

BORN AGAIN BIRD

FROM PAGE ONE

the world provides a necessary forum for the exchange, analysis, understanding and argument of issues and ideas that are at the base of any culture or society. The goals of the Times Eagle are in miniature the same as are debated everywhere on earth; to assist in the eradication of sexism, racism, poverty and war. These are the true horsemen of death; they are human diseases which are infected upon each other. Yet there is a fifth rider, a scribe, a scribbler who documents the dooms and glooms, the perversities and horrors of our busy, illtempered species.

Any attempt to understand the born again bird must begin with its original mother, Robert Stanley Need, who came to the Oregon coast from the U.S. Air Force and the Viet Nam War. His name was its own metaphor; his great need was to speak out against the lies most of the rest of us pursue as truths. He would be a Diogenes simply because most others preferred darkness. He and another veteran began publishing the original Times Eagle in the spring of 1971. Almost immediately the paper was in hot water and Need was receiving threats against his person. His partner, who had a family, withdrew from the paper because of the threats.

Need published the Times Eagle every week for four years, until another friend, one he had asked for help, betrayed him and forced him out. During those years he developed one of the finest, most honest newspapers in the country. The Times Eagle never made much money, never enough to pay the volunteer staff or the rent, and its readership never exceeded five thousand; yet that five thousand was spread across the earth. He took great risks. He was not afraid of being considered a fool, and he never played it safe. He was a raw independent who believed passionately in the First Amendment. And he was aided by a revolving staff, mostly young, mostly idealistic, who virtually slaved under his imperial mien and who left only when their brains burned out or their bodies demanded sustenance. More than once he was left alone to get the newspaper out on the street by himself. Finally he too burned out, and a year after he was ruthlessly shoved aside, the old Eagle died.

Three years after its death the Times Eagle was resurrected by a former editor who had spent six months sleeping on the newsroom floor. The first edition of the born again bird appeared on the tenth anniversary of humanity's first walk on the moon. The revived Eagle's reach has not been so lofty. Determined, as was its predecessor, to present information and ideas that generally make people uncomfortable, the paper has grown slowly in its attempt to recover ground lost by the old Eagle's death. Its circulation is limited to counter sales in small groceries, second-hand stores, motels, taverns and newstands from Astoria to Newport and into the interior — and from out of the current publisher's car, which was donated by a close friend. Application for a second class mailing permit, which would allow subscriptions, would cost in excess of a hundred dollars: eventually, after its

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PORTRAIT OF PUBLISHER



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other debts are under control, the Times Eagle will apply for the permit. Like its progenitor and the great majority of its peers and ancestors, the Times Eagle is a member of what might be termed the poverty press.

There is much the Times Eagle has not done. Even a partial list of the critical issues the paper has not yet examined or taken a stand on would fill the current edition. Several we have let slip past; others we were mistaken about. We will try to do better this next year.

If there is a single goal of the born again bird, it is to continue the independent thought and style that was never lacking in its first mother, Robert Stanley Need.

— Michael Paul McCusker



**The North Coast
TIMES EAGLE**

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The Radical Writer of The Birdland Rag

(to the tune of "The Bugler Boy of Company B.")

Dedicated to small First Amendment-type presses throughout the world.

We've got a writer down here, and he's quite a guy,
He's got the darkest of the news to zap you and I.
He'll tell you all the ghastly stuff you'd rather not have.
Oh well, it's plain to see,
He writes for you and me,
He's the radical writer of the Birdland Rag.

Now if you're confused about the nukes,
Or if your man's too macho,
Or whether maybe rights are wrong
for draftees, vets, and ammo,
Just turn to page four,
He'll show you the score.
Oh well, it's plain to see,
He writes for you and me,
He's the Radical Writer of the Birdland Rag.

He fights for the folks,
and shuns all the bad,
The state of the world has made him mad.
He'll show you what you're made of,
So you better not lag.
Oh well, it's plain to see,
He writes for you and me,
He's the Radical Writer of the Birdland Rag.

Our conscience is troubled and his conscience is clear.
Action's worth a thousand words, so open your ear.
Read his paper when you can, it's not in the bag.
Yes, it's plain to see,
He writes for you and me,
He's the Radical Writer of the Birdland Rag.

— Judith A. Osborne
(from the Cannon Beach Connection production "Birdland," sung by the Andrews Brothers, Chad Lerma, David Miottel, and Josh and Brian Stoller)