

# Newspapers Unite If Cause Concerns Press Freedom

By BERNARD GAVZER  
AP Newsfeatures Writer

Today's newspapers may differ sharply on political issues, domestic problems, international affairs — but there's one area in which most would quickly join hands to fight a common cause. That is when they sense some action that abridges freedom of the press.

Newspapers have frequently expressed alarm at the manner in which some states and some government agencies restrict access to information. Reporters have been shut off from what they believe is public news by closed doors of government bodies.

But when the wall of secrecy is breached and the news published, at least the editors and publishers can feel safe that they will not be thrown in jail.

A newspaper which criticizes the government — whether it be the person of the President or the chairman of a local water board — can do so without fearing reprisals. Such was not the case from almost the moment the first American newspaper, Public Occurrences, was published in Boston in 1689 by Benjamin Harris. The paper was suppressed after one issue, not because of libel, but because of the truth. Harris' report describing Indian allies as "miserable savages" was taken as criticism of colonial policy.

The most significant milestone on the road to press freedom was reached in the case involving John Peter Zenger, a German immigrant.

Publishing the New York Journal, Zenger attacked William Cosby, governor of New York, and subsequently was charged with "scandalous, virulent and seditious reflections upon the government." When the grand jury refused to return a true bill, and the New York Assembly refused to take separate action, Cosby prodded his council into taking action. Zenger was brought to trial in 1735 on a reduced charge of "raising sedition."

Two defense attorneys who disputed the warrant against Zenger were disbarred, and the court appointed a defense counsel. But at the moment of the trial, Philadelphia lawyer Andrew Hamilton, entered the picture as counsel for Zenger.

He took a dramatic step by stating that the defense did not deny publication of the critical articles. His argument was that it is not libel to print the truth.

The jury responded to this argument and freed Zenger. Thus, one of the great steps toward press freedom was accomplished.

An equally big slide involved another Hamilton — Alexander. This was in the celebrated case involving Hazy Crosswell, editor of "The Wasp," a Federalist paper published at Hudson, N.Y. The paper was aptly named because Crosswell managed to sting many a foe.

He was indicted in 1804 and found guilty. Appealing the verdict, he again went to trial, this time with Hamilton defending. Like Andrew Hamilton, Alexander argued that the truth and truth alone was a defense in a libel action.

He stated that the press had "the right of publish with impunity the truth, with good motives, for justifiable ends, though reflecting on government, magistracy, or individuals."

Following the case, new laws were passed using Hamilton's formula. Additionally, the laws stated that the jury had the right to determine both the law and the fact. These laws served as the model for the press guarantees of many state constitutions.

Prior to the Crosswell case — during a period some historians have called the "Dark Ages of Journalism"—there was a political and journalistic battle between the Federalists and anti-Federalists. So scurrilous were attacks by anti-Federalists, the Alien and Sedition Acts were passed.

The Sedition Act, directed against journalistic spokesmen of the anti-Federalists, stated in part "that if any person shall write, utter or publish . . . any false, scandalous and malicious writing . . . against the government of the United States, or either house of the Congress . . . or the said President . . . or to excite against them the hatred of the good people of the United States . . . or to resist or oppose, or defeat any such law . . . shall be punished by a fine not exceeding \$2,000, and by imprisonment not exceeding two years."

The weakness in the act lay in its administration, but some historians have interpreted it as really setting down legally for the first time the defense stated in the Zenger trial. The law did not forbid criticism of the government, it only attempted to curb malicious and false statements published to defame officials. But because of the way authorities abused it, the law was permitted to lapse after its two-year limit.

To many authorities, the battle flag in the crusade for press freedom was first raised in England by poet John Milton, in his speech to Parliament in 1644. The speech, "Areopagitica," was an argument for the right to express himself in print without having that expression approved in advance. It was essentially a cry against censorship.

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# Right Hotel; Wrong City

ST. LOUIS, Mo. (AP)—Allen S. Pruett, police chief and marshal of suburban Bellefontaine Neighbors, had been looking forward to a National Safety Council meeting ever since he and alderman Bernard Ploch were authorized to attend.

