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*for Canadian journalists*

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July-August, 1984

## **Politicians and the press**



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Much  
to be done**

**Star trek:  
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for Canadian journalists

JULY-AUGUST 1984

*content* is published six times yearly by Friends of Content in arrangement with Humber College of Applied Arts and Technology

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*content* is published six times per year

Subscription rate: \$15 per year  
\$25 two years  
\$35 three years

Sustaining contributor: \$65  
(includes \$15 one-year subscription)

ISSN 0045-835X

Second-class mail registration pending

205 Humber College Blvd.  
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## Thanks

Illustrations this issue courtesy of John Larter, *Toronto Star* (cover); Canapress; Stella Jacobs, Innovative Graphics; Robert Ragsdale; Quebec Press Council; CBC; *Toronto Star*; Jules Stephen Xavier; *Windsor Star*.



# Politicians and the press

*The Liberal leadership campaign came and went in advance of a federal election.*

*How substantive or realistic was press coverage?*

by Hugh Winsor

All of the journalistic sweat and typewriter ribbons the Canadian media devote to a leadership selection or a general election notwithstanding, we have collectively failed to come up with anything better than one tired and overworked metaphor to describe these periodic outpourings of rhetoric and jet fuel called campaigns.

That's the horse race metaphor, with its front runners, its also-rans, its steady gait, its stumbles, its gallops, its homestretch. And, always, of course, the rest of the pack.

The great concern about the Liberal leadership contest, shared by everyone in this business from top management to copy person, was that there wasn't going to be a horse race.

There were more than 100 nightly newscasts or editions to fill between Pierre Trudeau's walk in the snow and John Turner's triumphant stride to the stage at the Ottawa Civic Centre. What could we possibly do to fill them without putting viewers and readers to sleep, when for 100 days we fiddled and waited for the inevitable?

Or was it inevitable? The vast majority of the people covering the leadership assumed the result was inevitable. Thus, the concern in journalistic circles was about whether it was just a win or a coronation and what could be done to make it more of the kind of horse race we are comfortable dealing with.

This explains the frequently uncritical attention heaped on Jean Chretien, as differentiated from the intense scrutiny of every burp or cough from John Turner. It also accounts for the attention devoted to finding "The Third Man," the journalistic longing for something of the interest and suspense of the 1976 Conservative leadership "race" when Joe Clark overtook the "front-runners" from his position of third on the rail.

It is for Liberal partisans and eventually for the whole electorate — come Sept. 4 — to determine whether John Turner deserved the presumptions about him: that he wasn't lovable, but he was winnable, and therefore the best

person to lead the party.

But we mediums should be giving serious thought to our own presumptions implicit in our instant and sustained use of the horse race metaphor. Does it, in fact, become the self-fulfilling prophecy?

Most of the fuss about *The Journal's* coverage of the Trudeau resignation and commencement of the leadership contest focussed on the imaginative use of some lighting trucks (that are usually rusting in the yard at our Lanark St. studios in Ottawa) to light the Parliament Buildings for a better backdrop of what Keith Morrison, our panelists, and I were going to say.

Very little, if any, attention was ever paid to the appropriateness of what we did say.

My sole purpose on that occasion was to say that Trudeau's gone and John Turner was the "front runner" followed by a short biography about the man who was all but certain to become the next prime minister.

I was merely representative of the group-think on Turner that began immediately and colored every other aspect of the campaign. The fact that Turner was so instantly acclaimed almost kept Chretien out of the game and meant the other five candidates received more derision than scrutiny.

Because they were seen as hopeless causes, it made it very difficult for the candidates, other than the "front-runners" to attract funds, workers, or organizational support necessary to run a campaign.

(The exception, to some extent, was Donald Johnston who had the resources of the large and successful consulting firm Public Affairs International — PAI — running his campaign.)

The Turner front-runner presumption was re-enforced by all delegate polls and speculative stories about delegate counts even before the delegates were selected.

It would never happen, of course, but if the Liberals had been left to their own devices to choose a leader behind some form of news blackout, I don't think Turner would have won so easily.

The converse of that conclusion is

that our collective preoccupation in the media with the horse race dictates who's winning and the relative positions on the rail does a disservice to the parties, and eventually to the whole political process.

A British press lord once said the role of journalists was to sow minefields through which politicians walked with great care: "One false step could create a hell of an explosion."

So how did we do in the minefield business? (And how will we do this summer, with a federal election campaign under way?)

I have been covering national politics in one form or another almost continuously since I returned to Canada from Africa in 1969; that includes four federal campaigns and three leadership contests. My initial impressions were formed in print, but for the 1983 Progressive Conservative leadership and the recent Liberal leadership, I was attempting to cover them from the perspective of public affairs television.

There are vast differences when it comes to minefields and what follows has to be impressionistic. Leave it to the communications academics to come along with their measuring tapes and audience enjoyment indices for a more comprehensive analysis.

If we think of political minefields in policy terms, there is no doubt that print is the most dangerous for politicians. Careless words, subtle refinements, contradictions with what was said before — these are print's specialty. Such as the fact that John Turner apparently forgot about Section 23 of the Manitoba Act (passed in the last century). Therein lay the nub of his problems on the language question.

But policy minefields have less and less influence in determining political outcomes. Take it from a couple of print people.

The ascerbic Toronto *Sun* columnist Douglas Fisher wrote a quite remarkable column earlier this year about his impressions of a trip away from Ottawa talking to the elusive "real" people out there. He was surprised by their interests and their leanings and how they made their assessments.



"It was almost scary to discover once again how overwhelmingly people are getting their impressions of politicians and issues from television and — more significantly — how quickly they make judgments on ability and worth on those impressions ...

"Again and again the comments — usually pithy opinions on personality and honesty — referred to television. In a sweeping way, television has taken mystery and illusion from around our politicians. Excitement and charismatic effects seem to have a short life."

John Marshall, writing in this magazine about the 1979 campaign, reported on the frustrations of James Gillies, a former Tory finance critic and then-adviser to Joe Clark.

"A meaningless symbol, a Trudeau shrug, or a Clark nervous laugh catches on swiftly but it takes weeks or months to get across a real issue."

So where does it leave those diligent issue-and-policy surveys in the better newspapers? The Toronto *Star's* Ottawa bureau was particularly fastidious — boiling down what each of the candidates had said on everything from creating jobs to equal pay for work of equal value.

It's responsible stuff and it does occasionally trip up a candidate, but I suspect the people who read these stories most carefully are the researchers and producers for television shows who use them to background their hosts.

The newspaper profiles and the columnists had considerable impact on the tone or style of the race, not because they were widely read but because the political activists and strategists around the candidates read them, as did the television journalists — who basically use their tools to reflect what the print journalists tell them is going on, rather than attempting to create a reality of their own.

Jeffrey Simpson's early column in the *Globe and Mail* about Chretien as a great halfback is a good example. Simpson conceded that Chretien had been very effective in carrying the ball for other people's play patterns. But he struck a responsive chord when he questioned whether Chretien really had the ideas or imagination to be a quarterback. (As an additional plus, he did use a different metaphor.)

A profile by Richard Cleroux of Eugene Whelan, also in the *Globe*, probably has inserted a whole new folk wisdom into our argot: You now hear people joking about somebody getting their brains fried because they didn't wear a hat.

But these are observations of an infomaniac, a print person who has been forced to come to terms with the dictates and realities of television, to the "meaningless symbol" or shrug referred to earlier.

Television played a major part in determining public perceptions of the Liberal leadership contest, but not so much on the outcome of the balloting. That's because those who picked the new leader came from a small and select group, quite different from the public as a whole. Turner, by any dimension, is not great television, but the leadership was a battle of organization and elite perception — not a public popularity contest.

Turner won by putting together some traditional Liberal coalitions and by capitalizing on the natural support of the ex-officio Liberals, the so-called Establishment of party officials, MPs, ex-candidates, riding officials, and so on, who accounted for one-third of the total votes.

He had this group sewn up before the formal campaign started. The television coverage only hampered Turner with this group, causing his organization to work harder to prevent slippage. Television may have made Chretien into something of a folk hero with the public-at-large, but that didn't count for much in the booth.

It is only now as we approach a general election that the impact of television during the leadership convention may be felt, especially since Turner's hesitating style doesn't seem to have improved.

For television, style has become substance, which gives TV journalists some great advantages but also some great vulnerabilities (which we'll come to in a moment).

What he may not have realized is that even if he had tried to spell out policies in detail, few television programs would have used his answers because they wouldn't fit easily into the pacing required of prime-time TV.

The shots of Turner grasping for the water glass, of him casting darting glances from side to side like a cornered animal, and of the nervous cough, probably had more impact on the public perception of Turner than any of the full-page issue supplements in the *Toronto Star*.

Two of the other candidates, John Roberts and Donald Johnston, misunderstood the electronic media. Both believed that the so-called doctrine of fairness would mean they would have equal access to the national airways to

spell out their policy-oriented campaigns.

But it doesn't take too much skill at math to realize how much explaining seven talkers get to do in a two-minute newscast, or even when some of those items got extended to five minutes.

One of my responsibilities at *The Journal* was to prepare a campaign wrap-up to run the week of the convention. The result was a tightly-edited policy debate — on the deficit, the role of women, relations with the United States, the role of Crown corporations, and so on.

It received more positive response from people outside the CBC, including other journalists, than any other documentary I did. Internally, producers detested it. "It didn't have any sequences," some said. "It had too much of a print structure."

This points to the great journalistic vulnerability of television, which offsets somewhat its great image advantages.

Television has no natural way of conveying what happened after the doors closed in those back rooms, unless the participants are prepared *on camera* to talk about what transpired — and frequently they are not.

Since access is the *sine qua non* to political reporting on television, it is very easy for politicians to manipulate the outcome by how they give or restrict access.

The minefields created by TV are quite different than the minefields of print: John Turner may cure his nervous cough eventually even 'though Joe Clark could do nothing about his awkward gait.

But either of them could avoid much political embarrassment or take good advantage of perceived strengths merely by agreeing to let the cameras be present or banishing them to the corridors and the formal, staged events.

If we journalists believe there are important things that viewers and readers should be told, in addition to what they want to see and hear (and if we can keep them from switching the dial while we're doing it), then television has to develop some way to resist the potential manipulation represented by the access problem.

It means guts — and less concern for visuals. (30)

*Hugh Winsor, has rejoined the Globe and Mail as Ottawa bureau chief.*



# In the looking glass

*Media criticism is almost respectable,  
but there's much yet to be done.  
At a very fundamental level*

by Barrie Zwicker

All writing can be placed on a continuum, Robert Fulford said recently. At one end of the writing continuum are stop signs, Fulford said. Continue through memos, reports, and letters and eventually you arrive at the opposite end of the continuum: *War and Peace*. (I'd agree with Fulford that magazine writing is closer to *War and Peace* than it is to memos. I'd add that most journalism is closer to memos, but that's beside the point here.)

Media criticism, too, can be considered as being on a continuum. At one end of the media criticism continuum are two guys in a bar. Slurs one: "Gaddam papers sensationalize everything." "Gaddam right they do," his pal shouts back. At the opposite end is A.J. Liebling.

No media criticism today, in my opinion, is better than A.J. Liebling's memorable pieces in *Mink and Red Herring*. This is not to say some very high quality work is not being done. It is. Examples in the past year would include the *New Yorker* pieces on the press and Grenada and on the media's profound failure to grasp the enormity of the nuclear threat and communicate accordingly.

Then there's the question of the *quantity* of media criticism. This is as important as — perhaps more important than — the quality. Repetition usually equals acceptance. Repetition sells soap, the arms race, or a critical attitude.

