

tion by accident, as Fassio points out. The Knight newspapers, of which the *Free Press* is one, have been pioneers and leaders in developing management training programs to train future circulation managers—men who must now, as Fassio says, be administrators, business managers, salesmen, labor relations men, child psychologists, transportation experts, and public relations men in one overworked package.

Many circulation directors agree with Fassio that the newsboy is not going to disappear completely, at least in the Seventies, but that the carrier system is certain to be altered. The widely varying profit structure of the system provides a basic 25 to 30 per cent of the retail price, but a good many newspapers are below this figure and presumably will have to improve their position if they want to maintain the method. When the long-heralded four-day work week becomes a reality in industry and business, which manpower experts believe will occur shortly on a large scale, newspapers are going to have to find ways of reaching readers who may not be home for three days out of the week in good weather. It will also put a further strain on the delivery boy system. Boys who are expected to deliver seven days a week will have increasing difficulty dealing with both parents and readers operating on a different schedule.

Still another problem is soliciting subscriptions inside apartment buildings. New sales techniques will have to supplement whatever the carrier boys are able to do. Some newspapers are using telephone solicitation successfully; others are developing different sales methods.

Newspapers are also enjoying (and suffering from) a growth in their physical size, particularly on Sundays, and some experts (Fassio among them) think that it may be necessary to have two carrier boy organizations, one that delivers the regular paper and another to carry special advertising sections. The Los Angeles *Sunday Times* is already so large that it has to be delivered in two trips.

Over the whole circulation problem looms the prospect of what is now commonly referred to as "the little black box." Oldtimers in the business assert they are not frightened by it, but the technologists are certain that it is only a question of time before the mechanics of distributing newspapers will be revolutionized by electronic techniques that will bring them into homes on screens from which printouts can be made of pages the viewer wants to read in detail or keep. It is not a question so much of whether this will happen, as when.

## THE BLACK REPORTER AND HIS PROBLEMS

by M. L. STEIN

Black reporters on daily newspapers are deeply frustrated as the result of a conflict between their conception of their role and the traditional journalistic values to which they are expected to conform. They also are disturbed over what they consider tokenism and bias *inside* the newsroom as well as in hiring practices. After talking to several black journalists and white editors, I am convinced that some kind of understanding by the two groups is necessary to prevent a bad situation from becoming worse.

This is not to suggest that blacks are being employed in large numbers for news jobs. The opposite is true. Dr. Edward J. Traves, associate professor of communications at Temple University, found in a recent survey that black participation on daily newspaper staffs was at an "extremely low level and quite disproportionate to the growing Negro population throughout America." His findings revealed that of 7,152 news executives, deskmen, reporters, and photographers on 196 dailies of more than 10,000 circulation, 111, or 1.55 per cent, were black. Only five executives (assistant city editor through editor) were Negro. Of the 3,691 reporters represented in the study, eighty-three, or 2.25 per cent, were black. Out of the total number of news personnel, Professor Traves concluded that only about one in sixty-five was black.

The ratio of blacks to whites in broadcast journalism is even lower. The three major television networks have only five black newscasters among them, and only a handful are reporting for local outlets.

Still, particularly on newspapers, a breakthrough has been achieved in the past four years. For example, as a newsman in San Francisco from 1951 to 1961, I cannot recall a single black reporter or photographer on the city's four dailies during that period, a situation that also existed in many other communities. Currently, the San Francisco *Examiner* has its own training program for black reporters, a sprin-

gling of whom are working for the city's news media. But the breakthrough has created its own problem for some black newsmen and women. They say they were hired during a time of racial rioting and are being largely ignored by editors now that the strife has waned.

"Many black reporters throughout the country are undergoing a severe crisis because they were brought in during a crisis period," said Charlayne Hunter, a black reporter for *The New York Times*. "They were assigned to get into the ghetto areas during the trouble, and now that riots have spent themselves the need to utilize them is not as great. Some are just sitting around newspaper city rooms."

Miss Hunter's charge was endorsed by other black newsmen in New York City, Washington, and Chicago. They complained that they were not developing as newsmen because of the lack of good writing assignments. Many resented doing leg work for stories that are written by white reporters.

