

# Editors constantly strive to improve newspapers

**EDITOR'S NOTE:** The following story was written by Richard D. Smyser, editor of the Oak Ridge, Tenn., Oak Ridge and president of the Associated Press Managing Editors Association, in recognition of Newspaper Week, Oct. 6-12.

By **RICHARD D. SMYSER**  
President, APME

Don Carter of Macon, Ga., says newspapers should carry more columns of opinion.

Wendell Philippi of Indianapolis, Ind., wants more weather news.

Robert Haiman of St. Petersburg, Fla., wants better weather maps.

John Leard of Richmond, Va., thinks there should be a rather thorough evaluation of

the press role in Watergate.

Barclay Jameson of Grand Junction, Colo., believes that the press quotes too many unnamed "sources."

Richard Tuttle of Rochester, N.Y., asks: "Really now, should a national wirephoto network carry pictures of Australian bathing beauties?"

John Quinn, also of Rochester, N.Y., thinks editors ought to get closer to their readers.

Carter, Philippi, Haiman, Leard, Jameson, Tuttle and Quinn are all stern critics of don't have to be the shootout type. Questioning can be civil and positive and still dig out useful information, he says.

So are Robert Duncan of Honolulu, Hawaii; Joe Shquist of Milwaukee, Wis.; Robert Clark of Louisville, Ky., and Larry Jinks of Miami, Fla.

Duncan says there is too

much news about things that

happen back East and not enough about what happens out West.

Shquist worries about golf and tennis tournaments and automobile races that are named for commercial sponsors, thereby making for free advertising.

Clark feels that newspapers that presume to judge others should clean their own houses — not accept free trips and tickets.

Jinks thinks all questions at presidential press conferences

don't have to be the shootout type. Questioning can be civil and positive and still dig out useful information, he says.

Then there's Wes Gallagher of Rye, N.Y. He believes people have, of necessity, "turned inward." This makes them more

concerned with news of their own communities.

And Lou Boccardi of New York City, who says that newspapers must give readers the fullest possible information about "the three F's" — food, fuel and finance.

Also with some strong feelings about what newspapers should do are:

Tom Fesperman of Charlotte, N.C., who says he is sick and tired of so much news coming out of Washington and New York. Things are happening in the small towns, too.

Jenk Jones, Jr. of Tulsa, Okla., who believes news of Canada and Mexico, our closest international neighbors, is neglected.

And Reg Murphy of Atlanta.

Ga., who thinks newspapers

should take a new look at the way they handle crime news.

Nor is all of the criticism negative. John McMillan of Huntington, W.Va., thinks that

The Associated Press did a spectacularly good job covering the week-long events that led up to President Nixon's resignation.

Critics of newspapers abound. They are in all cities and states. No matter what sort of job or economic level, they care about how their newspaper performs and they say so.

The newspaper critics quoted here, however, all have something in common. They are all newspaper editors or Associated Press executives.

Their comments listed here

have all been stated in the correspondence, in the formal reports and at the meetings of the Associated Press Managing Editors Association during the past year. The APME is a national editors group that works toward better newspapers and a better Associated Press news service.

APME operates a yearling critique. This year its committees studied different aspects of newspaper content. Hundreds of letters were exchanged, scores of questionnaires filled out, tens of reports filed and numerous small and large meetings held.

John Leard and Barclay Jameson, two of those quoted above, have been in charge of

these committee studies. A lot

of the others quoted have been their committee chairmen.

As they assess their own performance and the performance of The Associated Press day by day and even hour by hour — there are a lot of telephone calls by editors to AP headquarters in New York — these editors worry whether the public fully understands what editors believe to be the role of the press.

One of the big things that editors believe they must do to increase public understanding is to tell the public more about their policies and practices.

One of the most universal policies and practices of newspaper and news service people is self-criticism.

## JOURNAL GAZETTE

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## Editorial Opinion

### Energy self-sufficiency far off

At the height of the energy shortage caused in part by the Arab Countries boycott, a goal of energy self-sufficiency by 1980 was hoped for.

Due to many factors this goal now seems very unrealistic and self-sufficiency cannot be hoped for until much later in the decade, if then.

Oil companies which are spending a great chunk of their record profits in exploration are not finding enough oil to offset the production decline which has been going on since the 1970 peak.

Daily production in that year was 95 million barrels per day. A few weeks ago an United States production was only 10 million barrels per day.

Oil from Alaska will not begin to flow in the pipeline until 1977. And knowledgeable oil men say this will perpetuate the production figures for awhile but will not stop the decline over the long term.

Part of the lag in oil production may be due to a two-level pricing structure in which new fields can bear a price of \$10 per barrel, the world price, but older fields can charge only \$5.25 per barrel, except that the world price may be charged for oil produced beyond the wells level of previous production.

