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The Student Teacher of Journalism . . Susan Van Koten Bangs
Hymn to an Oasis ....................... Reuben Maury
The Man in the Piazza ................. R. S. Baker
When Dan Whetstone, a young newspaperman from Minnesota, arrived at Cut Bank, Mont., in June, 1909, the conductor said: "You'll take one look at that burg and catch the next train for somewhere else." He was mistaken, for Mr. Whetstone established the Cut Bank Pioneer Press the following month and remained as publisher until his death Feb. 5, 1966.

As Mr. Whetstone put it: "Not the town itself but the surrounding scene was what caught [my] rapture—the lush green landscape stretching away on all sides, the snow-crowned Rockies to the west, the new land."

He asked Cut Bank residents if they wanted a newspaper and, though some were indifferent, many thought a newspaper would be timely for "they sensed the coming of the homestead seekers and a time of transition."

Mr. Whetstone had arrived in a rough little frontier town. There were five saloons, which never closed and had five bartenders for each shift, and there was Gerty and her women of the night. But Mr. Whetstone saw something else, and he described that vision in his salutatory editorial:

"In Cut Bank there exists a combination of resources as yet undeveloped that cannot but assure for the town a splendid destiny. Coupled with this is the spirit of enterprise and an expanding future, a hospitality that gives welcome and good cheer to the newcomer, bidding him to share in the boundless opportunities of this fine new region of the West. And the people don't say 'How do you do'—they say 'Hello, Bud.'"

Mr. Whetstone was born March 4, 1879, in Franklin, Minn., where he subsequently taught school and was publisher of the Franklin Tribune. After eight years with the Tribune, he decided he needed a new challenge in a new community, and he started west in search of a town that needed a newspaper. He found that town in Cut Bank, and he devoted the next 57 years to serving the community.

In 1956 he recounted his experiences in a book, Frontier Editor, published by Hastings House.

In the early 1920s, Mr. Whetstone served as publicity director for Gov. Joseph M. Dixon. He was a delegate to the Republican National Conventions of 1932 and 1936, and from 1939 to 1948 he was Republican National Committeeman for Montana.

Dan Whetstone
1879-1966
Seventeenth Member
Installed April 20, 1972

The Montana Newspaper Hall of Fame, established Aug. 16, 1958, is sponsored by the Montana Press Association and the Montana School of Journalism. A committee comprising six members of the Press Association and the dean of the School of Journalism recommends one person for the Hall of Fame each year. A candidate may be nominated five years after his death.
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Warren J. Brier, Editor
Dean A. L. Stone Address: 
China in General

By RICHARD DUDMAN

Mr. Dudman, chief of the Washington Bureau of the St. Louis Post-Dispatch, was one of 87 journalists who accompanied President Nixon to China in February, 1972. After the President's visit, Mr. Dudman remained in China, then covered events in Vietnam, Taiwan, Japan, India and Ireland. In 1970, he was captured by Communist guerrillas in Cambodia and held for 40 days before being released. Mr. Dudman joined the St. Louis staff of the Post-Dispatch in 1949 and was transferred to Washington in 1954 after a year's leave to study under a Nieman Fellowship at Harvard. He is the author of two books, Men of the Far Right and 40 Days with the Enemy, and many magazine articles. Mr. Dudman, the 1972 professional lecturer at the Montana School of Journalism, gave this address April 20, 1972, at the 16th annual banquet honoring the first dean of the journalism school.

You may recall that before President Nixon went to China an advance party of technicians went to Peking to set up the ground station for the satellite and make other preparations for television and newspaper coverage. The fact that they were technicians rather than journalists was an important point to the Chinese. The distinction meant that they were not to put out any news; the story of the Nixon visit was not to start until the main Nixon party arrived in China.

But there was a violation. Two members of the advance party got sick and had to be flown back to the United States. Somebody talked, and the resident Reuters correspondent, Jim Pringle, found out about it and filed a brief story. The Chinese saw Pringle's dispatch and took a very serious view of the matter, following the Chinese Communist principle that says one should "raise all problems to the theoretical level." The technicians had been acting like journalists, and they had to be taught a lesson. Now, under the Chinese Communist system, the treatment for wrongdoing is not so much punishment as a case of making the culprit ashamed of himself, sometimes by taking away privileges.

At the Hotel of Nationalities, the big old-fashioned place where the technicians were staying and where we in the main press party later were put up, the Chinese had furnished quite a few privileges and services to make life pleasant. In each bathroom were face soap, bath soap, toothbrushes and toothpaste, shaving cream and shaving brushes, a big Thermos bottle always full of hot water and a can of tea, and a bowl of Chinese hard candies wrapped in colored paper. And what did the Chinese do to the naughty technicians? They took their candy away.

There's more to the story. The technicians had been in the country two weeks or so and had become so imbued with the new Chinese system of values and social conformity that the treatment worked. They were really contrite. They went to the Chinese officials, so I am told, and said, "We are sorry and we won't do it again. Please, can we have our candies back?"

I'll tell you another story about the trip. Before I left, I thought it would be a pleasant thing to take along a few small presents to give to some of the Chinese I might come to know and like. One was a good pocketknife. It's called an Uncle Henry knife. It is expensive; it cost $11. It is well made, it takes a good edge, and it is insured against loss for a year. I thought it would be interesting to some Chinese to see an unusual quality product that comes out of the American economy.
For another present, my wife got me an All-American Wham-O Frisbee, one of those plastic discs that you throw back and forth. This one had an American flag and a gold crest on it. She also got me some 25-cent packets of vegetable and flower seeds.

I started with some of the seeds. On the bus ride to the Great Wall, I had a good chance to learn something about my interpreter, a pleasant, rather self-effacing young man. He told me about his little girl and how he was happy that she now could live at home while attending kindergarten, since his wife's mother was too old to work and was able to be at the house when the little girl came home in the afternoon. I was surprised to hear Mr. Chen say that he preferred to have her living at home to having her spend the week at boarding school, as she had been doing before. His reasoning surprised me still more—he said that he thought children were more spontaneous and self-reliant if they lived at home and that living away from home in an institution tended to make them timid and dependent.

Anyhow, in the course of our conversation, I asked Mr. Chen if he and his wife had a garden. He said they did, and I offered him a packet of carnations, another of bachelor's buttons and a third of carrots or onions, each with a colored picture on the outside and directions on how to plant them.

He took the seed packets as if they were too hot to touch. "We have a tradition in China," he said, "that a gift of seeds is symbolic of friendship. And if the recipient plants the seeds and the plants die, it means that the friendship will die."

I tried to laugh it off and asked him not to be so serious about it.

"Just plant them and do your best," I said. "They'll probably grow all right, and if they don't it's not so important. I could even send you some more."

He still looked doubtful and came up with another objection: "This is a gift that should be for the benefit not of a single person but of all the people. I must present these seeds to the Peking Botanical Garden, so that everyone can enjoy them."

I complained that I wanted them to be for himself and his wife as a personal present, not a donation to a great institution. He seemed adamant, and I suppose by this time they are growing at the Botanical Garden, for the good of the state and the people. The experience took the heart out of my gift project. I gave the rest of the seeds to a Japanese diplomat friend of mine in Tokyo—his wife missed Washington and hated moving back to crowded, dirty Tokyo. I left the Frisbee in my hotel room in Saigon. And I brought the knife home with me.

**professor chou pei-yuan**

One more story: This one is about a University of Peking senior professor, who also holds a position that appears to be the same as chancellor of an American university. I happened to sit next to Chou Pei-yuan at the first banquet, the one Chou En-lai gave for President Nixon. This tall, distinguished-looking man with white hair, bright eyes and steel-rimmed glasses told me he had received his Ph.D. from the University of Chicago and had taught at Caltech. His field was theoretical physics, and his specialty was cosmography—that is, until the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution. Now his field is fluid physics, which I translated as hydraulics, more engineering than physics and geared closely to practical applications. As he helped me to the candied walnuts, the crispy duck, the shark's fin soup and the sea slugs, he told me that the cultural revolution had changed the whole system and purpose of education in China. Before, he said, its purpose was to train the ruling class; those who worked with their minds were to rule, and those who worked with their hands were to be ruled. Now, that distinction was ended, and the teachers went to the masses to learn what to teach.

I wanted to know more about how this great national upheaval had affected one of the major Chinese universities and signed up for a tour of Peking University a few days later. Professor Chou was there, and he told a dozen or more of us that he had been a part of the old system. As he put it, he "shared in the mistake in carrying out the counter-revolutionary revisionist policy of Liu Shao-chi."

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China almost entirely as a tourist adventure. They had four slots each. They should have assigned one of the four slots to someone who really knew something about China. If I'm correct, CBS was the only one that included an old Far East hand in its team, and the CBS expert, Bernard Kalb, who would have had a lot to say, on at least one occasion found himself allotted one minute and ten seconds in which to say it. NBC's John Rich also has had a good deal of Far East experience, but he, too, did not get much time on the tube. The Associated Press did better. One member of its team was Henry Hartzenbusch of the Tokyo AP Bureau, and he was born in China and speaks fluent Chinese.

For an individual newspaper, it was a different matter. No paper had more than one slot, and the decision in most cases was to send what amounted to a general assignment reporter. If a choice had to be made between sending a specialist and sending a generalist, it seems to me that the wise thing to do was to send the generalist. One of the many people whom I asked for advice before setting out for Peking was I. F. Stone, who has made himself into a sort of journalistic Leonardo da Vinci, a generalist who is an expert in a great many fields.

"Don't get bogged down in trying to figure out who's standing next to whom at those banquets and what it means," he said. "That's just a lot of high-class crap. Leave it to the Hong Kong China watchers."

Incidentally, another adviser whom I pressed into service, Morton Halperin of the Brookings Institution, had just one word of advice. "Eat," he said.

President Nixon's trip to China was essentially a piece of drama, a pageant that led the American people out of a 20-year dream world into which they had been led deliberately by the China Lobby and some military and political hawks—people who included Richard Nixon. Never mind that President Nixon may have had some special motives in arranging his China trip—re-election, for one thing, and standing next to whom at those banquets and what it meant, for another—his pageant was most of all an educational and emotional experience for the American people. It was a chance to find out a little something about China and to displace the old clichés that held "Red China" to be an outlaw nation, inevitably hostile to the United States and inevitably expansionist.

What I tried to do was see as much as I could, talk to as many Chinese as I could and take advantage of the fact that the focus of attention was on China. A big part of the exercise was to write stories that would be widely read. Jerry ter Horst of the Detroit News had a good one—especially good for Detroit readers—about a tour of an automobile plant. He told about the plain utilitarianism of the Chinese jeep that he saw being manufactured on a primitive assembly line that moved at maybe one-tenth the speed of a Detroit assembly line. And he repeated a conversation with a worker in the plant in which the reporter from Detroit kept asking the worker if, deep down, he didn't really hope someday to drive his own car, and the worker kept insisting that he lived close enough to the plant to walk to work and that if the distance were greater he would get along just fine with a bicycle.

**the panda project**

One of my own projects was to try to get a couple of pandas for the St. Louis Zoo. Before leaving Washington, I had telephoned the Zoo director to ask if I could do something for him. It turned out that he, like many other zoo directors, had written to the Chinese embassy in Ottawa asking about getting pandas, but there had been no reply. I offered to hand-deliver a letter in Peking. He thought that was a fine idea, but his first suggestion was that I take along a Xerox copy of the letter he had sent to Ottawa. That wouldn't quite do, and I suggested that if he had a secretary with a few minutes to spare he really ought to prepare a fresh letter. He got into the spirit of the thing and got up a fancy brochure in a yellow plastic binder, addressed to the "Honorable Director, Peking Zoological Garden, People's Republic of China." He invited the director and his staff to visit St. Louis to discuss an exchange of animals and sent a list of various pandas, monkeys, pheasants and ducks that he would like to get from China.

I didn't get the pandas, but delivering the invitation did lead to a good story of a personal tour of the zoo, including a good look at its five pandas. It also turned up the moderately explosive piece of information that President Nixon's gift of two musk oxen, Milton and Mathilda, might not be satisfactory to the Chinese after all. When I asked the Peking zoo director whether brother and sister musk oxen could be mated, he replied, choosing his words carefully the way the Chinese officials always do, "In the specific case of musk oxen, I do not know, since I have never mated musk oxen. But speaking in general terms, the mating of two animals from the same parents always runs the risk of undesirable genetic effects."

When one of my daughters, a student at Ann Arbor, heard from someone that her father was making a big thing out of trying to get pandas for St. Louis, she wrote me a condescending letter saying, "Daddy, you amaze me." I had to write her an explanation that a newspaperman not only must write with truth and perception but also must be read.

This is not to say that there is no place in journalism for the specialist. In science and medical writing, in reviewing the arts, advanced study often can be a basis for a superior journalistic career. I once had a managing editor who was asked by a young reporter about to apply for a Nieman Fellowship whether it would be useful for the reporter to take some science courses at Harvard to prepare himself to be a science writer.

"If we ever decide to have a science reporter," the managing editor said, "we'll get a Ph.D. in physics and teach him to write."

My own view is that journalistic specialties are better developed in the reverse order. One of the best Supreme
The lingo of specialization is a great trap. Let a reporter cover social problems and he is likely to begin using words like alienation and parameters. Let him cover arms control matters and right off his copy is likely to be filled with indigestible acronyms like SALT and MBFR. (Those two terms mean "strategic arms limitations talks" and "mutual balanced force reductions," but the poor reader doesn't know it or much care, even when this gibberish is written out. Roadblocks like those are a signal to many a reader that the story is not for him and he'd better turn to something else.

I found out the other day, on a hunch, that my own wife didn't know what a mortar was. When she would see a story from Vietnam about an enemy mortar attack on a town or firebase, she had no idea what was going on. It didn't know what a mortar was. When she would see a story from Vietnam about an enemy mortar attack on a town or firebase, she had no idea what was going on. It turned out that "firebase" was another mystery. The military jargon that clogs the dispatches from Southeast Asia could be one reason that the war has become such a bore to the reader that escalations like the present one come as such a big surprise.

My introduction to the Far East was as a complete novice—not that I recommend that approach. It would have been helpful to have read a couple of books on the subject when my managing editor suddenly ordered me to Laos in 1960 to look into Joseph Alsop's reports at the time that a major Communist offensive was under way and that Chinese troops were taking part. I wasn't even sure of the name of the capital, and it was a shock to arrive at the little Vientiane air strip, climb down the ladder from the DC-3, and find myself in mud over the tops of my well-shined oxfords.

The Associated Press correspondent, Forrest "Woody" Edwards, out to meet the plane and see who might be coming in, told me that all the Americans there were dying because of the unhealthful, humid climate. He said, "My athlete's foot has reached my knees."

Another American who greeted me was Robert Elegant of Newsweek. He said I was fortunate to have just arrived. "You are not the prisoner of things you have already written," he said. I soon found out what he meant. The U.S. embassy and its military attaches put on a big briefing and told us about an important four-day battle for a fortress of strategic significance. The Laotian government continued to put out the word that Chinese troops were involved. I left the immediate story to the wire services and went out to see for myself.

A few of us organized a flight up to the village of Sam Teua, where the battle was said to have been fought. The commander showed us a few holes in the ground where he said mortar shells had exploded. He pointed to one place where the offensive had scored a hit—a bamboo pole holding up the thatched roof of the command shed had been broken and tied with a piece of rag.

No enemy troops had been seen, he said. The two dozen defenders of the few hilltop huts that made up the "fortress" had run into the brush and hidden until the shooting stopped. They knew that their outpost had been occupied because someone had been using their cooking pots while they were gone.

And what about the Chinese troops? The commander told us with a straight face that runners had brought word from another village that some strange soldiers had been seen approaching. When the young women of that other village went out to greet them carrying bowls of flowers, the soldiers thanked them in a strange tongue. So, he said, they must have been Chinese.

It should be noted that this business of hopping into the middle of a story without any preparation has its limits. It seemed almost too much when I was on my way back from six weeks in China and other points in the Far East on this last trip to be given an unexpected additional assignment. I had just reached New Delhi, planning to spend about a week there before returning to Washington. St. Louis called with the news that Prime Minister Heath had just announced the imposition of direct rule from London on Northern Ireland. How soon could I get to Belfast? That was a Friday night, and there was no plane for 24 hours. When the plane finally left, it meant a 14-hour flight to London and then on to Belfast. I made it Monday morning, in time to phone a story for Monday afternoon's paper. As it happened, I got on the last plane before a general strike by the Protestants closed the airport and just about everything else.

a mass of history and tradition

The problem there was the mass of history and tradition that has piled up on both sides of a struggle that directly involves only a million and a half people in six small counties. Suddenly I began hearing about dozens of battles and martyrs and heroes and scoundrels going back three or four hundred years, each one on everyone's lips as a ready excuse for a parade or a riot or a bar-room argument. Even a good guidebook would have been a help, but the bookstores were on strike. Fortunately, other reporters already on the scene were willing to help a newcomer get his bearings. And Ireland has the further journalistic advantage of being a place where the principal figures—from William Craig and the Rev. Ian Paisley to the leaders of the Irish Republican Army—are mostly listed in the telephone book.

Let me urge those of you who go into news work to look on each new assignment as a challenge—something to understand, make clear to the reader and make interesting enough to get it read. Learn a lot about the fields you go into, but don't get swallowed up in a comfortable little womb where you already know the material and the lingo and where you run the risk of writing more than anyone wants or needs to know.
Tortured Prose:

The Language vs. the Headline

By ROBERT C. McGIFFERT

Professor McGiffert asks why, in a craft that prides itself on its precision, the headline continues to drift at such a distance from the main currents of the language. He suggests that many newspaper people believe headlines are a sort of non-speech and are not entitled to the respect and protection accorded other writings. Using numerous examples, he summarizes findings of a summer-long study of headline practices in 100 daily newspapers, and he concludes that standards of writing are lower in headlines than in any other part of the newspaper, not excluding the classified ads. Professor McGiffert joined the Montana journalism faculty in 1966, having worked for 16 years as a reporter and city editor and for four years as a faculty member at Ohio State University. Last year he was promoted from associate professor to professor of journalism.

The worst writing in the western world appears in newspaper headlines.

Consider these examples:

Four years of high school in one year feat
My Lai charges expected to drop
Police assert hair discovered came from cat
'Solve his problems' a warrant for death
Owner and tenant of exploded house pot case suspects
Candlelight killer hunted here and L.A.
Navy takeover of island opposition growing
Half-billion city budget asked by mayor studied
Campus left, McCarthyism tied

Such assaults on the ear and mind are committed daily on U.S. copy desks, and not just by the harried multi-hatted people who staff the smaller papers. Of the nine newspapers responsible for the examples, five have circulations of more than 100,000 and only two have less than 50,000.

Tortured language may not be the rule in American headlines, but it's not the exception. The examples are representative of hundreds of unclear, ungrammatical, inaccurate and just plain hard-to-read heads that I turned up during a study of daily newspapers in 1970.

At first I just wanted to learn how well the traditional rules on splits and verb heads were holding up, how much headway the "down" style was making, how many enclaves of multiple decks and inverted pyramids remained, and in what directions copy desks were moving on similar trivial matters. It soon became clear, however, that in the present condition of the headwriter's art, style is about as important as a point after touchdown when the score is 56-6.

I covered 100 newspapers in my survey, examining a week's issues of each, and I concluded that standards of writing are lower in headlines than in anything else in the paper, including the "In Memoriam" poems.

Observance or non-observance of the traditional split rules had little to do with the clarity of individual heads. Even so, copy desks that observed the rules produced generally more readable heads than those that didn't.

Despite pockets of permissiveness, the split rules still govern a majority of desks, and the "verb" head—the head with no subject, grammatically speaking—remains unpopular. Only one paper in five permits it.
The 100 newspapers came from every state and the District of Columbia, and ranged in circulation from just under 10,000 to more than two million. They comprised 10 per cent of all dailies with circulations of 10,000 or more. Their combined circulation was 20.4 million, or about a third of the total daily circulation in the country.

I fear they were broadly representative of the American press. Because I'm a former deskman, and rather proud of it, it is with no joy that I report that three-fifths of them consistently published many terrible heads. The word "terrible" means, primarily, "unreadable," but it also covers adjectives like "inaccurate," "misleading," "ungrammatical" and "incomprehensible." I do not, however, use it in reference to peccadillos like violation of the split rules. True, a badly split head can be hard to read:

Meet June
26 On Grant
School Unit

Or it can be ambiguous, at least momentarily:

Unbalanced Reagan
Budget Up To Senate

Usually, though, the split itself does not affect clarity. Even so, the study showed a correlation between splits and the over-all quality of a newspaper's headlines. Sixty-nine of the hundred papers avoided bad splits most of the time, and 34 of those produced heads that were generally clear. By contrast, only five of the 31 more permissive papers deserved good ratings, in my judgment, for clarity and accuracy. It would seem that deskmen who are accustomed to the discipline of the split rules show greater respect for the language than those who are not.

**standards of lucid language**

That is not to suggest that broader application of the split rules could cure the headline's ills. No cure will be in prospect until copy editors begin to apply the same standards of lucid language to heads that they apply to body copy. Those standards certainly should include a prohibition of the obnoxious verb head—absolute when applied to the plural ("Probe Love Life of Bald Eagle"), but conditional, possibly, when applied to the singular ("Bags Elk"). The question of rules aside, the study showed that the ailments of the American headline are persistent and severe. The most debilitating are ambiguity, faulty grammar, lack of clarity, faulty punctuation, lack of attribution, lazy attribution, poor usage and just plain inept writing.

The question, of course, is why, in a craft that prides itself on its precision, the headline continues to drift at such a distance from the main currents of the language. It's not enough to blame miserable heads on the strictures of the unit count. The need to trim a story doesn't justify loose language in body copy, and while the problem differs in the headline, the principle should not. The answer, I think, is that many newspaper people have convinced themselves that heads are a sort of non-speech, not entitled to the respect and protection accorded other writings.

The evidence of such an attitude is overpowering. Take the ambiguous headline. While allowance can be made for the deskman who sometimes doesn't "hear" his head the way the reader may, it is hard to feel compassion for the editor who thinks he is licensed to delete any word or phrase at all, regardless of grammatical purpose or importance to meaning. Time after time a vital auxiliary verb gets shot down:

- Reds in Ceylon May Not Be as Potent as Thought
- Rookie Admits Prisoners Struck
- Often a whole phrase is blasted from view:

**U.S. Planning to Trim Million Military Men**

(The story dealt with a reduction in troop strength, not a mass haircut. The head could have said: "U.S. Strength to Be Cut by Million Men.")