There are, of course, outstanding exceptions. Miss Hunter and Thomas A. Johnson, of the *Times*; William Raspberry, of the *Washington Post*; L. F. Palmer, Jr., and Betty Washington, of the *Chicago Daily News*, and a few other black journalists are covering major stories or writing columns. Miss Hunter, who runs a recently created Harlem news bureau for the *Times*, said young black reporters feel they are not being given a chance to test their capabilities. "They get little direction or guidance from the desk," she added. "These reporters are saying, 'You can't treat us special and then not special!'"

The problem is recognized by some newspapers. Henry Stasiuk, managing editor of the Newark (New Jersey) *Star-Ledger*, said that under a new policy "all city-side reporters are on general assignment and no one covers a black beat." He further explained, "If we feel that a particular story can be best covered by a black reporter, we send one, but generally everyone here writes stories and legs them."

Thomas Boardman, editor of the *Cleveland Press*, said the four black journeymen reporters on his staff are

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—The New York Times

**Charlayne Hunter: "Many black reporters throughout the country are undergoing a severe crisis because they were brought in during a crisis period."**

assigned "general duties" and that one is an assistant editor. He noted that the *Press* also has a training program for young blacks recruited from inner-city high schools.

The issue is not always solved by keeping the black reporter busy covering general news. Some black newsmen object to being assigned a "black beat," but others strongly feel that they are best qualified by their black experience to report news with a racial background, an opinion that is not universally accepted by white editors.

L. F. Palmer, Jr., of the *Chicago Daily News*, who is on general assignment and writes a syndicated column expressing a black point of view, believes that the Negro reporter is usually better qualified to report on the black community. "Some blacks," he said, "are more sensitive to the whole black and white conflict than others. My own feeling is that this conflict is the biggest running story of the day, and it's not being adequately or honestly covered. I believe that the black perspective must be presented and only blacks can present it. I simply don't believe that a white reporter can understand all the nuances, all the meanings, behind some stories."

Other black newsmen supported Palmer's view. Richard Prince, of the *Washington Post*, observed: "There's no question that in some situations a black reporter is able to make a better judgment on a story. Besides, many black community leaders specifically ask newspapers to send blacks to cover events in those areas." As an example, Prince cited the memorial service in Washington for Ralph

Featherstone, a black militant killed in a bomb explosion. According to Prince, only black reporters were allowed inside the hall where the service was held. "It's just not a black and white issue," he added. "It's also a matter of good journalism practice. The reporter best qualified should cover the story."

Betty Washington, of the *Chicago Daily News*, said, "I prefer to think of myself as a reporter rather than as a black reporter, but I don't run away from stories about blacks. If something happens concerning the Black Panthers, for example, I want to be there. I think in touchy situations like that the black reporter can, in fact, do a better job of coverage than a white reporter."

The notion that only blacks be assigned to black-related news is difficult to accept for a generation of editors raised on the theory that any journeyman reporter should be able to handle any kind of story. Many white editors with black staff members are continuing to assign whites to black-oriented stories despite the resentment of some black reporters. One such boss, Harry M. Rosenfeld, *Washington Post* metropolitan editor, said he felt "uncomfortable" with the demand that only blacks cover the black community.

"I think I understand one of the reasons for this insistence," Rosenfeld continued. "It's a means of encouraging the use of more blacks on daily newspapers, and I'm entirely in agreement with this desire. The big-city papers should be more representative of their communities. But I also be-

lieve that a newspaper should tell about the *whole* community. I would be unhappy if I could only assign a black to cover a black story just as I would be unhappy if I had to assign a Jew to a Jewish story or an Italian to an Italian story."

Rosenfeld, whose metropolitan staff includes eight black reporters, pointed out, however, that he and other deskmen make "pragmatic exceptions" to the general assignment rule. "If," he explained, "an editor feels that a black reporter could best cover a particular situation, he will be assigned to it."

A similar policy appears to be in force at the *Chicago Daily News*. Editor Roy M. Fisher said, "We consider that all of our reporters are available to any assignment regardless of race. They do, however, have special advantages in reporting the blacks' side of racial controversy and tend to specialize in the racial and social problems of the inner city."