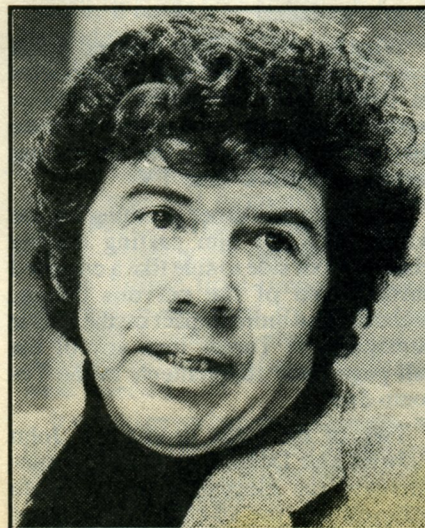
Unquestionably there's more media criticism today than there was 10, 20, 30, and more years ago. But there's more to criticize. A new study by the Ontario ministry of transportation and communications, for instance, indicates that information-related activities now account for close to half Canada's Gross Domestic Product. Considering this, media criticism may, in effect, have stood still.

And it's not just that there's more to be criticized. The media are more complicated, technologically and in terms of organizational structures, ownership, and the management and

control of information. The "consciousness industry" today must be the domain — perhaps the most important domain — of the media critic. To criticize nothing more than the day-by-day performance of the media — important as this is — is to become in serious measure an adjunct to them, another chip in the consciousness industry. And there definitely is a dangerous shortage of media criticism that critically examines the sources and patterns of the information flows that surround and penetrate and shape us, be we inside or outside the media.

As to the sources of media criticism, they are five: ad hoc groups, permanent organizations, professors and other individuals, specialized publications, and the media themselves. (I'm addressing Canada primarily, but reference to the U.S. scene is inescapable because of the dominance of the American consciousness industry here.)

Ad hoc groups: In Canada the leading examples were the Davey Senate Committee and the Kent Royal Commission. The Committee for Quality Journalism in Lethbridge, Edmonton's Media Working Group, and the Association for Media Literacy in Toronto could be listed as current examples.



Zwicker: Awareness growing

Permanent organizations include the press councils, the Centre for Investigative Journalism (CIJ), and newspaper ombudsmen where the function is institutionalized. Also included would be powerful special-interest groups such as Reed Irvine's Accuracy in Media (AIM), with headquarters in Washington, D.C. and which is supported by right-wing foundations, having a budget of \$1.5 million a year. The University of Missouri's Freedom of Information Centre and the shoestring-but-invaluable Project Censored run by Prof. Carl Jensen at Sonoma State University north of San Francisco also should be mentioned.

In Canada, the "professors and other individuals" category is virtually non-existent. We have no counterpart of Ben Bagdikian, whose most recent book is *Media Monopoly*, or Herbert Schiller, author of *The Mind Managers* and *Mass Communications and American Empire*. Both are professors at the University of California. Nor of sociologist Stuart Hall of England's Open University.

Many Canadian individuals could be mentioned. Without intending to slight others, some names that spring to mind are Robert Fulford, editor of *Saturday Night*; Peter Desbarats, dean of journalism at the University of Western Ontario; Walter Stewart, editor of *Canadian Newspapers*, *The Inside Story*, and now director of the journalism program at Halifax's King's College; Vancouver writer and critic Herschel Hardin; Dick MacDonald, and me. But none gives media criticism the continuing attention it deserves. People keep telling me that no one else is performing the on-going job of media criticism that I attempt in my weekly syndicated commentaries on CBC Radio. It bothers me that they may be right.

Specialized publications of media criticism appear to be on the decline. It's fairly well known that the dozens, perhaps hundreds, of journalism reviews that sprang up in the 1960s died except for a handful: *feed/back* of San Francisco, the *Chicago Journalism Review*, and *Content* being the only three I know of that survive. Since then



the *Washington Journalism Review* has been added. But advertising in the *Columbia Journalism Review*, the grand daddy of journalism reviews, is down 12 per cent since 1979 and *CJR*'s circulation still is only 35,000. The *St. Louis Journalism Review*, one of the best, survives through on-going subsidy. And *content* publishes, thanks to its friends.

This brings us to the last of our five sources of media criticism, the media themselves. The change here is in the right direction, if insufficient in quality and quantity. As the editor of the *Columbia Journalism Review* remarks: "We're competing with *Time* and *Newsweek* and the *Atlantic* and *Harper's* and the *New Republic*." He might have added *The Progressive*, *Nuclear Times*, *In These Times*, and virtually every U.S. journal of serious thought and opinion.

This is because those who edit and read such journals are constantly and acutely aware of the misused power of the mainline media. The same is true in Canada. Thoughtful media criticism can be found regularly or irregularly in *Canadian Forum*, *This Magazine*, *Saskatchewan's Briarpatch*, and many church and union publications, for instance.

But mainline publications, leadingly *Saturday Night* and *Quest*, run more than their share of media criticism in the form of major articles or occasional columns.

Other evidences of change in the mainline: corrections notices and apologies columns. Three-quarters of U.S. dailies with more than 100,000 circulation now run correction notices, up from one-quarter 10 years ago. The Associated Press Managing Editors (APME), the American Society of Newspaper Editors (ASNE), and the New England Society of Newspaper Editors are doing some thoughtful analysis and criticism within the context of their members' mandate — and occasionally beyond it, to their credit. An example is APME's study, *What is News? Who Decides? And Why?*

The number of books examining the media seriously, and the reception these books generally have received, is encouraging. *The Power and the Glory* by Gay Talese is one of a half-dozen books in the past decade that are serious attempts at close if not always specifically critical examination of media structure and power. Unfortunately, they're outnumbered about three-to-one by self-serving autobiographies and commissioned works.

In Canada, Walter Stewart's book



has done tolerably well. *The News: Inside the Canadian Media*, by Dick MacDonald and me, is selling well, and the publisher is thinking of an updated reprint. My own *War, Peace and the Media*, self-published, has sold almost 1,000 copies and is in a second printing. This is certainly encouraging.

So is response to my syndicated radio commentaries. I now am the senior commentator on CBC Radio Syndication. Most of the major stations carry this media criticism. These are indicators of a core audience. (This is not mentioned out of ego; there are people who could do better commentaries than I do.)

So what does all this add up to? What I see is a public marginally but significantly more aware of second-order thinking; that is, thinking about thinking.

Significant numbers of people no longer react by saying to themselves, "Goddam godless Russians!" upon being exposed to a headline which reads: "Soviets reject Reagan peace offering." The instant reaction of many people today is, instead, to ask: "What is the quality of this information and where does it come from?"

This may seem a subtle difference but I suggest it is nothing less than profound. It is the difference between uncritical acceptance of the message-as-received and critical examination of message and context of message. This can be termed media awareness.

The constituency of people with this

awareness is the single, most hopeful element in the state of media criticism today. Many media people I meet seem themselves unaware of the state of awareness of so many of their readers, viewers, and listeners. To this awareness add the accumulated antagonisms of so many people to what they see as arrogance and unfairness in the media and you have an unstable potential.

I say unstable because a collection of critical aggrieved publics could coalesce into a political force that could as easily call for censorship and control of the media as for a freer albeit more accountable media. That U.S. public opinion strongly favored the Reagan regime's Grenada invasion information blackout is sobering evidence along these lines.

Another element in the small degree of hopefulness I allow myself has less to do with observing the outside world than it has with my personal evolution. I've stopped hoping for instant progress or overnight conversions. I've more or less accepted that change in everything is always going to be slow. I've given up hope, for instance, that the Thomson organization will see any light except a neon sign flashing "Growth! Profits! Growth! Profits!"

I've also come to believe that it would be neither advisable nor workable for our current public information systems and institutions to be replaced too quickly, not that there's the slightest change they will. *Le Jour* came too quickly, then went. Not



enough thought and planning? Maybe. Or was it that even with all the thought and planning in the world the societal, legislative, and commercial environments were not ready? Probably both.

Many questions remain. What is the essential role of the media critic today? Or, more properly, what kinds of media criticism do we need now? Which are the most beneficial sources of media criticism? Apart from the answers to these questions, what can we actually expect?

The short answers are that the media criticism most essential today is that which lays bare the structures and patterns of information flows and who controls them for what purposes. That we need more and better media criticism from within and without the media. That the most beneficial sources may well be from within (since they'll more likely result in practical action), but that without vigorous pushing from outside these practical actions are less likely to be taken. And that we can expect nothing more than we struggle for.

By more and better criticism I mean more regular publications, seminars, workshops, columns, syndicated material, books, courses, research, press councils, and ombudsmen. By

better, I mean more investigative journalism into the media; more uncovering of currently invisible networks and deals, more lucid and sometimes lurid details about how information is treated as a commodity or political currency.

When I speak to non-media audiences about the media, an inevitable question is: "What can one person do?" Sometimes it's a straightforward question. As often, the tone of the question reflects a defeatist feeling on the part of the inquirer. Invariably I recite all sorts of ways any person can constructively act to better understand the media, to correct faults and encourage higher quality journalism within the mainline media, and to support high quality non-mainline journalism. All are necessary.

It seems to me the same urgings apply to those of us in the media. Journalists are disappointingly incestuous in their reading, for instance. Few if any leaps of understanding are to be gained from reading *Time* magazine, in my experience. In *This Magazine*, in *Harper's*, or in the *Atlantic* we are more likely to gain new understandings. In *The Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists* or in *In These Times*, more likely yet. *Atlas World Press Review* is a broadening breath of fresh air. I could

go on. The point is that we should deliberately seek out alternative explanations, even alternative visions. Our public information networks are set up to squelch or to trivialize and marginalize significantly alternative explanations and visions. By not looking beyond the system of which we are a part we perpetuate it.

Those of us impatient for solutions to the world's most pressing problems and who recognize that media reform must at least parallel other reform should remember that in historical terms there has been some remarkable progress. Just about everyone nowadays accepts the once-radical notion that the media should be scrutinized, even regularly and systematically. Media criticism has even become a shade respectable.

If enough of us voice the fundamental type of criticism that's most needed today — criticism of the structures and ideology of the mainline media — the danger of more respectability will be much decreased.

I don't know whether to hope it will or it won't be. (30)

*Barrie Zwicker, publisher of Sources and a former editor of Content, is heard regularly on Facing the Fourth Estate on radio stations across Canada.*

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## **A Victorian editor set a standard for raking muck**

by Peter Calamai

**W**T. Stead was the muckraking journalist of Victorian England. From the pages of the *Pall Mall Gazette*, he afflicted the comfortable and comforted the afflicted with verve and skill.

If Stead is remembered today, it's because he once "purchased" a 13-year-old British girl. The resulting "maiden tribute" series forced a procrastinating Parliament to raise the age of consent to 16.

But the British establishment didn't like pressure tactics by outsiders; it took revenge by jailing Stead for three months after a trial that was a mockery of justice.

Nothing daunted, the 38-year-old Stead then confronted the very heart of the establishment — the law. In doing so, Stead pretty well invented "trial-by-newspaper."

Historians and students of journalism disagree over the crusader's motives. Now a University of Toronto law professor has shown that, in the "trial-by-newspaper" case at least, Stead was out to settle some personal scores. More important to content readers, in a book published earlier this year author Martin L. Friedland demonstrates how press coverage fits the whole context of a criminal trial.

Friedland had never heard of either Stead or the *Pall Mall Gazette* when he began researching *The Trials of Israel Lipski* (MacMillan, 219 pgs., \$17.95). But the professor soon rated the muckraker "one of the most fascinating and important characters in the history of journalism."

How important quickly becomes apparent in the real-life murder mystery Friedland reconstructed from contemporary records and official documents, unearthed through scholarly detection and some good fortune.

Lipski was a 22-year-old immigrant Jew from Poland who, in 1887, was charged and convicted of the particularly loathsome murder of a young, pregnant fellow Jewish immigrant.

Stead saw Lipski's conviction as a miscarriage of justice. He also saw an opportunity to again expose the appalling living conditions in London's East End. (Earlier, Stead had ghost-written *In Darkest England* for Salvation Army founder William Booth.) And the chance to point out how juries can be misdirected by judges, as in his own trial.