The desk ignores the sequence of a story's events:

- Two Accused
- Of Kidnaping
- Slain Man
- Boy Hurt; Runs
- Into Bleachers

It forgets that proper nouns can have common meanings:

- "Swift Bar Patron Nips Suspect." (The story was an anticlimax. A patron in a saloon known as the Swift Bar had grabbed a theft suspect.)
- Lack of clarity is rampant on papers that use lots of verb heads. The classic objection to the verb head is that it reads like an imperative:

- Arrest man for assault
- Find body in Wildwood
- Kill currency office patron on South Side
- Visit China for three weeks

I suppose the regular reader gets used to this and stops thinking that he's being ordered to make arrests, find bodies, kill people or leave the country. But that melancholy supposition can justify the verb head only when the wretched critter is at its best. At its worst, the verb head is incomprehensible on first reading. That is because words like probe, report, study, air, charge, arrest, rule, increase, hike and other headline favorites can be verbs or nouns, and until the reader has studied the entire head, he can't know which part of speech he's dealing with. Look at these monsters:

- Probe Report Boy
- Struck By Driver
- Report Katyn Deaths
- Story Costs 5 Years
- Worry About
- Mobile Homes
- 'Blight' Here
When you’ve figured those out, try this pair of grammatical horrors that switch to the verb form in mid-transmission:

Car Crosses Lawn, Hits Home, Arrest Girl Driver
7 Antiwar Demonstrators Given 5 Years; Charge Draft Record Destroyed

Offensive as those heads are, they seem almost grammatically pure when compared to these combinations of verb head and verbless "label":

Kidnap threat, guard son of Princess Meg
S.I.U. rampage, gas dorms

The label head, which often has no verb, is at the opposite pole from the verb head. Many newspapers use it effectively, particularly over feature stories. The New York Times struck a poetic note with this one:

Along the Mekong, the Wailing of Exiles

And the New York Daily News hit a breezy note with this:

Yale Now, or Whatever Happened to Boola Boola?

The label also can do the job nicely over a news story. The St. Louis Post-Dispatch often leads the paper with labels like these:

White House Meeting
On Slump In Economy
New Cambodia Drive
By South Vietnamese
Blockade By Saigon
Off Cambodia Coast

But the label seems to be a high-risk head form, and unless it's composed with care it can be mighty unclear. Like the verb head, it can camouflage the function of words:

Donohue, White Pick Tonight;
Two-Man Duel For Lt. Governor

What are Donohue and White picking? And what is their connection with the duel for lieutenant governor? The answer to each question is the same: Nothing. The story reported that a state political convention would pick Donohue, White or a third man as its candidate for governor. The candidates for lieutenant governor were two other guys.

**problems of the label headline**

Here are some other heads that illustrate the problems of the label:

STATE’S FRIEND TILL MIDNIGHT
(Meaning: Highway rest area closed, midnight to 8 a.m.)

TERMS IN DRAFT RAID
(Meaning: Seven sentenced to prison terms for destroying draft records.)

 Pry At Troop Cutback
(Meaning: Department of Defense announces reduction in troop strength.)

CHOICE OF SERVICE FOR DRAFT GROUP
IN A HOUSE BILL
(Meaning: House bill would permit young men to risk the draft lottery or volunteer for some form of government service.)

HEARNES WORD ON M.U. ISSUE
(Meaning: Governor Hearnes clarifies position on punishment of campus protesters.)

The label head is not inherently bad. It makes trouble because copy desks take extraordinary liberties with it.

The headwriter's callousness toward sentence structure and clarity are nearly matched by his casual approach to grammar. A common error is inconsistency between verb and subject. Since this one crops up in papers that are generally well-edited, it's reasonable to suspect that printers are doing some editing on the side to avoid returning busted heads. Whatever the reason, grammatical disasters like these are common:

Squad Of Senators Say Asian Trip Worthwhile
Ustinov, Robert Young Each Capture 3rd Emmy
Wholesale Arrests, Barrage of Tear Gas Ends Isla Vista Sit-in

Some writers (or printers) get heads to fit by changing adverbs to adjectives:

Span Crashes Hurt Four, None Serious

And some get a fit by just saying to hell with everything:

Route Grew, 6 to 38, Is Hour Boy-of-Month

I've wondered sometimes why students can't understand that headlines must be punctuated. Now I know. Punctuation errors and oversights are so common in the commercial press that the kids are conditioned to them. The most common aberration is failure to punctuate at the end of the line or before attribution:

Academic Outreach
Needed Says McCarthy
Nixon Approves Ripon Program
Youth To Aid Policy Formation
New Rule On Track Grants
Will Help Vols Says Coach
Another corruption of language—the "near" syndrome.

Sometimes the unit count seems to govern the punctuation. In one issue, these two heads appeared:

Fact-Finders Visit Cambodia Base, Get GIs Attitude on War
Over Half of GI's Sent to Cambodia Are Reported Out

When clarity, grammar and punctuation take such a beating, it's not surprising that standard usage gets knocked around, too. I sympathize with the copyreader who's confronted by the word "discrimination," but lose patience when he exploits "bias" to solve the problem:

U.S. Bans Job Bias For Women
U.S. issues ban on Federal bias against women
Job Bias Against Women Prohibited

Another corruption of language—you could call it the "Near" Syndrome—appears frequently in stories, but its real home is the headline. "Near-riot" has become so common that perhaps it is acceptable. After "near-nervous breakdown," though, I wondered where it all would end. With near-explosion? Near-fire? Near-sickness? Near-murder? Near-meal? Come to think of it, if were going to travel this road, shouldn't the long-used airways term "near-miss" really be "near-crash"?

The names of political parties and political figures have caused headline problems for as long as anyone can remember. "FDR" and "Ike" were time-savers in their time and are sound precedents, I suppose, for referring to high government officials by initials only. It's straining things a bit, though, to let GOP stand for individual party members, as many papers do, like this:

One Democrat,
Four GOPs
In Favor

Objections to the spreading use of "Dem," "Dems," "Demo" or "Demos" may be based on prejudice. Nevertheless, I'm grieved to report that my survey turned up one or more of these corruptions in 29 papers, and I assume that if the study had been more extensive, it would have produced more.

"Viet" for every purpose

A good case can be made against the indiscriminate use of "Viet" and its variations—Viets, N. Viets, S. Viet, etc.—to refer to anything and everything Vietnamese. This corruption serves every purpose. As noun or adjective it can mean North Vietnam, South Vietnam, the Viet Cong, the North Vietnamese army, the South Vietnamese army and the Vietnamese people.

One issue of one paper included these varied usages:

U.S. Will Join Cambodia In Drive On Viets
Text of U.S. Statement on Aid to Viets
U.S. Supports New Viet Drive Into Cambodia

Undeniably, "Viet" is a useful short word, handy in dealing with a sticky headline problem, but it often obscures the direction of the headline:

S. Viet Slain
Top 5-Week Record

If you read "S. Viet" as a noun, you're going to have to re-read the head to get its meaning.

Furthermore, "Viet" doesn't always tell the reader whether North or South is the subject of the story:

Viets Storm Village;
Many Civilians Die

And the expression, I think, invites the copyreader to sink to headlinese:

Blood Bath by Cong
Held Viet Certainty
Immolation
Signals Viets' Indo Protest

Despite the problems, 54 of the papers used "Viet" and variations.

("To me, the most intriguing usage connected with the Indochina war was a headline reference to "Thai GIs.")

One of the most difficult headline problems is attribution. About half the papers were facing up to it and insisting on verbs of attribution. The results were often disastrous from a literary standpoint, but at least these chaps were trying. The others either used typographical devices to solve the problem, or just didn't bother to indicate attribution. Forty papers used the dash or colon before or after the name of the person or agency being quoted. Twenty-one—including some of the 40—weaseled out by using quotation marks.
marks, sometimes around the entire head. Eleven put attribution in the kicker, and eight just didn’t bother with it.

It may seem arbitrary to object to the colon and the dash as a substitute for an attributive verb. The practice does save units and often does permit use of a name when otherwise the attribution might have to be anonymous. The trouble is, papers that use the colon and dash at all use them to the point of monotony.

These heads were in a single issue:

Leonard: By Fall Total Integration
Kennedy: No New Taxes This Year
Laird: Tough Arms Verdicts May Be Taken
Dr. Eddings: Attitudes Are Shaped in Schools
Educator: Mixing Won’t Kill Quality
Watson: Nixon Will Support Quota

Tiresome, yet it’s better than letting quotation marks do the job. Look at this assortment:

Aluminum Plant Emission Proposal ‘Far Too Strict’
‘Police Use of Guns at Protests Popular’
‘Reds Station Missile Subs Off Greenland’
Radar System ‘Needs Study’
Plane Noise ‘Doesn’t Rate Tax Break’
‘Supreme Court Hampers Police’
‘Forced To Hire Unskilled’
‘Violence Begs Violence’
‘Electrical Rule From President’

Most of those heads don’t say anything. Except for being inaccurate, that’s the gravest sin of all.

**attribution in the kicker**

To judge from the survey, most newspapers still frown on use of the kicker to carry the attribution, and that’s a good thing. Still, attribution in the kicker beats none, as in these examples:

- GOP Too Weak To Fight GCW
- Minority Role Vital
- Nixon Aliens Student Moderates


On the papers that do it the hard way, heads that require attribution strike the language many low blows. These often result from changing “said to be” to “said,” “termed” to “termed as,” “told of” to “told,” “seen as” to “seen,” “ruled” to “ruled as,” “held to be” to “held” or “tells of” to “tells.”

One daily with a circulation of 85,000 tortures the word “said” like this:

- Most Billboards Said Off Roads
- Victim Said Pulled Over
- Death Area
- Chile Mine Nationalization Said Aided Montana Firm

Here are some of the survey’s other attribution disasters:

- Welch terms job panel behavior as inexcusable
- Probe of college slayings is termed as one-sided
- American Airlines tells gains
- Wife’s ride of terror told
- Jets to Israel hinted all set
- Carswell whites-only pact told
- Cambodia view seen Allen doom
- ‘Buying’ Thai forces seen anti-war spur
- Sawchuk’s death ruled as accidental
- Transplant funds said ‘a miracle’
- Morton urges listen to youth

Using punctuation to bandage the wounded doesn’t help much, either:

- Say, No Deal
- On Divorce by Vatican
- Tekite Pebbles May Be Of Lunar Origin, Belief
- Mitchell, Spouse a Democrat

Stories that deal with possibilities rather than established

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facts cause another headline problem. One way out is to end the head with a question mark. It's a lazy way, but it's mildly popular. "Question" heads appeared in 16 of the papers. On a story about prospects for a state lottery, it looked like this:

Lottery Due
With Santa?

Over a story about possible exoneration of a figure in the My Lai investigation, it looked like this:

Charges Thrown Out?

The My Lai head was one of scores providing evidence that sloppiness feeds on sloppiness. As written, the head suggests action already taken. Had the deskman had more respect for accuracy, he might have done it this way:

Case to Be Dropped?

Enough of that, or I'll seem to be advocating the question-mark device. Back to the kicker. While we've seen that some papers use it for attribution, most ban it as a purveyor of other kinds of essential information. A few, however, use the kicker for everything, and these few include a couple with circulations of more than 250,000. They commit crimes like these:

May Sue
To Play Drums
Past Experience Has Shown
Public Support Needed For Wage,
Price Controls to Work
To Oust Patrolman
Smith Aide Probes Mathis Request
Jobless Pay
Monterey Cutoff
On Hair, Skirts

The colon, like the kicker, also is used indiscriminately on many papers, large and small. A daily with a circulation of 190,000 dealt in this cavalier fashion with a story about a driver who had been frightened by a cicada:

Locust Scare:
Auto Crashes
Into House

Other metropolitan papers go crazy with colons:

Counterfeiting:
Easier, Cheaper
Welfare Reform:
Revised Version
Charlottesville
Loss: Outhustled
Marshall Harris:
Quick on Trigger
In House Debate
Protester's
Sentence:
Raise Trees
Hawaii Abortions:
862 in 3 Months
Humphrey's Priorities:
Peace, Population and Pollution

It gets pretty tedious. Beyond that, I guess there isn't much wrong with the practice, just as there's not much wrong with any technique that produces clear, accurate, grammatical heads in literate English. Heads unlike these, which somehow didn't fit into this doleful story before:

Sightless couple wed after adult blind home meeting
Elusive COSVN triple size military expected
Insurance bills due to firm collapse
Blacktop projects support reward
Press data users rate hike delayed
Fewer car mishap deaths hoped

And one more, composed especially for this moment:

100 Newspaper Headline Language Practices,
Problems Survey Report End Reached
Proposals by a Radio-TV Pioneer:  
The Future of Montana Broadcasting

By ED CRANE

This article is based on excerpts from a speech by Mr. Craney to the annual convention of the Montana Broadcasters Association June 11, 1971, at Many Glacier. Mr. Craney, former president of the Greater Montana Foundation, started the first radio station in Butte and the first television station in Montana.

Montana supports far more broadcast stations than does any metropolitan area with a comparable population. Consequently, the state's broadcasters need to coordinate their efforts to keep Montana radio and television alive and vigorous. There is a genuine need for a governor's advisory board or commission, such as the one appointed by Gov. Ed Johnson of Colorado, if Montana broadcasters are to continue to provide objective service to their scattered listeners and viewers.

Conferences are going on this month (June, 1971) to set aside channels for satellite operation. Eventually we will have satellite-to-home reception, and such broadcasting will be national and international in scope. If we subsequently take away the big box-office shows from the local stations, then local and state politicians, local advertising, even local news events won't attract large audiences between phonograph records, musical shorts and old movies. Satellite-to-home broadcasting will dilute and kill both ground-oriented broadcasting and cable.

Cable firms have been selling the idea that with multiple channels they provide greater access than does a single wide-coverage broadcast channel. Who will have access to the microphone and camera of the satellite origination on either radio or television? Certainly not your mayor, your county commissioner, your governor, congressman or senator. Only the French seem concerned with this problem today, and they demand that access be defined precisely. And no one talks about the destruct vulnerability of such a system.

Actually, isn't our television system of 1971 somewhat similar to our AM radio of the 1920s and early 1930s? We used to have 40 clear channels, and access to the microphones of those 40 AM channels was very limited. Sen. Clarence Dill and Congressman Wallace White reduced 40 clear channels to 25. Six channels were set aside for use only. Now there are only 12 of these wasteful channels—and we have FM too. There are almost 7,000 broadcast stations, and you don't hear about problems of access to radio.

In the northern part of Canada, in Australia, and on islands in the Pacific, little one-watt, five-, 10- and 100-watt VHF transmitters are used. Some of these are by film chain, some with tape and a few have live camcords. Some, of course, have all three types of input. Programming is flown to most of these spots for a week at a time and these little transmitters are the outgrowth of what we know as TV translators. Montana has more than 200 of them, while Japan, smaller in area than Montana, has more than 3,000.

In rural areas without electrical interference, translators are good for 20 or 30 miles when directionalized. However, in cities with man-made electrical interference about five miles is an effective limit. In Wellington, New Zealand, translators are used for areas as small as the four city blocks. Their coverage pattern can fit any shape.

If properly engineered, translators—as stations—could be interlarded into the VHF portion of our TV spectrum without interference. Since the Maximum Service Broadcast would fight this, another answer must be sought. It could be achieved by taking one single VHF channel of service in the densely populated areas of our country and using it exclusively for these low-powered "neighborhood" stations. New York City could have several.

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ethnic group could have access. As a result many new jobs
would be opened, and reception could be enjoyed by every-
one, rich or poor. This would be broadcasting—free over-
the-air broadcasting—supported by advertising dollars. It
would symbolize the continuance of the system envisaged
by the authors of the Radio Act, that document which
built in the United States a unique broadcasting system free
of license or fee for its reception.

Think it over. This may be the only salvation for the
continuation of local community broadcasting. Such a sys-
tem would remove the access pressure from the present TV
stations just as the six local AM and the much-duplicated
regional AM frequencies removed access problems from
the clear channels.

The state's broadcasters are now building through the
Greater Montana Foundation a written history of Montana
broadcasting to be housed in the Montana Historical So-
ciety Library. We should be doing better than this. We
should have somewhere in Montana a communications
museum. There is no sound reason why all our museums
should deal with history before 1900. True, communica-
tion started here with the Indian's smoke signal, but the
greatest advances in communication have been brought
about in the lifetimes of many of us in this room. Before
all the relics of cat-whiskers and crystals, of vacuum tubes
and carbon microphones find their way to a refuse dump,
let us solicit the help of all broadcasters to come up with
a museum to note properly today’s and tomorrow’s great
changes. There are others who will join us in building
such a museum. Telegraph, telephone, bus, rail, and avia-
tion all have contributed to communication. You broad-
casters should become the sparkplug to get this going.

And as a reminder, seek out and record every old-timer
of substance in your area. We are fast losing a great deal of
living history. Then give these tapes to the Greater Mon-
tana Foundation for the Montana Historical Society.

The Greater Montana Foundation was started in 1958
by Connie and me with the hope that our funds—or at
least some portion of them, at least those overlooked by
the tax collector—might do something for the people of
Montana.

Our chief knowledge lay in the business of broadcasting.
We felt that by encouraging better copywriting, better an-
ouncing, better programming, the general public would
benefit. We felt that if there were some way to bring the
broadcaster and those being educated in broadcasting closer
together, more of these students would remain in Montana
and the people would benefit.

With the advent of 1959, Uncle Sam changed the laws
relating to foundations, and we found it mandatory to make
the Greater Montana Foundation strictly an educational
foundation. While that seems simple, such is not the case.

We already had done considerable work with the museums
of Montana. We made up the first comprehensive listing
of Montana museums, searched out their locations and out-
lined their contents. We instituted museum seminars in
an effort to forestall all of them becoming a repository
from local basements and attics. However, in 1969 the
Internal Revenue Service declared that museums were not
"educational." Now that work is terminated.

Montana and the federal government are investing
heavily in vocational schools. One of these schools in Mon-
tana will be offering instruction in broadcasting. The In-
ternal Revenue Service states that such vocational schools
are not "educational."

We have some schools of higher learning in Montana
outside the University System. For the Greater Montana
Foundation, the IRS says these are not "educational."

Confusing? Yes! This is so confusing, in fact, that
the Greater Montana Foundation lost all its revocable
trusts and was operating during 1970 exclusively on funds
from irrevocable trusts and gifts. Teddy Traparish changed
his will in January, 1970, after a Greater Montana Founda-
tion meeting, and we lost his continuation, after death, of
the Announcer of the Year Awards.

In my own case, I canceled all revocable trusts and am
only this month reinstating part of them. This has been
done because of the confusion attending pay-out-after-
death provisions. We hope that clarifying changes will be
made in the laws. The funds now in the Greater Montana
Foundation are earmarked for the improvement of mass
communication for the public good in Montana. Might
it not be well for you to apprise the Montana congressional
delegation of the shortcomings of the present tax law with
its IRS interpretations and urge changes for Montana's
benefit?

To me, the education of young people in vo-tech schools
is as worthy of our help as is education in a four-year course
in our universities. Some of our stations may be better able
to afford the vo-tech graduate than one from Missoula or
Bozeman. Also, the help that might be given our Montana
Historical Society and Museum, or any other responsible
museum, is certainly of an educational nature for future
citizens of and visitors to Montana.
Let us say—flat out—that my addressing you on the subject of your trade is an act of the sheerest effrontery. As I groped for an image of that relation, I thought first of a partially lobotomized patient led up to speak, in drooling gratitude, to the American College of Neurosurgeons. In other moods, I felt like a Viet Cong sneaking in to harangue the Air Force Association. But the image that has recurred most frequently is that of a customer who, after many years of eating, finally gets to meet Howard Johnson and Colonel Sanders.

That is to say, I represent that majority of Americans who still read, even with loyalty, the daily newspaper. I also represent that minority of Americans who actually read editorials.

What follows will be an amusing or appalling revelation of ignorance about the details and conditions of your craft. But—because I am your ultimate consumer—my remarks about your group and its product, however distorted they may be, should hold for you a certain morbid fascination.

I must at this point thank you for taking time to answer my questionnaire. As peculiar as that sheet may have seemed, it did help me confirm many of my intuitions about your group and its product, however distorted they may be, should hold for you a certain morbid fascination.

I found—beyond the obvious protectiveness of humor—a reticence remarkable in a profession dedicated to probing for truth. A friend who once worked at a Naval reception center told me that of all the groups passing through those most reluctant to disrobe were physicians.

Perhaps we should not be surprised that newsmen like to ask questions but not to answer them, to detect "news" but not to be "news."

From the questionnaire emerged a collective portrait, and I'd like to note some of its characteristics and suggest some relations among them. In age you range from 26 to 65, falling roughly into three clusters: The 26-36 group is made up of persons furiously—and mistakenly—sure of their identity; the 45-55 crowd is in fruitful, complex doubt; and the post-55s know who they are, and enjoy it—perhaps a bit overmuch.

I found some correlation between age and personal tastes, but a profession that prides itself on its independ­ence may be glad to hear that quirky individuality on many points is its most characteristic attribute. You reveal your­selves as stronger, more attractive persons in the ques­tionnaire than in your editorials—I'd rather meet than read you . . . a point to which I shall return. (Or should we file it under "Relations between editor and publisher"?)

Your answers to my standard questions about your family, hometown and educational backgrounds contained few surprises.

Predictably, your fathers were mainly professionals, although a high proportion of those of you who write the
best editorials (or who at least are associated with the editorial pages that contain them) come from “below,” from working-class homes. Make of that what you will—
i am uncertain whether it means that “when you’re number two you try harder” or whether lived experience in two
social classes gives one greater breadth of vision.

As for your birthrank, the Freudians among you will
smile knowingly hearing that a full 56 per cent of you are
first-borns, 30 per cent are the youngest of your sib­
lings, with a scant 14 per cent coming in the middle.
(Middle children, presumably affable, jolly and disgust­
ingly well-adjusted, go into advertising or some of the
snappier branches of engineering.)

Most of you grew up in small towns—getting a chance to
“see life steadily and see it whole.” A study made some
years ago showed that something like 90 per cent of those
holding first- and second-rank managerial positions in New
York City grew up in towns of 25,000 and fewer. One
might expect a change now that America’s urbanization is
nearly complete, but I noted that even your younger mem­
bers are small-towners.