The *New York Times*, which has thirteen black reporters and photographers, deploys them on any kind of story, but editors prefer to use them for racial matters "when it appears necessary," according to Managing Editor A. M. Rosenthal. He added that no reporter is restricted in what he can cover and that it is not uncommon for white reporters to cover black stories and blacks to get general news assignments.

Being assigned to a "black beat" is not always an ideal situation for a black reporter. Some encounter hostility from community blacks who have hurled such epithets at the newsmen as "Uncle Tom," "spy," and "sell-out." Then, too, black news sources have been used to dealing with Negro weekly papers and are uneasy and hesitant under the demands of more professional reporters with daily deadlines. A black reporter who frequently covers the ghetto for a New York daily said: "Some black organizations don't even know how to set up a press conference, and they're suspicious of me when I try to help them with it."

The question of assignments inevitably leads to the issue of objectivity, that journalistic byword so buffeted about these days. A number of black journalists feel that objectivity—or even the new term, fairness—is for them an unworkable, if not insulting, concept. One of their most severe conflicts arises from their efforts to be fair and objective, while having little or no faith in the idea. Arguments between white editors and black reporters over objectivity have erupted in more than one newsroom.

Robert A. DeLeon, a black man who, until recently, reported for the *Atlanta Constitution* and *Newsday*, recalled

his newspaper days with a bitterness echoed by many of his colleagues. "Once involved in the black community," he said, "I found it increasingly difficult to remain in the position of objective observer and soon learned that such attempts were futile. I realized that my biases and subjectivity entered into the picture even before I began reporting a story. Because white papers—and the media in general—traditionally have neglected and, in fact, ignored the black community, editors provided little guidance in the selection of stories in the black community, and the whole process of selection became a personal matter. I had to dismiss the notion of objectivity. In choosing stories I constantly found that I was seeking *good things* that were being done in the black community. I guess I was trying to prove to whites that blacks were human and wanted, basically, to share in the same things as everyone else. For this bias I have never apologized, because white journalists have been doing it all along as it relates to the day-to-day happenings in the white community."

Betty Washington said she strives for fairness in any story she covers "even when I'm emotionally upset about something like a police-Panther shootout. However," she admitted, "my story is bound to be biased to a certain extent. I don't care, because I know how some other stories are written in the paper. Actually, I don't believe that anyone is objective. Newspapers certainly are not objective."

Miss Washington's colleague, L. F. Palmer, agreed, terming objectivity a myth. "I believe in advocacy journalism, particularly for blacks," he asserted. "At the same time, I feel that a reader is in a better position to evaluate a story if the biases of the writer are not hidden. It's when they're concealed that the reader gets taken. If a reader knows that I'm a pro-black writer, which I am, he can more competently deal with what I'm saying."

Nevertheless, many white editors continue to insist on objectivity, except in columns. Thomas Boardman, of the *Cleveland Press*, expressed a common city-room attitude when he stated: "We expect the same objectivity from black reporters as anyone else."

Grievances of black newsmen have led them into forming their own organizations as a means of expression. The first National Conference of Black Newsmedia Workers was held last summer at Lincoln University in Jefferson City, Missouri. Rush Greenlee, a black San Francisco journalist, said the meeting was called because "there is a hunger among black journalists to know who they are, to clarify the

role they have been playing and the one they might play in the black liberation struggle."

The dispute will likely simmer for years unless there is some dramatic shift by the newspapers. A growing number of young blacks in journalism schools and elsewhere are even more militant than those now in the media. At a journalism workshop for minority students at New York University last summer, several black youngsters ridiculed the principle of objectivity. Betty Washington said she has talked to inner-city black pupils who want to go into journalism, but seek to do their own kind of writing. "Some of them said that if things don't go their way they'll throw bolts into the presses," she reported.

Whether these young people will be hired at all is another major area of conflict in the minds of black newsmen on Establishment newspapers. They blame editors for the scarcity of black staffers, charging that they are not recruiting hard enough because they're not sincere about wanting more blacks. Black reporters scoffed at the frequently voiced excuse by editors that not enough "qualified" blacks are available. Many believe that the term "qualified" is itself a convenient dodge to limit black employment on newspapers. Bristling at the mention of the word, a black Washington newsman snapped: "I always hear the term 'qualified' applied to black applicants in the media. Are all white applicants qualified? I doubt it, yet I never hear of editors sending out requests for *qualified* white beginners."