Stead's crusade is unmatched in the annals of muckraking. Not even the tabloids' coverage of the Sam Sheppard trials in the 1950s and 1960s could equal the passion of such leading articles as these:

Monday: *A Life for a Bottle*

Tuesday: *The First Batch of Fresh Evidence*

Wednesday: *On the Murderer's Track*

Thursday: *Fresh Evidence and Further Clues*

Friday: *Dare We Hang Lipski?*

Saturday: *Spare the Man*

But Lipski was hanged. And, for reasons that must be left for Friedland to reveal, Stead capitulated utterly, under a fatuous heading: *All's Well That Ends Well*.

This retreat had serious consequences for muckraking and for the British legal system. Three years later, Stead quietly left the *Gazette*

(swallowed up and regurgitated as today's *London Evening Standard*) and founded the weekly *Review of Reviews* which, while influential on both sides of the Atlantic, was less a crusading paper.

Meeker editors noted Stead's humiliation. There was little more probing of judges or of the legal system, although desperately needed. The press clamor for reform was muted for decades.

As Professor Friedland points out, it need not have been. Lipski was likely wrongly convicted and should have won acquittal on grounds of reasonable doubt.

Which is just what W.T. Stead claimed. But rather than what-might-have-beens, consider the message from Friedland's book for anyone trying to report the legal system today.

Because the public servants of Victoria's time never expected an outsider to be reading their memos less than a century later, a thorough researcher can probably come closer to the truth of Lipski's trial than someone reporting today's cause celebre — Henry Morgentaler or Donald Marshall.

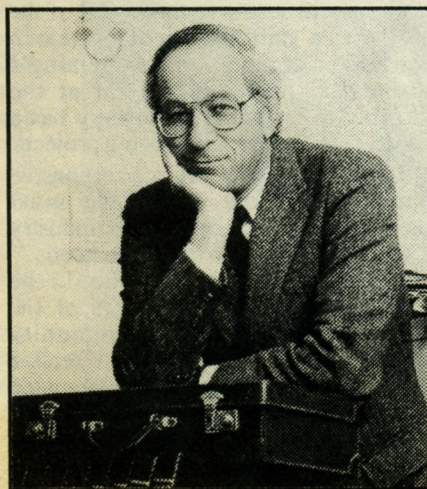
We learn what the judge really thought, how the Home Office withheld vital evidence, how prison officials lied. All documented with letters, reports, handwritten file notations.

Like lawyer Edward Greenspan in CBC Radio's *The Scales of Justice* series, Friedland cannot resist the occasional Monday morning quarterbacking. But mostly he lets the facts speak for themselves.

They show that the law is but one part of the process of criminal justice. Just as influential on the outcome can be the personality of the judge, the competence of the defence lawyer, the press reaction, public opinion, and the vulnerability of the government.

Who today is reporting that full context? 30

Peter Calamai is with *Southam News* in Ottawa.



Author Friedland: Thorough research



# Government sidestepped

*Press councils have sprung up across Canada, moving toward a national federation*

Canada's press councils are a significant step closer to forming a voluntary national federation with the creation of a committee to draft terms of reference.

The committee, composed of chairmen of the country's six provincial and regional councils and chaired by Quebec's Gerard Filion, a former publisher of Montreal's *Le Devoir*, is to solicit views on the goals, responsibilities, and functions of a federation and report next year.

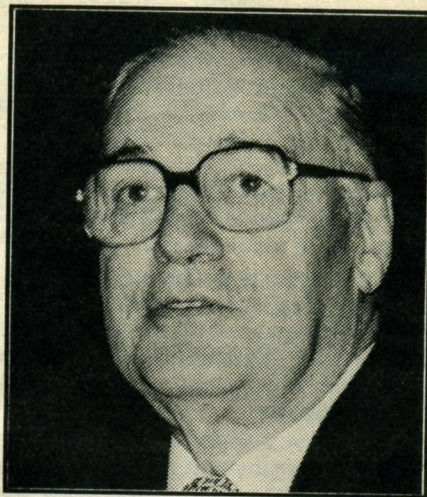
The action was taken during a meeting of all councils in Toronto May 4. Actually, in all but name and specific detail, a de facto federation now exists — and has since the proposal was advanced last October at the first meeting of Canadian councils in Quebec City. (content, Oct.-Nov., 1983.)

The Ontario and British Columbia councils have endorsed the concept and others are expected to do so before they get together next year in Vancouver or Victoria to act on the Filion committee's recommendations.

The federation will not be highly structured; indeed, everyone who has discussed the subject makes a point of saying a bureaucratic superstructure must be avoided. This "loose federation" likely will serve as an information exchange, and it is expected to concern itself primarily with matters pertaining to the federal level of government, such as the Criminal Code, the Combines Investigation Act, and the Copyright Act. Provincial affairs will remain the purview of regionally-based councils.

Judy Erola, federal minister of consumer and corporate affairs, who addressed the Toronto meeting, was pleased at the progress made toward establishing a federation.

In fact, the motion to form the Filion committee was passed unanimously minutes before Erola arrived — to give chairman J. Allyn Taylor of the Ontario council something tangible to report to her. The spectre of a government-created national advisory council, put forward by former multiculturalism



Quebec's Filion: A "loose federation"

minister James Fleming and still alluded to from time to time by Erola, clearly hasn't withered away.

She told the meeting: "A federation might assume more substantive functions in time, such as dealing with complaints or issues regarding accountability, quality, or editorial independence which might have a national dimension. It could also serve as a clearinghouse for suggestions about research on journalism and communications, and channel them to the appropriate institutions."

Erola still seems to think well of the idea for a national media research centre, an adaptation of Fleming's proposals, and went so far at the meeting to indicate her ministry has a "kitty" of funds for deserving projects.

In her talk, Erola struck a responsive chord when she said "we must recognize that the newspaper industry is and should remain in private hands." At the same time, "it should be recognized that the standards of the industry are a community concern...and that efforts to realize those standards should be associated with citizens, consumers, and governments, as well as with the industry itself."

And while some of those present may not have noticed, she echoed Tom

Kent's Royal Commission on Newspapers when she said: "Government does have a role to play, as it has a legitimate interest in the freedom and independence of the press. Government can adopt a posture of support and encouragement for actions to be taken by the industry itself, by journalists and by the community, to ensure accountability and independence."

Nonetheless, Erola said, "in the final analysis, Canadians' respect and tolerance for freedom of the press will probably depend on how good a job the press itself does in fulfilling its responsibilities: in reporting the facts, in presenting a diversity of sound and thoughtful opinion, in its accountability to the community it serves...."

"It is my hope that government will do what it can, but not more than it should, or needs to, to nurture the climate in which newspapers can thrive in their unique role."

What the government *has* done, of course, is propose several amendments to the Combines Investigation Act designed to address questions of competition. While not geared specifically to the press, Erola explained, these provisions would apply to newspapers as they would apply to any industry.

The government obviously has accepted the argument — made most loudly by the country's publishers — that ownership concentration is best governed through a general law, such as the combines act, rather than specific legislation for the press. A few publishers attending the press councils' meeting told Erola they felt comfortable and better protected by her amendments.

Still, she had a caveat. "While the Combines Investigation Act deals with market competition, the debate still rages over the issue of concentration of ownership at the national level. Many still fear that the concentration of ownership challenges the principles of press responsibility and accountability. The jury is still out on whether this remains a problem outside the area of market competition." (30)



# Star trek

*Canada's largest newspaper  
has been mecca for many reporters.  
It's still an enigma*

by John Marshall

**E**mbodied in the giant Toronto *Star* (a million-plus Saturday readers) are all the best and the worst reasons leading any principled person to seek or to avoid a career in daily print journalism. To a more shocking extent than any place I know from first hand or well-documented reports (primarily unpublished), it has traditionally seethed with an irrational clash of extremes in its operational and editorial policies. On one hand, it has provided the inspiration and opportunity for the often superior editing and writing talent it has attracted to do the kind of newspaper work that is rarely matched elsewhere. On the other hand, it has often disheartened and stupified them.

The problem is an inconsistent internal mix. There is the blatant self-serving mediocrity sometimes displayed at both the corporate and individual editor level. It is evinced in the way the editorial board was overruled on its view of a controversial Toronto expressway proposal — because it conflicted with what was best for *Star* delivery trucks. And some exposés of politicians, cults, and (until recently) organized crime have been discouraged or even killed after having been written.

However, there also have been generous amounts of time, staff, and space devoted to highly-responsible studies of numerous major issues. And there has been an admirable traditional attention to the welfare of the less privileged. There is, too, the *Star's* advocacy approach to many topics — such as the deleterious effects of foreign control of Canada's industry — that are either inadequately covered or covered up by other newspapers.

The *Star* suffers from corporate schizophrenia. Its prophylactic mondrianesque newsroom was and still is seen by many as a sort of psycho ward into which the head doctor, Beland H. (Bee or The Beast) Honderich, or his delegates, regularly enter, and, like a berserk food processor, stirs the place

up, whirling editors off in all directions and dropping outsiders into the mix.

Which in fact has been part of both the genius and the fatuity of the *Star*. Editors react differently to such stimuli: kept either on their toes or off balance, made energetically enterprising or fearfully cautious. But it does infuse the scene with new faces, new intensities; unsettling, but adding fresh ideas. Too many other papers coddle secure in-bred regimes unleavened by top outside talent.

The impact the *Star* had upon me capsulizes its mix of enjoyable, rational energy with irrational, low-morale confusion. I entered the over-crowded old newsroom on King street from the demoralizing ruins of the *Telegram* in 1971, the middle of a couple of decades in which a round dozen hopefuls went through the revolving door to the managing editor's desk. My own mind then was like a spinning door with chaotic flashes of my newspapering career kaleidoscoping a 26-year past, traumatic present, and confused future into a soul-searching melange.



*Honderich: Beastly or benevolent?*

It is the most difficult period of my 36 years of journeyman journalist to publicly dissect. The guideposts that might be in it for those entering newspapering — and which are, possibly, points of orientation for those already in the business — are not the easy, anecdotal ones about the skills needed in the craft (unless one includes posterior osculation, an art I did not practice). No, the key points are misty things of the psyche. Very personal. Confusing. I quit one good *Star* job. I was fired from another when I went back a second time because, I was told, I did not have the ability to be a general reporter.

Whatever...one of my greatest highs was the day I drove past One Yonge, the *Star's* lakefront highrise into which it moved shortly after I was welcomed aboard by the publisher himself six months before. I had resigned and was escaping, my Pinto loaded with camping gear, books, good food, dinner wine, and freedom's euphoria. I kept going until I found myself (in more ways than one) at continent's end on an empty horizon-wide Gulf of Mexico beach. Just me, the calligraphy of the gulls in the sunlight, the grace of the coyotes in the moonlight — and a great peace. It was part of my self-prescribed therapy for whatever it was that ailed me, and which had prompted me to throw over a job that I had been so delighted to get when the *Telegram* folded.

A journalistic menopause is the way a friend aptly described the incongruity of my quitting an enjoyable, good-paying position at the age of 50 to take what I called a sabbatical to seek a perspective after 26 years in the business. I did not ask for the umbilical-cord security of a leave of absence. There seemed to be a need to test myself, to find out whether — in spite of my age — my abilities and reputation could get me another job at the end of the six months I could afford to finance (thanks to a sorely-tried but understanding wife).

The irrationality was, no doubt,



partly a product of the psychotic bruises left from the closing throes at the *Telegram*. A clean kill, such as the *Ottawa Journal* or *Winnipeg Tribune*, might have been more merciful to the betrayed staff. Soon after the announcement that the *Telegram* was finished, I learned I was one of an envied group, mostly editors, wanted by the *Star*. (An equally happy, possibly even more euphoric group, was the one taking on the challenge of launching the feisty Toronto *Sun*.) But until I quit the *Tely* — well before its actual closing day, because I couldn't take what was going on there — I spent quite a bit of my time and a good deal of the Bassett-Eaton money on long-distance phone calls trying to find jobs for others. It was a gut-wrenching period.

