

NY Ban On Pre-Trial News Said Against Free Press

By STERLIN F. GREEN

WASHINGTON (AP)—The nation's editors were told today that proposals before the New York State Bar Assn. to ban the release of pre-trial information on criminal cases would jeopardize both freedom of the press and the right of fair trial.

Robert C. Notson, managing editor of the Morning Oregonian, Portland, arranged to report on the New York proposal to the American Society of Newspaper Editors as the group neared the close of its three-day annual meeting here.

Notson attacked the proposal, in the current issue of the Society's Bulletin, as a "regression in Democratic process" which "should be resisted by every citizen who believes in free institutions, including members of the bar."

The ASNE Committee on Freedom of Information yesterday listed the New York lawyers' resolution among recent developments in several states, which, the committee charged, threatened "the people's access to their courts."

Notson said the alleged justification for the clampdown proposal is to prevent "trial by newspaper."

This, the Oregon editor declared, is a "badly overworked smear phrase, frequently the alibi for losing counsel."

Actually, Notson said, "investigations of newspapermen and their cooperation with law enforcement officers have resulted many times in the conviction of the guilty and the freeing of the innocent."

Without public knowledge of the evidence and the investigation, he added, the public cannot judge the work of its law enforcement officers, prosecutors and judges.

"Such a law as that now proposed could be very useful to arbitrary, stupid and corrupt officials in evading a proper accounting for their acts," Notson said.

CLAMPDOWN

On the closing-day agenda the Society listed the election of a new president, shop-talk sessions ranging from slanted writing to newspaper coverage of the trial, a luncheon speech by Robert H. Winters, Canadian minister of public works, and a dinner address by former President Herbert Hoover.

In keeping with its tradition of naming its first vice president to the presidency, the editors were expected to elect James S. Pope of the Louisville Courier-Journal as their new president, succeeding Basil L. Walters, Chicago, executive editor of the Knight Newspapers.

Five members were elected yesterday to the ASNE Board of Directors. Two of them—Managing Editor Stuart P. Barnett of the Cleveland Plaindealer and Editor Virginia Dabney of the Richmond Times-Dispatch—were reelected to the board.

DIRECTORS

Newly-elected directors were Carl E. Lindstrom, managing editor of the Hartford (Conn.) Times; Walter Lister, managing editor of the Philadelphia Bulletin; and Michael Gorman, editor of the Flint (Mich.) Journal.

Coleman Harwell of the Nashville Tennessean told the editors why Nashville's two dailies, the Tennessean and the Banner, have stopped printing daily television and radio listings. The answer, he said, is that daily logs cost much money and effort—outlays which properly are "the responsibility of the TV and radio stations themselves."

It does not make sense, Harwell suggested, that newspapers provide gratis the listing of programs for which the broadcasters "are paid by commercial establishments from advertising appropriations for which these same newspapers are competing."

RADIO LISTINGS

Nashville broadcasters rejected a proposal of the newspapers, he said, that the stations share the cost of the listing at considerably less than regular advertising rates "and in fact at less than it costs the papers to print them." The

CRUSADE

LONDON (AP)—Billy Graham, the American evangelist on a religious crusade in Britain, is telling Britons in a series of fervent sermons the only defense against the hydrogen bomb is a deep faith in Christ.

The H-bomb and the anxieties it has aroused have been the theme of many of Graham's talks before the vast crowds that continue to gather to hear him at London's Harringay Arena.

stations declared in a formal statement they considered the publication to be the responsibility of

The newspapers accordingly dropped the listings Jan. 17, Har-

well said. Since then they have received 320 telephone calls and seven letters, and lost 76 sub-

scribers. The daily editions have not lost circulation. Harwell reported, and the Sunday Tennessean has increased its subscription list by 5,960.

Meantime he said the radio-TV logs are being carried in a weekly legal newspaper, in the papers of

smaller towns around Nashville, in newly established radio-TV guides, and in leaflets given away by program sponsors mostly at grocery stores. He said the broadcasters rejected a proposal from one advertiser that he carry the listings in newspapers at his own expense,

at regular advertising rates. "When it comes to news on the air—such as a presidential speech or the McCarthy-Stevens hearing—of course we print them," Harwell said. "But the routine listings are something else again."

have Audrey Hepburn or Jimmy Stewart on their screens, they pay to announce the fact in the papers. "Then why should papers tell the public for free where they can find it?—a lot find, which is often more important — Arthur Godfrey of Liberate?"

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