Metropolitan daily editors deny the accusation and claim they are honestly seeking more blacks for their editorial departments but can't find them. One reason for this, they say, is that the journalism schools and departments are not turning out enough black majors. True enough. Professor Traves found that, although the proportion of Negro journalism majors has jumped 50 per cent in the past year, the total number is still very low. Of the 7,440 juniors and seniors majoring in news-editorial or photojournalism sequences at 103 schools, 237, or 3.19 per cent, are black.

L. F. Palmer conceded that journalism schools should be producing more black graduates, but he contended that the newspapers are nevertheless dragging their feet on hiring them. "Take Chicago," Palmer said. "Officials at the four metropolitan daily newspapers report that they employ eight hundred and eleven editorial employees at and

above the reporter/photographer rank. Of this number, seventeen are black. This is just two per cent in a city expected to be fifty per cent black by 1980."

For the answer to the problem, one must go deeper than journalism school enrollment or debating arguments. Black enrollment in journalism schools is low because for years journalism was a career virtually closed to blacks. But even now that the opportunities have opened up in the field, the ratio of black journalism majors is still far below what it should be. One reason is that few black youngsters in secondary schools are getting encouragement to study journalism or work in the field. If journalism schools are to increase their black enrollment, a pipeline must be laid to the high schools. This is the responsibility of journalism schools, the news media, black journalists, black community leaders, and high school teachers, counselors, and administrators. More programs are needed, such as the one recently initiated by the Association for Education in Journalism, establishing media internships for black students. The American Newspaper Publishers Association Foundation offers cash scholarships to black journalism students, and other organizations are engaged in similar efforts.

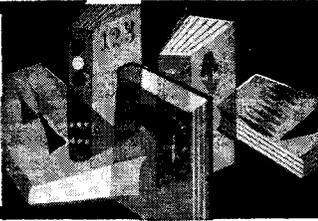
"Most black high school kids have never seen a reporter," said Ernest Johnston, Jr., black reporter for the *New York Post*. "Black journalists should be brought into the classroom. Just their being there will give students a better insight into journalism. There should also be more and better school papers to stimulate the interest of youngsters and develop their skills."

In any case, some black journalists fear that if and when the black students are hired on newspapers they will have a tougher time surviving their probationary period and getting promoted than starting white reporters. Said one black reporter: "The editors don't expect us to be as good. One editor, in fact, told me that he didn't expect too much from me. This is a hell of a way to get into a new job. I've talked this over with other black reporters, and most of them feel that they have to be in training longer than whites. And even then they stand a good chance of being fired."

White editors said *their* big problem is keeping the black reporters they've hired. In recent months, *Newsday*, *The New York Times*, the *Long Island Press*, and the *Cleveland Press*, among other newspapers, have lost black newsmen to public relations or broadcasting. The lure usually has been the same as that for white reporters who took the same route—more money.



# Books in Communications



## Heavyweight Stone

I. F. STONE does not readily fit any of the usual journalistic categories. It is far easier to define him by what he is not. He is not a reporter and he is not a columnist precisely. He is not an editorial writer or a commentator on events in the television sense. He is not a heavy contributor to magazines. He is not exclusively a researcher or an editor. Stone, while none of these things, is a little of all as the do-everything publisher of *I. F. Stone's Bi-Weekly*, the Washington newsletter that he began in 1953 to the dismay of many capital residents. His pre-eminent journalistic quality is independence. He is very much his own man, not a synthesizer of other opinions, a seeker after consensus, a wait-and-see historian.

Stone appears principally in his own bi-weekly and, for more extended pieces, in the *New York Review of Books*. From these two sources he has gathered writings over the past three years into book form in *Polemics and Prophecies 1967-1970* (Random House, \$10), taking up more or less from where he left off in a similar collection, *In a Time of Torment*, in 1967. In the new book, however, Stone has zeroed in on his two principal concerns: Vietnam and armament. Indeed, his concentration is monolithic, and while the parade of his facts and figures can become wearying, the drumfire of his arguments carries a certain grandeur. In the earlier collection, there was more range and variety; in this one, Stone's outrage at the ruling tyranny of a pernicious war and the mindlessness of the military-industrial complex dominates the book and overwhelms other themes.