I can recall some of the best in the business worriedly checking with me about the times arranged for interviews for PR jobs far beneath their talents. And there were the daily sad-boisterous group gropes fending off the shadows in alcoholic hazes at the Spadina Hotel bar. Branded into my skull was a lasting impression of the total helplessness of the employees in a business in which they expend so much of their energies in efforts to help others — in the process, making extremely good profits for the owners, the only ones in control of their futures.

And so to the *Star*, where the editor-in-chief, the late Martin Goodman, and city editor Patrick Scott told me I had a job no matter what, but that they hoped I would accept a particular one. They wanted me to help expand the scope of the Family Section (still carrying the pejorative women's pages aura), taking advantage of my experience with in-depth pieces and series on a wide range of subjects. I was delighted, but said I'd be unhappy if I couldn't get sprung occasionally for such things as major political conventions. "That's exactly what we want," said Goodman. "We hope you'll find ways to fit assignments like that into the section."

I was then introduced to the editor, Maureen Keller, who wanted to "de-ghettoize" the department. My part in that was a satisfying one — lots of self-starting assignments, lots of section-page space, time to do the work, and a fine group to work with — well away from the endemic office politics stresses. But I could see that in about a year I would feel restricted even with the considerable scope I enjoyed. I also missed the "rush" that comes

from the fast-thinking and fast-moving demands of occasional major spot-news assignments. However, I felt misgivings about prospects elsewhere in the the newsroom.

After I resigned, I put such thoughts on paper for Goodman. This sincere but ingenuous action, though never regretted, likely had a bearing on what happened when I returned to the *Star* needing a job, my do-it-yourself mental therapy having put me at peace with the world, able to cope with anything, but broke.

When I gave notice in April, 1972, a Goodman memo generously expressed his regrets, and his appreciation of my work, and said, "The door is open should you change your mind at some point."

And: "Since we can't afford to lose people like you, I wonder if you would help us make any improvements that might have caused you to come to a different decision." He asked me to speak to a consultant he had looking into editorial department morale and organization.

I agreed, explaining, "I felt a responsibility to speak frankly because the *Star* is one of the most influential newspapers on the continent and I have a concern, too, about the fact there are many able journalists on its staff who are depressed rather than happy in their work, a situation neither good for them nor for the paper."

I interviewed other staffers for their views and sent Goodman my version of my talks with his expert, a report still in parts sadly applicable to the *Star* and many other papers. Even while I was compiling it, cynics were saying, "Forget it. This has happened here before and nothing ever changed."

I described my own doubts about finding a congenial role in the general newsroom: "I was not only not attracted, I was repelled. I just had no desire to seek involvement... the *Star* has such a great potential as a fascinating place to work. It is sad that for so many it seems otherwise."

Goodman wrote his thanks for my candor and the constructive criticisms — "I hope we can do something about them. Enjoy your time away. As before, we'd like to see you back."

It wasn't that I, personally, had had any bad experiences at the paper, even in the general newsroom. The one time Scott seconded me from the Family Section resulted in a "warmest thanks" memo saying he'd sought my help because he needed a professional in an urgent situation that left no room for error.

But I knew about the problems. And when Goodman rehired me in the fall of 1971 on cityside, I quickly experienced them. I guess I could not have expected a warm reception. Bad-news messengers are bad news.

I had described the lack of a human

*Star  
on King  
Street:  
Moved  
to grow*





element — editors with poor staff relations who walk through the newsroom without talking to anyone, and some junior editors apparently selected for the same attitudes. “It’s ulcer alley. Look it over carefully in the mornings. Rarely a smiling face. Never a bit of horseplay, the vital relief from high-tension jobs.”

Writers, I said, felt they were not respected. Their work would be drastically altered (too often resulting in errors) or be spiked, and they would never be told why. “That’s not just another widget they produced, it’s a story. Maybe there are vital news contacts involved and the writer wants to keep them in the picture, too.”

The attempt to rectify the situation took a typical bureaucratic approach. Sub-editors were issued a mimeographed form, Rewrite Report, on which to tick off the reasons for a rewrite. In my second coming at the *Star* I received one about a story the desk had mutilated, prompting me to counter by inventing a form for writers to use, Report on Rewrite and Editing. On it I ticked off the desk’s pedestrian and erroneous lead, and listed its other errors in fact and in news judgment. It caused a bit of a shock, but at least I got a non-form memo back and a semi-confession of guilt.

My report to Goodman condemned an administrative system that did not delegate responsibility and which

“squelched initiative and originality” due to the fact that many editors were afraid to make firm decisions because “conventional wisdom is that the smallest decision must be made by you, Marty, or even above (Honderich).” I said this put up barriers to change, delayed decisions and inspired second-guessing that led to uniformity in writing styles. In addition, as editors rose up the ladder and fell out of favor, they were pushed to the side, but tried to justify their existence by the easiest way of looking as though they were still productive — by fiddling around with copy. This “editing by committee” also led to timid uniformity.

(Now, one sees a wider variety of distinctive writing at the *Star* although dictated formula still keeps popping up — such as the anecdotal opening that tries to boil down some involved and even technical issue to the experience of some Joe Average. It’s almost as obligatory as page-one play used to be for every sneeze by *Star* director Walter Gordon — which did an injustice to the man.) From my own observations and those of others, I wrote, “There are too many writers and editors who have apparently decided to be adequate. Their juices have been squeezed out... they won’t try to change things because they know it won’t do any good... a newsroom *should* be a place of ferment, of the clash of ideas. It *should* be a place of enthusiasms.”

On my return, I soon found it

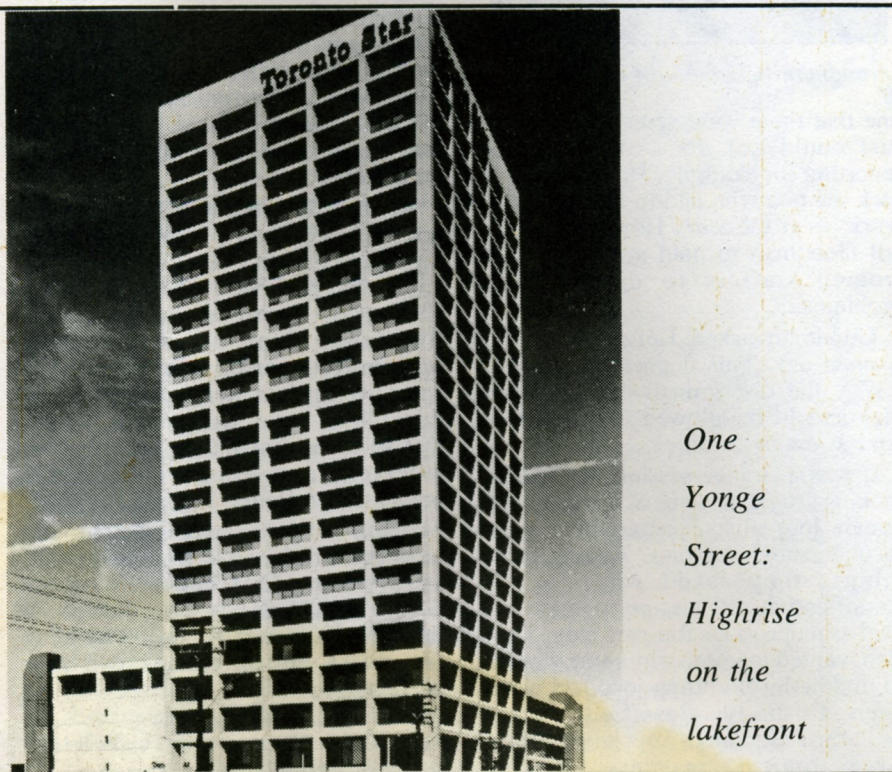
difficult to be enthusiastic, in spite of my post-sabbatical euphoria partly based on the old carborundum adage about not letting the bastards grind you down. And after all, earning a living in an unsmiling newsroom was still significantly more interesting than earning one in a factory or office, or in real estate or public relations.

I was often relegated to cub reporter work and to weekend and night shifts which prevent a self-starter from developing his own leads. Attempts to expand routine items into something brighter were prevented. Restive under what I considered often to be inefficient, inadequate and even at times psychotic direction — and with my sabbatical-rejuvenated sense of my own worth — I blithely fought back. It was a losing battle.

And so, bemused but hardly surprised, I failed to pass my (extended) six-month probation period. The application of a probationary classification and the dismissal itself (Scott’s “You have not convinced me that you can make it as a full-time general-assignment reporter.”) would have made an interesting bit of labor litigation. Instead, I went coral reef scuba diving for a week and returned to a job at the *Globe and Mail*, where a minor satisfaction (he said, having normal human failings) was the opportunity to beat my opposition, the *Star*, fairly often — on general assignments.

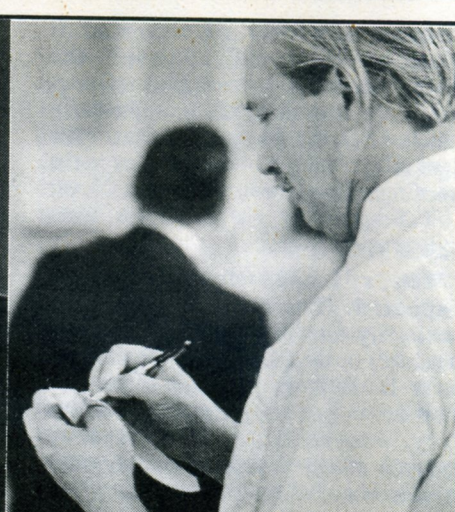
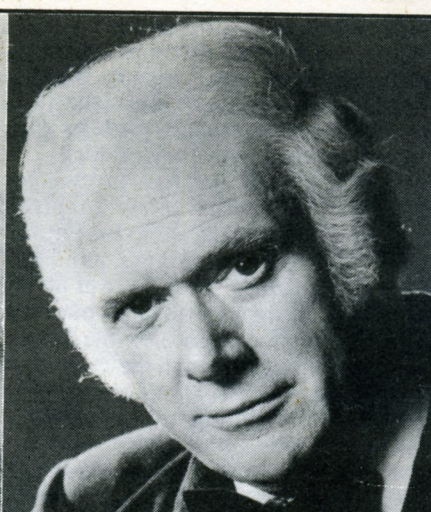
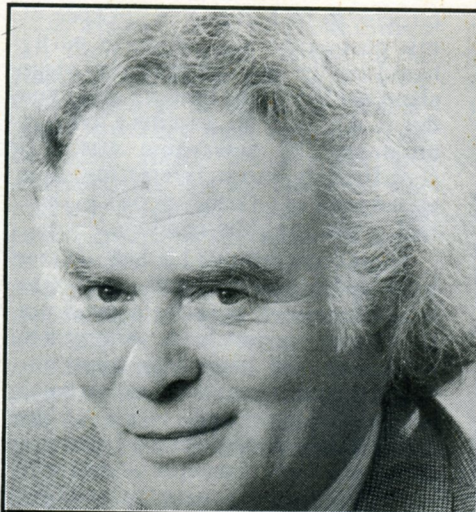
It was an interesting time to be at the *Star* with the potential invigoration of its defeat of the *Telegram* and its move into the wide-open color-coded spaces of One Yonge. But there was a weird Monty Pythonish touch to the move, too. For example, on every desk on opening day was a vase with a red carnation. Designer-ordained chic. And funny. Because some had been delivered white, and they had been hastily dyed red. Fancy filing cabinets blocked air ducts and had to be raised on legs. Swinging doors in halls had no windows. You crept up to them apprehensively wondering if you’d get slammed in the face. A viewing ramp for tours was placed exactly where the view would be blocked when sound barriers had to be put around noisy teletypes.

