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Freedom of the Press

by Robert E. Segal

Late in 1973, young Clay T. Whitehead, speaking for the government of the United States, threw a sharp light on an alarming shadow hanging over this nation's hard-won right to freedom of the media of information and opinion. Director of the White House Office of Telecommunications Policy (an ominous-sounding hunk of bureaucracy), Mr. Whitehead hinted, in effect, that if radio and television stations would behave the way the Administration wanted them to behave, they might be able to get their licenses renewed for a five-year span instead of the present three.

If you have forgotten that threat, perhaps President Nixon's on-tape comments about The Washington Post's television stations may startle you out of your complacency. Jarred by The Post's deep burrowing into what John Mitchell pointedly alluded to as "the White House Horrors," Mr. Nixon has been quoted as saying on September 15, 1972: "The main thing is the Post is going to have damnable, damnable problems out of this one. They have a television station...and they're going to have to get it renewed."

The newshounds had picked up the scent of strange goings on in the Oval Room; and Mr. Nixon seemed intent on pinning somebody's hide on the wall in retaliation.

The White House places ads in The Post. It can't apply economic sanctions against the newspaper by withdrawing that sort of revenue. But the government is the overlord of our limited number of airwaves; and the Federal Communications Commission members, serving by Presidential appointment, are a force for any freedom-loving radio and television owners to reckon with. Especially with fearless FCC Commissioner Nicholas Johnson no longer on that powerful board, the agency's potential for mischief is frightening. And with Richard E. Wiley, a self-proclaimed "political conservative," now established as Chairman of the agency, the screws may be tightened sooner than expected.

Nor can the current revelation of Mr. Nixon's huffing and puffing about The Post's television franchise be regarded as an isolated instance of such posturing. A few weeks ago, both the CBS and ABC networks accused the Administration of bringing an anti-trust action against them allegedly for the networks' refusal to "play ball" with the government. At that time, Dan Rather, who bends neither of his knees before Presidential puissance, declared in a sworn affidavit that Ronald L. Ziegler, chief press factotum for the President, had told him (Rather) that the networks were going to have to pay "sooner or later," "one way or another," for irritating the Oval Room folks.

Situations of this kind must have been in the mind of the late Supreme Court Justice Hugo L. Black when he insisted that our First Amendment gave the free press the protection it must have to fulfill its essential role in our democracy. "The press was to serve the governed, not the governors," Judge Black said. And if that is true of newspapers, it is even more applicable to government-licensed audiovisual mechanisms.

From John Milton's thundering plea for freedom from governmental licensing of the media of his day through John Stuart Mill's passionate appeal for freedom of expression,

TELL TALES

*"One Man Plus The Truth
Constitutes A Majority"*

BY JACK TELL



(Continued from Page 1)
room.

Now we analyze the crocodile tears Greenspun is shedding for Maheu.

Not too long ago Greenspun turned state's evidence before a Federal grand jury which indicted Maheu and others. Greenspun, of course, was seeking to save his own hide. He was named an unindicted co-conspirator. Where was Greenspun's empathy for Maheu and Maheu's wife and children at that time? Greenspun accuses Hughes lawyers in the L.A. trial of name calling, while what Greenspun was attempting to do before the grand jury was to send Maheu to jail.

Fortunately for all concerned the Federal indictments were thrown out of court, leaving Greenspun the only one, by his own admissions, guilty of anything.

So just who is Greenspun for? We know he's not in Hughes corner. He certainly cares not one iota for Maheu. It all points to the sole conclusion that Greenspun is strictly, unequivocally and wholly for Greenspun. It apparently always was that way. Here's why.

From the advent of Hughes in Nevada, with Maheu chief of Hughes Nevada operations, Greenspun had some kind of hold over Maheu. It is being revealed piecemeal, that it appears that Greenspun had his fingers in practically every multi-million dollar purchase of hotel-casinos made by Hughes via Maheu. That's not counting the sales of properties by Greenspun himself to Hughes at inflated prices under unusual and suspicious circumstances. There also were the half million in advance to Greenspun for advertising in the Sun and the \$4,000,000 loan at three percent interest, terms the Wall St. Journal said Gen. Motors could not get from the Bank of America. When Hughes sought the return of the \$4,000,000, Greenspun counter-sued for \$142,000,000.

Hughes lawyer in the L.A. trial hit it on the head when he said: "Suing Mr. Hughes is one of the most popular indoor sports in the country."

All in all Greenspun wound up with more than \$10,000,000 of Hughes cash, more than any other individual in Nevada.

Greenspun admitted he had sinned and erred and prostituted his newspaper, but he never revealed specific acts committed. They will all come out in due course.

Greenspun was forced to admit under oath that he was in the employ of Hughes. So here we had a newspaper publisher secretly working for the biggest newsmaker in the state when his dedication and responsibility should have been to his reading public, who trusted him.

Greenspun betrayed that trust in order to become a millionaire, only to turn on his benefactor.

Who's the killer?
enlightened men and women have known the enduring value of gaining and holding the assurance that a democratic government dare not be oppressive in the zones of publication and communication.

Arab Nuclear Reactors?

On the surface President Nixon's visit to the Middle East was a personal triumph with apparent benefits for the United States, Israel and the Arab states. Improved American-Arab relations could lay the groundwork for a Middle East peace settlement.

Israel was highly pleased with President Nixon's reaffirmation of continuing American friendship and support, a policy which Nixon said transcends any particular Administration in Washington. Israel was also told it would receive its much sought commitment for long term military and economic aid rather than the present annual appropriations.

But the hope that emerged from the President's trip was dampened by the shocking announcement in Cairo that the U.S. will provide nuclear reactors and fuel as well as technology to Egypt. Israel was certainly stunned by this disclosure and the government of Premier Yitzhak Rabin had to face its first serious no-confidence vote in the Knesset as the opposition parties tried unsuccessfully to use public fears over the agreement to topple the government.

The statements by President Nixon and Secretary of State Henry A. Kissinger that the U. S. will have safeguards to prevent Egypt from using the reactors for developing atomic weapons are not reassuring. There is the recent example of India which developed atomic weapons by using a nuclear reactor given it by Canada for peaceful purposes. Nor is it reassuring that Israel will now receive nuclear reactors which it has sought. What is important is that Israel already has the technological capability to make atomic weapons and Egypt will now get this know-how.

U.S. pressure and perhaps reluctance within Israel itself has kept the Jewish state from producing atomic weapons. Now the Nixon administration has introduced into the Mideast the very situation the U.S. has long sought to prevent. Kissinger noted that a statement by Egyptian Foreign Minister Ismail Fahmy meant that Egypt would build atomic weapons if Israel produced them. Fear that the other side has nuclear weapons could lead to a nuclear arms race in the Mideast. There is also no guarantee that the Soviet Union will not try to maintain Arab friendship by providing nuclear weapons to Egypt or some other Arab country.

Now that a Mideast peace seems obtainable a nuclear arms race in that area would be a disaster not only for Israel and the Middle East but for the world.

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