraph-Journal and Evening Times-Globe.*

EDMONTON

• After a year's absence, talk show host Bob McLean is back on the air at *CKXM-FM Radio.* He is also doing a weekly show on *CFRN-TV.*

• Dennis Carrie has been appointed general sales manager and Ray Collins was appointed program director at *CHQR* in Calgary.

• Bruce A. Powe, who began his writing career on the late *Edmonton Bulletin,* has published his fourth novel, *The Aberhart Summer.* The book recreates six weeks in the summer of 1935 leading up to the election of the Social Credit. It is the 18th volume in the International Fiction List series issued by Lester & Orpen Dennys, Toronto.

WINNIPEG

by Edmund Oliverio

• John Harvard, co-host of *CBWT's* "24 Hours," becomes senior correspondent, host and reporter of *CBC-TV's* Winnipeg documentary unit.

• Brenda Barrie returns to edit *The Downtowner* after an eight month public relations stint with the Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra.

• Over the summer, the *Winnipeg Sun* will be moving to new headquarters at 1700 Church Ave. in the north industrial area of the city. *CFRW* is moving to 1445 Pembina Hwy., and *CJOB* begins renovations to double their current production facilities.

• Greg MacLeod is the news and interviews reporter at *CFQX-FM Radio* in Selkirk.

• Marnie Sterritt has been appointed public affairs director at *CHTM-Radio* in Thompson.

• Donald Ferguson has been appointed *CBC* regional director. He was formerly the assistant director of news and current affairs for English-language televsion at *CBC*.

• News cameraman Allan Lawrence at *CKY* is moving to Washington for a two-year stint at the *CTV* bureau.

• The *Report on Farming* ceased publication with its June edition. Publisher Don Nicol cited declining circulation and advertising revenues as the reasons for the folding of this independent journal, which was first published in 1906.

TORONTO

• The French-language consumer publication, *Ganet Mondain* has been relaunched as *Mensuel Ganet Mondain*. It was originally distributed free restaurants. Now, under publisher mand Ouellette, the magazine wll be sold on newsstands for $1.25.

• Emile Quintal, 77, a bridge columnist for *La Presse*, died in May after being struck by a fire truck which went though a red light on its way to a fire.

• Peter C. Newman, former editor of *Maclean's*, has been elected to the board of Key Radio Ltd., a subsidiary of Maclean Hunter.

• Officers recently elected to the Toronto Press Club are: Past President, Benedict Vicarri (public relations consultant); President, Margaret Chartrand (public relations manager, Metro Toronto Library); First Vice-President, Robert Crichton (freelance writer); Second Vice-President, Mary Cann (Ontario Ministry of Energy); Secretary-Treasurer, Leonard E. Taylor (freelance writer); Membership Secretary, A. Fordon Donaldson (broadcaster and writer).

The Toronto Press Club intends to continue developing professional activities within the club and to maintain such major programs as the national Newspaper Awards; special events for members; the news forum; student journalists' seminars.

• Century Media, publishers of *Goodlife*, plan to boost circulation from 80 to 100,000, and add a second Ontario edition this fall.

• Chris Pandoff had left *CITY-TV* to join Mediacom.

• Corky Rawson of *CKTB-CJQR-FM*, St. Catharines, has moved to Regina.

• Edye Rome formerly of Barson-Marsteller is the new public relations manager of the O'Keefe Centre, replacing Tina Vanderheyden.

• Freelance writer Tom Riley has formed Riley Information Services, a company intended to advise clients on how to get access under the new information law and to advise major companies on recent trends in data protection and privacy laws. The phone number is: (416) 922-4716.

• Gunter Ott, former editor of *Photo Life*, has set up a consulting and public relations company called Gunlin Communications. Phone: (416) 537-6027.

• Don Obe, subject to approval from Ryerson's board of governors, will become the new dean of journalism at Ryerson. Obe was a former editor of

You said it ...

*Dear **content**:*

We at the *Aurora Banner* read with incredulity the "Opinion piece by Stephen Ostick (April/May, 1983) regarding the lack of competition and subsequent deterioration of our paper.

Those of us who work here are concerned that such an error-riddled article like Mr. Ostick's could be published in a journalism review without his factual information being checked.

Since that wasn't done, here's our side of the story.

Mr. Ostick, a Ryerson journalism student, wrote this article last year originally as a class assignment. It was at that time when editor John Cole first read the piece. (Incidentally, Mr. Ostick never informed the editor his interview would be published).

The piece appears in *content* as it was presented by Mr. Ostick to his fellow journalism students. Despite us pointing out his glaring factual errors at the time, no attempt was made to correct them before publication in *content*.

Allow us to outline a few of the more blatant errors Mr. Ostick made.

• He claims the *Banner* never reported a major house fire. In fact, we did. The fire was not as colorful as Mr. Ostick would have us believe (perhaps he suffers exaggeritis?) The woman in the house was drunk, hysterical, and had accidentally set her sofa afire, fire officials report. We wonder whether Mr. Ostick got his information first-hand from the fire department or second-hand from his father, a town councillor and at the time, chairman of the Public Safety Committee.