Since secondary production from older fields is of lesser volume than in a new field, it is understandable that oil companies are putting the bulk of their development money into the new fields, at the neglect of older ones.

This is another example of how artificial price controls in the marketplace can contribute to shortages and prevent full production.

It was not expected, of course, that new exploration would tilt the scales

of oil production in a miraculous manner. In addition to the great amounts of money it takes to discover new oil and to divert it into a steady stream of pipeline oil it also can take a long time.

In the meantime the rest of the energy picture is being frustrated and delayed by environmental and ecological considerations.

Western strip mining would probably be the most productive method of mining the coal the nation needs. But this is being delayed and hampered by environmental considerations and site reclamation.

The miner's union took a memorial "week of idleness" ostensibly to request safety practices and to dramatize the plight of miners with black lung.

Coal operators, however, say that there was a secondary motive of reducing coal supplies above ground prior to operator-union negotiations.

The unions will be in a better bargaining position if mined coal reserves are low in the event of a strike.

And in spite of a report showing danger of nuclear generating plants releasing harmful radioactivity is about as remote as being hit with lightning, we are delaying the construction of new plants.

It is conceivable that safety precautions at nuclear plants should be elaborate and detailed. However, even when this criterion is met the ecological fight will still go on.

We will achieve energy self-sufficiency only by reasonable compromise between the need for energy and preservation of the environment.

Otherwise self-sufficiency may be a very long way ahead.

## Glancing back

30 years ago today (1944)

**EN ROUTE WITH GEN. DAWES** — Gen. Charles G. Dawes moved on through Minnesota today carrying an appeal to the women voters of the northwest to rally to the attack on Sen. Robert M. La Follette and his Progressive platform, which he help up as a menace to "women's newly acquired right to suffrage."

**SPRINGFIELD, Ill.** — The Illinois Commerce Commission began another series of hearings today on applications for authority to operate motor bus lines over the new paved roads of the state.

**BERLIN** — The East German republic — Russia's newest satellite — was proclaimed today under the leadership of German Communists.

**THE AMERICAN Legion** post voted at its meeting to sponsor a milk and Graham cracker program at Grant Park School, Commander Hiram Brausa reported today.

**PITTSBURGH** — The nation's week-old steel strike today was just where it started but the government is making an effort to solve the three-week-old coal walkout.

**WASHINGTON, D.C.** — Admiral Arthur W. Radford told Congress today that concentrating American military strength in the air forces B-36 bomber is "a bad gamble with national security."

He labelled the Air Force fleet of B-36 bombers a "billion dollar blunder" that will be "helpless defensively and inadequate off-

ensively" in an atomic war.

Fourteen reports given at a meeting of the Hospital Building Committee Thursday evening indicated a strong difference of opinion in various parts of the country in regard to whether the public wishes to build a district hospital and finance it with an increase in taxes to the tune of 10 cents on each \$100 of assessed valuation.

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## Leaders fearful of economy

By Rowland Evans and Robert Novak

**WASHINGTON** — Behind President Ford's tough new line on international oil prices is a grim reassessment by his top advisers that economic catastrophe in the Western world is threatened within the next four months.

In public and even in some private meetings of administration officials, the President's economic policymakers still stick to the old refrain that the economy is sluggish and in danger merely of mild recession accompanied by inflation. But they now privately concede the possibility of much worse — a drastic business decline with depression-level unemployment — thanks largely to the traumatic impact on the West of wildly rising oil prices.

That's why Secretary of State Henry Kissinger abruptly shifted to a hard line against the oil-producing nations. That's also why Mr. Ford has switched gears and now wants some economic proposals put forth quickly instead of waiting for next year's budget. But that's also why a mood of futility, pessimism and downright fear has spread from the business community into the upper reaches of the administration.

Administration officials are now seeking a viable plan to back up strong words from the President and the Secretary of State. But there is total pessimism; nobody here believes the oil-producing nations will back down any time soon. And unless they do, neither rhetoric coming out of the economic summit conference nor new programs by the President can protect the economy.

The administration's view seemed much different even to insiders no more than two weeks ago. Mr. Ford then seemed to have inherited intact the Micawberism of the Nixon administration, refusing to either admit the danger of catastrophe or to hurry any change in policy.

But realism has taken hold. Top administration officials now privately admit the possibility of the "worst case" that has been prophesied by economists inside and outside the government: the skyrocketing escalation of energy costs will generate critical bank failures in Western Europe, which will spread to American banks and American businesses bringing a flash-fire business decline with unemployment quickly exceeding 10 per cent.

Everybody agrees that no protection from this menace, temporary or permanent, is possible without lowering international oil prices. But the overnight shift to a hard line warning the oil-producing nations is no guaranty of relief.