And then there were the rules and regulations. Like something out of military college or kids camp. Nothing — dictionary, newspaper, phone book — was to be left on desks after shift time. I’d come in early to do some writing and would lose time hunting for



One  
Yonge  
Street:  
Highrise  
on the  
lakefront





*Haggart: He passed through*

a phone book. Goodman, himself, sometimes cleaned off the desks. (I noted in my report to him that, as a *Star* subscriber, I couldn't afford high-priced help doing joe jobs.)

This obsession with the artificially antiseptic reached ludicrous levels. Shortly after the move, trying to use the financial department's files, I found there were no index cards on the drawers. When I suggested to the secretary she hadn't had time to put them on, she said she'd been told not to use them because they'd spoil the appearance of the cabinets!

Then there was the rule that no coffee was to be consumed at one's work station (a bit of then-new jargon that fitted the rest of the farce). I learned about the rule in Ottawa where I was on assignment when the move was made. When I got back, I picked up a coffee on my way in, prepared to challenge the stupidity of it. Too late. A night copy editor had beaten me — and no doubt a phalanx of others — to the heroics. After a confrontation, the rule was dropped. Filing cabinets eventually were indexed too.

But some of the idiosyncratic blind spots were of more import. Historically self-congratulated as an instrument for social reform, the *Star* did not always put its money where its lip was. This applied, among other things, to the discrimination practiced towards women newsroom employees. But neither Honderich nor Goodman could grasp the issue.

Two women reporters separately sought audience with Honderich around the same time. Courteously received over cups of tea, they both said they were wondering about their prospects, considering that no women held senior posts there. Honderich told

*Berton: ... so did he*



*Goodman: Cleaned off desks*

one that there were some jobs women just could not do — night police reporting for example. He happened to pick the one who had in fact done that work — at the *Star*. However, he did tell Goodman to hold a meeting with women staffers to discuss their problems.

Goodman asked Keller to get the women out. This deghettoizer asked, "Why the discrimination?" She said men should be allowed to attend too. And a few of us did.

It was a strange session. Goodman, looking around at some of Canada's top female journalists, just couldn't seem to understand the fuss. Among other things, they asked why, in any classification or unit, no woman was paid as much as the top-paid men. They also wanted to know why some women in middle-level editing jobs had never been formally classified to the positions. Goodman kept saying there were logical reasons, denying

*Marshall: Moved to the Globe*

discrimination was involved.

I finally suggested that even if it could be accepted that women on staff suffered no discrimination, he had to concede that we did discriminate against all our women readers. After all, no woman's voice represented them at any senior editorial level. His squelcher was to point out that Ruth Atkinson Hindmarsh was on the board of directors.

My own ultimately-frustrating experience at the *Star* does not negate my opinion that it has been not only a superior newspaper, in spite of its failings, it has been a catalyst in many branches of the Canadian communications industry. So many who went through there — Pierre Berton, Ron Haggart, Charles Templeton, Denis Harvey, Ted Bolwell, among others — have left their marks and have contributed in many other areas.

Neither this journeyman journalist nor the *Star* gained a single thing from my last six-month session there. The entire two-part interlude is the most aberrant one in my newspaper career. But from any news-gathering opportunity a person is apt to salvage some worthwhile item. Among other things from my *Star* period is a letter that told me that the hope a woman received from an article I wrote prevented her from committing suicide.

From the insurance-company modern of the *Star*, I went in March, 1973, to the Cratchet-tacky of the *Globe and Mail* not long before its move to the former *Telegram* building — and to old memories and new challenges.

(30)

*John Marshall now is a freelance writer based in Toronto.*



# Recycling ideas

*What starts out as a newspaper or magazine piece can be turned into a book*

by Betty Jane Wylie

You think journalists are the forgotten people in the hierarchy of writers. You think their efforts are ephemeral. Today's passing fancy or irritation committed to biodegradable print ends up wrapping the garbage or gracing the cluttered tables in dentists' offices. (Even manufacturing enthusiasm and mining facts, first-with-the-news journalists seldom elicit more than a three-minute attention span from their fickle and inattentive readers.) Inattentive, because these readers remember facts, not bylines.) Minutes after a story leaves your keyboard, it's all to do again. Find an interesting new boulder and push it up hill. Note the striations in the rock formation; watch out for that hummock! Right?

Wrong. Partly wrong, anyway. It is possible to parlay an article or a special report into a book or some other more permanent form. It is possible to use your journalism to feed your other ambitions, not merely your physical appetite. The first time, I did it by accident. Now, I try to do it on purpose. When my husband died, I turned to journalism and magazine writing as a means of earning an income while still living in a small town away from the hub of media activity; I could do it by mail. Writing about what I knew (and was learning), I offered a piece about my widowhood to Peter Newman, whose *Maclean's* was still in the old format.

"Go ahead," said Newman, "but make it as witty as you can."

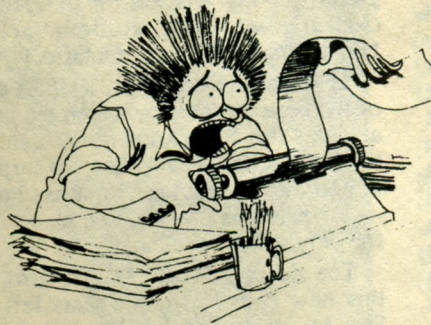
The result was an article that I later learned drew some of the highest readership response in the magazine's history. Published in January, 1974, nine months after my husband's death, it brought me letters from across the country. I realized I had touched a nerve, but it took awhile to convince book publishers. Reassured by a paperback sale to the Canadian Life and Health Insurance Association, McClelland and Stewart published *Beginnings: A Book for Widows*, in 1977.

In its fifth printing now and a

Canadian best-seller, *Beginnings* will be published this year, in a revised version for the American market, by Ballantine Books in the United States. All from a magazine article.

I have this vital concern about aging, single women — being an aging single woman myself. I wanted to write a play about an old woman in a room. (I consider myself a playwright, but you think journalism is a depressing business? The average playwright in Canada makes under \$2,500 a year.) To find out what goes on in the head of an old woman in a room, I had to get into a room in those circumstances. So I went to Hartley Steward, then an editor at the *Toronto Star*, and I suggested that I try living on the equivalent of the Old Age Pension.

"You're on," said Steward, "but wait 'til the weather's worse."



So, in late October of 1979 I took the amount of money that a woman of 65 with no other resources would have from her government incomes, the pension and the Guaranteed Income Supplement (an amount well below the urban poverty line), and moved into a rooming house for three weeks.

The immediate result was a five-part series in the *Star* that focussed some attention on the plight of old people living meagerly and alone in mean little rooms. The longer-term result was a play entitled *A Place on Earth*. It won a first prize of \$1,000 in the annual Smile Company playwrighting contest in Toronto, had its first production by Toronto Workshop Productions in

1982, and was produced by a fringe theatre company in London, England, in 1983. Now published by Playwrights Canada, it hasn't made a lot of money or fame, but it, too, has touched a few nerves — and you can't wrap the garbage in it.

The Old Lady Caper, as I called it, also developed into an assessment of the ripoffs women suffer regarding pensions and became an article for *Homemaker's*.

The process works two ways. I researched and created a play with Theatre Passe Muraille about a man of the cloth who was said to have been condoning sexual relations among teenagers in his Chatham, Ont., congregation in a celebrated case in the 1960s. The play toured southwestern Ontario and then came to Toronto in 1975. I kept a journal of the collective process of play-making — a very humbling and gruelling experience for the playwright — and recently published an account of that in the last issue of *Canadian Theatre Review*. Not much cash, but a satisfying outlet.

I cleaned out some of my closets recently and wrote a piece about cupboards. I investigated hammocks in the dead of winter and wrote an article deploring my lack of experience with them. (A retired sea captain wrote, offering to initiate me into the perils and pleasures of love in a sling; the suspense must be terrible.) An addicted list maker, I wrote an article about the art of lists. I love letters, especially love letters, so out popped an article about the art of writing those delicious messages. I have also written about the art of flirtation, the art of saying thank-you, the art of female manipulation, the art of hit-run techniques with other peoples' libraries.

So? Well, I tell you this because I hope to package all these disparate ideas into something called *The Trivial Arts* — a book?

Tear sheets are all very well. Books are nicer. They make better doorstops.

(30)

Betty Jane Wylie is a Toronto author and playwright.



# At all times professional

*Borden Spears, who died last year,  
left behind a trail of words.  
They're a guide to better journalism*

by Dick MacDonald

Obituaries are always complimentary but, in Borden Spears' case, they simply echoed what people said during his life. They spoke of the gentleman and the scholar. They spoke of his broad imagination, his intuition, and his quiet eloquence. And they always spoke of his abiding concern for the craft at which he excelled.

An overworked cliché by now is that someone who has died universally commanded respect during his life. But Borden Spears *did*.

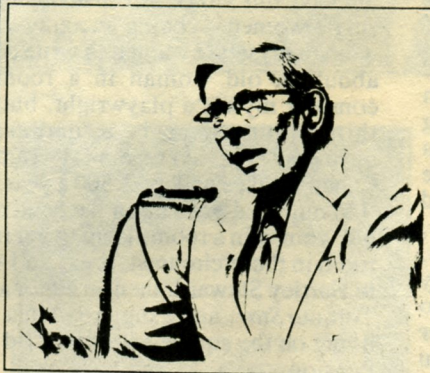
He was, in the words of Sen. Keith Davey (the 1970 Special Senate Committee on Mass Media where Spears was both senior consultant and an inspiration), at all times professional. The chairman of the 1981 Royal Commission on Newspapers, Tom Kent, summed up many people's feelings when he said the newspaper industry owed a large debt to Spears.

Borden Spears was born in Pine Lake, Alta., Feb. 19, 1913, son of the late Thomas John and Laura Augusta (Weir) Spears. He attended schools in Red Deer and Vancouver in the West and in Tobermory, Owen Sound, and London in Ontario. He graduated with a bachelor of arts degree from the University of Western Ontario — with which he was to have a different kind of association a half-century later, as Distinguished Visitor in Journalism — winning gold medals in Latin and Greek. He did post-graduate work at the University of Toronto in Greek drama, philosophy, and epigraphy (the deciphering of ancient inscriptions). After university, uncertain about his direction, he did a stint as a commercial fisherman.

Ron Lowman, writing Spears' obituary the day he died, March 17, 1983, gave Spears' version of his arrival at the *Toronto Star*: "I became a reporter when I took a vacation from fishing. I was walking down King Street one day and saw the old *Star* building (at 80 King St. West). I thought I'd like to work for a newspaper, so I walked into the *Star* and got a job." (He wasn't entirely

## BORDEN SPEARS

Reporter, Editor, Critic



compiled and edited by dick macdonald

green, having worked on the campus *Gazette* while a student at the University of Western Ontario.)

That was in December, 1938. A trace of the benevolence for which the paper at times has been known was evident: Spears recalled, years later, his surprise at getting the regular Christmas bonus — a week's pay — after being on staff for only a few weeks.

The Second World War interrupted this new career, when Spears left the *Star* to serve with the Royal Canadian Air Force's public relations staff. He finished his service in India and Burma as a flight lieutenant before returning to the *Star*.

He soon began to make his mark on Canadian journalism. With the *Star*, he was reporter, photo editor, city editor, Ottawa correspondent, twice managing editor, foreign correspondent, and, finally, ombudsman, the role in which he represented the public in the newspaper. It is in this role, as the paper's internal critic, that he may best be remembered, in addition to his contributions to the Davey and Kent inquiries, his career as a soft-spoken but hell-raising city editor of the *Star*, and his nurturing of a group of brilliant, if erratic, writers at *Maclean's* magazine.

In later years, he was sometimes embarrassed to speak of the excitable, and sometimes gaudy, journalism of the 1950s. He once recalled, "I knew at the time what we were doing wasn't respectable. But it was so much goddamn fun." Long-time *Star* reporter Pat McNenly put that memory in the context of a livelier newspaper market, when blaring, bold-face headlines were a key to street-corner sales. That no longer is true, and we likely are the better for it.