In educational background, nearly all of you hold a B.A.
earned at a college either respectably decent or clearly
top-rank, with some additional graduate work, usually from
a first-rate university.

a primary virtue and flaw

Question seven, as you may recall, asked: “What would
your family classify as your primary virtue and flaw?” Sur­
prisingly, this drew the greatest number of purely smart­
aleck answers and was far and away the winner in the vote
on which was the silliest question. I couldn’t help being
amused when I opened one questionnaire and found “Inde­
pendence!” listed as both virtue and flaw, only to receive
another the next day from another person, but identically
phrased. The second instance was more persuasive, how­
ever, in that the respondent had refused to answer the other
questions.

Nonetheless, I found the degree of discomfort this ques­
tion elicited extremely significant, certainly more so than
the actual content of the answers. It suggests to me that
there is a serious, schizophrenic split in your image of
yourselves. You will not claim, nor even admit, a vital con­
nection between your public and private personae. It is as
put it bluntly: Be more nakedly, unashamedly human (and
thus humane) at the office and more heroic at home; that
is to say, be the same whole person around the clock.

It was flattering to find that of all other occupations you
would choose as an alternative, the one named most often
(with law/government second and “no desire to change”
third) was my own—teaching. I have no idea why you are
so inclined. Is it nostalgia for the peaceful green campus
and the pleasure of bouncing Pure Thought resonantly off
the blackboard? A lust to have a living audience? Or a
captive one? The chance to pass along all that you know?
A driving interest in a particular subject field? At any rate,
I hope you will feel equally complimented to know that
most academics—or English teachers, at least—have a
yearning to be editors or syndicated columnists, to reach the
whole adult audience, to see one’s words in semi-permanent
form rather than have them drift away forever at the sound
of the buzzer ending the class hour. On our end, however,
we envy you less than traditionally we have envied you; this
seems to be a difficult time in which to be an editor. I am
much less certain than in the past about what editorials I
would write, given the opportunity. For Americans are
sorely divided now, even within themselves. Who today can
be wholly certain he knows exactly what “the public inter­
est” is? Even the very notion of a profession is being ques­
tioned. All professions today—yours, mine, law, medicine,
arms, business—are under attack.

Yet I was impressed by the tone of your responses to that
question. I did not find cynicism, self-disgust or smugness.
Today, a profession (such as your own) that neither re­
gards itself as immune to criticism nor flounders in lost
faith must be rated as healthy.

In probing your current intellectual sources and influ­
ces, I began with the question of how many magazines
you subscribe to with your own personal money. Little did
I know that so many would freak out over the phrase “per­
sonal money.” But peering through the dust kicked up by
that query, I noted the range—from zero to “God only
knows!” (That latter phrase is the mark of the man who is
afraid to admit how many—even to himself, let alone his
wife; it’s the infallible sign of your true magazine buff.)
Assuming that one subscribes to kooky personal favorites
he would hesitate to ask the publisher to pay for, the aver­
age number is (to me) surprisingly low. Is it not a truism
of journalism that each section of a newspaper appeals to,
is read by, a specialized fraction of the total audience? That
being so, I should have thought that editorial writers would
be heavy subscribers to a diversity of egghead, low-circula­
tion journals. Presumably they would do this to stay up
with and maybe even a bit ahead of their specialized audi­
ence, just as sportswriters are expected to be somewhat out
front of their readers.

Equally disheartening, the intellectual level and variety
of the magazines cited as being influential was relatively
low. No Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists, no Partisan Re­
view or Hudson Review, no Rolling Stone, no Sports Car
Graphic, no Zanzibar Metaphysics Quarterly. I was taken
aback to find you claiming as influence things that aren’t
very much better than what you write. Are you really only
provincial rewriters of Newsweek?

As for “favorite living novelists,” your answers were all
over the map, but the American map—no Europeans were
nominated. And even more significantly, perhaps, few of
those novelists named (including several who are dead—
don’t you read the newspapers?) have built their reputa­
tions on the base of their achievements in style.

Your choice of poet seemed largely to be tied to your
age. Your answers tended to be whatever poet was academ-
ically fashionable at the time you took Sophomore Lit. Survey. (As an English teacher, I should be warned by this—whatever I teach in a given year is likely to stick with those students forever.)

If I push the point about poetry, it is because I had assumed it went without saying. Yet—apparently, judging from your perfunctory listing of yesteryear’s Big Names and a strong preference for the sentimental—it is necessary to push it. Put bluntly, reading poetry regularly helps the man who must write in a hurry. Editorial writers live in the arena, caught between the twin pressures of being responsible about crucial issues and of being on time. Thus, language—style—is the first to get squeezed out. It is terribly tempting to fall back on cliche or, at best, on the merely pedestrian. You should habitually read the best contemporary poets to refresh your sense of language. I see this as a necessary cleansing after your obligatory daily plunge into the turgid stream of AP prose, PR releases, bureaucratese and other bastardized forms of our lovely language.

As for current nonfiction books, again I found no single big winner and, again, the level was disappointingly low. The titles given were mainly current events or popular sociology or “insider” stuff about journalism. There was no philosophy, no science—in short, nothing that would test or stretch the way you habitually define Man.

Your answers about music were another matter. There were some stereotyped and vaguely abstract responses (especially from the young). But there did emerge a clear winner. Your number one favorite in Heiligenstadt is—hand me the envelope, please—Beethoven! Which I am sure he would be quite glad to hear—if he could hear. I saw this perhaps as a sympathy vote by editors deafened by the racket and rumble of Linotypes and presses. Or maybe—you crew of Peanuts readers—it was the one composer’s name you could spell. Or maybe it is a signal that as Zeus the Thunderer you’d prefer to be judged on power rather than elegance.

On the cars you drive I found a division into two camps—both predictable. Just like everybody else, slightly more than 50 per cent of you drive GM, and as I had expected among editors, most of that group had decided to flaunt their savoir-faire from behind the wheel of an Olds. Not far behind is the reverse snob tooling along in his VW, Travelall or battered Jeep (with the words “Battered Jeep” painted on the sides). What an image of your treasured crusty independence: Driving off in your battered Jeep—in caravans. A whole herd of independent minds!

For my own guidance I had asked what points made in critiques you are sick of hearing. This elicited relatively few answers, with no consistent pattern. What I seemed to get was an assortment of individual wound reports. If so, you should have a lively, bloody afternoon in your small-group sessions.

**some impressions**

Let me turn now to impressions garnered from analysis of your editorials and editorial pages.

I had descended on them, red pen in hand, with the freshman comp instructor’s famed sadistic glee, anticipating finding some real howlers to dangle before you. Surprise! There was not a one that I would call really bad.

But only a few achieved real excellence. Now I am aware of the rotten, noisy conditions under which most editorials are produced—just as I am certain that you are aware of the rotten, noisy conditions under which most editorials are read. Yet, surely, you could do better and do it oftener. Taken all in all, your editorials have a gray, middle-class WASP tone. Reading them, the net effect was like being in a small-town Presbyterian church on a muggy morning in mid-August. It is indisputably “nice.” It is possibly “good for the soul.” But, gentlemen, in no way can you call it exciting.

They blurred together. No identity. I could rarely tell, from internal evidence, what paper they were from or what city or even—with one exception—what state. Over-all, they seemed to be written by one man, except for Montana, where they all seemed to be written by another man.

May I be bold enough to say that editorials are the Muzak of the newspaper biz? I shall be so bold, knowing from your answers to the music question that a good share of you will take that as a compliment.

Let me spray you now with a shower of unrelated observations about the editorial page as a whole—make-up, “op ed” pages and like matters.

First, I noted a trend toward addition of an “op ed” page, either daily or weekly, and/or a marked turn toward deployment of rather long, syndicated, one-shot think pieces. (And both changes may be more widespread than appeared from your submissions, since “op ed” and other editorial-type pages were not sent me by several papers that contain them.) This phenomenon seems to be a symptom of a deeper-lying change. Nowadays newspapers are trying to be magazines (I’ll grant it does let you take the weekend off), while magazines are trying to be books (Harper’s—at least until the end of the Willie Morris reign—is a spectacular case in point). But even in magazines that always have run excerpts from forthcoming books, the excerpts are getting longer. And from my various dealings with trade and text publishers, it seems that many books yearn to be newspapers, getting terribly trendy, riding the headlines in quest for “relevance.” I would be tempted to write something called “The Greening of the Pastures” if I could just decide whether it should go in a newspaper, a magazine or a book.

Be that as it may, I think we must recognize that the editorial writer’s position vis-à-vis his audience has changed since the end of World War II. You were like the old-time reverend in a one-church town—all he had to do was show up every Sunday at 11 o’clock with some kind of sermon; if it happened to stir hearts and heads, that was all to the good. Then a flashy tent-show evangelist—let us call him Competing Mass Media—showed up in town on Saturday night, the congregation discovered it could get pretty good canned sermons on radio, and deacons brought in a youth pastor and a series of guest ministers. So now if you want to
preach you have got to be good or to be exclusive (that is, by focusing your comments on local issues).

Another point: I have noted a trend in make-up from the vertical to the horizontal and from the closed to the open. (I am afraid I am ignorant of the proper technical terminology of journalism to cover these matters, but I trust you can translate.) I am uncertain about the merits of this shift. My personal preference is for the old way. Its admittedly rigid linearity is a subtle reminder that newspapers are not stone tablets but are tied to the clock. On the other hand, the horizontal, open, chunky sort of make-up doesn't seem to bother the McLuhanesque young. I am a "publisher" of sorts—almost daily I post assorted clippings on my office door for the edification of colleagues and students. Since the doors on state-financed buildings are likely to be a touch on the thin side, I often can overhear comments, of which the following is typical:

“Saaay, Clyde, 'd'you see this?”

"Huh? Yeah, I started it but I'm reading this now; I'll finish that in a minute.”

So perhaps your waiving of the rules is a way of ruling the wave of the future.

Third, on the critique instructions sent out by your program chairman there was an assumption that it is an unalloyed good to vary the appearance of the editorial page day by day. As a reader I think I prefer that the editorial page be a point of stability, a reliable constant, if you will, in the grand chaotic circus that is the daily paper taken as a whole. I see the editorial page as the grid on the fever chart—the reassuring constant that allows one to measure the meaning of the fluctuations of the red lines. My reaction here is at some deep psychological level, difficult to articulate. But that is just how I know I am on the track of something important to readers. Headlines are headlines—Armageddon will get front-page treatment, but so will a city council meeting on non-Armageddon days, making it difficult to calibrate my adrenaline flow. When the steady voice of the editorialist rises a decibel or two, then I know I should get excited.

One last point from the perspective of the daily reader of the editorial page. I imagine that with some frequency you feel at a disadvantage in relation to the national columnists whose words appear alongside your own. After all, writing is the only thing they have to do—they are free to focus on raw charm, style, on profundity, or whatever virtue appears as a luxury that you ache for but can ill afford. But let me assert that you should be proud of your editorials. For the reader, a national column is a public address, its meaning in lived lives of the people who will be affected by the law that gives the actual shape to our lives and that therefore it is that area you should be writing about more often. Instead of the human side of public issues. Certainly you will recognize that it is custom as much as law that gives the actual shape to our lives and that therefore it is that area you should be writing about more often. In short, recognize that your reader is a man first, last and always and only with some reluctance a citizen.

Turning the coin, we find certain types of editorials sadly missing. Blatantly absent (with a single exception) was any reference to any of the arts. Nowhere did I find mention of any literary work, any art show, any play or film or any musical performer—except for notice of Stravinsky's death. Praise the arts if you can, condemn them if you must but, sirs, do not treat them as being beneath mention.

Another AWOL editorial was the kind I have labeled the Short Envelope Edit, meaning one treating the nitty-gritty problem. Won't somebody write that editorial?

I found that your editorials smack too much of the legislative and administrative. It is as if you saw yourselves too exclusively as critics, councillors or coaches of kings. You are more likely to applaud or sneer at the intricacies of maneuvering by which a law gets passed than focus on the meaning in lived lives of the people who will be affected by the law. You should pay less attention to the structure of our social institutions and more to their texture. You should write more frequently of the human side of public issues. Certainly you will recognize that it is custom as much as law that gives the actual shape to our lives and that therefore it is that area you should be writing about more often. In short, recognize that your reader is a man first, last and always and only with some reluctance a citizen.

Another complaint: Please lay off the easy targets. In small, square Northwestern towns, it is a cheap shot every time you sound off against hippies or the Mafia or evil metropoli a thousand or more miles away. Or, if you just must do this, why not free yourselves of the New Provincialism and attack distant, minor-league countries? I look back with nostalgia at those lovely editorials I read as a boy, the ones implying that if the King of Albania dared to set foot in Skookum County he could jolly well expect a punch in the nose.

I have always regarded editorial writers as the linguistic elite among newspapermen. Given that, perhaps you can understand my deep disappointment over your style as I ploughed through dozens of your editorials. Is it not symptomatic of your weakness in this area that among the many questions on your critique form there was not a single one dealing directly with style?

It is easy to laugh at group gatherings such as this, to
speak of a convention as a blend of "amour, alcohol and self-congratulation. I believe in conventions; they offer one a chance to lift his head from the daily grind, to take stock, measure strengths and weaknesses, and commune with fellow professionals, the only ones who Really Understand. I am sure that you all have spent considerable effort during the past year trying out in practice ideas picked up at the last meeting. But how many of you can claim visible, conscious improvement in your writing style during the past twelvemonth?

My idea of an acceptable editorial is one that is stylistically superior to one your reader could knock out in 40 minutes, starting from scratch, on the same subject. That is a modest aim, one you could set as a reasonable target for the year ahead.

Another puzzle: The best people ("best" meaning those with something trenchant, concrete and courageous to say on a significant issue) often wrote the worst sentences. Why? My guess is that in those cases the available time was poured into thorough research and arranging a clear thought structure.

We would all recognize that style is too complex a matter to solve lapses in it by magic formulae. But I would like to offer three specific suggestions for improving your editorials:

*Imagine each sentence you write as being read aloud and rapidly by a man at breakfast to his half-attentive wife. Will she get it? Try these sample sentences from your editorials:*

The crux of the plan is the addition of pre-election financial reporting to the present post-election requirement.

The Yakima River Canyon park, while undeniably needed to accommodate growing outdoor recreation throngs and to get the most and best use out of the present canyon route when it becomes a scenic and recreation highway with completion of the Yakima-Ellensburg route through the Firing Center, is a development that can be delayed for a time.

Concretely visualize every metaphor you use. What would happen if you asked your editorial cartoonist to turn your words into pictures? Try these samples:

That wall is being challenged by many concerned with the welfare of church-related schools.

The state chamber's conduct during the recent legislative session caused consternation among its most avid adversaries because its tanglefooted, shrill, fumbling behavior helped grease passage for environmental bills which needed all the help they could get.

Learn to hum or mime the aesthetic structure of your editorial. Any performing art (including editorial writing) develops a casual shorthand for discussing its standard formal structures. Years ago some of the jazzmen I knew accorded me the great privilege of sitting around during their rehearsals. The leader would say something like this:

O.K., cats, a B-flat blues, stick to the stock chord changes; we'll start with a unison riff—Boop-boodley-dee-boodley-dee-YAH. Got it? I'll take three choruses, Hank, you come in and wail your ass off for two, Julius you trade fours and eights with the drummer, and we'll take it out on the riff again.

A mimed version of your typical editorial structure would seem to me to run like this:

*Paragraph One: [Raucous clearing of the throat.]*

*Paragraph Two: [Right index finger pointing heavenward.]*

*Paragraph Three: [Right index finger slowly, with deliberation, counts off two points on left hand.]*

*Paragraph Four: [Right index finger rapidly counts off five points on left hand.]*

*Paragraph Five: [Left hand shades brow for peering-into-distance, as right arm makes dignified sweeping gesture to the east.]*

*Paragraph Six: [Right hand shades brow for peering-into-distance, as left arm makes dignified sweeping gesture to the west.]*

*Paragraph Seven: [Arms hanging limp, palms out, in brisk, slight shrug of shoulders.]*

*Paragraph Eight: [Same, but shrug is vague, slow and deep, ending in total limpness.]*

**pose of divine authority**

If all this seems unduly harsh, please remember that I am operating from a reader's idealized vision of what the editorialist should be. I would urge you to drop the pose of divine authority and accept and make visible, unashamedly, your simple humanity. Do not aim to be Zeus the Thunderer (your 19th- and early-20th-Century crusading editor) nor even Jove the All-seeing (your cool, shrewd commentator on legislative/administrative matters). Rather, you should settle for being wily Odysseus, content to be—in all its terror and glory—a man among men, *primum inter pares.*

Perhaps, for you, these references to classical mythology lack the requisite juice and punch. Then let us turn to a mythology closer to home for a comparable figure, a man we shall call Ol' Ed. You all know the scene. There is trouble in Prairie Gulch—a drought has left them with dry wells and dying sheep, rustlers have made off with many of the cattle, there has been a mysterious fire or two, and a crack has appeared in the church bell. Into a disturbed town wanders a Chinese lesbian deaf-mute midget—an ideal scapegoat. The townspeople swiftly gather as a lynch mob—much angry muttering, ending in cries of "String her up!" and roars of agreement. Ol' Ed steps forward and...
a hush falls. He spits judiciously and hooks his thumbs in the belt that runs below his paunch. Surveying the mob, he casts a steely glance at the leading hot-heads, drags his toe in the dust, and speaks: "You folks go right ahead. If the Good Lord hadn't meant for us to lynch Chinese lesbian deaf-mute midgets, He wouldn't a growed hemp for rope nor cottonwoods to string 'em from. You gotta right to do it. That's freedom, which is what I suppose all that fuss in Lexington back in '76 was all about. (Pause) But just remember, folks, (judicious spit no. 2) the last time we lynched a poor innocent Chinese lesbian deaf-mute midget, the next day a whole passel of 'em rode over the hill and burnt down the town and poisoned the wells."

What I am suggesting is that the editorialist is uniquely equipped to stand at the center of life and represent us all. Among the professions, it is he alone who is in intimate daily contact with every segment, every facet of community life. It is he who, standing at this focal point, can understand, weigh and balance the ideas and claims from various specialties. He is the common center. In an age of specialists it is ever more imperative that somebody specialize in being a generalist.

My own name for this ideal figure is the Man in the Piazza, drawn from my observation of Italian life. Two things can be said about Italians: They are very highly civilized, and very few of them buy newspapers—on the order of 10 per cent. (Let us not draw any causal relation between the two.) As a life-long newspaper addict myself, I could hardly comprehend how a society could function, and function so joyfully, with so low a level of newspaper readership. The mystery was solved once I realized how the custom of life in the piazza, in the public square, functions as a living newspaper. It is filled with buzzing chatter—exchanges of information trivial and grand, pursuits of and commentaries on the wall posters various groups use for issuing manifestoes, and—always—that steady flow of personal gossip, which provides both amusement and an opportunity to confirm (or occasionally alter) one's moral principles and one's understanding of how life is in its isness.

Who, among this hurly-burly, is the equivalent of the editorial writer? Frequent any piazza over a number of days and you can spot him. He is usually middle-aged, with a face made grave by experience yet softened by flickers of humor. Most of the time his head is inclined in attentive listening while his eyes scan the square, alert and skeptical. But when he speaks he is listened to. He does not orate. He does not preach. He does not even adopt a tone of outraged innocence. Softly but clearly, he suggests how the matter appears to him. In his words there is the ring of a wisdom based on his balancing of the claims of past, present and future, the claims of the ideal and the actual, the desirable and the probable. If he lived here he would have your job—would, from his station in the piazza, keep one eye on the new-book shelf in the library and the other on City Hall, on the till. He is the kind of man I should like you to be, in print as I suspect you are in person.

You will go from here inspired or stung (it doesn't really matter which as long as the result is improvement of your product) to do a better job in the year ahead. As you face that year, I wish you well in your labors. That is a thought I always try to convey to the crew of any airplane on which I happen to be a passenger.

Unfavorable Words About a 'Raving Lunatic'

Authors nursing unfavorable reviews can take solace that some giants of American literature were panned by philistines.

When one volume of poetry appeared in 1855, for instance, the critic of the Christian Examiner dismissed it as "an impertinence toward the English language." The New York Criterion called it "muck," "obscenity," and "entirely destitute of wit."

The Boston Intelligencer speculated that the author "must be some escaped lunatic raving in pitiable delirium," and proposed that he "be kicked from all decent society as below the level of the brute."

The New York Times asked: "Who is that arrogant young man who proclaims himself the Poet of the time, and who roots like a pig among a rotten garbage of licentious thoughts?"

Who, indeed, but Walt Whitman, author of "Leaves of Grass."

'A Course of Destruction':
Chief Charlot’s Speech of 1876

The following speech appeared in the Missoula (Mont.) Weekly Missoulian
April 26, 1876, page 3. Some typographical errors have been corrected.
Charlot, after whom the Montana town of Charlo is named, was chief of the Salish
Tribe. Having signed a treaty with the United States in 1855, the Salish hoped
to retain their land in the Bitterroot Valley south of the present site of Missoula.
But Congress in 1872 ordered them removed to the Jocko (later Flathead)
Reservation to the north. Charlot refused to move his people, so Alee, who was
willing to comply with the order, was named chief. In 1891, after years of
impoverishment, Charlot finally consented to move and led a band of about
200 remaining Salish to the new reservation. The Salish, KALispel (later Kalispell)
and Kootenai Tribes subsequently became the Confederated Tribes of the
Flathead. This speech appeared under the headline "Indian Taxation" with the
notation that it presented the question from an Indian standpoint.

Yes, my people, the white man wants us to pay him. He comes in his intent, and says we must pay him—pay him for our own—for the things we have from our God and our forefathers; for things he never owned and never gave us. What law or right is that? What shame or what charity? The Indian says that a woman is more shameless than a man; but the white man has less shame than our women. Since our forefathers first beheld him, more than seven times ten winters have snowed and melted. Most of them like those snows have dissolved away. Their spirits went whither they came; his, they say, go there too. Do they meet and see us here? Can he blush before his Maker, or is he forever dead? Is his prayer his promise—a trust of the wind? Is it a sound without sense? Is it a thing whose life is a foul thing? And is he not foul? He has filled graves with our bones. His horses, his cattle, his sheep, his men, his women have a rot. Does not his breath, his gums, stink? His jaws lose their teeth, and he stamps them with false ones; yet he is not ashamed. No, no; his course is destruction; he spoils what the Spirit who gave us this country made beautiful and clean. But that is not enough; he wants us to pay him besides his enslaving our country. Yes, and our people, besides, that degradation of a tribe who never were his enemies. What is he? Who sent him here? We were happy when he first came; since then we often saw him, always heard him and of him. We first thought he came from the light; but he comes like the dusk of the evening now, not like the dawn of the morning. He comes like a day that has passed, and night enters our future with him.