Pruett called Ploch Monday to remind him of the meeting, then went to the Congress Hotel in St. Louis. The hotel clerk insisted no National Safety Council was meeting there.

The marshal called the city clerk to double-check the invitation to the meeting. It was at the Congress Hotel all right—in Chicago.

Pruett said sadly: "I tried to get in touch with Ploch but couldn't reach him in time for us to take a jet plane to Chicago."

# Bystander Raps Driver Educator

CLINTON, Mo. (AP)—Carl Sexton, driver educator instructor in the Clinton schools, took two boys and two girls out for a lesson in changing tires.

They stopped in a residential section when it was one of the girl's turn to change a tire. While the girl toiled, there came an indignant woman's voice from a nearby house:

"It seems to me that you men could at least help that girl instead of just standing around."

COULD BE TRUE  
COLUMBUS, Ohio (AP)—"If the boy friend invites you up to see his etchings," the Ohio State University student newspaper told coeds, "he may be telling the truth." The article explained that students have been renting graphic prints from the College of Fine Arts to keep in their rooms or apartments.

# Rosary Set For Lanza

HOLLYWOOD (AP)—Friends here will pay final respects to Mario Lanza at services today and Wednesday at Blessed Sacrament Roman Catholic Church.

The Rosary will be recited for the tenor at 8 p.m. today and a Solemn Requiem Mass will be celebrated at 10 a.m. Wednesday.

The 36-year-old film star died in Rome Oct. 7 of a heart attack. His funeral there attracted thousands. Other throngs filed past his glass-enclosed casket Saturday in South Philadelphia, where Lanza once attended church.

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# "DENNIS THE MENACE"



... I SAID PUT YOUR MOTHER ON THE PHONE! WHAT? YES, I'M STILL MAD AT YOU! HELLO? DENNIS? DENNIS!...

# Brother Asks Delegates To Plead Cause Of Lama

By TOM HOGGE  
UNITED NATIONS, N.Y. (AP)—A young man who looks more at home in an English suit than the monastic robe he occasionally wears is buttonholing U.N. delegates to plead the cause of his brother—Tibet's Dalai Lama.

Gyalo Thondup, 31-year-old emissary for the exiled Dalai Lama, bears little resemblance to the quaintly garbed holy men one usually associates with Tibet.

Smooth and immaculate, he mingles easily at receptions, sips aperitifs and converses in good English.

Representing him are a public relations firm and Ernest Gross, an international lawyer. Thondup and his party are at the Waldorf Astoria Hotel. They have been feigning the press with luncheons featuring such delicacies as duck with wild rice.

Representatives of Thondup say the bill for all this is being footed by the Dalai Lama's exiled government. They hint that the ruler managed to take considerable money on his flight from Lhasa to India last spring.

Thondup appears to be a dedicated crusader for his oppressed land. He feels it is the duty of the U.N. to see that a peaceful solution is reached somehow between Tibet and Red China. He has indicated he would like to see the assembly set up a U.N. commission to restore conditions that existed before 1950, when Tibet was a sovereign state linked to both India and China.

Thondup is openly distressed at the reluctance of some Asian nations to help his brother's cause, but he says he realizes that countries bordering on Red China hesitate to give outward support for fear of endangering their own position.

Actually Thondup's knowledge of recent events in his land is second hand. Fearing for his life after the Red Chinese occupied Lhasa, Thondup went to India in 1952. He spent the seven years there as a student and unofficial liaison between India and Tibet.

Before the Communists seized power on the Chinese mainland in 1949, Thondup was a student in China and married a Chinese girl. They have three children.

# Starving Deer To Receive Aid

MIAMI, Fla. (AP)—Deer facing starvation because of high water in the Everglades are going to get 50 bales of hay and 10 bags of carrots.

A caravan of eight air boats will make the journey into the Everglades Thursday. Air boats are flat-bottomed, powered by airplane or automobile engines and equipped with propellers so they can glide over shallow water.

Miami clubs provided the food for the deer and the Air Boat Assn. of Florida will distribute it.

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