Spears believed that the press has an enormous amount of influence on society's image of itself. This was evident in the ombudsman columns he wrote for the *Star*, in his deliberations for the Davey and Kent studies, and in speeches, lectures, and panel discussions.

His last *Star* column elaborated on that theme: "It should be safe to assume ... that the essential task of journalism will remain constant. The task is to keep abreast of change, and to gather and disseminate the information by which citizens can understand the world they live in."

Spears brought to Kent's Royal Commission not only a professional dedication and direction but a kind of spiritual guidance. Tim Creery, the research director, said Spears was the Commission's "man of balance."

Although authorship of any Royal Commission report is never assigned to an individual, it was obvious to journalists who read the 1981 volume that Spears was speaking directly and personally throughout many of its chapters, particularly those dealing with the performance of Canadian newspapers. Those who knew him detected the elements of the Spears' philosophy. He wrote:

"We return to the question with which we began: whether the newspapers of Canada are in a position to provide a better service than they now do for their readers, for their communities, for the political, economic, social, and intellectual vitality and cohesion of the nation as a whole.

"...the conclusion is inescapable.



The privileged economic position of the newspapers, and particularly of the ever-expanding chains and conglomerates that place control of the press in fewer and fewer hands, becomes steadily more pronounced....

"The process of corporate growth, by concentration into larger groups within the industry, has been accompanied by a reduction in the diversity of news and comment that is the vital element of a free society. The quality of what remains has not improved, and in some respects has declined....

"Innovation, creativity, even a desirable degree of eccentricity give way to the pressures for uniformity.

"Can the newspapers afford to do better in their professed pursuit of excellence? They can. This implies no aspersion on the journalists now practising their craft, but only on the system in which they practise it. If they are freed of some restraints that now confine them, something more can be demanded of them.

In his professional life, Spears worked in many ways to develop effective journalistic ethics. He was instrumental in drafting the first Statement of Principles for the Canadian Daily Newspaper Publishers Association. The late Martin Goodman, then editor-in-chief of the *Toronto Star*, and chairman of an Editorial Division sub-committee of CDNPA, had been asked to develop a code of ethics for the association. Under Goodman's supervision, Spears scoured codes that had been drawn up by journalists' and publishers' groups in North America and Europe. He flew to meetings around the continent. And he drafted and redrafted the document that ultimately was accepted by the majority of the publishers in 1977. It now is an irony of history that the Royal Commission on Newspapers, four years later, used that same Statement of Principles as a measuring stick to evaluate the industry's performance.

Defining press freedom was a life-time preoccupation. Spears was unerringly faithful to his belief in the need for an unobstructed press. To him, this was a straightforward extension of the public's right to have access to information that might affect them.

Some of his contemporaries said he could have been tougher, more ruthless, especially in his role as on-staff critic of the *Star*. But most, such as his predecessor as *Star* ombudsman, Mark Harrison, now editor of the *Montreal Gazette*, recall

*"His own conduct  
was a balance  
of detachment  
and commitment,  
work and leisure,  
private life  
and public life,  
and a bit more  
for God  
than Caesar."*



*MacDonald: Spears' chronicler*

Spears as "a splendid editor, a fine writer, an engaging boss, and as comfortable in a poker game and with the fellows at the track as attending a meeting of a learned society."

Harrison was the country's first daily newspaper ombudsman, having been appointed in mid-1972 and holding the position until Spears moved out of the managing editor's chair and into the ombudsman's job at the turn of 1973-74. Harrison on Spears: "He

always showed a calmness under fire, especially in the days of razzle-dazzle journalism. He cheerfully, if not willingly, played that game. He didn't fit the stereotype of your city editor, the Lou Grant type. He was, in fact, a truly literate and kind person."

Literate, indeed. George Bryant, *Star* travel editor, still has a book list Spears gave him in the early 1950s — "titles every well-rounded journalist should read." Among the authors are Chaucer, Aristophanes, Shakespeare, Swift, Donne, Shaw, Huxley, Thurber, Chesterton, Wells, Twain, Wolfe, and Wilde.

The public usually saw a serious man who cared deeply about language, as he stated in this column: "The prime purpose of language is to transmit ideas intelligibly from one mind to another, by imposing order and connection on the dissassociated images that dance like motes in a sunbeam. Language is coherence. You don't achieve it by abandoning all discipline."

Spears was the kind of editor anyone in journalism would be proud to work for and to learn from. He prided himself on doing a job well, and he expected the same of others.

Tim Creery, who worked most closely with him at the Royal Commission, said: "His own conduct was a balance of detachment and commitment, work and leisure, private life and public life, and a bit more for God than Caesar."

When he died, his old paper, the one that had given him a forum in which to practise and to advocate what lively, important journalism ought to be and what it ought to mean to the reader, said Borden Spears was "a shining ornament to his chosen craft."

The *Star* went on to editorialize that, as Spears often contended, "journalism was not, strictly speaking, a profession: at its best it was an art."

When he died, Canadians lost a journalist who had the soul of a philosopher and the pen of an artist. But his words remain with us, as wise and as useful as the day he wrote them. Journalism that lives more than a few hours past deadline is as unusual as Borden Spears was, and worth remembering. 30

*Excerpted from Borden Spears: Reporter, Editor, Critic, compiled and edited by Dick MacDonald. Co-published by Fitzhenry & Whiteside and the School of Journalism, University of Western Ontario. 224 pgs. \$12.95.*



# Editors managing

*Every year, a few of the boys  
get together, to swap stories,  
listen, talk. And learn*

A part from the fact the general membership meeting was closed to reporters, this year's Canadian Managing Editors Conference will be remembered for its tight and substantive agenda.

The 22 registered delegates — 20 papers and two news services, a rather paltry showing considering the size of the industry — went through provocative sessions on the Quebec press, access to information, graphic design, and stress. All panel discussions were open to coverage.

The irony at the Montreal conference in June was in the closing session, the membership meeting of *editors*, being closed to coverage. Bylaws were cited, although a close reading of the constitution does not indicate the covering press should be excluded.

As it turned out, there wasn't all that much to report from the session. The managing editors decided to hold their 1985 convention in Kitchener. They established a committee to seek ways of increasing membership and holding that membership's interest throughout the year — an overdue notion. And they re-elected Robert McAleer of the *Windsor Star* as president.

Other than getting together to swap tales of newsroom woes and delights — sometimes the main benefit of these



Bob McAleer: CMEC president

annual meetings — the managing editors heard:

- The francophone press in Quebec, while allowing more leeway for writers' observations in their stories than is the case in most of Canada's English-language papers, is increasingly being continentalized. Lise Bissonnette, editor-in-chief of *Le Devoir*, and Lysianne Gagnon, a columnist for *La Presse*, also said the journalistic militancy of the 1960s and '70s has receded. But both indicated that decision-sharing responsibilities earned by newsrooms in the past few

years remain, by and large, in place, though with limited effectiveness.

- The year-old federal access-to-information act is not likely to help reporters satisfy today's deadlines, but it is there to be used to background stories, apart from sometimes unearthing pieces which otherwise wouldn't be possible. Inger Hansen, the federal information commissioner, also said journalists must start documenting cases of requests for information being denied. And to be in the forefront of the act's amending process due two years from now.

- Peter Robertson, graphics editor of the *Toronto Star*, said newspapers "sometimes are forgetting some basics in the rush to improve design. I still think papers should be produced by journalists, not artists."

- Richard Curtis, graphics managing editor of the highly-visual *USA Today*, said "legibility and readability are the essentials of communication in print." People, said Curtis, want to be informed and "that's our goal at our paper. Good art helps that."

- Murray Burt, managing editor of the *Winnipeg Free Press*, said many editors and writers are "graphically illiterate." Yes, agreed Curtis, "but too many graphic designers are verbal illiterates." (30)

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# Speaking freely

*Ontario reporters dislike the idea of muzzled lawyers. Their 1984 meeting heard other challenges, too*

**T**he Ontario Reporters' Association (ORA) has asked the Law Society of Upper Canada to rescind a warning to lawyers that they could be accused of publicity seeking if they talk to the media about court cases.

The ORA said it is an infringement of lawyers' rights to freedom of speech and hinders a reporter's efforts to properly understand such cases.

The resolution was passed at the fourth annual meeting of the growing ORA (1984 target 100 members) in June at the Hamilton Press Club. The all-day session was shop talk at its best — panelists taking the more than 30 delegates well behind the scenes and confronting them with some controversial challenges.

"Racism is alive and well in the media," said Hamlin Grange, Global Television, told them. "We've got to change the makeup of our newsrooms." He advocated affirmative action to recruit non-whites.

Haroon Siddiqui, Toronto *Star*, said, "It's not so much racism — though I would not let off racism — it is intolerance about being different." He urged reporters to look for "ethnic" names to put in stories — "go out and find a Chinese, do a feature on him."

And the media had downplayed Liberal leadership candidate Eugene Whelan's slur against Africans, the meeting was told. "If he'd made a similar anti-Semitic remark, a helluva noise would've been made," said Grange.

Michael D'Souza gave a lesson on how to fight the Thomson Newspapers chain. And how to win, if you judge success by ideals and good journalism, not personal income (though there is a potential even for that). With \$125,000 from the International Typographical Union, he and colleagues locked out of the Welland *Evening Tribune* in 1982 have made a strike paper, the *Guardian Express*, into a thriving twice-weekly commercial one.

However, while it's well into the black and attracting purchase offers, its staff still is on strike pay — a top of

\$185, many getting \$125. "There's always a price to pay if you stand up for anything," said D'Souza; "nothing comes free." And he challenged others at non-union papers to take action. He can provide, for instance, what amounts to a do-it-yourself kit for a strike paper.

The ORA's retiring president, Kevin Cox (succeeded by Michael Davie, Hamilton *Spectator*), analyzed coverage of the inquiry at the Toronto Hospital for Sick Children. As a *Globe and Mail* reporter, he'd covered all but one of 147 days of hearings. He said the experience had made him less trusting

of both police and hospitals. But he is also questioning the media's role in such complicated and inherently sensational stories.

"We could have used expert consultants at the beginning," he said, although he pointed out the *Globe* gave him a month's preparation time to read and to interview experts.

He thinks TV cameras can be disconcerting for witnesses, particularly those on the stand for more than one day and who have seen themselves on the screen. There are also distortion problems in the selection of dramatic clips for TV news. 30

## Doing a story about...

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# Mild myopia

*Freelance writers assembled  
to weigh the future.  
The editors stayed home*

by Tina Ivany

Unabashedly, the executive director of the Periodical Writers Association of Canada (PWAC) praised the first international conference her organization of freelance writers had just convened.

The conference, titled *Freelance Writers and the 21st Century*, had been a great success. The one-day event in June, held at Toronto's city hall, had drawn close to 100 participants. It all made Norma Clark understandably proud.

There was but one disappointment. Where, Clark asked, were all the editors?

Only two had shown, one from a dance magazine, the other from a native people's publication. Only two of the hundreds of editors from across the country had deemed the conference of writers important enough to attend.

Such lack of interest underscored the John Steinbeck quotation contained, ironically, in the brochure promoting the conference. It read: "The profession of writing makes horse racing seem like a solid, stable business."

PWAC had gambled it could attract editors to a non-confrontational conference which would address such issues as freedom of information, copyright law, the journalist's role in the future, income security, and survival prospects for freelancers.

It had lost that race.

But it won another. Those who wagered their \$50 registration fee emerged the victors, better informed about many of the issues affecting the future of freelance writers, not only in Canada but internationally.

They learned, for example, how to circumvent what Toronto lawyer Heather Mitchell termed the "creative avoidance" tactics used by Canadian politicians and bureaucrats in response to journalists' requests for government-held information.

A 10-year veteran of access battles, Mitchell's practical tips (also contained in her book *Using the Access to Information Act*, \$5.95, Self-Counsel Press) were interspersed with personal

comment on access law in Canada. Of the proposed Ontario bill, she had little good to say.