To take and to lie should be burnt on his forehead, as he burns the sides of my stolen horses with his own name. Had Heaven’s Chief burnt him with some mark to refuse him, we might have refused him. No, we did not refuse him in his weakness; in his poverty we fed, we cherished him—yes, befriended him, and showed the fords and defiles of our lands. Yet we did think his face was concealed with hair, and that he often smiled like a rabbit in his own beard. A long-tailed, skulking thing, fond of flat lands, and soft grass and woods.

Did he not feast us with our own cattle, on our own land, yes, on our own plain by the cold spring? Did he not invite our hands to his papers; did he not promise before the sun, and before the eye that put fire in it, and
in the name of both, and in the name of his own Chief, promise us what he promised—to give us what he has not given; to do what he knew he would never do? Now, because he lied, and because he yet lies, without friendship, manhood, justice or charity, he wants us to give him money—pay him more. When shall he be satisfied? A roving skulk, first; a natural liar, next; and, withal, a murderer, a tyrant.

To confirm, his purpose; to make the trees and stones and his own people hear him, he whispers soldiers, lock houses and iron chains. My people, we are poor, we are fatherless. The white man fathers this doom—yes, this curse on us and on the few that may yet see a few days more. He, the cause of our ruin, is his own snake, which he says stole on his mother in her own country to lie to her. He says his story is that man was rejected and cast off. Why did we not reject him forever? He says one of his virgins had a son nailed to death on two cross sticks to save him. Were all of them dead then when that young man died, we would be all safe now and our country our own.

his meanness ropes his charity

But he lives to persist; yes, the rascal is also an unsatisfied beggar, and his hangman and swine follow his walk. Pay him money! Did he inquire, how? No, no; his meanness ropes his charity, his avarice wives his envy, his race breeds to extort. Did he speak at all like a friend? He saw a few horses and some cows, and so many tens of rails, with the few of us that own them. His envy thereon baited to the quick. Why thus? Because he himself says he is in a big debt, and wants us to help him pay it. His avarice put him in debt, and he wants us to pay him for it and be his fools. Did he ask how many a helpless widow, how many a fatherless child, how many a blind and naked thing fare a little of that little we have. Did he—in a destroying night when the mountains and the firmaments put their faces together to freeze us—did he inquire if we had a spare rag of blanket to save his lost and perishing steps to our fires? No, no; cold he is, you know, and merciless. Four times in one shivering night I last winter knew the old one-eyed Indian, Keneth, that gray man of full seven tens of winters, was refused shelter in four of the white man's houses on his way in that bad night; yet the aged, blinded man was turned out to his fate. No, no; he is cold and merciless, haughty and overbearing. Look at him, and he looks at you—how? His fishy eye scans you as the why-oops do the shelled blue cock. He is cold, and stealth and envy are with him, and fit him as do his hands and feet. We owe him nothing; he owes us more than he will pay, yet he says there is a God.

I know another aged Indian, with his only daughter and wife alone in their lodge. He had a few beaver skins and four or five poor horses—all he had. The night was bad, and held every stream in thick ice; the earth was white; the stars burned nearer us as if to pity us, but the more they burned the more stood the hair of the deer on end with cold, nor heeded they the frost-bursting barks of the willows. Two of the white man's people came to the lodge, lost and freezing pitifully. They fared well inside that lodge. The old wife and only daughter unbound and cut off their frozen shoes; gave them new ones, and crushed sage-bark rind to put therein to keep their feet smooth and warm. She gave them warm soup; boiled deer meat and boiled beaver. They were saved; their safety returned to make them live. After a while they would not stop; they would go. They went away. Mind you; remember well: at midnight they returned, murdered the old father, and his daughter and her mother asleep, took the beaver skins and horses, and left. Next day, the first and only Indian they met, a fine young man, they killed, put his body under the lee and rode away on his horse.

Yet, they say we are not good. Will he tell his own crimes? No, no; his crimes to us are left untold. But the Desolator bawls and cries the dangers of the country from us, the few left of us. Other tribes kill and ravish his women and stake his children, and eat his steers, and he gives them blankets and sugar for it. We, the poor Flatheads, who never troubled him, he wants now to distress and make poorer.

I have more to say, my people; but this much I have said, and close to hear your minds about this payment. We never begot laws or rights to ask it. His laws never gave us a blade nor a tree, nor a duck, nor a grouse, nor a trout. No; like the wolverine that steals your cache, how often does he come? You know he comes as long as he lives, and takes more and more, and dirties what he leaves.
Report from Little Babylon

By WILBUR WOOD

Mr. Wood was graduated in 1964 from the University of Montana, where he majored in journalism and English and served as editor of the student daily, the Montana Kaimin. He subsequently studied with various poets at San Francisco State College. After earning a master's degree in 1967, he began writing for the independent muckraking newspaper The Bay Guardian, covering events such as the first Huey Newton trial, the student revolutionary movement in Mexico City, the San Francisco State College student strike, the People's Park and the San Francisco Bay oil spill. In May, 1971, he and his wife returned to his hometown of Roundup, Mont., to garden and write and begin developing a more natural and self-sufficient lifestyle than is possible in the city. His articles and poems have appeared in The Bay Guardian, The Nation, Kayak and Clear Creek.

1. lament

If I want to talk to you about the stripmining of the Bull Hills, I have to talk to you about how the Bull Hills were before the white man came. And to do that we have to see the land not as it is now, but as it was 80, 100, 200 years ago.

We have to see the many seams in the hills, dry streambeds, that begin with the ground indenting around a juniper tree, or at the base of a dead ponderosa, and running down through clusters of the present, shorter pines, over sandstone rock carved by—what? Not wind, not in these protected streambeds. Carved by water, nothing but water could carve and smooth and hollow out those rocks. But where's the water now?

A river, called the Musselshell, runs down a valley just north of the Bull Hills. The river runs out of mountains to the west, runs muddy now, did it always run so muddy?

Well, the river bottom is sandy, this is sandstone country, sandstone over layers of bituminous coal,

but I have a sense the river once did not run so muddy, I have a sense that once so much silt did not wash away down the river, that all the land around here once was deeper in grass, and the grass held the soil, keeping rain from washing it away,

and the grass held the rain, keeping it from evaporating, so that the water could percolate slowly down to fill those underground lakes in the sedimentary rock strata,

and in the Bull Hills, maybe, the streambeds ran with snow melt in the spring, ran down to feed the bigger streams—Hawk Creek, Fattig Creek, Parrot and Half Breed and Goulding Creeks—streams that still feed the Musselshell River; sections of these creeks still run all year, though I watched those sections dwindle to slow narrow trickles this past, dry summer.

Walking in the hills I dip down into a dry streambed, my nostrils twitch, I smell water, if I had to dig for water how far down would I have to go? if I were wandering these hills with just a knife, could I fashion a bow and some arrows? could I trap a rabbit? could I find enough food here? I know the Indians found ample food here.
There are deer in the hills, men from the town drive out in the fall and kill them with rifles. Some say a herd of 30 elk or so still roam the hills, staying to higher country. Barbed wire fences—you have to slip through them walking in the hills. Cattle in the fenced-in fields. Deer feeding among the cattle at evening.

When the Indians were here there were buffalo. Mostly the buffalo ranged through the valley, and out on the high plains north of the valley. But there were some kinds of buffalo that preferred the hills. Buffalo could move on before they grazed down the grass. No fences. But the cattle can't move on.

When the Indians roamed here there also were moose, bear, grouse, sage hens in the hills and the river valley. Beaver in the streams higher up the valley. Now the beaver are gone to the mountains, like the elk and the moose and the bear.

Berry bushes—chokecherries, buffalo berries, sweet wild raspberries—filled this valley. This past summer it was so dry the chokecherries didn't develop. I didn't see any buffalo berries. No wild raspberries. Only the rose hips came in profusion, later on, toward fall, bright red in the stream valleys, in ditches along country roads.

Pine-covered hills. A few quaking aspen in the stream valleys. Tall cottonwood trees all up and down the river valley, green leaves quivering in light, sighing in the wind. It must have been a beautiful valley before the white man came, thicker with bushes, deeper in grass. And the hills, deeper in grass, taller in ponderosa. Plenty game. Plenty food.

If we want to talk about the stripmining of the Bull Hills, we have to talk about how the land has been used since the white man came.

Railroads, reaching out from across the Mississippi. Across the great wide buffalo land, iron tracks the buffalo feared to cross, cutting the buffalo herds in half, in half again. Divide and conquer. Bands of men—I call them white men, but I mean men from Europe, from the European civilization that came to America, I mean, my ancestors—chasing down the divided herds and killing and killing. If you have an enemy, the plains Indian, who won't step aside, you go out and destroy his food supply.

His food supply, his clothing supply. Buffalo meat, buffalo hides, buffalo bones for tools, buffalo sinews for rope, buffalo stomach for holding water. And a vision of the white buffalo calf maiden who appears to two men from the tribe in the ancient days as a beautiful young woman approaching, so lovely, and one of the men desires her, desires to possess her. And the other man warns him, no, those are evil thoughts, she is a powerful holy being, we should honor her. But the first man can't stop thinking of possessing this beautiful maiden. And she calls him to her, and as he approaches a great cloud covers them. In a moment the cloud lifts and the sacred woman stands alone. At her feet the man with bad thoughts is a skull and bones on the prairie, fed upon by snakes.

And this is what you know. When those men come with their sharp digging implements pulled by their cattle, and turn over the grass that grows so tall in a good summer it brushes the belly of your horse as you ride into the coulees, when they come and plow under the grasses and the good herbs and plant their single crops, wheat, alfalfa.

when they pile up earth solid, as no beaver would do, stop up the flowing river, run it off through ditches into fields, run it into reservoirs, where much water goes into the sky.

when they come with their maps laid out in squares and, in their eyes, lay the squares down on top of the land, and go along the edges of the squares and put up fences, and put their cattle and sheep inside the fences, and let them eat the grass down into the dust.

Then cactus comes. Sagebrush comes in more abundance. And weeds. And the earth stops up her mouth and will not sing her water through the springs out into the land. And when you cut the trees, to give you more open spaces for your crops, for grazing, and the taller old trees begin dying in the hills and in the valleys, clouds do not pile up so often over your country, and speak thunder, and give you rain.

And our sweet earth begins to turn into a desert.

2. babylon

I read about Babylonia, great city dug up out of the sand. Had a stone wall 300 feet high, 85 feet thick at the top, 17 miles around. A hundred gates in the wall. The Euphrates River ran right through this huge city. Straight streets at right angles to each other,
paved with stones from the mountains. Colored tile roofs on the buildings. Indoor plumbing. The study of the planets and stars was highly advanced.

The fertile valley was irrigated by canals.

Then the Babylonians deforested the mountains. They needed lumber. They did not reforest. Rain washed down denuded slopes, washed away the nutrient-rich forest soil, turning the mountains into rock. Silt flowed down into the rivers, silt eventually filled up the canals.

Soon Babylonia was importing food, paying for it with money.

Pretty soon the money was worthless.

The Tigris and Euphrates valley supports nothing now remotely like the Babylonian civilization.

3. the waters

The Whore of Babylon, spoken of in Revelations. "Who sitteth upon the waters filling them with the filth of her fornications."

I no longer see this metaphorically. It seems very literal to me. That is what Babylon did to its waters, that is what this civilization is doing.

Over the Bull Hills, south over a sagebrush plain, down in the next river valley lies a city, Billings. Seventy thousand people. No great city, no Babylon, but the largest city in Montana.

You can see her lights reflected on the clouds above her valley, from a hundred miles away, out on the high plains south of the Snowy Mountains. She fills the waters of the Yellowstone River with her sewage, with treated wastes from meat-packing plants, power plants, oil refineries. From the highway crossing over the Bull Hills, at the top of the divide, on a clear day you can see the brown sheet of smog hanging over the Yellowstone valley. Hazy blue mountains in the distance, toward Wyoming, the Pryors, where the only official wild horse herd in the country has to be thinned out this year, because the entire Pryor range, overgrazed many decades ago by sheep and cattle, cannot support even a hundred and fifty horses now. And southwest, toward Yellowstone Park, looms the Beartooth-Absaroka range, highest mountains in Montana, which mineral companies are pressing to stripmine, which lumber companies log, so that Billings may extend her prefabricated wooden houses up and down the valley, eating up arable land with crewcut lawns and asphalt streets and shopping centers.

There is something pleasant about the older part of Billings, larger homes, big trees, quiet streets. But the new housing developments look like anywhere in America. Square acres divided into square lots. So much asphalt. That's an oil product, asphalt. And the paint on the houses is an oil product. And the plastic lawn hose. And the weed-killer in the spray can in the garage. The detergent under the sink. The darvon and demerol in the cabinet in the bathroom, products of oil technology. The bright lights of the oil refinery towers, over the trees of the older residential section. The lights of the suburban homes extending west up the valley. Dotting the hills. The pink glow of the city at night reflected on the shroud of smog hanging over the valley.

Oh she shines. She jingles her jewelry in your face. She is an appealing lady sometimes, laughing, flashing her teeth in the grainy sunlight, crouching there over the waters.

4. coal town

So. Railroad up the Musselshell valley. Got to get where we're going and no nonsense. Straight line up the valley.

But the river meanders down the valley, from side to side down the green valley.

Can't build a thousand bridges over the damn river. Straight ahead!

Dig up earth, dig up rock, riprap a raised earthen runway and lay iron tracks down on it. Shove the river to one side of the tracks, to the south side of the valley. Let it cut a new channel, the ground's easy here, easy sandstone.

The railroad that came up this valley missed out on the big grants of government land. But the railroad that had come up the Yellowstone was one of the companies that got immense grants of land from the federal government, for "opening the west." The railroads sold off some of this land to cattle ranchers, leased some of it, worked it legally so they retained underground mineral rights. This allowed the railroads
Empty houses, empty storefronts on Main Street.

to go into the coal mining business, and the
country around the town I grew up in, little town
across the Musselshell River from the Bull Hills,
town called Roundup from the days of rounding up
cattle to ship off to market, the country around
Roundup was dotted with coal mines.

In order to follow the coal veins, miners had to
pump water out of the mines. A lot of water was
pumped out of the underground lakes in the Bull Hills
this way, for the biggest mines dotted the Bull Hills.

The mineworkers came in on the train, many of them
slavs and slovak people from eastern and southern
Europe. They built their shacks and houses in
the river valley, near the big mine.

On higher ground, east of the big mine, above
the river, were built the stores and the houses
of merchants, bankers, doctors, lawyers, judges.
Some big houses. Almost you could call them
mansions but no, not quite mansions, not quite
big enough, rarely the intricate Victorian
woodwork, the stained glass windows you commonly
found in those mansions in bigger, richer mining
towns, copper-mining Butte, gold-mining Last
Chance Gulch (which became Helena, state capital,
before the gold ran out). Not a house in Roundup
you could call a mansion, but some big houses,
some wood, some local stone, on this low flat hill
above the river.

But the miners build their shacks and houses
in the river valley, along the old river bed,
and in floodtime the river's impulse is to
return there. Every ten or eleven years,
when rain falls heaviest, the muddy river
covers the lowlands for a few days, and if
you're a miner's family you grab what you can,
get out of the house, wait on higher ground
for the waters to subside; go back and mop
the place out; start over again.

For a time there are 1100 men working in the
Roundup coal field. Big payroll in town.

Long black slag piles all over the hills.

After the second World War diesel engines replace
coal-burning steam engines on the railroad.
In town, oil furnaces replace coal furnaces.
Electric ovens replace wood and coal stoves.

Families start getting second cars so their
teenage kids can get out of the house at night
and drive up and down Main Street, waving and
honking their horns at other cars full of
teenagers driving up and down the Street.

Elvis Presley on the car radio: love me tender,
love me true. Parking in the hills. Beer cans
flung into the darkness from around a campfire
under the stars.

Television. Instant coffee.

No, coal's too clumsy, too messy. Everything's
going to be smooth now, smooth as oil, smooth
as a suburban lawn. If it weren't for the
communists trying to take over the world,
everything'd be all right. But we could all die
any moment. But THEY'd all die, too, you can
bet on that. We and they. Democrats and
Republicans. Visitors and home team.

Meanwhile the oil companies are establishing
control over the energy resources of the
civilization, oil is becoming the biggest business
on the planet, oil is fueling the Korean war,
the Indochina war.

There are oilfields northeast of Roundup,
but after the initial strikes, the well drilling,
derrick hauling, water and mud hauling,
pipelaying and construction activity, all you need
men for is to keep the machines working, pumping
the oil out of the ground. As coal mines close
(all but a few local family operations) the oil
industry doesn't take up the economic slack,
it provides too few stable jobs, and with the
automation of farmwork, the consolidation of
smaller farms into larger ranches, the general
migration by young people out of the small towns
and into the cities, the population of Roundup
drops by almost a thousand—about 25 per cent—
during the 1960s (years I am gone from
the town, off to the university, then to live
in San Francisco).

Empty houses, empty storefronts on Main Street.
Old people in nursing homes, old miners union
pensioners, old women who do cleaning and wash
down walls and scrub floors. People on welfare.
The town has the lowest per capita income in a
state that has a low per capita income.
But new lights on the football field up at the high school. And a new bank? why is there a second bank in town?

And a bronze art foundry. And serious talk (once again) of capitalizing a business that would grow mushrooms in the old, cool mine tunnels.

And FIVE sawmills? There used to be one. They’re taking trees out of the Bull Hills, out of the Snowies.

And that feedlot east of town. On an overcast day, when the wind turns, the smell of the manure drifts through the town.

And sometimes the grain elevator whines all night and you wake up with engines ringing in your ear, just like in the city.

Out in the Bull Hills, some ranchers have sold sections of their land to a company calling itself Reforestation Incorporated, which subdivides the acreage, and sells it off in 10- and 20-acre plots for $200 an acre, and more; fat profit for the rancher who sells at a much higher price than he could command for grazing land; fatter profit for Reforestation, which cuts some trees and carves roads around the hills.

The people who buy the land mostly are people who want to get out of the city. They read Reforestation’s ads in magazines. Probably they don’t know till they get here that they’ll have to drill a hundred, maybe two or three hundred feet, maybe farther, for water.

And the railroad is back in the coal business, indirectly. It’s leasing its mineral rights to a stripmining company out of Pittsburgh, Consolidation Coal.

The coal in this area is a high-grade bituminous. And it has an interesting characteristic: it is very low in sulfur. For this reason it is much in demand at this time, because it burns comparatively cleanly, that is, it doesn’t put sulfur oxides into the air when burned in power plants, to generate electricity for the suburbs and the cities.

5. seeing the hills

You can understand why many people in the town—mainly the merchants, the bankers, the lawyers, whoever stands to make money off any increased economic activity—don’t particularly care about the Bull Hills.

“Let ’em stripmine.” I’ve heard some townspeople say, “it’d IMPROVE those hills if anything.”

This is what I mean about seeing: To see more than sagebrush, dry grass and scrub pine, you have to see the invisible, or what seems invisible to us in this age, in this civilization. You have to “see” the water table. You have to, in a sense, see the past, see water running in those seams in the hills.

But growing up in the town I didn’t see the hills. Not that way. As for water, I didn’t think about where the water came from that came out the faucet. If asked, I would have guessed from the river, but no, the town pumps its water out of an old mine across the river, in the hills.

I have a memory of water. Boy Scout days. Canteen. Knapsack with cans of food. Sleeping bag. A line of boys crossing the bridge over the river near the fairgrounds. Toiling up past tall sandstone cliffs, through pine and juniper, out onto the first open grassy plateau of the Bull Hills.

Cross this field, through more pine, another open field, aim for those dark pine opposite. Look out for rattlesnakes, cactus, left foot, right foot, hot sun. Now shade, pine needles, pine cones crunching under hiking boots.

Down through a cut in a rock cliff, down into an open field in a small valley, creek running down it; throw off your packs, unlace your boots, cool sweaty feet in the running water, a little farther up the creek fill your canteens.

We accepted that creek the way we accepted water out of faucets in the town: it was there.

This June—1971—I walked up that valley. Walked right up the middle of the dry creekbed that 15 years ago, 20 years ago, ran water, even in midsummer.

They pumped it out of a mine, says my step-dad.

All right. The creek came from a mine. But that would make the creek only 50 years old, and that valley is more than 50 years old, those rock cliffs along the east side of it are ancient.

A natural creek ran down that valley once—how long ago? a thousand years? Or was it running when the white man came? Maybe running only in spring? And, in pumping water year round out of the mine, did this dry up the source of the natural creek?
It's hard to find out things like this. I ask oldtimers, Was the Musselshell valley more lush when you came?

No, they don't remember . . . oh maybe a little more water, more bushes along the river . . . more game . . . yes, a lot more game.

My mother tells me grandpa used to walk out north of town, six or eight miles to a high grassy plateau, and go fishing in a big shallow lake there. Come home at evening dragging fish behind him, he caught so many. And people shot ducks on that lake in the fall. But that grassland's grazed down now, or converted to wheatfields. The lake's mostly dried up. The fish are gone. The ducks—well, perhaps some have found new habitat in the river valley, on those sloughs, those curves in the old riverbed cut off from the newer channel.

I begin to form a picture of what is happening to this country, how fast it is being used up.

But the water table in the Bull Hills has RISEN in the past ten or fifteen years! If the country's wasting away, why are wells in the Bull Hills flowing better now? why are there new springs (or old ones) appearing?

Most ranchers think it's the fact that the mines aren't pumping water out of the hills.

So you can understand why a rancher would resist the idea of stripmining. He's not only afraid of how much his pasture land will be chewed up—and some ranchers worry about the trees, those who aren't letting sawmills deforest whole hillsides of their land; and some think of the wildlife; and a few are beginning to talk about the long vistas of distant mountains, the gentle rolling hills, the beauty—but perhaps most of all the rancher wonders about the water. If tunnel mines could lower the water table so drastically, what will stripmining do?

You will also understand why the legal protests and appeals by the "Bull Mountain Landowners Association" have had little but a delaying effect on Consolidation Coal when I tell you that Consolidation Coal, the biggest coal company on the planet, is owned by Continental Oil.

Is it commonplace to point out how powerful just a little Oil company money can be?

When Roundup was desperate for a second doctor this year (the town's only doctor complained he was overworked and couldn't handle his clinic and be on call for the hospital at the same time) Consolidation Coal stepped in and advertised for a doctor for Roundup in some national magazines. Spent a few thousand dollars. In a sense, bought off the town this way.