• Mr. Ostick claims none of the editorial staff are from the Aurora area. In fact, sports editor Steve Buffery has lived in town for two years, not four months as reported.

• He says Mr. Cole has lived in Aurora two months. In fact, Mr. Cole has lived here almost a year. Besides, he married an Aurora woman many years ago and has spent most of his life in the York Region area and had extensive contacts in Aurora before moving here.

•News reporter Chris Ballard, never mentioned or interviewed for the article — Mr. Cole was the only editorial staffer interviewed — has lived in neighboring King City his entire life. In fact, his mother once wrote for the *Banner*.

All this information was given to Mr. Ostick at his interview with Mr. Cole, but he obviously chose to ignore it.

At that time, Mr. Cole did not say the quality of the paper had deteriorated. He did say there was no longer editorial competition between the *Aurora Banner* and sister Metroland paper, *Newmaket Era*.

There is, however, competition from the three Toronto dailies, *The Star's* "Neighbors North," *Topic Newsmagazine, King Township Weekly*, local radio and TV stations.

Two more errors:

• Mr. Ostick says the *Stouffville Sun* is an independent newspaper. It is not. The *Sun* is part of a seven-paper chain owned by Harry Stemp who, as any York Region journalist will acknowledge, is very concerned about making money. The *Stouffville Tribune*, a Metroland paper, employs three editorial people, the *Sun* has one person.

• Metroland has never dropped its advertising rate to squeeze out the competition.

It is obvious to us Mr. Ostick made a major journalistic gaffe by deciding what he wanted to write before starting his research and then tailoring the facts to fit his thesis.

We hope Mr. Ostick's article is the result of journalistic naivete, and not the result of a problem between his town councillor father and our paper.

Finally, if the *Banner* has deteriorated, why did it place first in its class for news and features in the recent Ontario Community Newspapers Association competition? (And more recently third for spot news photo in the Canada-wide competition?)

We are proud of our paper and are sad to read unprofessional work in such a high-quality publication as *content*.

Thanks for letting us have our say.

John Cole, editor
Chris Ballard, reporter
Steve Buffery, sports editor

The Canadian and *Toronto Life.*

- Sheila MacVicar has been appointed Ontario reporter for *CBC's* "The National." For the past year MacVicar has been working out of The National newsroom as an editor, writer and reporter.
- Jim Maclean has been appointed news director of *CKEY,* Maclean is currently the Ottawa bureau chief of News Radio.
- After 22 years, *CFRB* fired morning radio man Earl Warren.
- Following low ratings, radio stations *CKEY* and *CJCL* have dropped their talk show formats.

At *CKEY:* psychologist Dr. Sherry Rochester and afternoon talk show host Paul Kellog are being replaced by announcer Dick Young.

At *CJCL:* Sports commentator Earl McRae and noon-hour "Talkshow Toronto" host Bev Bowman have been dropped. Talk show host Andy Barrie quit recently, citing personal reasons. Program director Robert Holiday has been shifted to another position and Doug Ackhurst has been brought in as general manager. CJCL is owned by the Quebec-based Telemedia Broadcasting Co.