But not entirely. Each piece is individually dated, and the three-year record contains Stone's "Holy War," a dispassionate analysis of the Israeli-Arab conflict that first appeared in the *New York Review* in the aftermath of the Six-Day War. It is painstakingly fair to both sides and is written with a timeliness that helps illuminate the daily exchanges in the present peace talks. There is a strong cutting edge in Stone's analytical style. "A certain moral imbecility," he writes, "marks all ethnocentric movements. The Other are always either less than human,

and thus their interests may be ignored, or more than human, and therefore so dangerous that it is right to destroy them. The latter is the underlying pan-Arab attitude toward the Jews; the former is Zionism's basic attitude toward the Arabs."

The book opens with some comparison shopping in a political year along the Republican and Democratic shelves. As always, Stone sees politics tinged with economic determinism. "It is often said," he comments, "that American politics stops at the water's edge; it also stops at the oil well's mouth." In 1968, there was no political figure to whom Stone gave his support, except McCarthy and then only reluctantly. Further in the book there is a fair and reasonable discussion—the outsider coming in and seeing things straight—of New York City's school crisis. And at the end he deals with a series of lesser themes, including campus rebels, the Berrigans, and the People's March on Washington ("the rich have been marching on Washington ever since the beginning of the republic").

But Stone has poured most of his indignation into the separate yet connected pieces on the Vietnam War and the arms race, which he scathingly labels "the socialism of the rich." He saves his sharpest blades to dissect the U. S. military claims and expose them as self-serving propaganda. He details the way we used the Tet truce in the winter of 1967 to move up supplies while accusing the North Vietnamese of violating the truce by doing the same when they were not. When the air raids were stepped up by the Johnson-Rusk-McNamara war management in the spring of 1967 in order to "punish" the North for trying to destroy the political institutions of the South, Stone wrote: "This is the myth that leads to disaster. If this is not a rebellion but a conspiracy and an invasion, why limit the punishment to North Vietnam? Why not hit at the sources in China and Russia? Why not make it painful for the Kremlin?"

Stone tenaciously pursues his themes, exposing the incredible follies committed in the name of military preparedness. He details the history of that loser of a fighting machine, the F-

111, and ascribes the assigning of its contract to General Dynamics in preference to Boeing to military-bureaucratic, industrial, and ultimately political considerations. This is how he does the arithmetic of the contract award: "General Dynamics is in Texas, a swing state with twenty-four electoral votes, and its biggest subcontractor on the F-111, Grumman, is in New York with forty-five electoral votes. Boeing would have produced the plane in Kansas with eight votes, which go Republican anyway, and in the state of Washington with nine. Nixon's November 2 pledge shows that any major new plane must show it can fly successfully through the electoral college."

Clearly, any journalist who speaks out as strongly as Stone should be answered, and no doubt the "truth squads" are even now forming in the courtyard of the Pentagon. But they must be prepared to dig for their facts as deeply as Stone obviously has and to research the subject as meticulously, for Stone's analytical reporting goes several levels below daily journalism. How is he able to maintain his pace, one minute hitting the "drunken sailor procurement" habits of the Pentagon, the next setting the record straight on Tonkin Gulf, which he condemns as "crisis-making to support a secretly pre-arranged decision"? By passion and dedication mostly. He must weigh in against some heavy opposition, for he has picked as his targets the successive Chief Executives of this country who have kept the war going in Vietnam and the military-industrial establishment, hideously enlarged to include most of the country—except for that corner of it from which I. F. Stone keeps coming out fighting.

**What's Happening Here:** It is not particularly easy to read out of context the disconnected brand of counter-journalism that rises vaporously from the underground press. There have been several collections attempted so far, and now *Fire!*, edited by "Paul, Jon, and Charlotte" (Dutton, paperback, \$2.95), puts it all together. Without any connecting or explanatory commentary (none is really called for), this anthology—to give it an above-ground word—manages to crowd in the chief events of the various rebellious movements: the beginning of protest in rock music; the People's Park struggle in Berkeley; the disruptions at Columbia, San Francisco State, Cornell, and Harvard; and Women's Liberation. The quality is strange. It is not writing or journalism by any but its own standards. It is more like a series of fast film clips.

—STUART W. LITTLE.