Is it stretching a point to say that Oil companies, Power companies, the big money interests like railroads and lumbering, real estate and "agribusiness," constitute the REAL government of this state? (and by extension, of this nation? of this civilization?)

So that in June, 1971, when the government-in-name, if not in fact, decides to hold a public hearing on the reclamation of the proposed Con Coal "test pit" in the Bull Hills southeast of town, the outcome has been pretty much decided in advance.

The state land commissioner stands and tells the people in the courtroom that this is NOT a hearing about stripmining—stripmining's perfectly legal whether some of us like it or not—but what this hearing is about is reclamation. Con Coal's application to stripmine on Burlington Northern railroad sections is the first application under Montana's new reclamation law.

State officials hold up charts. Different colors represent different angles of slope on the "spoil pile"—the idea is for the state and Con Coal to work together and find out what grasses best reseed at what different angles of slope.

People get to testify, pro and con. Ranchers stand and express doubts about successful reclamation—maybe there has been success in Pennsylvania, but this isn't Pennsylvania—there's too little rain here, and anyway we're moving into a dry cycle; the topsoil's too thin; is the Company required to drill-seed or can it just sprinkle seed from the air? have there been any expert studies on what stripmining does to the water table?

Townspeople stand and say, This town was booming when the mines were here; all our young people graduate and leave; what this town needs is jobs, and a payroll.

The Con Coal regional engineer, author of the reclamation plan (which has been revised some by the state land commission), stands up,
a man in his 30s, white shirt and tie, paunchy, southern accent, he says. We believe the land should not be ravaged, and should be returned to a usable state after the mining. Con Coal expects to be mining in these hills for 40 years. Only an infinitesimal amount of land will be under mining or reclamation at any one time. He assures us the Company will use the best reclamation techniques. He holds out the hope that the land will be in even better condition than it is now, with a greater variety of grasses, after the reclamation.

It comes out in questioning, not in testimony, that the Company can legally go ahead with general stripmining even before the results of its "test pit" reclamation are seen.

It comes out in questioning that the Company is legally required to seed reclamation sites only twice: if grasses don’t take hold after the second seeding the Company can legally forget about it.

It comes out in questioning that of the 15-acre "test pit" site, 7-plus acres are pit and 7-plus acres are spoil pile, and only the spoil pile is to be reclaimed. What are the Company’s plans for the pit? Shouldn’t the pit be refilled?

Oh no, it was never the plan to refill the pit, says the state land commissioner.

And the Company engineer answers that the Company figures the pit can be made into a pond.

The rancher whose land the "test pit" is on draws a bitter laugh from the other ranchers when he asks: Where you going to get water for a pond?

Which is a sensible question when you SEE where the test pit lies: high in the hills, bored into a ridge, a saddle dividing two hills. No, there’s not enough rain to fill a pit that size; these days there’s little enough rain to fill the ranchers’ own much smaller ponds. And this high in the hills, there’s little or no groundwater to seep in and fill that pit.

So here is a picture of opposing forces: ranchers vs the town; anti-stripmining forces vs stripmining; ecological considerations vs economic. And, in another sense, the past:

the way the land was when Indians moved through it, vs the present: the inexorable crawl of huge machines over the land, bulldozing a wide dirt road up a dry stream valley to the test pit site; sending big trucks brimming with coal down the road, raising dustclouds so high it looks, from a distance, like a fire in the hills; down to the sign PRIVATE PROPERTY/NO TRESPASSING/ VIOLATORS WILL BE PROSECUTED; clanking over the cattleguard, turning up the river valley road to the railroad cars.

6. drinking in energy

When I cross the river and go into the hills, sometimes I don’t walk deep into them but sit on the cliffs overlooking the town in the valley.

No wonder the Indians were disoriented by the white man. One moment here’s a flat grassy plateau, buffalo. Next moment here are tree-lined streets laid out in squares; Main Street lined with stores and gas stations, cars going up and down, trucks moving through town with loads of cattle, loads of pipe for the oilwells, loads of lumber; big trucks emptying coal beside the railroad tracks, big caterpillar machine whining and growling and lifting the coal into the railroad cars.

Here, suddenly, a little Babylon, squatting in the river valley, drinking from the cup of the Earth, paying no attention to what Earth drinks from her cup in return: the smoking junkyard, the sewage lagoon, the exhalations of the trucks and cars.

Suddenly all these unseen, underground things going on. Water pumped out of the hills, moving through pipes in and out of the houses. The invisible hum of power through the wires.

And invisible chemicals filtering steadily into the waters. The DDT, leaching off the land into the waters of the Earth, killing off phytoplankton, those tiny beings all organic life on Earth feeds upon, those invisible energy-units so basic to us they’re like motes of pure sunlight—

Invisible smog, building up high in the atmosphere, behind those jets that rattle the windows of the town most days around noon; smog lying like an oilslick (if we could see it) on the upper air, inhibiting sunlight from getting through to the phytoplankton, the trees, the animals—

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Sometimes the Apocalypse gets very personal . . .

And what would be invisible made briefly visible by TV—unbreathable air in Birmingham and New York—floods on the Ganges delta—starving refugees—hollow cheeks—sunken eyes—

Sometimes the Apocalypse gets very personal and I'm wondering again if I'm going to survive the famines, earthquakes, revolutions of the next thirty years.

The Sun rides out there, impassive, from that old Babylon to this present one is maybe an hour, maybe a minute, in the Sun's great life—

I say "if I'm going to survive" but when I say that, I can't help including you. Visibly you may seem to be one world, and I another, but the visible is only a tiny fraction of reality, our worlds are connected by invisible ties, streams of light, our lives are momentary flashes in the eye of the Sun, we and the trees and the phytoplankton, all here together breathing the same air, marrying Earth and Sun inside ourselves with each breathing.

7. when the cattle go

I drive out northwest of town to the edge of the high plains.

The trees begin here, the valley begins, a dark forested seam in the Earth.

Beyond the valley, to the southeast, the Bull Hills pile up, plateau stacked on plateau.

Every other direction I can see fifty, a hundred, a hundred fifty miles. Stretching east out of sight are rolling yellow plains. Northwest is the blue bulk of the Snowy Mountains. Farther west are the Belts, lying lower on the horizon. And south of the Belts, west and a little south of here, the jagged hazy blue line of the Crazy Mountains.

The Musselshell flows out of the gap between the Belts and the Crazies.

These days when I look at the Crazies I think of Plenty Coups of the Crow tribe, who went into those mountains as a boy seeking the vision that would tell him what he was to do on Earth.

He fasted and prayed for a long time but no vision came. Finally, remembering the courage of his ancestors, he cut a joint off his index finger, and as the warm blood flowed he fell into a dream.

A spirit person was guiding him through a tunnel in the earth. All around were buffalo, snorting and jostling up against him in the tunnel. The spirit person told him to walk straight ahead without fear. Soon he was in daylight and the buffalo were coming out of a great hole in the earth, and blackening the plains,

as they did in the time of Plenty Coups' boyhood.

Suddenly the buffalo are gone. Vanished. In their place, coming out of the hole in the earth are horned and spotted beasts, like the buffalo but also unlike them. Plenty Coups later understood these were the white man's cattle.

There was much more to his vision, as it has come to us, but the important thing is it told how the Indian way of life would disappear, and the white man's way replace it, and it told the Crow people how to deal with this fact.

Something else the vision told Plenty Coups, something that hasn't yet come to pass: the cattle, too, will go.

I have puzzled over what this could mean.

If no cattle, does this mean no fences?

If no fences, are we able to begin to see the land in its wholeness again?

So that we can see the forested hills as a whole system, breathing out oxygen, inhaling hydrogen winds blowing off the mountains, causing clouds to pile up and empty above them, storing rainfall to flow in springtime. . .

So that we can see how precious is this river valley. How few rivers there are in this vast country. How the river valley is a whole system, too, carrying the blood of the planet to renew the land. . .
But this veers away from vision toward wishful thinking, and I want to return to the vision of Plenty Coups, for there is something further in it that puzzles me.

In his vision the buffalo vanish. In reality the buffalo went very fast, slaughtered by gunmen. Sometimes the hides were taken, and enough meat to feed the gunmen, but the rest—wasted.

Over the bleaching bones come the cattle; as in Plenty Coups' vision, so in reality.

But when the cattle go, in his vision, they don’t simply vanish. They go back into the hole in the earth, the hole out of which they came.

And I wonder what this means, could it mean that the cattle, that the whole way of life based on raising meat-animals for food, will be swallowed up by the Earth?

Or could it possibly mean—when the cattle go—that the energy they represent will return more naturally to the Earth? that the cattle—unlike the buffalo—won’t be wasted?

8. waste to wealth

It is November, 1971. Elizabeth and I are driving east of town, down the valley. We pass the trim wood fences, the brown ground of the cattle feedlot. Then, as we are moving with the wind, the smell of the feedlot envelops us a moment, till we drive free of it, following the highway down the valley.

Recently we’ve heard the feedlot definitely is going out of business. There’d been rumors about this for months. The owner borrowed too much money too fast, couldn’t pay off his banknotes. That’s twenty jobs gone from the town.

What’s going to happen to the land? I wonder. The feedlot covers a large acreage between some low hills north of the river, down to the old riverbed, that was cut off by the railroad. All that rich manure. Too acid now. But if they’d treat the ground with alkaline . . . then if they’d let it reseed gradually . . . “if they’d leave that ground alone for a few years,” I say aloud, “they’d get some fine grass.”

But all summer we’ve been observing what happens any time a stalk of grass rears its head in this country: some cow’s there munching it.

“You KNOW they won’t leave it alone,” Elizabeth replies.

One of the problems of feedlots is the manure. You specialize, you concentrate so many cattle in so relatively small a space, and there’s no way for the manure to spread around naturally on the fields. (There AREN’T any fields in a feedlot.) The manure piles up.

What do you do with it?

Get rid of it, it’s waste.

But no—no, it’s wealth. Spread more naturally over the earth, it goes back into the earth to feed new grasses. It turns to wealth.

Another problem of feedlots is the fact that when "meat" (as they say) “isn’t on the hoof” it isn’t as nutritious as meat from animals that roam about more freely, feeding on what they find.

The goal of the feedlot is to fatten cattle, fast. Fat cattle command higher prices in the current market. But fat cattle produce fat meat—low in protein, lower in protein than range cattle.

But then, range cattle produce meat lower in protein than meat from wild animals like deer. (Fences have something to do with this. Deer can jump fences and move on.)

In so many ways, it seems, in so many places and so many times, the coming of Babylon has meant: devitalization.

The feedlot produces devitalized meat. Not to mention chemical-filled meat, since most feedlots treat their imported feed with chemicals that tend to fatten the cattle even faster than their cooped-in feedlot life can fatten them: speed, speed. Speed and fat.

That the chemicals used (like the recently publicized DES, "diethylstilbestrol"; "diethyl" tells us this is another product of oil technology) may also produce cancer in the cattle, and presumably the risk of cancer in those who eat the cattle, is a fact just becoming generally known.

Mountain men and sometimes Indians used to live all winter in this country wholly on wild meat and berries. Many of these people, it is recorded, lived long and active lives. They were closer...
to the source, closer to the Sun. Wild meat and berries. Berries are little bursts of sunshine in water, enclosed in a film of sweet earth. Wild meat comes directly from an active animal. He is alert, sensing danger, but not crazy with fear as those cattle must be as they hear the bellows from the room ahead, the room they’re moving toward, and smell the blood, no way out. . . no, the deer’s meat is not poisoned with fear as he stands at the edge of the clearing, head up, but you're downwind and have a clear shot.

Then you gut him out, take him home, skin off his hide, salt the hide, salt and smoke or dry out his meat. If you were an Indian, after you killed him, you probably set his head on a mound and did a slow dance around those staring eyes, praying to the spirit of the deer, saying Brother, forgive me, but this is the natural order of things, all of us eat and are eaten.

So wild meat's better for you than "civilized" meat.

But even wild meat's not the best source of protein. Certain peas, lentils, beans—soybeans, for example—and a great many nuts are more efficient sources of the vital amino acids than meat: your body has to deal with less bulk to get the same amount of energy. And nuts and beans don't build up uric acid in your system the way meat does.

Another thing: to get the same amount of food value from meat animals as you get from, say, a nut orchard you need up to 70 times as much land. To graze meat-animals instead of raise soybeans, and get the same food value, you need something like 30 times as much land.

Eating plant food directly—rather than feeding plant food to cows then eating the cows—saves energy: energy of the environment, because you use less land to get the same result; and energy inside ourselves, because we use less energy digesting, say, walnuts than digesting meat.

There is something else. To get meat we have to destroy a highly organized system of energy.

The Indian understood what invisible forces he was releasing in killing the buffalo, the deer. So the killing was first a time of atonement. Then thanksgiving, then celebration. A religious occasion.

To get meat we have to kill the animal. To get, say, walnuts we don't have to kill the walnut tree. On the contrary, we have to make sure the tree stays alive and healthy.

A tree—such a mystery—how can it feed directly on light?

To the world of plants a tree is what a man is to the world of animals. But plants came before animals, trees have been here a long time before man, great forests used to cover the Earth. Probably most of the planet’s deserts once were forests and grasslands—maybe a lot like the Bull Hills are today. And the presence of so much coal underlying this sagebrush and scrub pine country testifies that the Bull Hills once were a lush forest, long ago, before the land submerged and some great pressure oxidized and compacted the trees to shiny black rock. Then sediment slowly filtered down, slowly compacted to sandstone, covering the coal, before the land upheaved again.

Coal—such a mystery—how could so much Sun-energy become impacted like that?

Burning coal—it’s like eating meat—a most inefficient use of energy. Maybe a third of the energy in each piece of coal (probably much less than that) is used to heat our houses, or heat water to drive steam turbines to spin off—another mystery—electricity. The rest of the coal’s energy, energy of ancient forests, goes into the air. Mingles there with the smog and the rain and the cries of slaughtered cattle and the restless spirits of the buffalo.

Newspapers tell us, Power company people, Oil company people tell us, there’s an "energy crisis" implying: there’s not enough energy.

But this is a lie. If we used the land efficiently, if we took care to tap all the energy in a piece of coal, if we learned from the trees about drinking directly from the cup of the Sun—there’s plenty of energy, our whole environment seethes with energy, IS energy. The crisis is not a lack of energy. The crisis is: WASTE.

But in a natural system there is no waste. There is only: inhale, exhale.

As in the civilization of the forest—plants breathing out oxygen, animals breathing...
in; animals breathing out carbon dioxide, plants breathing in.

Trees feeding on light; leaves, needles falling to turn into new earth and feed new trees; new trees feeding on light.

So a system is unnatural to the extent that it produces waste.

The economic system dominating the planet today notoriously produces waste.

Furthermore, this energy-inhaling system notoriously exhales "waste" in forms that the environment cannot readily regenerate into wealth.

Plastic can be recycled into plastic again, but it takes virtually forever for plastic to break down into earth.

Or say you buy some chemical fertilizer, some synthetic nitrogen, because it's easier, faster—you think—than getting a load of manure. For awhile your tomatoes appear to do very well. They get very big very fast. But it's all appearance: they're bigger but they have more water content, less nutritional value, much less flavor. And in the meantime you've put your soil on a speed trip. The soil's working so hard feeding the tomatoes it forgets how to feed itself. Just like a person on speed, can't eat, the soil can't regenerate itself anymore after awhile, all its natural nitrogen-producing organisms are burned out.

Or take stripmining. The way to attain wealth in this economic system, remember, is to get that energy. The quickest, cheapest way. The energy can be in the form of coal (quickest, cheapest way: stripmining) or lumber (clear-cutting) or meat (feedlots, overgrazing) or hydroelectricity (dams, reservoirs). Whatever form of energy we speak of.

To calculate costs you simply calculate what it costs to get the juice, the energy. Only what it directly costs you: what you pay to get access to the land; what you pay to keep your machines running; what you pay your human labor...

But it's easier to get coal using big machines than using human labor. Men you have to send by the thousands down into tunnels; machines just move the earth aside. Machines cost less—or so you think—because you don't calculate the cost to the Earth. The cost of waste.

When does it occur to us that everything we call waste is potential wealth?

But it's wealth only if we return it in a usable form, without harm, to the Earth.

9. valley of gardens

So we are thinking, How can we return energy to our garden?

We read up in our Organic Gardening encyclopedia about what animals produce the richest manure. Rabbits by far are best, but nobody around here raises rabbits. Next come chickens, ahead of horses, cows, pigs.

But there are few chickenhouses around anymore. The feed's too expensive for smalltime chicken owners to make any profit producing eggs or chickens for a local market. So chicken manure is out, for now.

Cattle manure? Fairly rich. And plentiful. We get permission to shovel from the feedlot pile, dumped on a rancher's land across the highway from the feedlot.

But then we wonder what chemicals have been run through those cattle.

And besides (we read) horse manure is richer in nitrogen, phosphate and potash than most cattle manure.

We know this old gentleman who lives down in the miners shack area, between the railroad tracks and the river, and he has a few acres and a couple horses. He's always trying to scare up some grass to feed his horses, he's quite poor, he really can't afford commercial feed and mistrusts it anyway, too full of chemicals.

My brother asks him, "Jim, you want your horse stable cleaned out?"

I'm shoveling away. The manure in Jim's stable is three feet deep and seven years old, still wet after you dig down a foot, very rich.

The old man comes up. Starts talking about the lettuce he just bought at the grocery, he can see the chemicals on it, he says. And the last hay he bought for his horses,
I look at the devastated land around us.

he asked the man did they spray it? No, the man said they didn't spray it, but they did put a lot of fertilizer on it.

Chemical fertilizer? asks Jim.

Chemical fertilizer, sure.

Same thing as spraying, says Jim.

And I say to the old man, Yes, I feel the same way as you, we don't use any of that stuff on our garden.

I say: We're trying to get back to a natural cycle.

Yes, Jim says, let Nature take care of it.

Right on, old man (I'm thinking), let Nature take care of it.

But I look at the devastated land around us. No grass growing out of it. Much of it covered with coal slag. Is this piece of land where this old man and his wife have their shack and horses and broken down cars, a former slag heap? It'll take more than Nature to revitalize this land very soon; it'll take a conscious, diligent effort to help Nature.

The river runs nearby, there's water to irrigate the land. And the manure I'm shoveling could rebuild this soil.

But old Jim can hardly walk, he uses a cane, he couldn't perform the hard manual labor to revitalize this piece of ground.

Next day Jim comes up while I'm shoveling. He holds a slice of sweet potato in his hand. The slice came right out of the middle of the potato, he says. It has brown spots all over it. That's chemicals, Jim says. He tried to cut out most of the brown parts, then his wife cooked the rest, but they didn't taste very good.

We get to talking. It turns out this isn't horse manure, it's mostly cow manure. (It doesn't matter to me, it's so rich.) Jim used to have cows down here. And chickens—he points to his tumbledown chicken shed.

And if he was young again he'd plow up this whole piece of land, plant fall rye grass, it'll grow anywhere, he's seen it growing out of the crack of a rock.

What about all this coal slag? I ask him. What happened here?

He has me dig down into the coal slag. It's only an inch deep. Under that is dark brown soil.

Plow it up, he says, put some manure in, fall rye grass'd grow real good here. Makes good feed for the horses.

Dig here, Jim says, dig here. Everywhere I dig the soil looks good. Just needs manure spread over it, intensive cultivation.

You could grow a crop of potatoes here, the old man says. He used to grow potatoes this big—he cups his hands, shows me an imaginary potato of excellent size.

Yes, just these few acres could become a little Eden. Berry bushes along the river. Herbs and flowers. Fruit trees—plum and apple trees do well in this country. And grapes. Strawberries. Maybe some hardy nut trees.


We grew all these vegetables, more or less successfully, in our backyard garden uptown. My brother and wife and I are not experienced gardeners, but we wanted to grow as much of our own food as we could; and without chemical sprays or fertilizers, planting mostly with the Moon in water signs, weeding in fire signs, watering morning and evening when the hot days came, using plenty of mulch, the three of us were eating almost...
exclusively out of our backyard by midsummer, and giving vegetables away, and feeling good from all that sun and fresh air. We had plenty tomatoes, beets, chard, corn to put up for the winter. And if three of us could do this uptown, above the river valley, what could you grow in that rich river valley soil?

And all up and down the river valley? It’s not hard to see little homesteads, little orchards and gardens. Careful hands mulching around each plant with straw, grass clippings, leaves: to hold water, to keep down weeds, to build new soil. Planting cover crops and not grazing them down: to hold the soil together and keep the springs flowing. Under intense, scientific, organic gardening this river valley—and each valley with a still flowing stream running out of the hills into the river valley—could bloom like a rose.

People could keep animals. Chickens. Bees. A milkcow, or goats. Horses for riding in the hills. But far fewer cattle, far fewer sheep, far fewer meat-animals. Far fewer fences.

Change what you eat—get closer to the Source—and you change everything.

Change how you see wealth—begin to see it’s worth just as much to return energy to the Earth as to take energy from it—and you change everything.

There is a voice in me now saying, “Be realistic,” so I’m forced to consider how the valleys could become summer gardens.

First, we need people. Second, access to the land. Third, knowledge and tools to work the land. And fourth, we need a sustaining economic base.

Small towns typically complain about all their young people leaving, but what my town hasn’t yet noticed is a lot of its young people are staying around, oh they go to college awhile, or travel, they pass through cities but aren’t drawn much to live there.

And many of us who did go to cities are returning. For me it got simple. I saw that I’d rather shovel manure than take a job in some office or classroom performing essentially useless, essentially destructive work, transferring papers from file to file, transforming whole forests into garbage; I’d rather grow my own food than get a salary to pay for tasteless, devitalized food.

I keep running into old friends I knew in college, graduated and went to some city for a time, Denver, Washington, D.C., San Francisco, now trickling back to Montana. We get together sometimes, feeling like some new kind of pioneers, we talk about setting up stores to market our crafts, about starting community gardens, about turning on farmers to organic farming methods.

Many of my friends in San Francisco are doing the same kind of talking, they want to get out, get to the country. Many are working seriously at getting land, setting up more self-sustaining environments for themselves.

Self-sustaining is a key word.

What we need is direct access to the Sun. That means access to tools to tap alternative sources of energy: old-fashioned sources like windmills, newfangled sources like solar mirrors; and effective batteries to store wind-generated, sun-generated electricity; and methane converters for our internal combustion engine cars, methane-powered generators for each homestead. Access to tools to work the land: tillers, seeders, compost-shredders. But most of all, somehow, access to the land.

We don’t need ownership, just access.