On the contrary, responsible administration officials are deeply pessimistic about breaking the world oil cartel. One knowledgeable policymaker believes the Arabs, particularly Kuwait and Algeria, will never relent until that unforeseeable day of a political settlement in the Mideast. Nor is there any real hope here that withholding U.S. food from the world market would have the slightest effect on oil.

Withholding U.S. arms, though riskier, might be slightly more effective.

About all these officials feel can be done is for the U.S. to make clear by word and deed that it is moving toward energy self-sufficiency and to acting in concert with Western Europe and Japan. Since such steps are not imminent, there is simply no prospect of any quick price relief from the oil producers.

## Is Watergate forever?

By William A. Rusher

It begins to appear that Watergate is one of those receding episodes in American history that will provide grist for investigation and controversy almost literally forever.

The wife of Bruce Catton, the Pulitzer Prize-winning historian, once wisecracked that she had lost her husband in the Civil War. And there are also large oateries of Sacco-Vanzetti buffs, Kennedy assassination addicts, and devotees of the incident at Chap-paquiddick. All that is required is some event, or series of events, that is intrinsically interesting and cloaked in some degree of mystery and/or controversy. The stubbornness and ingenuity of the human mind will do the rest.

Was Stanton behind the assassination of Lincoln? Did the first rifle reports at Dallas come from the "grassy knoll"? How did Edward Kennedy really get back to the Shiretown Inn?

Watergate is clearly in the grand tradition. For one thing, while not so vast a subject as the Civil War, it boasts up rather well against Sacco-Vanzetti, the Kennedy assassination and Chap-paquiddick in terms of the breadth of the canvas: the period of time involved, the number of people concerned, and the ambiguity of the available evidence.

What was the role of Gordon Liddy? When did Nixon first learn about CREEP's involvement in the Watergate break-in — or did he help to plan it? What did Hunt hope to learn from the files of Ellsberg's psychiatrist? Who was Deep Throat? You begin to see the possibilities. There have been whole books published recently on the mysterious Affair of the Diamond Necklace (1773-81) and the vexed question of who killed the young Princes in the Tower in or about 1485. People will still be arguing over the Huston Plan, and wondering why Nixon didn't bounce up rather well against Sacco-Vanzetti, the Kennedy assassination and Chap-paquiddick in terms of the breadth of the canvas: the period of time involved, the number of people concerned, and the ambiguity of the available evidence.

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any desire to persecute the former chief executive; it is only the historical record they are interested in, or the integrity of our judicial processes. One way or another, though, they plainly intend to keep the Watergate ball in the air, and some sort of proceeding against Mr. Nixon is evidently deemed essential for the purpose.

One school of thought favors a direct attack on the pardon itself, on the highly dubious ground that Mr. Ford could not lawfully issue one until Mr. Nixon was actually convicted of something. For the purpose of testing this theory, some experts believe the Watergate grand jurors ought to go ahead and indict Mr. Nixon for something anyway, pardon or no pardon.

Others, notably including the ACLU, are urging the impeachment of Mr. Nixon by the House and his conviction by the Senate, even though he has rendered that whole process superfluous, and perhaps unconstitutional, by resigning.

The Attorney General of California is publicly casting about for evidence of some crime for which Mr. Nixon could be prosecuted under state law (to which, of course, a presidential pardon does not apply).

If all other recourses fail, the Watergate buffs hope for a final report by Special Prosecutor Jaworski to the Congress, or a special presentation by the grand jury, naming Mr. Nixon's role to the world. Unfortunately either step would apparently require special enabling legislation by Congress, since the pardon bars his indictment and it is not certain that Congress will agree to authorize such gratuitous denunciations.

But whether it does or not, we might as well stop kidding ourselves that anything at all will still the Watergate controversy forever. If Mr. Nixon's critics want to torment him further, let them go about their business without pretending that anything they can do, or prove, or contend, will finally lay the matter to rest. Mankind is just going to have to live with this one, for a long, long time to come.

## Readers write

### Another depression for America?

Editor, Journal Gazette:

The central issue of today's economic crisis is money — and those who control it.

Americans caught in the squeeze of rising living costs and vanishing jobs are mindful of the symptoms of distress which preceded the crash of 1929.

Then, as now, the people were confronted by a shrinking dollar, leaping interest rates, a sliding stock market, and, in the final days, evaporation of business capital with resulting unemployment.

Then, as now, the people were assured by elected officials, and by "financial experts," that the economy was sound.

The catastrophic collapse which followed was not relieved until the onset of "war prosperity" beginning in 1939.

The American taxpayer who bears the agency of economic crisis has the right to know who decides whether the United States will be prosperous, or is to be plunged into a new depression in 1974.

For astounding facts behind the economic crisis write for a free copy of "Another Depression for America?" from the committee to Restore the Constitution, 900 Savings Building, Fort Collins, Colo. 80521.

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