While Mitchell limited her address to the Canadian information statute, Frederick Eckhard, executive director of the United Nations Multilateral Project, presented a more global view of the control of information.

Citing statistics from a 1983 study by Freedom House, a New York-based human rights organization, Eckhard pointed out that press freedom flourishes in only 57 of the 157 countries surveyed. In 88 countries, he said, the press has no freedom at all.

"The global environment in which journalists work today is not a particularly healthy one," he said.

Eckhard traced the history of UNESCO moves on information flow and said the U.S. counterthreat to pull out of the organization was encouraging because it indicated the private press could work with government to defend its interests.

However, he urged the U.S. to remain in UNESCO because "someone has to carry the banner for us to report unrestrained from any part of the world."

The conference also featured speakers from the United Kingdom, West Germany, and Sweden who described what public or private programs and what copyright laws are in place to guarantee some measure of income security to freelancers in those countries.

At the outset of the seminar, moderator Michael Fay had welcomed the audience to what he said he hoped would be the "first annual" international PWAC conference.

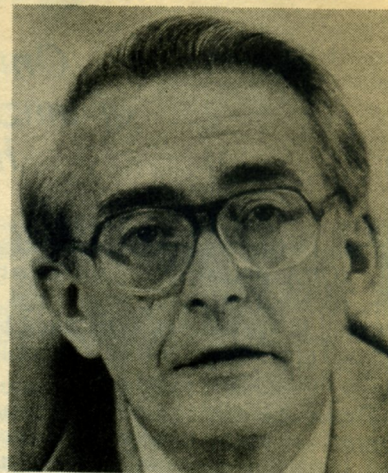
Norma Clark is not convinced that the description was entirely accurate. It's too early to tell whether there'll be a second. However, at the annual meeting which followed the conference, members agreed to maintain and establish ties with the international writing community.

Now, it's about those editors ....

30

*Tina Ivany is a journalism instructor at Toronto's Humber College and a freelance writer.*

## Kent revisited



*Tom Kent, chairman of the  
Royal Commission on  
Newspapers, reflects on his  
Report three years later.  
In content.*

*The September-October  
issue.*

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# Short takes

## Broadcasting in a large nutshell this summer:

There may be some long faces among college graduates as they knock on doors ... a lot is riding on September's meeting of broadcasters and judges ... and radio news is taking a quantum leap into space and home again.

Read on and you'll see where many college grads have found niches in sundry newsrooms. Some have done well, others less so. Discouraged job-hunters simply have to be persistent. But "part of the problem," says Fanshaw College graduate Stephen Wilson, now with CKO London, "is a lot of people quit before completing the course: People don't like hiring quitters."

The market is changing, too. Montreal's English-language population is not growing and CFCF news director (ND) Steve Pownall says some stations are cutting back. "But the frustrating thing is, graduates don't believe me when I say, 'conditions will improve'." Chuck Bridges of CJCH/C100 Halifax laughs at complaints about how low newsroom salaries are, because he became news director at CKAP Kapuskasing for \$80 a week in March, 1974. That afternoon, the minimum wage went up and in three hours he had jumped to the princely sum of \$82.50. Incomes are better today.

At CFCA Calgary, Thompson McDonald's news department has graduates of Fanshaw, Carleton University, and the Southern Alberta Institute of Technology.

As president of the Radio and Television News Directors Association (RTNDA), McDonald's main interest these days is a presentation in St. John's in September to provincial court judges. The association is seeking more electronic public access to courtrooms. McDonald cites the RTNDA pool feed in Toronto where a royal commission is investigating deaths at the Hospital for Sick Children. There, he says, "one silent electric camera preserves the dignity of the court while serving the public interest."

However, Ontario Attorney-General Roy McMurtry doesn't like what he's been seeing and claims that TV coverage distorts events at the hearings. RTNDA has protested his position. (Cameras in the courtroom is the subject of a major article in a forthcoming issue of *content*.)

In other news, radio stations are waiting to hear how much improvement there is in the quality of reports delivered via satellite instead of over land lines. Broadcast News, marketing manager John Rea (formerly CJBK London) boasts that the system will provide 15kh.

(For those not technically inclined, it's enough to say that the narrower the band-width, the less quality can be carried. Existing land lines, for instance, are only 3.2kh. With 125 per cent more "quality capacity," a story recorded across Canada will sound as if it had been done by a local reporter.)

VOCM in St. John's has been on the satellite since mid-June, relaying its programs to other stations in the local network of transmitters. Newsradio's Bill Onn is spending the summer arranging downlinks at 42 affiliates between CFCB Corner Brook and CJOR Vancouver.

**On the road, again:** Global News with Peter Trueman will be originating in Ottawa by September. Newsradio's Andy Sparling has gone to CHCH Hamilton from Parliament Hill. And CTV's Bruce Yacato has moved from Quebec City to Toronto and CBC's *The Journal*.

In Nova Scotia, Mike MacEachern (VOCM) has joined Sydney's CJCB, which this year picked up two Atlantic Region awards for RTNDA. In New Glasgow, Mary Clarke now is assistant to news director Tom Peck at CKEC. In New Brunswick, news director at Fredericton's CIHI is John Bulger, assisted by Michael MacFadyen; joining the newsroom is Dave Clarke (ex-CKLC Kingston). Also in Fredericton, Robert Burns was promoted to assistant news director at CFNB.

In Ontario, ND for both CHRO radio and TV in Pembroke is Dan Nyznik and Ottawa bureau chief for TV is Al Uhryniw. At CFRA

Ottawa, John Badham was named sports director after Ernie Calcutt's death. Moving from CKWS to CKLC in Kingston is Rick Choma, while Christine Ross (CJBQ) went to CKWS. Replacing Pat Conlon (now CFRA Ottawa) at CJBQ is Pat Enbord.

The Belleville news director literally threw his vacation to the wind when a story broke. CJBQ's John Ferguson was visiting his old stomping grounds in Bermuda when the Tall Ships were there. When one of them went down, he was first to file an overseas report and kept filing to BN practically non-stop for two days.

At sister-station CJTN Trenton, while Janice Alexander of Humber College is news director, the rest of the news staff is from Loyalist: Sharlene Masterson and part-timers Lisa MacDonald and Margaret Wilcox.

In Peterborough, Robert Rudd is assistant news director at CHEX-TV to Bill Spencely and lineup editor is Mike McVeigh (formerly at CHEX radio). In Cobourg, Mike Anton (Centennial College) is on air overnight Saturdays and handles two hours of newscasting on weekdays.

In Toronto, Regis Cornale has moved into media relations with the ministry of natural resources from BN where she had reported from Queen's Park. Previously, she was with Selkirk on Parliament Hill and CKLC Kingston.

"We just don't talk shop," is how Dick Smyth of CHUM and Tom Rivers of CFTR explain how they took holidays together on the Trent Canal system. Smyth, though, sometimes talks money: his book of commentary is being re-ordered by some stores.

On the other hand, people speak in many tongues at Toronto's multilingual CHIN, where Jeanette Trigiani now is public affairs director and Giorgio Beghetto is news director.

In the Niagara area, buoyed by the success of a country music format, CHOW Welland has added some new voices, those of BN Voice, to the existing four who include Dave Zarecky. He graduated four years ago from Niagara College and advises recent graduates to "try everything you can think of" to find a spot in broadcasting.



Elsewhere in Ontario, CKCO Kitchener TV's Scan news package has a thorough look to it, thanks in part to Steve Parr in London who accepts items from bureau chiefs in Windsor, Sarnia, and Chatham that are sent by microwave, edited, and incorporated in the program. Legislative reports also are microwaved from Toronto, although material from Muskoka and the Bruce Peninsula and Haliburton areas still arrive by bus in Kitchener, a nice counterpoint to the marvels of technology.

Replacing Denise Allen at CHYM/CKGL Kitchener is Cal Johnstone (CKBB), a graduate of the University of Western Ontario. Allen and former ND Kirk Dickson now are at BN Toronto, leaving Don Gross as news director. Gone, too, is announcer Paul Godfrey, now program director at CHOK Sarnia.

Originally hired while in college by CJOY Guelph, Shawn Crockard has moved to CFTJ. He's joined in Cambridge by Ryerson graduate Joy Malbon.



Conestoga grad Scott Pettigrew now is news and sports director for *CJCS* Stratford. *CKDK* sports director Steve Young came from *CFOR* Orillia and news director in Woodstock is Kathy Hyde, who attended Mohawk College.

In London, Fanshawe graduate Liz Swan works at *CJBK*, alongside part-timer and Fanshawe student Al O'Grady. Paula Gauthier, who left Niagara's three-year program after two, provides local coverage and produces lifestyle features. Doing night news at *CKSL* is Steve Barlow, who has a radio and TV arts certificate from H.B. Secondary School — not even college level.

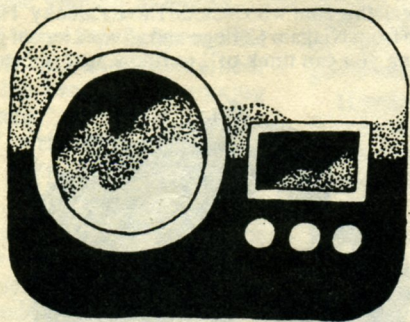
In what some people call the Sunparlour, Cathy Feldman was made ND of *CHYR* Leamington's news team of Connie Stewart (Fanshawe), Marie Pearson and Kent Moroz (Loyalist).

Still scouring the Ontario broadcast map, at *CKLY* Lindsay Carolyn Clayton directs news, Dan Blakely does sports, and Mike Brillinger handles farm copy. There have been changes in Jeff Turl's *CKNY/CHNB-TV* newsroom in North Bay, as Kathy Stackleburg became assistant news director and women's editor, while Kevin Marks reports sports and Tim Sheehy the farm news. Linda Holmes does feature interviews.

At the Lakehead, two Conestoga RTA graduates work in the *CJLB* newsroom — Andy Weiler on sports and Sue Baker on news. Another reporter there, Andrew Carter, formerly worked nights at *CJAD* Montreal.

In Manitoba, new sports director at *CFAR* Flin Flon is Danny Greenberg; Joe McCormick remains news director. Sports editor at Saskatoon's *CKOM* is Keith Terry; ND there is Pam Leyland and women's editor is Lori McNab. Moving from *CJNB* North Battleford to *CFFR* Calgary is the news director, Murray Wood. And at *CFSL* Weyburn, Doug Deegan now is ND and Dale Neufeld tends to sports; Deegan also handles the open-line show.

At *CJVR* Melfort's nine-person newsroom, Phil De Vos wants to hear any suggestions for improving BN's wire performance. As news director, he's the Saskatchewan representative on BN's national board.



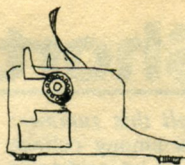
Sports director Ron St. Clair of *CKKR* Kindersley, Sask., provided play-by-play in July for the world youth baseball championships held there for teams from 11 countries. Reporter Richard Boon supplied color commentary.

When *CKGB* Timmins news director Rich Horner decided on a move, he headed for Drumheller, Alta. Replacing John Weldon as ND, he added Hal Anderson and Sue Sarjeant, a graduate of Mount Royal College. Horner previously worked at *CFOR* Orillia and *CHNR* Simcoe.

Changes at *CJPR/CJEV* in Blairmore, Alta., include John Scott Black as news director, Randy Spencer as assistant ND, and Doug Jamieson in charge of farm news. Sports editor is Chuck Barass.

In British Columbia, public affairs producer for *CFBV* in Smithers is Wayne Parkinson; assistant ND is Arthur Harndon. In Terrace, Doug Smith is news director for *CFTK-AM*, TV, and *CJFW-FM*. As with many small and medium-range stations, double duty is common at *CKNL* Fort St. John, where Wendy Taylor produces public affairs and is women's and farm editor, and news director Barry Dickson does the open-line show. At *CHTK* Prince Rupert, Norm Williams also handles the open-line chores while directing the news operation.