Most of the land is controlled by big corporations. Homesteads and small farms have disappeared, swallowed by big ranches, which often are tax write-offs for big corporations (several large local ranches fall into this category). Big tracts of land are owned by railroads like Burlington Northern, under old government grants. Big tracts, like national forests, are nominally owned by the government—the people—but the real government is not the people, it’s big corporations; so big lumber companies control the national forests, big mining companies file claim for minerals on state land. And the Billings newspaper announces the other day that yes, Consolidation Coal can go ahead and do more stripmining, no need to wait even till next spring for results of the Company’s “reclamation” of the spoil pile near the widening test pit.

No, I don’t care to discuss the question of ownership of the land. God owns the land, if you want my view. But who controls the land, that’s the issue. How is it used?

Speaking practically, it seems apparent that at some future time the people will have to assume “ownership” of the land from the corporations. (Which means the people will have to become the
government in fact, and not just in fantasy.) But theoretically it doesn’t matter who owns the land, even a “corporation,” so long as the people control its use, and begin to return energy to the land.

For that is necessary if people are to establish self-sustaining environments.

I know—not very long ago—this town grew most of its own food. It doesn’t anymore. It’s like any city, any suburb: the antithesis of a self-sustaining environment. Most energy is generated elsewhere; processed elsewhere; imported—electricity, food, water, oil—and recent governmental regulations have tended to kill off small, indigenous businesses like local dairies, local chicken-growers, local mines, which did produce various forms of energy locally.

But this town happens to be in an area that produces much of the energy devoured by the cities and the suburbs. The town’s past payroll was based on production of basic energy for the civilization. And if there’s no more payroll, the reason is that production has passed over from men to machines.

That’s why rumors that occasionally sweep through the bars and bridge clubs of the town—rumors like “Consolidation’s going to move in 400 families by next Thursday!”—are so cruel and unrealistic.

I’ve sat on the rock cliffs overlooking the stripminers. For what they are doing now they don’t need more than 20 men. And—ironically—these are not local men, for two reasons:
1. local men are not trained
to run those big machines,
2. the union insists that the workers be from the same state the job foreman is registered in, and the present job foreman is from North Dakota.

And even if there were, somehow, a sudden splurge of hiring of local men by Consolidation Coal, this kind of economic boom is based on the old concept of wealth: solely taking energy from the environment.

And the environment simply can’t give much more.

Any new economic base for this just-becoming-visible movement of people back to the land has to spring from the concept that it’s worth at least as much to plant a tree as to chop one down.

It’s worth at least as much to clear the countryside of beer cans and recycle them, as to get sent to Vietnam and paid to bomb jungles and villages and fields.

It’s worth at least as much to start a local business recycling garbage and manure into methane gas, as to go around connecting new houses to Power company lines.

It’s worth at least as much to build rich soil as to steer earth-moving machines.

(This concept isn’t new. In the 1930s, for example, there were the “CCC boys,” the Civilian Conservation Corps, who were paid by the government to work on projects like flood control and reforestation. And today the government pays farmers NOT to grow crops on land through the “soil bank” plan. If programs like these arose primarily out of economic and not ecological considerations, still they can serve as useful precedents.)

At issue is the disconnection between the present economy and the growing ecological consciousness. And if this disconnection goes wide and deep, the urge to connect—economy with ecology, ourselves with our environment—must go wider and deeper.

Now the voice inside me is saying, but what do you mean, “growing ecological consciousness”? I’ll give you a curious example that occurs to me. Tom, a high school friend of my brother’s, visits us. Tom’s the son of a local rancher. He’s been to the university, his hair’s pretty long for a rancher’s son. He’s against stripmining, he’s hip to what’s been done to the valley and hills in the name of civilization. One day he’s in our bathroom and suddenly he calls out, “Do you flush your toilet every time?”

A few years ago I’d have thought: what a weird question. And maybe would have pretended I hadn’t heard.

But I realize he’s serious and I answer, quite seriously: “Every time I shit I flush it. Every time I pee I don’t.”

We aren’t talking in code. It’s just that both of us—a lot of us—have been thinking lately about waste. That’s something this culture never has encouraged us to think about. Shit was always dirty. Garbage was something you didn’t talk about. You threw it away, flushed it away, forgot about it. And that’s
why the air is brown. So we’re forced to think seriously about waste, and it’s plain an enormous amount of water is wasted every time a toilet is flushed. It’s plain that shit belongs not in the water cycle but in the earth.

But here we are, in these houses, in these towns and cities with these systems of pipes and sewers.

Growing ecological consciousness.

No, it’s not a fad, no matter how much the orthodox press makes it look like a fad.

It’s a very personal, individual realization. It may begin in your head—like, intellectually, you see it’s not cool to throw beer cans out the window—but somehow it ends in your guts.

It’s seeing friends of ours decide not to have more than one child, or at the most two. Or maybe have none, and adopt children instead—“there’s enough people on the planet already.”

It’s the pain and rage in my heart as I stand on the Consolidation Coal spoil pile looking down into a little draw that the pile is steadily filling, and see the fine young breathing pines that tomorrow will be buried alive, deep under a hill of sand and gravel.

10. we are the environment

I sit on a rock in the Sun.

A large flat rock on a downhill slope in the hills.

If you hovered above me, you’d see the slope is a crease in the rim of a plateau. It’s a steep crease, clogged with boulders and bushes where water once ran off the plateau, down to the floor of a dry stream valley.

The stream valley widens out of the hills, north to the river valley.

The Sun rides low in the southern sky, stands now over the hill to the southwest, the plateau opposite this one, across the dry stream valley.

I am one ridge removed from the river valley and the town. Drifting over the ridge to my ears is the sound of machines bringing coal out of the hills, lifting coal into the railroad cars. Roaring and subsiding the machines set up a constant hum in the air, under the sound of the wind in the trees.

In the south and in the west the sky is clear, the Sun makes my chest feel warm, my jacket’s up the slope behind me, it’s not warm enough to take off my shirt, but it’s a warm day for November.

Overhead a high procession of large clouds, flat, round, gray clouds, blows out of the northwest, in a long line off the peak of Old Baldy Mountain, chief of the Snowies; weather forms over the mountains, blows over the high plains, over the river valley, over these hills.

Though the Sun still shines brightly on my chest, colder air envelops me as this procession of clouds passes over. The swishing sound of the wind in the junipers and pines rises, more urgent.

A long calling sound—it comes from a distant railroad train rolling fast down the valley—out of the west, my ears tell me.

The train makes a sound like a mighty river in flood, mingling with, gradually overwhelming the sound of the wind in the pines; a dense pressure in my ears as the train nears, clatters through town calling, the pressure subsiding as the train moves east down the valley.

Slowly the flooding river sound dies down, finally it is gone. The wind washes through the pines. Sound of the hills breathing.

Distantly, under the wind, comes the rising and falling, grinding hum of engines over the ridge, in the river valley.

More distantly, under the engines and wind, comes a deeper hum, steadier. At times this hum crackles around its edges, sizzles a little, electric. Other times it is a faint, constant drone.

This hum underlies all other sound, it is connected to the Sun.

But whenever I think: the Sun is the center of the sound, I hear the sound coming at me from a tree nearby, then from a rock behind me. Then I see the sound’s center is everywhere.

Then the sound is also inside me, it is how I’m hearing now, so open—"
The sudden caw of a magpie in my left ear, a series of shrill grating caws as he flashes out of a green pine, black and white flashing across blue sky, landing on the top branch of a standing dead ponderosa, cawing again, folding his wings—

Each short, sharp caw makes a little tear inside my ear, then some smooth force comes instantly mending each tear as it is made—

But I'm no longer hearing the hum underlying the sounds of earth and rivers and wind—

That faint, pervasive hum,

Good-by Skid Road

By Warren J. Brier*

For language purists, the death of author Stewart Holbrook was particularly depressing, for he was the Last Great Defender of the term "skid road."

To be sure, Murray Morgan's Skid Road—An Informal Portrait of Seattle stands in paperback poignancy in many bookstores. But Morgan never really got that feeling right here when someone said skidrow instead of skid road. Holbrook did. He would release a volley of expletives sharpened by use in logging camps and newspaper city rooms in the 1920s and 30s.

Holbrook has been called the high priest of skid road because of his incessant public endorsements of the term and his impassioned opposition to skidrow. He states his case with reason and wry solemnity in his book Far Corner:

Skid road is the proper name. It originated in Seattle some seventy years ago, when logs were hauled through town over an actual skid road made of logs laid crosswise. Hotels, saloons, and other places seeking the logger trade grew up along the skid road, and the entire district was known as the skid road. From Seattle the term spread until cities all over the West had their skid road districts. Of recent years a corruption has appeared as skidrow, but its use is confined to those who wish to be known as men of the world, and who patronely don't know what they are talking about.

There is no authoritative explanation of the development or popularity of skidrow. Perhaps the obvious reason also is the correct one—the rickety buildings that arose in a row along the skid road.

Skidrow is easier to say—indeed, more fun to say—than skid road. Herb Caen, delighted by the increasing use of the word, coined the term "skid rowgue," which surely must have prompted a wince—perhaps outright anguish—among devotees of H. W. Fowler.

Mencken, who probably is chortling in Valhalla over the loose language of today, gave skid road only fleeting mention in his The American Language. In the section headed "Cant and Argot," he called it an esoteric term and noted parenthetically that skidrow often was used.

Widespread use of skidrow (it was incorporated in the name of an official city commission on slum clearance in Los Angeles) brought the term to the attention of those notorious language levelers, the dictionary makers. The latest unabridged, The Random House Dictionary of the English Language, says: "Skid row, a run-down area of cheap barrooms, luncheonettes, and shabby hotels, frequented by alcoholics and vagrants. Also called Skid Road."

So now skid road is an also word. Holbrook is gone. The term has joined cohort and disinterested on that junkpile of words that have lost precise meanings. One is tempted to refer to the enormity of it all. But who would understand?

*Reprinted from The Quill, October, 1970. The writer is dean of the Montana School of Journalism.

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The 1919 Election: Broadsides and Ballots in Butte

By ROBERT M. AMICK JR.

Professor Amick, a 1961 graduate of the Montana School of Journalism, is a faculty member at Eastern Montana College at Billings. He is a candidate at the University of Montana for a master's degree in journalism, and this article is a chapter from his thesis about the Butte (Mont.) Daily Bulletin. Professor Amick was editor of the weekly Choteau (Mont.) Acantha for four years and an editorial writer for the Des Moines (Iowa) Register for two years.

There was nothing artful about Butte politics as plied by the Anaconda Company. Nor was anything impossible. By World War I, Company politics had progressed little from the crude but highly effective craft that had emerged from the war of the copper kings. Intimidation, larceny, bludgeon and libel were the tools that usually controlled both sides of the political fences in Butte and in Montana.

The Butte Daily Bulletin was born into a closed political system and, in part, was given life to open that system. With the Anaconda Company dominating the machinery of the state Republican and Democratic parties, it was inevitable that anti-Company forces would organize outside established political machinery. Thus, when the Daily Bulletin began publication in 1918, it was closely aligned with the state Non-Partisan League. With a Montana membership in 1918 of 21,000, nearly all farmers, the League was bent on wresting political control of the state from the Anaconda Company.

The Bulletin served as a link between the League and organized labor. Such a connection was vital if the Company political hegemony were to be shattered.

In its first editorial the Bulletin stated its desire to function as a link among the "great common mass" of Montana. The editorial said the Bulletin was "owned by thousands of citizens of this state" and existed to "faithfully represent the sentiments and desires" of "toilers" and members of the "producing class" whose views were denied expression in the corporation-controlled press.

The first Bulletin was published in the middle of the 1918 primary campaign. Urging Silver Bow County residents to vote in the Democratic primary, the Bulletin daily ran the League slate of endorsements. Electioneering in the first Bulletins was limited by a paper shortage, which the newspaper blamed on diversion by the Anaconda Company of a newsprint shipment. The Bulletin promised to expose the perpetrators but never produced convincing evidence that temporary loss of the shipment was not accidental. Coincidentally, perhaps, the newsprint shipment was delivered the day after the primaries.

Bulletin coverage of the 1918 general-election campaign was rustic. Preoccupied with establishing the newspaper on a solid footing, hampered by a flu epidemic that curtailed public meetings and diverted by the arrest of its officials on sedition charges and by a Company-inspired strike, the Bulletin was unable to become totally immersed in the campaign. Considerable free space was granted to League candidates in large advertisements, but the messages were changed infrequently if at all. Cursory coverage of campaign activities of state candidates revealed that Bulletin resources were inadequate for the newspaper to function as an effective statewide League organ.

Despite unsophisticated handling of political news, the Bulletin's influence was felt in Silver Bow County. Its most notable triumph in 1918 was the election of Bulletin editorial writer William F. Dunn to the state House of Representatives.

More indicative of the Bulletin's political force in 1918 was the showing U.S. senatorial candidate Jeannette Rankin

Footnotes:

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made in traditionally Democratic Silver Bow County. Miss Rankin, who was completing her first term in the U.S. House of Representatives, had lost the Republican senatorial nomination to Oscar S. Lansrum. She bolted the G.O.P. and, with League and Bulletin endorsement, ran on the National party ticket against Lansrum and Democratic incumbent Thomas Walsh. Miss Rankin ran a poor third, losing by a two-to-one margin to Walsh. But in Butte, where the Bulletin had turned on Walsh after the senator abandoned Burton K. Wheeler, she almost matched Walsh's vote. Miss Rankin drew 5,709 votes to Walsh's 5,763 and Lansrum's 4,455. She carried two small counties, Sheridan and Valley, while losing by substantial margins in nearly all the others. In a town that normally would have given full support to Walsh, Miss Rankin's strong Butte showing must be credited in large measure to the Bulletin.

Despite some success in the 1918 election, Bulletin campaigning was little more than a political baptism. Within a few months, the newspaper was in a vicious contest for control of Butte city hall. The controversy displayed the newspaper at its most vitriolic and the Anaconda Company at its most wanton.

In a clash the Bulletin billed as a contest between the people and the profiteers, William F. Dunn was thrust forward as the people’s champion. “DUNN AND DEMOCRACY ENTER THE RACE FOR MAYOR” read the Bulletin’s March 6, 1919, banner headline. A full slate of “people’s” candidates would file for the March 24 primary in the next few days.

**testimony printed**

Dunn’s announcement was preceded by a week-long Bulletin buildup that left little doubt he would run for mayor. On Feb. 27, 1919, the Bulletin began running the Sept. 9, 1918, testimony of its staff before the State Council of Defense. Following by only three days Dunn’s conviction for sedition, publication of the testimony doubtless was intended to clear Dunn’s name before the people of Butte. Knowing the “capitalist” press would take full advantage of the conviction once Dunn was a candidate, the Bulletin hoped to vindicate its editorial writer by making full disclosure of the hearing that led to sedition charges. The Bulletin decision was politically astute considering the temper of the Butte community and the content of the hearing.

The next day the Bulletin informed readers that the next Butte mayor would not be acceptable to the Anaconda Company and, in another editorial, contrasted corrupt state officials with Dunn, “who has wronged no man, accepted no bribe, betrayed no trust, who has fought . . . for the cause of humanity, because God and some far distant Irish ancestor planted that cause deep in his tender, flaming heart . . .” Dunn, the Bulletin said, “stands like a distant mountain to thirst-racked plodders in the desert—a hope for relief, a promise of security, well-being and happiness.” The Bulletin extolled Dunn’s labor record and his “insistent clamor for decency in high places.”

Invocation of Dunn’s Irish ancestors and his portrayal as a “mountain” of a man of pristine virtue, while hyperbolic and melodramatic, were aimed at an audience, much of it Irish, that was used to seeing in blacks (Anaconda Company) and whites (Dunn and labor).

Dunn’s principal primary opponent was William F. Cutts, a member of the Carpenters Union and manager of the Montana Amusement Company. Cutts had played an important anti-strike role in the February, 1919, walkout and had been criticized in several Bulletin editorials. Obviously in the Company political camp, Cutts had served under C. J. Kelley on the citizens committee that investigated the high cost of living in Butte. As early as Feb. 16, 1919, the Bulletin noted the Cutts for Mayor Club was “going to pull off a camouflage investigation of the high cost of living.” Recently returned from Army service in the Pacific Northwest forests, Cutts was the subject of a Feb. 14 “quickie” editorial in the Bulletin:

William Cutts, cutter of spruce, wants prices cut. Cutts is strong on cuts. The cut in miners’ wages pleased Cutts. A cut in prices would please Cutts, too—if it were accompanied by a cut in clerks’ wages. If we had a cut of Cutts we’d run it.

Two other would-be Democratic mayoral candidates withdrew from the primary March 8. T. J. Nerny announced he was “leaving the field clear for Cutts.” Indicating the slate was “too full,” George Hagerman, an incumbent Butte alderman, withdrew at the same time.

After a one-line editorial March 8—“Butte again is going to have a splendid opportunity to prove at the coming primary election that it is strong for American patriotism and loyalty”—the Butte Miner March 9 fired the first full broadside of the campaign. Feigning impartiality, the Miner fulsomely lauded Cutts, then turned on Dunn. The next day, the Bulletin—also pretending impartiality—published a parody of the Miner attack on Dunn.

The Miner contended:

> The first fact that confronts the citizenry of this community with regard to his [Dunn’s] present candidacy is that he was convicted by a jury of his peers of the crime of sedition. He was given a fair and square trial. . . .

The Bulletin replied:

> The first fact that confronts the citizenry of this community with regard to his [Dunn’s] present candidacy is

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*Billings (Mont.) Gazette, Nov. 10, 1918, p. 6.


*Ibid.


*Anaconda (Mont.) Standard, March 9, 1919, p. 6.

*Ibid.

*Butte (Mont.) Miner, March 8, 1919, p. 4.

*Ibid., March 9, 1919, p. 4.

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that he was convicted by a jury of his peers of the "crime" of antagonizing the A.C.M. and its tools. He was given a fair and square trial—fair and square in the eyes of the industrial pirates. . . .

The Miner charged:

Mr. Dunn's labor record—and that is mentioned since he poses as a friend of labor—is notoriously weak. He has not accomplished one iota of benefit for labor's cause. On the contrary his every effort has been toward the disruption of unionism. He is the avowed enemy of the recognized labor movement of America, and his time and effort, along labor lines, are devoted solely to fighting that movement, never to any effort of a constructive sort of unionism or labor.

Not in all the time that he has posed in Butte as an adviser of labor has he won for it a single feature of benefit to it.

Continuing the parody, the Bulletin saw things differently:

Mr. Dunn's labor record—and that is mentioned since he is known as a friend of labor—is his strong point. He has not accomplished one iota of benefit for the A.C.M. cause. On the contrary his every effort has been toward the upbuilding of unionism. He is the avowed friend of the recognized labor movement of America, and his time and effort, along labor lines, are devoted solely to building up that movement, never to any effort of a destructive sort of unionism or labor.

Not in all the time that he has posed in Butte as an adviser of labor has Cutts won for it a single feature of benefit to it.

The Miner also rendered judgment of the Bulletin:

Butte or any other community in the entire nation never has seen a more ardent advocate of the Russian Bolshevik form of government than the so-called newspaper of which Mr. Dunn is the animating spirit and the chief editorial writer. And be it remarked in passing that it is a fact well-known to labor that Mr. Dunn's so-called newspaper is but his personal organ for the exploitation of his personal, radical views and not in any sense of the word maintained in the interest of or for the benefit of labor and its principles.

The Bulletin:

Butte or any other community in the entire nation never has seen a more ardent advocate of the democratic form of government than the Butte Daily Bulletin of which Mr. Dunn is the animating spirit and chief editorial writer. And be it remarked in passing that it is a fact well-known to labor that Mr. Dunn's newspaper is the organ of union labor in Montana and in every sense of the word maintained in the interest of and for the benefit of labor and its principles.

The Bulletin termed Cutts' labor record "shady" and viewed his service as a "spruce soldier" as a reflection of cowardice. His entire being, the Bulletin said, was consecrated to the service of the Anaconda Company.

the polarity of butte

The Bulletin staff undoubtedly enjoyed taking the measure of the Miner and Cutts in one mocking article. At the same time, the Bulletin, as well as the Miner, effectively outlined the central issues of the young campaign. They also illustrated the polarity of Butte. Given the same set of facts, Company and labor newspapers could draw antipodal conclusions using only slight variations in approach.

The focus of the primary campaign obviously was to be on the Dunn-Cutts race. It was equally obvious that the Bulletin, for a few weeks at least, would be Dunn's personal organ. The Bulletin's March 12, 1919, banner, "DUNN AND DEMOCRACY VS. A.C.M. AND AUTOCRACY," demonstrated the labor newspaper would promote Dunn's candidacy actively. The bottom of the page was devoted to a signed campaign statement by Dunn. He described the "deplorable condition" of Butte's affairs, blamed that condition on "the autocracy of Silver Bow County" and pledged to move city business from Anaconda Company headquarters to city hall. He also faced bluntly and immodestly charges that his politics departed markedly from the mainstream:

I have been accused of being somewhat radical, and it is probable that I am, but it takes some strength of character to be a radical these days, and that same strength of character . . . has been developed in a fight for what I believe is right. . . .

An editorial in the same issue pleaded for a campaign based on principle rather than personality. It pointed out that "men are the product of certain conditions" not of their making. Thus, voters should choose one of "two forces striving for control," the copper companies or the rank and file. Switching to a pragmatic consideration, the Bulletin challenged the right of copper companies to have any voice in city affairs. It noted Company properties were "without exception outside the city limits." The campaign warmed considerably the next day when the Bulletin reacted to a pamphlet, On Guard, published by the Cutts for Mayor Club. Terming the publication "scurrilous . . . made up of lying statements and slanderous attacks on the character of W. F. Dunn," the Bulletin story, written by Dunn, challenged Cutts to a debate. Dunn announced in the story that the hope of a clean campaign on the "clear-cut issue of corporation domination of city affairs with its known consequences of rotten and incompetent administration" had been "shattered by the filthy campaign.
methods employed by the opposition, who are using without scruple the entire staff of mental prostitutes employed by the copper press of this city."23

Dunn challenged Cutts to debate campaign issues and charges made in On Guard

at the Broadway theater or any other building on the first day or night that is available. The friends of W. F. Dunn will pay for the theater . . . at one meeting or as often as the building can be filled.24

Dunn laid out Cutts’ alternatives. Cutts could prove his courage, a quality Dunn said his opponent stressed with frequent advertisement of his military record, or "he can evade or decline the challenge and prove that he is a liar and depends on lying [sic] and slander to win the election for him."25

**debauch or debate**

Cutts replied March 16 in the Miner in a two-column-by-16-inch advertisement headed "DEBAUCH OR DEBATE?" Referring to the "Soviet candidate for mayor," Cutts defended the charges against Dunn in On Guard. Most of the allegations, he claimed, came from government records and Daily Bulletin files. Cutts bewailed the fact that he was not a "salaried" editor of a partisan daily and was forced to pay for the "good, clean, undefiled space" to reply to Dunn’s "latest bubble of vituperation and malicious abuse."26

Cutts professed to be at a loss over what the two candidates could discuss. Dunn had not yet addressed himself to any issues, Cutts said, except for "pilfering" part of Cutts’ platform. Specifically, Dunn was charged with stealing Cutts’ idea for a public food market in Butte. In fact, the idea was not new. Incumbent Mayor W. H. Maloney had discussed in September, 1918, the possibility of establishing a public market. In addition, the Bulletin-sponsored Butte Boosters Club had gone part way toward establishing a public market by pooling resources to purchase wholesale quantities of food and fuel.