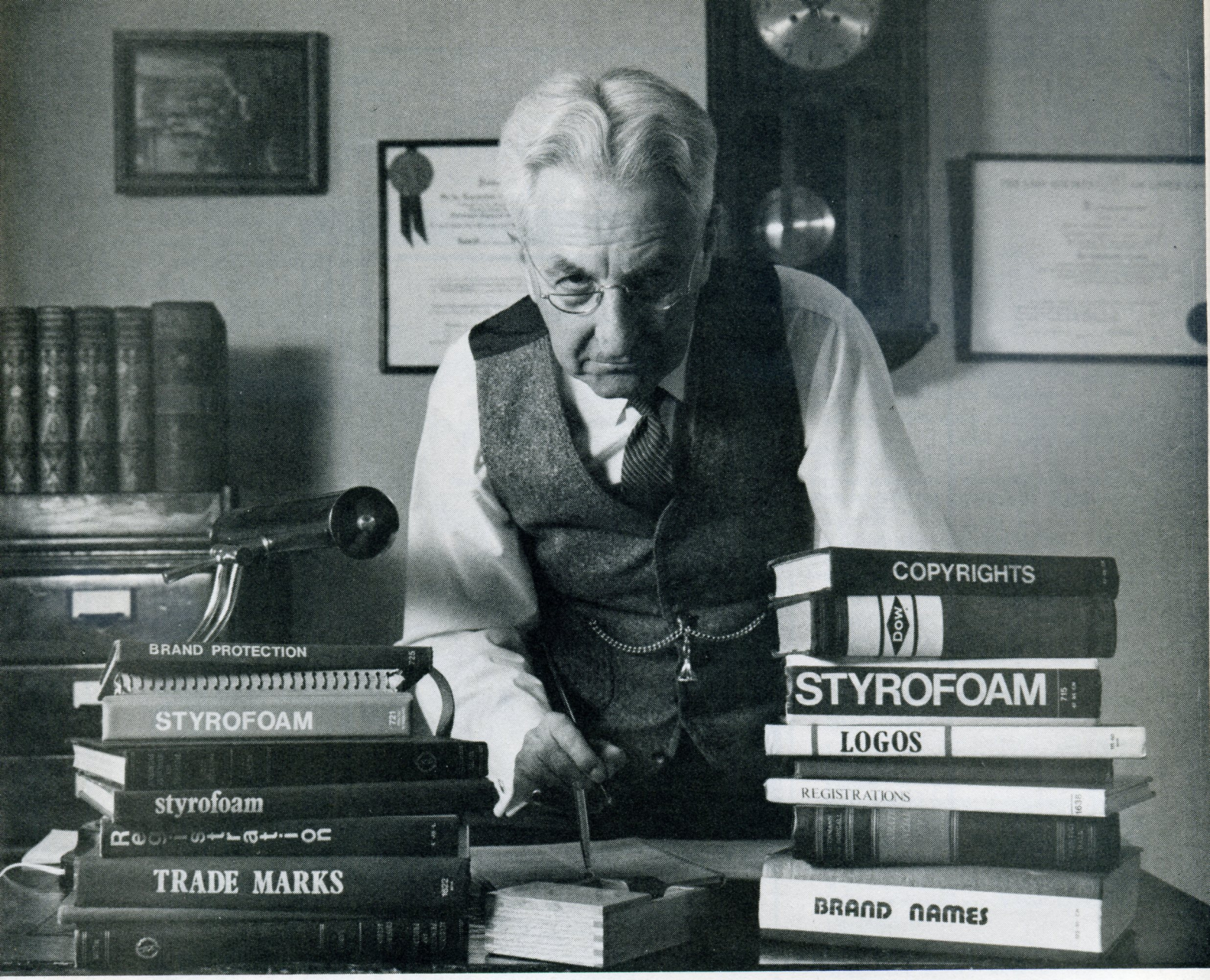
- Richard J. Doyle, editor-ion-chief of *The Glove & Mail,* R. Howard Webster, *The Globe's* honorary chairman, and John Gellner, a frequent *Globe* contributor on military affairs, are among 71 Canadians to be named to the Order of Canada honors list. Doyle and Webster are to be Officers, the Order's second rank, while Gellner becomes a Member of the Order. The investiture will be held on October 5 in Ottawa.

AWARDS

NATIONAL MAGAZINE AWARDS:

Given annually for outstanding achievement, both editorially and graphically, *Saturday Night* was the top winner, followed by *Toronto Life, Homemaker's* and *Prism International.* The names of the award-winners are as follows:

- Humor; Colin Adams, "The Cruelest Month, *Canadian Yachting.*
- Business Writing: Wayne Lilley and Jane Muir, "Caught in the Undertow," *Canadian Business.*
- Science and Technology: Dr. Adrian Forsyth, "Rain-Forest Requiem," *Equinox.*
- Sports Writing: Ted Allan, "Raging Bullshit," *Winnipeg Magazine.*
- Politics: Benoit Aubin, "La Loi 101, Cinq Ans Apres," *L'Actualite*
- Agriculture: Thomas Pawlick, "The Cause and Its Effects," *Harrowsmith*
- Fiction: Alice Munro, "Mrs. Cross and Mrs. Kidd," *Tamarack Review.*
- Poetry: Erin Moure, "Tricks," *Prism International.*
- Culture: Robert Fulford, "The Canada Council at Twenty-Five," *Canadian Forum.*
- Comment and Criticism: Robert Fulford, "Paying the Price: Disorder in the Courts" and "Growing up Gould," *Saturday Night.*
- Travel: Claude Montpetit-Fortier, "San Francisco, Ville Ouverte," *Chatelaine.*
- Religious Journalism: Don Obe, "The Dissident Rabbi," *Toronto Life.*
- Food Writing: Cynthia Wine, "Comfort Foods," *Homemaker's.*
- President's Medal of Excellence: Robert Fulford "The Personal Journalism of Peter Worthington," *Saturday Night.*
- Fashion Features: Myron Zabol (photographer), Rod Della Vedova and Georges Haroutiun (art directors), Shirley Gregory (producer), "Jetting Ahead," *Avenue.*
- Magazine illustration; Anita Kunz, "Conversion of the Jews," *Saturday Night.*
- Photography: Nigel Dickson, "The Last Days of Eldorado," *Saturday Night.*
- Photojournalism: Tom Skudra, "The Life That Goes On," *Toronto Life.*
- Art Direction: Ursula Kaiser, "Support Systems," *Homemaker's.*
- Magazine Covers: Shin Kishinoyama (photographer), Derrick Clinton Carter and Brian Burke (art directors), "September 1982," *Prism International.*



Behind every great brand name there's a very tough watchdog!

It has to be that way—because a name like STYROFOAM* is more than a word. It's a *unique* identity for the characteristics, performance and reputation of top-quality products. It's *our* name for *our* products...and we'll protect it. All the way! If we don't, and people get into the habit of calling other products by our name, the confusion will lead to all kinds of problems. So, please remember: simply calling beadboard, coffeecup foam or any other kind of foam by the best name in the business won't change the fact: Only STYROFOAM *is* STYROFOAM! Call it like it is...and keep our watchdog on the leash.

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