Finally in our broadcast *Short takes* for this issue, a change in Yellowknife, where *CJCD*'s three-person newsroom includes an assistant news director, Dave Bondy.



*With an election bearing down on us like a runaway manure truck, each meets the challenge in his own way ...* First, in and around Parliament Hill — as expected, former CBC-TV reporter Dennis Baxter has been named press secretary to Prime Minister John Turner. And *Le Droit* parliamentary reporter

Michel Gratton is the new assistant press secretary to opposition leader Brian Mulroney ... joining ex-gallery cohorts Ian Anderson (ex-*Maclean's*) and Bill Fox (ex-Toronto *Star*). Replacing Gratton as president of the Parliamentary Press Gallery is CBC radio reporter Judy Morrison.

Freelance reporter Mitchell Beer has fled the press gallery to become a consultant on native and energy-related issues. Wendy Warburton, former Queen's Park correspondent for the *Ottawa Citizen*, has returned to Ottawa to join the *Citizen* parliamentary bureau. Replacing her at Queen's Park is former *Citizen* education reporter Susan Hanna.

And elsewhere in Ottawa ... Karen McCarthy has joined the reporting staff of the *Ottawa Sunday Herald*. Meanwhile, former *Herald* reporter John Bachusky has gone to the *Calgary Sun*.

*Enterpriser* magazine, a local business mag, has suspended publication. *Ottawa Revue*, once an arts-oriented tabloid, has become a weekly broadsheet with a community focus. And Ottawa freelancers have banded together to form a new organization, Ottawa Independent Writers. President and guiding light of OIW is Clive Doucet.

And presses to the French: *L'Acadie Nouvelle*, the first French-language daily east of Quebec since *L'Évangeline* went belly-up in September, 1982, began publishing June 7. This is not the same French-language daily for which the New Brunswick government set up a \$4 million trust fund following the 1982 election. Nope. The government earmarked the \$4 million for a Moncton-based consortium which wants to publish a daily called *L'Acadien*. The proposed Moncton paper has been the victim of political cat-fighting and has yet to hit the streets. Or the presses, even. Nelson Landry is chief editor of *L'Acadie Nouvelle*, which is financed to the tune of \$400,000 from area shareholders. The new French daily, based in Caraquet, a fishing town of about 5,000 people in northeast New Brunswick, expects to up its circulation from 6,000 to about 15,000.

The 1983 Atlantic Journalism Awards were presented May 12, 1984. And the winners were: (ahem) ... For spot news in newspapers — Peter Barss, of the *Bridgewater Bulletin*, for his coverage of the grounding of the ship, *Devon III*. For spot news in radio — *CJCB/CKPE* newsroom of Sydney: Russ White, Dave Wilson, Gary Andrea, Dave LeBlanc, Peter Cotter, Paul McEachern, Don Brown, Greg McLean and Yvonne LeBlanc, for coverage of a huge blast-furnace explosion in Sydney. For spot news in TV: Sharon Hanson, of CBC-TV, Sydney, for coverage of the expulsion of the United Mine Workers union executive.

Enterprise reporting in newspapers — Ken Thomson, of Thomson Newspapers ... no, that must be wrong. Why would my notes say a thing like that? 'Scuse me ... ah, yes, here it is. Enterprise reporting in newspapers: Calvin Woodward, of The Canadian Press, Halifax, for a story marking the 25th anniversary of the Springhill mine disaster. Enterprise reporting in radio: Chris Wood, of CBC *Maritime Magazine*, for his report on gambling. Enterprise reporting in TV: Ian Parker, of CBC *Inquiry* in Halifax, for *Beyond a Reasonable Doubt*, a report on the trial of lawyer G.H. "Paddy" Fitzgerald.

Awards for commentaries, newspapers: Parker Barss Donham, for columns on the judicial system, which appeared in the *Scotia Sun*, in Port Hawkesbury, N.S. Radio commentaries: Ralph Surette, of CBC radio in Halifax, for his commentary, *Harry How's Antics as Attorney-General*. Commentaries in TV: Steve Murphy, of ATV in Halifax, for an item called *Reassessing our Politicians*.

The best magazine article award went to Harry Bruce for his tribute to the Dalhousie Law School on its 100th anniversary. The article appeared in *Atlantic Insight*. The award is not made by the Dalhousie Law School. It is donated by Imperial Oil.

Journalist of the Year award went to the aforementioned Calvin Woodward, of CP Halifax. Harry Bruce also took a National



Magazine Award in humor, for *A Domestic Fable of our Time*, which appeared in *Atlantic Insight*. Harry Thurston, a freelancer from Southampton, N.S., won a silver National Magazine Award in the science and technology category for *The Basque Connection*, which appeared in *Equinox*.

In other Atlantic business, Alexander Bruce, Atlantic region rep for PWAC, was recently appointed editor of *CityStyle*, an insert of *Atlantic Insight*. Halifax freelancer Valerie Mansour is the Atlantic rep on the board of directors of the Centre for Investigative Journalism now. And donalee (with a lower-case d) Moulton-Barrett, of Halifax, has been elected national vice-president of PWAC.

At *Atlantic Insight*, editor Marilyn MacDonald and assistant editor Marian Bruce have resigned. Bruce went to the *Montreal Gazette*.

*Atlantic Fisherman* is a new biweekly publication based in Montague, P.E.I. The editor is Sharon Fraser. And in Halifax, Walter Stewart replaced George Bain as head of the J-school at University of King's College.

In London, *Free Press* editor-in-chief William Heine took early retirement at age 64, and was replaced by William Morley.

In Windsor, long-time Windsor *Star* labor reporter Sheila McGovern came back from 10 months leave in France, where she learned to speak French as they do in France. Then she went to the *Montreal Gazette* as a general assignment reporter, where the French she learned in France may or may not do her any good. And while we're on the subject of Windsor, the *Star's* publisher, Gordon Bullock, is leaving as of Sept. 1. He will be replaced by former Brantford *Expositor* publisher James Southam Thomson. Word has it that he is related to the Southams, but not to the newspaper Thomsons. Does this mean we can call that fine paper a *Southam Thomson newspaper*? ... other new faces at the *Star* are Joanne Goslin, on the news desk, and Terry Masters, promoted from copy person.

At the Calgary *Herald*, night news editor Gary Loewen has fled to the Toronto *Globe and Mail* copy desk, and is replaced by former night editor Bob McKee. Christine Mushka, formerly of the copy desk, was named foreign news editor. Former city deskier Melanie Collision was named the new op-ed page editor, replacing Jack Spearman, who replaces McKee as night editor. And editorial page columnist Horst Heise moves to the business page, to columnize about world economic matters.

At the Brandon *Sun*, Ryerson grad Darren McGee joins the staff as a copy editor, and Greg McComb joins as agriculture reporter. Former ag reporter Hank Daniszewski left in early May to teach journalism at the University of Western Ontario.

In Montreal, Norman Provencher, once of the late *Montreal Star*, joins the business section of the *Montreal Gazette*. And Edie Austin joins the editorial staff of the *Gazette*.

In Toronto, the phenomenon of experienced politicians becoming neophyte journalists continues. This has been a tradition in Toronto since 1984, when former mayor and media whipping boy John Sewell joined the *Globe and Mail* as a municipal affairs columnist. The latest pol to directly enter the upper echelons of the Toronto media is former Metro chairman Paul Godfrey, Sewell's arch enemy, who took a job as publisher of Toronto *Sun*. In the *Globe*, he was quoted saying the *Sun* directors were not deterred by his total lack of experience in newspapers. "I know a lot about people and I know a lot about handling problems," quoth Godfrey in Canada's National Newspaper. Opportunity for the inexperienced is a wonderful thing. We now await the results of trained journalism grads applying for work at the *Sun* and saying, "Sure I'm not experienced, but, ..." Of course, the *Globe and Mail* had the right guy on hand to write an analysis of Godfrey's tenure as chairman. Sewell.

Also at the *Sun*, police reporter Gus "Fun Gus" Carlson, who worked his way into the Toronto media somewhat more slowly, via the Windsor *Star*, has left to join his father, a former publisher of the Hamilton *Spectator*, to establish a public relations firm.

Oh, remember in the last issue of *content* we said *Globe* ace writer Arthur Johnson left to join *Maclean's* as a senior writer? Well, forget it. Johnson has gone back to the *Globe*. Total time at *Maclean's*: about one month. Canada's National Newsmagazine has gained a new staff writer, in the person of one Bette Laderoute,

formerly of TV Ontario. It has lost a fine researcher, Jackie Carlos, who left to join *Canadian Business* as an associate editor. And it has also lost associate editor June Rogers, whose intended destination was not known at this writing ... but she has this column's vote for Paul Godfrey's job as metro chairperson. Not much experience in politics, but she's great at handling problems.

At the Toronto *Star*, theatre writer Gina Mallet left to do theatrical production.

## Share your news

*Short takes* is compiled by long-time broadcaster Bob Carr and freelance print journalist Dave Silburt, both based in Toronto. They're both adept at using the telephone to assemble the nuggets of information contained in this regular *content* feature. They can't do the whole task, largely for reasons of time, and yet we want *Short takes* to be as comprehensive and as current as possible, within the confines of publishing deadlines. So your contributions are welcomed. Other than items about people on the move — historically a popular element of the magazine — *Short takes* consists of information that might not, or not yet, justify longer treatment. On the broadcast front, contact: Bob Carr, 494 Richmond St. East, Toronto, Ont. M5A 1R3; telephone (416) 366-6306. For print news of any kind, contact: Dave Silburt, 2285 The Collegeway, Mississauga, Ont. L5C 2M3; telephone (416) 820-0535.

At the *Globe and Mail*, Hugh Winsor, recently of the CBC's *Journal* (and a Friend of Content) becomes the new Ottawa bureau chief on August 1, or whenever an election is called, which is probably by the time you're reading this. Reporter Bruce Little joins *Report on Business*. Gary Loewen of the Calgary *Herald* joins the sports desk as copy editor, as does Bud Jorgenson of the Vancouver *Province*. Gord MacGregor has left ROB to join the *Montreal Gazette*, and ROB assistant editor Rich Mackie has joined Prime Minister John Turner's staff, as a policy analyst. National Newspaper Award winning editorial writer Bill Thorsell joins the *Globe* from the Edmonton *Journal*. And reporter Ann Silversides takes a one-year leave of absence.

Among many changes at Southam News, senior correspondent Christopher Young and national economics editor Don McGillivray will take over writing the SN national political column, succeeding Charles Lynch, who retires in December. And the much-feared Allan Fotheringham, 1984 National Newspaper Award winner for column writing, moves to Washington as of September, to write on American affairs. Foth's acid columns will be Canada's revenge for acid rain.

Other developments: Jean-Robert Belanger, publisher of Ottawa's *Le Droit*, was elected chairman of the Canadian Daily Newspaper Publishers Association, succeeding J. Patrick O'Callaghan, publisher of the Calgary *Herald*. John Foy, formerly general manager, is now president. Tom Crowther, publisher of the Fredericton *Gleaner*, is chairman-elect and Sandy Baird, of the Kitchener-Waterloo *Record*, is vice-chairman and treasurer.

From the It's A Crime department: Toronto journalists Michael Enright, editor of *Quest*, Marq de Villiers, editor of *Toronto Life*, Don Obe, chairman of Ryerson's school of journalism, CBC's Peter Gzowski, and the *Globe and Mail's* Geoffrey Stevens and Paul Palango have signed a petition seeking a federal combines investigation over *Globe* sports writers being stripped of normal press access to Maple Leaf Gardens, contrary to NHL rules. The beef names the Gardens, the NHL, the Maple Leafs and Harold Ballard, and arises from Ballard's actions against the *Globe*, the result of the newspaper's having the temerity to publish stories about the Leafs that Mr. Ballard did not like.

And in Vancouver, *Maturity* magazine, aimed at people over 50, will be published bi-monthly as of September. It will be distributed through banks and drug stores.





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