Rejecting Dunn’s debate offer, Cutts stated he had information that the "I.W.W. disrupters from the temple of discord" planned to "pack" any meeting between the candidates. Instead of debating, Cutts offered to answer specific campaign charges "through the columns of the immaculate guardian of the truth and the rights of the common people of which Mr. Dunn is the editor." Cutts allowed that publication of the "exact words of any person would be a most unusual procedure and might result in stalling the Bulletin press."27

"CUTTS, RUNNING TRUE TO FORM, EVADES THE ISSUE" read the March 17, 1919, Bulletin banner. Thirty-six-point type announced "Cutts Displays Yellow Streak and Declines to Debate With W. F. Dunn." The Bulletin story answered point by point the charges Cutts made in the Miner, adding the labor paper’s distinctive interpretation to each.28

Cutts’ fear of the meeting being packed by Dunn partisans was taken as a confession of "cowardice" and evidence that Cutts did not have enough supporters to fill a theater. Cutts’ complaint that he did not have the press coverage Dunn had was answered by noting that Cutts was "being boosted editorially by every A.C.M. daily in the state.” Cutts, of course, was not so much supported by other Anaconda Company newspapers as Dunn was condemned. Even the Gazette in Billings, some 240 miles east of Butte, was devoting space to Dunn:

Dunn is a rank I.W.W. and Bolshevist advocate who would supplant American institutions with those of the Russian type. He would destroy our democratic form of government and institute the soviet system of the "reds." Cutts would live and let live. Dunn would tear down and destroy as is demonstrated by the attitude of his paper toward the highly humane mining companies of Butte, which are operating at what must be a loss, rather than close down their properties and entail suffering among their thousands upon thousands of employees. . . .29

Stating that Cutts "dare not meet in open debate," the Bulletin offered him a fresh proposition:

Accept the challenge to debate the issues of the campaign and attempt to prove the lies contained in your pamphlet at any of the theaters in the city, and the Bulletin will give you free of charge, a column of the space on the front page from now until primary election day. In this space you can say anything you please . . . it will be edited by yourself.30

In addition, the Bulletin offered to pay Cutts $10 for every statement in the On Guard pamphlet he proved true if Cutts contributed $5 to the Dunn campaign for every On Guard charge that Dunn proved false.31

The public, according to the Bulletin, "desires this debate" and wants "to find out if you [Cutts] write your own stuff or have it written for you. . . . Will you accept this

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23Ibid., March 14, 1919, p. 1.
24Ibid.
25Ibid.
26Miner, March 16, 1919, p. 16.
27Ibid.
29Gazette, March 11, 1919, p. 6.
31Ibid.
fair offer, Mr. Cutts, or must the public catalog you as a
coward as well as a liar?" 

Cutts chose to ignore the offer. Dunn, after all, was
known for his oratorical talents. Any statement Cutts sub-
tmitted to the *Bulletin* could be rebutted by Dunn in the
same issue.

**police graft alleged**

The campaign moved to other issues. A front-page state-
ment in the March 18 *Bulletin* pledged Dunn to eliminate
graft in the police department. Citing no evidence of illegal
actions, Dunn stated the police department had no business
interfering with the private affairs of citizens nor do its
duties require it to levy tribute upon prostitutes and petty
gamblers, levying it in such a manner that the proceeds
never find their way to the city treasury.88

Not blaming the "ordinary patrolman" ("he has nothing
to say any more than any other slave has"), Dunn promised
to fix the responsibility for corruption.84

Dunn opposition prodded on another front. Labor leaders
opposed to the Dunn candidacy were pressed into service.
J. M. Kennedy, identified by the *Miner* as a Butte miner,
former labor legislator, former Butte city clerk and organi-
zzer of the Butte and Anaconda Workingmen's Unions,
called Dunn

a professional agitator, a dangerous and disloyal dema-
gogue representing all of the disturbing elements of
society, a man who has . . . expended all his energy . . .
to destroy this community's business property and civic
peace. . . .89

The *Bulletin* did not let Kennedy's comment pass: "Man
Who Defrauded Widows and Orphans Joins the Army of
Corporation Tools in Support of Cutts." It said Kennedy
had defrauded the City of Butte of $2,269 when he was city
clerk, defrauded depositors [widows and orphans, presum-
ably] of the State Saving Bank of $2,231 when that institu-
tion failed and "as a campaign manager for the wets in
1916 he looted their treasury and was thrown out of the
convention held in the Placer Hotel in Helena." The *Bu-
letin* concluded:

It appears that whenever he is placed in close prox-
imity to any considerable sum of money that his slim,
prehensile fingers immediately develop an itch that can
only be cured by a firm grasp upon whatever coin of the
realm is within reach.

The candidate that accepts support from such a quarter
confesses that he is allied with the forces who condone
the most disgusting forms of graft, thieving and re-
action.86

As far as the *Bulletin* was concerned, that took care of Ken-
nedy.

Not so easy to dispel was an attack on Dunn by M. M.
Donoghue, president of the Montana State Federation of
Labor. Donoghue, the *Miner* reported, told a Patriotic
Citizens of America meeting that Dunn never had been
and never could be a champion of organized labor. The
only place for Dunn, Donoghue said, was Russia, "where
the soviet form of government and the men he holds are the
greatest in the world hold sway." Another speaker at the
meeting, Silver Bow Rep. William Meyer, called the choice
between Cutts and Dunn a choice between loyalty and dis-
loyalty.87

The *Bulletin* had two answers to the Donoghue attack.
First, the night before Donoghue's speech the Silver Bow
Trades and Labor Council had endorsed Dunn for mayor.
The *Bulletin* considered the Council vote an "emphatic
and unmistakable reply to the Cutts pamphlet, *On
Guard*." It also indicated Dunn's pulling power with labor. Second,
the *Bulletin* scored the Patriotic Citizens of America meet-
ing at which Donoghue spoke. It said the meeting had been
attended primarily by Anaconda Company officials and "all
of the gunmen and stool-pigeons of the A.C.M. who could
be spared from their pressing duties, such as shooting
women for picking up coal."88

The *Bulletin* contended Donoghue was slated for discard
at the next federation election "by the outraged coal miners
whose interests he has betrayed—he has been playing the
A.C.M. game for some time now." Dunn and Donoghue,
formerly friends, had "parted ways at the last session of the
legislature as soon as Dunn found that Donoghue could
never be found except in the company of Dan M. Kelly or
Roy Alley."89

The *Bulletin* also said the Patriotic Citizens of America
meeting was attended by a "goodly number of those pale-
faced young gentlemen who live on the shameful earnings
of those poor females whom they force to walk the streets
for them."90

While smear and counter-smear dominated Butte politi-
cal news, Dunn attempted to add a rational note to what
had become a discordant campaign. The lead *Bulletin*
story March 21 contained Dunn's platform. It included a call
for a centrally located public market where farmers could
rent stalls for a nominal fee and sell their produce for less
than grocers could. Dunn advocated construction of public
toilets. With the closure of saloons, public restrooms ap-
parently were scarce in Butte. Dunn proposed to create new
improvement districts for streets and alleys "as soon as the
Anaconda Mining Company, through its subsidiary com-
pany, the Three Forks Cement Company, lowers the price
of cement from $1.20 per sack to 40 cents, where it should
be."91

90Ibid.
91Ibid.
92Ibid., March 21, 1919, p. 1.
Dunn reiterated his promise to end police graft and to serve 95 per cent of Butte’s people. “The other 5 per cent, composed of crooks, grafters, gunmen, stool-pigeons, company politicians and officials, have had enough mayors.”

He offered biographical data and an abbreviated explanation of his sedition conviction: “Here is my declaration and here is my record. I am not ashamed of either and am willing to rest my case on them.”

disagreements over support

Both candidates had labor union endorsements, but neither the candidates nor the Bulletin and Miner always could agree on who was backing whom. The March 19 Bulletin ran a front-page box in which the Musicians Union refused Cutts’ claim of friendship with it. Cutts, the union declared, was instrumental in organizing the theatrical trades in Butte in an attempt to rescind a pay raise for “girl cashiers and . . . to fight the musicians’ minimum regulations.” The Bulletin observed that the Miner refused to print the union’s announcement.

The March 22 Miner reported the Workingmen’s Union had refused to endorse Dunn. With 500 members, the union was one of the largest in Butte. The Bulletin reported the Workingmen’s Union was three to one for Dunn. The Bulletin declared debate on an endorsement motion clearly gave Dunn a healthy margin, but a parliamentary maneuver adjourned the meeting before a vote could be taken. “If the Miner can get any consolation out of that kind of ‘defeat,’ it is welcome to it.”

Confusion was not restricted to union endorsements. The Miner reported that Cutts paid the admissions of a “large crowd of voters” to a movie theater when the hall he had rented for an election meeting was closed. The voters, the Miner observed, gave Cutts an enthusiastic welcome. Reporting the same story, the Bulletin contended only nine persons, “company candidates with a bodyguard of labor fakirs,” appeared for the meeting. Cutts then was invited to speak before the theater audience at the invitation of the theater manager, according to the Bulletin, and “Mr. Cutts received a very warm welcome from the audience, mostly boors and jeers.”

While political infighting continued, the Bulletin helped prepare for Election Day. The March 19 editorial page contained “General Information for Watchers and Checkers,” a list of regulations governing conduct of the election. The Dunn campaign headquarters called for election watchers and checkers in the March 21 Bulletin. An editorial spelled out what the Dunn forces feared:

The usual number of repeaters will be on hand, dead men will come out of their graves to vote, vacant lots will suddenly become populated, and there will be used all those means to put it over, with which the powers that be are adept and which go as “legitimate” in Butte.

Judges and clerks, watchers and checkers, will be at their places ready to challenge doubtful voters and the strong-arm gunmen will be there to bluff or force them through.

Then the counting begins and watchful eyes are matched against nimble fingers and a small army of men sit into the night and a bill of hundreds of dollars is created against the city to get what the ingenuity of man has been taxed to secure—an honest ballot.

Democracy, where art thou?

Why, if a man really believes in democracy, he could be trusted to go into a room alone and count the ballots and not to change a single vote...48

Two days before the election, the Bulletin published a list of irregularities that voters, checkers and watchers should watch for. The list included making certain ballot boxes were empty before voting began, watching to be sure no one voted more than once, keeping a close check on judges and clerks, challenging suspected illegal votes, watching the ballot box and observing that votes were counted and recorded properly and,

if the lights go out before the balloting is closed, see that nothing goes into the box. Use your judgment. If the lights go out after the ballots are removed from the box, see that they are not moved.50

The Bulletin furnished readers with phone numbers so they could summon a Dunn-sponsored trouble squad if the lights were turned off. The Bulletin also announced that Dunn’s watchers and checkers would be furnished with flashlights and carbide lamps “to prevent any attempt at fraud in the absence of electric lights.”

In the last few days of the campaign, the Bulletin reduced its efforts in behalf of Dunn to devote space to support other city candidates and to insure an honest election. The Bulletin appeared confident Dunn would win. He clearly had won the battle for labor’s vote. The electricians’ and bankers’ unions had endorsed him as had the Metal Trades Council and the Trades and Labor Assembly. Even the Miner printers had endorsed Dunn in a 14 to 1 vote. Cutts was backed only by the carpenters’ and clerks’ unions.

The Bulletin exuded disgust and confidence in a March 22 editorial:

No reasoning, no logic, no set of principles, no great historical cause or ideal to be attained. No!

Simple abuse; sickly, slimy insinuations; depraved suggestions; bold and blatant lying; muck-slinging and the jabberings of drunken coster women.

But what other methods did they ever use? What other
Indeed, attacks from the Cutts camp were becoming increasingly frantic. At a Saturday, March 22, mass meeting for Cutts, Dunn was accused of milking union treasuries for personal benefit. Charles Armstrong of the Carpenters Union charged that "half of the unions in the city are bankrupt as a result" of the Bulletin "while Dunn and his cohorts are living in ease. . . Dunn is best termed . . . a leech feeding off union labor." Armstrong claimed Dunn carried a gun to protect himself from union members when they discovered he was "using them as puppets."

County Attorney Joseph R. Jackson told the assemblage that "Dunn is a bird of passage, a carpetbagger who has hardly had time to warm his feet since his arrival. . . ."

Perhaps the most truculent smear of the campaign was printed over the signature of the "Women of the Cutts for Mayor Club." In advertising space apparently donated by the Miner, the Cutts women blamed the travail of Butte on "bands of anarchists and imported agitators . . . who . . . have destroyed with dynamite the homes of peaceful . . . citizens . . . who have fomented strikes and brought penury and want to the threshold of many homes. . . ." The Cutts women saw Butte "menaced as never before . . . sedition seeks high place in the city hall."

Dunn was accused of telling the Legislature: "LENINE AND TROTZKY ARE THE TWO GREATEST MEN THE WORLD HAS EVER PRODUCED."

The smear was published the day before the election, too late for the Bulletin to reply before most ballots were cast.

**election day**

Election Day dawned bright in Butte. The mines were closed. The skies were clear. Voters had only one responsibility—to cast their ballots. It was a holiday and crowds thronged the streets. Townspeople of sporting blood watched the odds on the Dunn-Cutts contest and wagered some $30,000 on the outcome. As voting progressed, the odds switched from 10 to seven favoring Dunn in the morning hours to five to three for Cutts by night. Seventy-six per cent of the eligible voters "flocked" to the polls, according to the Miner, to cast 10,240 ballots, the largest turnout in Butte history. The Bulletin reported violence at several polling places. Police ejected numerous Dunn watchers from the polls. By Tuesday, March 25, the morning Miner reported "UNOFFICIAL FIGURES INDICATE NOMINATION OF DUNN FOR MAYOR." Election results, however, would "require revision" and the "defeat of Capt. William Cutts has not been conceded."

"W. E. DUNN, PEOPLE'S CHOICE" crowed the afternoon Bulletin. The front page, which contained a three-column picture of Dunn, announced he had won despite "many huge steals." A "prominent attorney" estimated that "the gang of thugs . . . backing Cutts stole 2,200 votes." Unofficial election returns showed the Dunn slate of Non-Partisan party aldermanic candidates had been nominated on the Democratic ticket in six of eight wards. Non-Partisan party candidates for police magistrate and city treasurer also had been nominated as Democrats.

The Bulletin editorial rejoiced in the Dunn triumph but placed more emphasis on the election conduct of Anaconda Company gunmen and city and county officials:

They intimidate voters! They packed the polling places with their gunmen! Women and men watchers were thrown bodily by drunken detectives and gunmen; watchers and checkers were beaten up with the cooperation of persons on the city and county payrolls or without any interference by officers paid to protect the voters. . . .

"Cutts is cutting down Dunn's lead!" yells the megaphone man, and the crowd is silent. They sense that something is wrong, but they do not know as do the dopes at the press table that gangs of gunmen have been sent out to oust the watchers and checkers and count the ballots to suit themselves.

The hypocrisy—the sickening hypocrisy of it all! The hollow pretense of giving the people the right to choose their officials, when if their choice does not meet with the approval of the copper kings, their band of degenerates are ready to murder that their masters may not be disappointed. 

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A Dunn supporter shouted, “Pull out the guns.”

To the Bulletin, Dunn’s victory was less spectacular than the inability of the opposition to steal enough votes. That judgment was premature. The Miner announced March 26 that the “CANDVASS ALONE WILL DECIDE PRIMARY WINNER” and said the count of several precincts was suspect. Dunn’s margin of 114 votes over Cutts left room for an election reversal if errors were found in the canvass.

Regardless of the outcome, the Miner stated in an editorial, “Butte has been thoroughly disgraced in the eyes of all loyal citizens everywhere, by the large vote this community cast for . . . Dunn.” Striking out at the people of Butte, the Miner said:

Evidently there were two controlling reasons for these voters supporting Dunn, the main one being that he represented everything that was un-American and the other that his opponent was a soldier who at the outbreak of the war had volunteered his services to the nation and donned the uniform of his country.

Suspecting that Dunn’s victory might be reversed at the official canvass, the Bulletin March 26 urged “every honest man and woman” in Butte to rally at city hall that night. The Bulletin based its misgivings on the fact that certain “sure-thing” gamblers were offering to bet that Cutts would be the Democratic nominee after the canvass. Satisfied the “sure-thing gentry” would not bet unless they had an “ace in the hole,” the Bulletin asked why they would bet on Cutts. The only reply the Bulletin could manage was that something had happened to the tally sheets after they were taken from the polling places. The Bulletin invited voters to “come in your thousands to protect the ballot.”

Voters did not come in “thousands,” but they crammed the city council chambers and, according to the Bulletin, numbered “at least a thousand” in and around city hall. The crowd “was distinctly and emphatically a Dunn crowd, like all the other crowds during the campaign and on election night.”

As the canvass progressed, it became evident Dunn’s election would be overturned. As the Dunn crowd mumbled and grew angry, Dunn’s vote total shrank and Cutts picked up enough ballots to finish with a plurality of 108. The Dunn crowd turned ugly when the tally from the deciding precinct was announced. A Dunn supporter shouted, “Pull out the guns.” Police reached for their weapons and blocked the gate separating the crowd and the city council. Mayor W. H. Maloney ordered police to search the hall for weapons, but “this was found impracticable,” the Miner reported.

Calm was restored only when undertaker Larry Duggan announced Dunn would run as an independent and asked the crowd to adjourn to Dunn headquarters to hear its candidate speak and to plan the new campaign.

The Bulletin was outraged but not surprised by the canvass result. “BALLOT RAVAGED BY THE CROOKS,” the banner read. The newspaper contended:

There is not an intelligent person in the city of Butte that does not know that, failing to roll up a sufficiently large vote for Cutts by the use of an army of repeaters and by substituting marked ballots for the originals, that the poll books and tally sheets were doctored after the polls closed.

So raw have the tactics been that dozens of honest people who voted for Cutts . . . are already repudiating him.

The Bulletin declared that “intelligent action of the rank and file” had forced the “copper gang” to “over-reach themselves.” The “copper gang” was warned that the people were in “no mood to brook any further invasion of their rights.”

**dunn responds**

Dunn acted on two fronts to salvage his candidacy. First, he filed in district court a suit alleging fraud in the primary election. Second, he unsuccessfully attempted to file for mayor as an independent.

The Bulletin closely watched those developments as it continued its campaign. Before court evidence was introduced on Dunn’s behalf, it alleged or implied that votes had been stolen in six wards. It specified the number of stolen votes in two wards, a total sufficient to decide the election. It was on those totals that Dunn’s case was built.

Meanwhile, Cutts and the opposition press had resumed name-calling and smear tactics. The Bulletin published a list of pronouns used to describe Dunn and his adherents:

Plug uglies, anarchists, imported agitators, demons, black-hearted rascals, cowardly scoundrels, alien enemies, industrial brigands, vagrant hordes, professional disturbers, dynamiters, petty politicians, daring and dangerous men, demagogues, murderers, monsters, social outlaws, disreputable demagogues, cunning and treacherous agitators, band of wreathes, hissing young serpents,

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*Miner, March 27, 1919, p. 1.
*Ibid., p. 4.
*Miner, March 27, 1919, p. 1.
*Ibid., p. 2.
*Ibid.
*Ibid., March 29, 1919, pp. 1, 8.
skulkers, copperhead, cowardly convicted seditionist, notorious offenders, meal ticket prize fighters, pimps, rounders, bootleggers, blackguards, leeches of the underworld, gamblers, crap shooters, yawping wharf rats. . . ."

"These are their arguments," the Bulletin declared, at a time when Butte was bankrupt, unemployment and living costs were high and wages were down. Workers were asked if they wanted to place in power candidates of such "vulgarly."75

As district court sessions opened on Dunn's fraud charge, State Attorney General S. C. Ford sent an aide to Butte to investigate election irregularities. Three days of hearings established that tally sheets had been altered for the two wards for which the Bulletin had specified the number of stolen votes. Testimony came from 17 witnesses, most official election judges or observers in whose selection Dunn had no voice. The alterations were blatant. Witnesses testified that tally sheets had been altered and new sheets with different totals and different ink had been added. In addition, seals had been removed from ballot boxes and the ballots removed in violation of state law. The Bulletin blamed the fraud on City Clerk Charles Treacy, who was in charge of election records after the election.76

"Probably never in the history of Butte has there been a more thorough exposé of the crooked tactics used by the company tools, and certainly their work has never been of so coarse a nature," the Bulletin said.77

The district court hearing, which had to be concluded rapidly if it were to accomplish anything before the April 7 general election, soon bogged down in tedious counting of ballots. The count was demanded by Cutts' attorney, objected to by Dunn's attorneys as immaterial and a delaying tactic, and allowed by the presiding judge, W. E. Lamb. Dunn's attorneys contended the count was aimed at preventing Dunn from filing as an independent before the dead­line passed on the grounds that Dunn was still on the ballot. The ultimately effect of the boycott was to deprive Cutts of votes and that Bulletin backers who cast ballots had voted for Stodden.85 That the Bulletin affected the election outcome cannot be disputed. The reduction in voter turnout was evidence the Bulletin boycott was effective. That a Republican was elected mayor in normally Democratic Butte was further evidence. But the breadth of that effect cannot be known. Many anti-Dunn voters might have stayed home simply because Dunn was not in the race. Cutts' loss of votes may have been a reaction against fraud, but it also reflected a crossover of Republicans in the primary. In the latter stages of the primary campaign, the Patriotic Citizens of America had urged Republicans to support Democrat Cutts.86 Nevertheless, the Cutts loss was so substantial that its final chapter of the mayoral election was written at

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the April 7 Hebgen baseball-park meeting when Burton K. Wheeler criticized the Anaconda Company and told voters they could expect no relief until city hall, the courthouse and state capital were given a "thorough cleaning by the people whose liberties have been ravished by the official tools of the A.C.M." Wheeler predicted the overthrow of the "corporate autocracy" in the 1920 general election.88

**the red scare**

Wheeler and the *Bulletin* were to have ample opportunity to clean house in 1920. Wheeler sought the governor's office and the *Bulletin* backed him. Unfortunately for both Wheeler and the *Bulletin*, the red scare that swept the nation in 1919 had caught up with Montana. As elsewhere in the country, the specter of Bolshevism fanned hysteria in Montana, leaving the labor movement badly mauled and the power of capital at its apex.89

Combined with Butte's and Montana's sorry economic climate, the red scare gave the statewide Company press an issue that could evoke unreasoned fear among state voters. Butte's economic woes could be blamed on radicals and reds.90 The election of radicals such as Dunn, who again was running for the state legislature, and Wheeler could result in closure of the mines.91 Wheeler and the *Bulletin* attempted to counter the fear campaign by employing essentially the same tactics used against Cutts in the mayoral election. Wheeler and the *Bulletin* represented the people and the Anaconda Company and Wheeler's opponent, Joseph M. Dixon, represented the profiteers. As in 1918, the *Bulletin* proved no match for the statewide network of Company papers and Wheeler was no match for a nationwide Republican sweep and the Bolshevik label the Company pinned on him. The *Bulletin* and Dunn managed to deliver Silver Bow County by only a 138-vote plurality.92 Dunn, who campaigned for Wheeler but not for himself, finished well down in the election finals.

