



THE EAGLE HAS LANDED

FROM PAGE ONE

THE ONLY CORPSE SUCCESSFULLY REVIVED IN RECORDED HISTORY WAS THAT OF LAZARUS, WHO WAS SAID TO HAVE LIVED FOR SEVERAL YEARS AFTERWARD. JESUS CHRIST IS REPORTED TO HAVE ARISEN FROM THE DEAD, BUT EVEN THE MOST ARDENT SUPPORTERS OF HIS RESURRECTION ADMIT HE WAS ON EARTH ONLY FORTY DAYS; AND JONAH WAS STILL ALIVE WHEN THE WHALE SPIT HIM ASHORE. COUNTLESS OTHER CLAIMS OF RESURRECTION OR REBIRTH HAVE BEEN MADE, NOT LEAST AMONG THEM COUNT DRACULA AND RICHARD NIXON. WITH SUCH INSPIRED PRECEDENT, THE NORTH COAST TIMES EAGLE IS BORN AGAIN.

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office or on the publisher's lumpy couch, and subsisted on canned chili, spaghetti and cheap red wine. When Mr. Need's faithless friend engineered his removal and took over as publisher I resigned.

I revived the NCTE after it laid dead three years. I thought it had died prematurely, like a murdered child. Its restless ghost caught up with me on the island of Guam and snapped me back to Oregon like an overstretched umbilical cord. I chopped wood, cleaned motel rooms, hauled garbage and borrowed money from skeptical friends to get the first issue of the Born Again Bird off the press, and I have kept it barely afloat the past decade on dirty dishwater as a restaurant pearldiver, as a frycook burning burgers for the masses, pouring beer and wine in shoreside taverns, selling tickets at a museum, swabbing floors and cleaning taverns. A journalist's life.

The NCTE is a member of the Poverty Press. It is one of a few small presses obsessed with a vision unaffected by commerce. It is descended from radical newspapers that blossomed briefly in the 1950s and 1960s, but its lineage threads back to the prickly press that fostered the First Amendment, which denies government or anyone else the right to interfere with freedom of speech. The independent advocacy press has few pretensions toward objectivity and fewer illusions about its probability. Most small independent journals are understaffed, underfunded and generally misunderstood because they seldom reflect popular opinion. They act, often myopically and insensitively, as consciences and torchbearers, and most of them are fierce

and shrill advocates of large or esoteric causes. They are usually on hard times and fail more often than they are replaced. A very good one, MANAS, folded this year after almost forty years of publishing.

Yet more than two thousand low-profile publications constitute what is considered the alternative press — and perhaps half as many independent listener-sponsored radio stations such as KBOO in Portland and KMUN in Astoria — and they operate on the cutting edge of political, environmental, cultural and ideological issues, providing fresh ideas and insights that megamedia, initially reluctant to jeopardize its profits by espousing change or radical concepts, later trumpets when some of the ideas begin to catch on. Sometimes a small limited distribution publication can reach into the heart of the nation. I. F. Stone's Weekly, for example, profoundly influenced a generation opposed to racism and a vicious war. (I. F. Stone died last month at the age of eighty-one. He was perhaps the greatest American journalist.) Without an independent press journalism is hardly more than a useful method of misleading the public, of providing illusions and deceptions to thwart public response to the chicaneries and jingoism of the equestrian class who regard themselves as the nation's lords and ladies.

The Born Again Bird has flown on improvising wings since it was raised out of the crypt yet it has a growing readership and most of its advertisers have stayed with it despite no evidence of making a nickle. It has sought to display or publish the works of artists, poets and writers who live on the coast and inland,

and its readers submit a large portion of its articles. It is a newspaper that some people think is necessary, though they do not always regard it with rapture. It is a polemic laden with doom and gloom, which prompted one reader to ask if it served any purpose if its readers were in such despair after reading an issue they considered suicide.

I seldom know the effect the Times Eagle has on people who read it. It begins a life outside my presence or knowledge after it is printed. My part in its life is finished after the press run of each issue except for distributing to small towns on the Oregon coast; to bars, restaurants, markets, motels and bookstores where it is sold over the counter; by UPS to towns farther down the coast or to inland cities; and among friends. Sometimes someone tells me that the newspapers means something to them and they might describe a complex circulation of each issue among family and friends. Teachers say they use the paper in their classes. Its articles are often read on radio stations or reprinted in other publications.

Printing an unprofitable newspaper of limited interest and circulation at the beginning of a post-literate era can be frustrating and perhaps only slightly justified because it comes from the heart. The NCTE has yet to breakeven on a single issue, a ten year record which surely must be worth a catagory in Guinness. But enough of money. It is the Eagle's blood, not its heart. Profit and loss are mechanical processes, like digestion. What matters is if the Born Again Bird is not



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