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FREEDOM AND YOUR NEWSPAPER

Of the many factors that shape the minds of men, it is a newspaper, coming with periodic regularity, that is potentially the most forceful. Accepted into a home as a reliable source of information, a newspaper may reward its readers by the facts that it discloses. Of critical importance, however, is the confidence with which it is received. Out of this fact stems the strength of a publication.

In the United States, there is a largely unfettered press, which goes about its business of disseminating news unafraid of the heavy hand of censorship. By constitutional right, no ban nor official reprisal can effectively muzzle the press in its determination to print the truth.

Certainly, if there is a censorship of news in this land (and the question is well-debatable) it is in the policy and selectivity of the individual paper itself. There is no agency of government nor combination of private interests that can effectively handcuff the nation's press and still its report on any local or national issue.

Let it not be assumed, of course, that there are no attempts made in this direction. Certainly there are forces which would jump to the chance of doing so. But by the influence of numbers and the national traditions, they get short shift.

Nowhere in the world is there a more complete freedom of the press than here. Except for the principles of good taste and the laws of libel, a person or a corporation is without restriction as to what can appear in print.

A grave responsibility goes with this freedom. The price of liberty is eternal vigilance and a newspaper must discipline itself to the standards of an unbiased, unprejudiced presentation of news if it would help maintain its professional status quo.

These are tumultuous times, not yet recovered from the effects of the last World War, in which a free flow of news has dramatic effect in world opinion. How lamentable that in other nations the truth must be bent to conform to political convenience!

The propaganda power of the press, whether it is in the hands of an absolute government or an absolute special interest, is effective only where an opposition voice is stifled. Surely the emasculation of rights and the perversion of liberties will be as difficult as the faithfulness with which an opposition voice is tolerated.

An enlightened public opinion in some degree polices the newspaper industry. Without the confidence of its readers, no publication will go very far... very long. It is this factor, recognized by newspapers, that works a powerful influence upon the policy of news and editorial presentation.

From October 1 to October 8, this year, the newspaper industry observes its tenth annual week with a slogan "Freedom Goes Where the Newspaper Goes." Might it also be noted that a newspaper is largely accepted by a free people in the degree that freedom permits the press to speak boldly and honestly on matters of significance.

The constitutional guarantees of free speech, press and assembly becomes a strength and a bulwark when it is translated in terms of the American Press.

ATOM BOMB BALANCE

The news was given in solemn pronouncement by President Harry S. Truman and, as when a weighty rock is dropped into a placid pool, the ripples reach far.

Practically every daily paper emblazoned the news in large, bold headlines. Radio newscasters tied their tongues in knots vociferating the alarming revelation. News, analysts and commentators turned the situation over and over, on its side and upside down, exposing all possible views to interpretation.

To the man in the street or the housewife in range of her radio set, the cataclysmic development was that the United States had discovered that Soviet Russia had the Atom Bomb!

Forces of communication and information went a long way to properly impress—in fact din into the ears of the public this significant news. And well they might, for if ever there was a significant matter this might well be it.

There has been enough hubbub and hubbaloos over the atom bomb to make one growingly weary of it. So radical a departure from the traditional American feeling has been the undisguised atom-bomb diplo-

macy marking a portion of our foreign policy as to cause an uneasiness among those who will be called upon to suffer the next world war as a combatant or a civilian casualty.

Make no doubt about it, the atom bomb is a responsibility. It is a departure in warfare of far-reaching possibilities and could spell the doom of civilization at the same time it could demonstrate power superiority. With only nine atomic explosions recorded so far, there yet are few the world over which do not read the terrible, frightening aspects of its development and refinement.

Atomic knowledge, to be sure, ranks with the power of Samson of Biblical fame. In the hands of overambitious zealots only intent upon their own domination of the world, it would wreak havoc without parallel and perhaps put the world down in the process. But in the hands of anyone, following human instinct, it could be (as it has been) held as a threat of extinction as reprisal.

So, the news of Russia having achieved the atomic bomb manufacture might just possibly have a healthy effect toward future peace. The atomic explosion mysteriously recorded and revealed by the President of the United States, must certainly have devastated the area in which it was detonated. Surely, if they knew it not before, the Soviets had graphic illustration of the destruction one bomb could occasion. And by the same supposition, they can but realize that nothing would finally be gained or proved by unlimited atomic warfare.

The Russians, it has been amply pointed out by commentators beyond number, are politically ambitious. And they are the most commonly accepted foes to "Western Democracy", which in truth represents all shades of government.

Likewise, it is impossible to gainsay there is the vigorous seed of international ambition in our own United States. It would not be too far-fetched to observe that the powers of government, if they were to fall into the absolute hands of some, would predicate a most unusual career of political ambition.

There is some hope to those who abhor the thoughts of the next world holocaust in the fact that Russia has the atom bomb in the possibility that they can but recognize the terrible aspects of this weapon. Perhaps this will equalize the two nations which have figuratively been at each other's throats practically at the end of World War II.

Perhaps it will prove to be the atomic bomb balance which will lead the way to a golden era of peace and world prosperity.

PEOPLE PEOPLE ELECT

In the people people elect, there is a shining example of the simple faith that humans invest in other humans.

No matter the political office nor the degree of eminence, the vote that is cast for any candidate should be considered a testimony of confidence as high as can be given.

How scoundrels sneak into office and then have the gall and effronit to command the respect and confidence of the electorate they have bamboozled and defrauded is one of the unhappy features of the democratic processes.

If a man is of any worth, he should have honor and some degree of humility. Particularly should these qualities show up when a man accepts a position of public trust. Arrogance, pomposity, swank and swagger should not be the mark of an elected official.

Yet, sometimes, it is nothing less than amazing to regard some of the people that people vote for. Sometimes a vote is influenced by a family tradition of party affiliation—like being a Republican or a Democrat because one's forefathers had cast a straight party ballot from the dim beginnings of the affiliation. As backward, too, is the refusal to vote for a candidate because he is listed in a certain party, regardless of his other qualifications.

No doubt, the slipshod choice of some candidates results from the inability of a political party to police its candidates, to deny them the party label if they are not qualified by certain minimum standards.

It must be recognized, in all fairness, that sometimes the honest and sincere candidate is less flashy and at a disadvantage when opposed by one who holds truth lightly and can fabricate with ease the most believable fiction. Much of the responsibility for the wrong men in office must be assumed by candidates who fail to make a valiant enough effort to get themselves elected.

In the end, the ones who pay are those defrauded by the people people elect.

WANTS NO PART OF IT

Certain unfortunate countries deny their newspapers and their citizens the right to give and receive this vital service (freedom of the press).

"I, personally, would want no part of the life of those countries."

Douglas McKay, Governor.

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 1ST IS THE DAY!

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