The *Bulletin*'s finest hour had been in the primary of 1919. But even that success had been stolen. By 1920, the political climate had changed. The change precluded any possibility the *Bulletin* could be counted as a political force until the climate changed again. The *Bulletin* didn't last that long.93

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93The *Daily Bulletin* became the *Weekly Bulletin* in 1921 and it was discontinued in 1924. Burton K. Wheeler served as a U.S. senator from Montana from 1923 to 1946. In May, 1972, at age 90, he was an attorney in Washington, D.C. Dunn, who became co-editor of the *Daily Worker* in New York City, died Sept. 23, 1953.

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**Principles of Advertising: Circa 1904**

The Butte *Evening News*, established March 1, 1904, shared an office with the *Reveille* at 28 West Broadway, between two saloons. The printing department was in the basement. When the pressmen discovered a pipe from a beer keg under the floor of one of the saloons, they tapped the line and for a long time enjoyed free beer while toiling at the press. But one printer forgot to replace the plug, and the saloonkeeper soon discovered the cause of his beer shortage. The owner threatened to sue the *Evening News* for $10,000, but its personable editor, Richard R. Kilroy, assuaged him by giving his saloon six months of free advertising.


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*Montana Journalism Review*
Butte Circa 1925:
Hymn to an Oasis

By REUBEN MAURY

This article, reprinted by permission, appeared in the October, 1925, American Mercury under the pseudonym Arthur O'Dane. Maury, chief editorial writer of the New York Daily News, is a native of Butte, Mont. He earned a law degree from the University of Virginia, then returned to Butte to practice law. In 1925 he wrote this article as a response to H. L. Mencken's contention that no literate piece of writing ever had come out of Montana. Maury sent the article to Mencken, then editor of the American Mercury, and he printed it. Captain Joseph Medill Patterson, owner of the Daily News, read the article and offered Maury a job. He began writing editorials for the Daily News in April, 1926, and he received the Pulitzer Prize for editorial writing in 1940.

The impression is general that Mr. George Follansbee Babbitt has settled down definitely to Service in Zenith City, his faith renewed after a most regrettable philandering, both mental and physical, and a passage through the cleansing fires of democracy's displeasure. He was heard from once or twice during the 1924 campaign, and, I am advised, made a fugitive appearance in a late work by his official psychographer, on all such occasions giving voice to the most righteous sentiments imaginable. Surely the assumption was thus far from monstrous that Mr. Babbitt had got bravely over the unpleasantness connected with his son's marriage and was entering upon a serene old age filled with godly baits of Zenith City Reds, Catholics, Jews and Negroes, and evenings at home with the American Magazine, the Dearborn Independent and the American Standard.

The truth is, however, that Mr. Babbitt is dead. I know, because I walked and talked with the wan ghost of him but yestere'en. The adventure took place in West Park street, in the city of Butte, county of Silver Bow, State of Montana, hard by the Y.M.C.A., and under a Rocky Mountain sunset that was all brass and copper-sulphate. The stride of the apparition was still pepful though a mite hangdog, the white silk socks twinkled in my eyes at every step, the pearl-gray hat brim was turned down for'ard in condescension to a lately visiting heir apparent and up astern to show that the wearer was an American forever—but the sun glimmered through the ensemble rather than on it. No questioning can be allowed. The fact must be accepted that Mr. Babbitt, for reasons unknown to me and by him undisclosed, at some time since January 1925, saw fit to travel westward from home a thousand miles to Butte, Montana, and that there he departed this life.

His spirit did not call attention to the obvious fact that it was only a spirit, nor can I say why it chose me to fall in with in West Park street. Its chief desire seemed to be to talk to someone, to anyone, and I saw nothing for it but to listen.

"No place for a real honest-to-John Amurrican," it muttered. "This town of yours, I mean. I dropped in at the Kiwanis meeting when I first come here, over at this, now, New Finlen Hotel, and what did I see? Why, I saw the members grinning across the table at each other while singing some of the finest songs ever written, and I saw several of 'em tip each other the wink at the strongest points that was being brought out by the speaker from Salt Lake City. Real red meat that talk had in it, too. Well—" the ghost sighed windily—"then, I hear how your attorney-general started a drive on bootleggers in this county, and all he..."
could get out of your juries was one acquittal on top of another, and finally one of the State's own Prohibition agents was locked up because he was forced to shoot a bootlegger while performing his sworn duties."

"Yes!" I said, for it was all true.

"Yes! . . . Uh——furtively—'you're a Protestant, I take it?"

"Episcopalian," I told him, with that urbanity which seems assumable by us Churchmen alone of all heretics when so questioned.

"Well," said Mr. Babbitt, partially reassured, "in this here town I see Roman Cath'lics inside-of-the-Y.-M.-C.-A! Spot 'em in the shower-room, by those dinguses around their necks. Yes, sir! Now, even you'll admit . . . But there's other things happen. I'm told how, while the campaign was on, there was a Red agitator spoke every evening on one of the main business streets, aiming to overthrow the government—and all the sheriff and police chief would do was say, 'Let the . . . . . . . talk his head off. We should worry.'"

"The Wobbly didn't draw any very large crowds," I offered meekly. "'We'd heard it all before, around here. And he wasn't exactly red—looked bilious to me.'"

"That's just what I'm getting at," the immortal fraction of Mr. Babbitt broke in. "In this town, nobody listens to anything at all—no more to what they should listen to than what they'd ought to call out the reserves to keep 'em from hearing. Just no spirit. No Amurricanism, none whatever. Hope you don't take it too much to heart me saying these things. But it just don't—just doesn't seem quite right, to me."

In the shade's tone was a woolly be-puzzlement. For my part, as I stared into that outrageous sunset aflare beyond me."

Mr. Vanderveer is correct save for the facts that practically all the mines are situate on one hill known in Chamber of Commerce pamphletry as The Richest Hill on Earth, and that the 1920 census gave Butte a population of 41,611. The suburbs of Walkerville, Centerville, Meaderville, Williamsburg (or Dogtown), Butchertown and Seldom Seen combine to raise this figure at the present moment to perhaps 56,000.

**copper as king**

The population wags with the market price of copper. When copper is up, Butte streets bustle, everybody has money and spends it, the miners acquire delusions of grandeur and flock to the first union organizer who hoists a foghorn voice into the snow peaks, and delinquencies both *mala prohibita* and *mala in se* in alleys and puritians take on an exhilarating frequency. When copper is down, as now and for long past, only the gamblers, pimps and bootleggers make any real money, the business streets gape with empty store-fronts, and the men in the mines reconcile themselves beautifully to the fact that they are Being Crushed Under Capital's Iron Heel Huray For W. Z. Foster.

It is this mining camp which may be remembered as having been advertised extensively some eleven years ago by the gifted Mrs. Gertrude Atherton in her novel "Perch of the Devil." She described with much detail and no little artistry the Butte hill at night, with its blazing scarf of lights twirling out against a sky of black ice, the Flat and its road-houses, the electric atmosphere, the glistering mountains roundabout. A thunderous outcry arose from Butte's upper social stratum when the book appeared, to the effect that Mrs. Atherton had misrepresented local conditions shockingly, and altogether had not done right by our city. Inasmuch as the novelist caused her central character, by way of capping his other exploits, to outsmart the above named Anaconda Copper Mining Company in a projected land-grab, the criticism would seem to have been rather unjust, for the reason that an achievement of this generic aspect represents the unspoken wish, or libido, of fully nine-tenths of Montana's male population of voting age. The other tenth work, have worked, or hope some day to work, for the Company.

Butte, further, is the city where lived, wept, laughed twistedly, and wrote with an iron nib dipped in fire that wizardress of beautiful words, Mary MacLane. The poet resides in Chicago nowadays, I believe, where presumably nested down in a little valley among some hills, every one of which is a copper mine; copper mining or more lately, some zinc mining or lead mining,—a few by-products,—is the entire industry of the town. Pretty near all the mines there are owned by a company known as the Anaconda Copper Mining Company, which is a consolidation of the old Amalgamated, about which you read so much in Tom Lawson's article some years ago, and the Heinze interests. Outside of the A.C.M. mines there is little in Butte, except a few independent mines, owned principally by W. A. Clark, former senator from the State of Montana, and former stockholder in the Amalgamated Copper Company.

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she looks into her smouldering heart and writes down what she finds there. Her own city, world-wearily persuaded for reasons shortly to appear that all poems are but vanity, laughed at her consistently, yet gloried none the less in the terrific splash she made with "The Story of Mary MacLane." That was in 1902.

Butte, again, is the place wherein was indited, anno Domini Sancti 1897, that masterpiece forerunning by fifteen years Vachel Lindsay, Sandburg, and the rest of the current literate, though seemingly his epic fire was spent on this lone magnificence.

III

So much for what we may term the city's major cultural output since its incorporation in 1879. It is not of this that I would chiefly carol, because such tricks and devices are held in more or less contempt by Butte at large. Every person within the corporation and suburbs well knows that any attempt to adorn, otherwise than with laughter, the jagged bronze surface of existence is a vain thing. The cultural output is not characteristic of Butte; it came in spite of Butte.

The things that are typical, that chalk out the municipality's mind and soul, are such as I list hereunder:

Item: The discharging in Federal Court some eighteen months ago of eleven shots by a convicted bootlegger awaiting sentence; and more especially the wind-up of this affair, namely, a hung jury when the man was prosecuted for attempted homicide, necessitating transfer of the case to Helena.

Item: A small flag bearing the letters KKK, nailed by some cosmic realist to the masthead of the Mountain View Methodist Episcopal Church in the dark of the moon shortly before the last election.

Item: A recent bald announcement in the public prints to the effect that the cigar-store proprietors of Butte had "agreed" (that was the word used) with the sheriff's office to suppress their punchboards, poker dice, and other dimes, all strictly prohibited by Montana statute, until such time as the anti-gambling fever then running high in the local purity squad should have abated.

Item (in extenso et solido): The dark and earnest suspicion that is nursed by the average man of Butte, the man in the street as he used to be called, of all evangelical clergymen, faith healers, stock promoters, boosters, Republicans, optimists, Democrats, Fundamentalists, sweet old-fashioned girls, and advocates of the propagation in any way, shape or form of sweetness and light.

Sub-item to the next preceding: The equally pronounced torpor which characterizes the aforesaid average Butte man amid the din incident to the New Dawn about to be ushered in by the birth-controllers, anti-child-laborites, pacifists, modernists, communists, Younger Generation literati, sin-

gle-standard moralists, third party John Baptists, and Salvation Yeo's of whatever kind named or not named.

butte's civic heart

The first three items are submitted out of dozens available as indicating the kind of incidents that may be looked for in Butte any day, and as direct results of the Butte state of mind. The concluding pair illumine the inner recesses of the civic heart of Butte, that great throbbing organ so lushly saluted by the local press whenever a drive is toward.

Enthusiasts of all kinds come in for closer, more morose scrutiny, hundred-percenters wax less fat, and pep, punch and piety meet with rougher sledding in Butte, I believe, than in any other American city save the godless seaport of New York. Warned of an impending drive, be the object never so worthy, the average Butte man wonders first and instantly—and inquires in harshly audible tones,—who is slated to get away with the pot. Notified that he is summarily to be saved by grace, the New Thought, McAdoo, Mrs. Eddy, Coolidge, 'Gene Debs, Judge Gary, Henry Ford, or the Board of Temperance, Prohibition and Public Morals of the Methodist Episcopal Church, he reflectively lights another Camel and gets him to Jere Clifford's place to shoot a quarter on the baseball pool.

This is true not only of the higher orders in the city, but likewise of the common man—the man who goes without butter on his table to keep his Chevrolet rolling, who owns his little home subject only to two mortgages and a mechanic's lien—the man who, in the States generally, showers his worship and his savings on the vendors of buncombe and furnishes the raw material for the Ring Lardners and the Sinclair Lewises. In brief, the entire Butte community, long ago, whether consciously or unconsciously I know not, took to its bosom that wise crack of Dr. Johnson's—

Boswell: Sir, you laugh at schemes of political improvement.

Johnson: Why sir, most schemes of political improvement are very laughable things.

—merely broadening the apothegm by eliminating the word political.

It is a wise, weary, sardonic burg, this copper camp pigeonholed away in the remoter Rockies; a wild one, a Rabelaisian, bad and bold one. Even the municipal dog, Dynamite, who boards at the restaurants, sleeps at the Quartz street fire-station and superintends all fires and funerals, has an eye that says, "Of course, my acting as I do is a joke, but don't kill my game, and I won't tell what I know about you."

IV

A large part of my reasoning lifetime has been devoted to a fascinated speculation as to the reasons, if any there be, for the juice and savor that is Butte. I love this common man of Butte and all his ways, with the single exception of his mysterious preference for Camels, and my chief joy in
The rest of the State of Montana... loathes Butte...

my hours of ease is to ponder on what it may be that makes him the sweet cynic he is.

One explanation which appears plausible at first thought I find in the large proportion of Roman Catholics to the city's population. The Latin church has ever recognized the truth that this flesh is incurably lustful, and it places a damper on the fiercer fires by means of a system of symbolic fines and penalties, rather than seek to stifle them after the fashion of the evangelical sects. It would seem to follow, then, that wherever popery wields a measurable influence there will be found a group-philosophy more closely approximating horse sense than in predominantly Protestant feudalities such as Oregon or Tennessee. However, there smoke and sweat many American cities in which Holy Church is even stronger than in Butte, so that I think this theory fails to reach to the root of the matter.

Another reason might be predicated on the League-of-Nations tableau presented daily by the 41,611 Butte denizens. About forty languages and dialects, by reliable estimate, are used in the camp. The ceaseless, inescapable spectacle of men even thinking in words meaningless to the viewer, yet squeezing just as much money and social prestige out of the environment, is calculated finally to ram racial vainglory amidships. And when that goes down, a huge cargo of assorted jackassism founders with it. Undoubtedly the perpetual rubbing of shoulders with Harps, Hindus, Spades, Canucks, Wops, Frogs, Greasers, Hunyaks, Far-Downs, Yids, Cousin Jacks and Cousin Jennies has a part in keeping the average Butte dweller's eyes in focus on the realities of this world. But there are a thousand other American cities where national crazy quilts flame as gaudily.

The rest of the State of Montana, comprising some 146,066 square miles, loathes Butte with the acrimony that only the inferiority complex engenders. The Ku Kluxers in the legislature would long ago have jimmed the Butte hill up at the roots and taken it home piecemeal to Ekalaka, Two-Dot or Pompey's Pillar, had they had the power so to do. A Butte candidate for any berth in the snug harbor 'neath the capitol dome at Helena is fortunate to complete his stump ing tour without receiving a charge astern from some ranch hand's squirrel gun. This knowledge that ravening foes surround in numbers all but overwhelming no doubt helps to hold the Butte intelligence at razor's edge. The underlying isolation, however, is the result of something else.

the city's uniqueness

After long meditation, as aforesaid, I believe I have hit upon the basic cause of the Butte uniqueness. I offer my conclusions herewith, and dedicate them solemnly to the radical Republican senators, the General Committee of the I.W.W., and Upton Sinclair.

Properly to expound my thesis requires a glance at the outset over the motivation of Mr. George F. Babbitt. What was it that made him in life the manner of man he was, and what is it that keeps his seven or eight million prototypes revolting? Surely it was and is nothing more or less than a conviction that it is humanly possible—nay, easily feasible—for a man to be somewhat other than he is. A little qualification is needed here. The idea I am attempting to convey, and finding deuced hard to express as it happens, is that Mr. Babbitt believed himself able by taking thought to add unto himself characteristics and talents which inherently he did not possess.

He thought, for example, that by pretending to be a terrific worker and cunning in the art and mystery of the realtor, he would actually be one. He had a fixed idea which certified him in the fancy that he was a model American husband and father so long as he bullied his wife and attempted to terrorize his children for a given length of time each day, let his thoughts stray to no matter how many Tanis Judiques. Mr. Babbitt believed, further, that some necromancy lay at his disposal whereby he could rise above the mental and manorial level of the source of his being, to wit: his hundred generations of peasant ancestors. He thought he became automatically a gentleman when he dressed like one, a scholar by reading the Literary Digest and being seen in public with Chum Frink, a judge of good whisky by buying synthetic gin from a druggist. He thought that if he were outwardly good he would be inwardly happy, and that he understood any given proposition once he had proclaimed loudly enough that he did understand it.

Mr. Babbitt most emphatically did not, be it observed, think he could bluff his way through life. What he thought was that bluff was life, and the sum and substance thereof. The distinction is important. The notion was born in him from those ever brooding, ever hopeful, ever superstitious peasant ancestors. And it was nourished by the tons of optimistic go-getter philosophy he absorbed from babyhood. Further, conditions in Zenith City were such as to give Mr. Babbitt the illusion that his belief had worked out in practice. The God he affected to admire had been exceeding generous toward the nation of which Zenith was a conspicuous adornment, in the matters of enormous natural resources, a population still sparse in proportion to area, puny or friendly neighbors, wide seas muzzling potential foes, a late entry upon the historical stage, and similar beneficences. Mr. Babbitt at forty-five saw himself not the least among the business captains and kings of Zenith; and he told himself that he had it all, never realizing that first, his achievement was not excessively notable, or that secondly, almost any man could have done as well, given similar circumstances under which to work.

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Let us turn now to Butte, where nothing conduces to such mental flatulence. I quote once more the earnest Vanderveer:

For years there have existed in Butte certain conditions which have operated to keep the whole camp in one seething turmoil. They have what they call the rustling card out there; some other places they call it the white card. ... If you come into Butte, you may be the finest copper miner in the world,—you first have to get it, if you want a job,—you have to go to some employment office. ... You ask for permission to apply for a job; not for a job. They immediately ask you who you are and where you came from and what you have been doing. ... And then they tell you to come back bye and bye, and "We will see what we can do." Then they will look you up. ... If they find that you have ever been a union man ... you don't get a rustling card. ... When you get work, and get down below, if you do the least thing that displeases the boss, this man who is called "the safety-first man," why under the pretension that you have endangered somebody's health, or done this or that or something which he thinks you ought not to do, he says, "You go up on top for seven days ... fifteen days, or thirty days." You are laid off for that long. And you go. That is all. ... I say that may happen to the finest miner in the world.

All "seething turmoil" of an industrial nature ended at the precise instant of the copper marker's collapse in post-war deflation days. It will undoubtedly boil up again the moment copper leaves the sickbed; indeed, faint signs of the precise instant of the copper market's collapse in post-circumstances under which jobs in the Butte holes are remarks remain accurate to this day as a description of the rustled, got and held down.

the company

A condition analogous to that prevailing in the mines extends to every person who makes a living in Butte. Like the Lord God Almighty in His universe, the Anaconda Copper Mining Company is everywhere. It is all, and in all. Its titular Mercy Seat is on the sixth floor of the Hennessy Building at the intersection of Main and Granite streets, but it is enthroned in the heart, brain and wallet of every man and woman from Nine-Mile to Stringtown, from the Main Range to Whisky Gulch. Paraphrasing Mr. Vanderveer: if you do anything calculated to injure the company finan-
Is the News Managed?

By Drew Pearson

Are we getting the truth? Is the news managed? It has been my experience covering Washington—and I've been there covering seven Presidents—that every President, with two exceptions, has tried to manage the news. One exception was Harry Truman, who just slugged it out with the newspapermen, for which I can bear witness. The other was Dwight D. Eisenhower, who didn't read the newspapers. But he had an efficient press secretary who did. And if you were traveling with Ike and had been too critical of him, you found that your baggage just didn't turn up.

Lyndon Johnson is no exception. He is sensitive about the news. He is particularly sensitive about television for he feels he doesn't come off very well on television. I'm rather inclined to agree with him. But I think, seriously, we have to decide as a people whether we want a President who is an expert on TV—an actor such as the governor of California—or a man who knows government. I think this is a decision we have to make almost immediately. When Mr. Johnson was a senator, I remember that on one occasion, when I had been writing some rather critical stories about his legislation on behalf of the oil companies, he became so irate at me that he telephoned most of my newspapers in Texas and demanded they cancel the column. About half of them did. Well he doesn't do that anymore, though, as I say, he is a little sensitive.

Most people don't realize that a Democratic president has a much more difficult time with the newspapers than does a Republican president. The reason is very simple. Eighty per cent of the newspapers in this country are Republican. I think you have in Montana only one Democratic newspaper—in Great Falls. Obviously, a Republican newspaper is inclined to be more kindly toward a Republican president. To give you one very quick illustration: When Eisenhower was in the White House, three oilmen contributed $1,000 a month to the upkeep of his Gettysburg farm. This was highly unethical. The money paid for the farm manager, the farm hands to build certain barns and buy certain livestock. It probably was illegal, because the Internal Revenue Service later ruled that those three men would have to pay a gift tax on their gift.

Nevertheless, I don't believe any of you knew about it, probably for a very simple reason: Most of the newspapers didn't publish it. They were kind to Ike.

In contrast, I expect all of you remember that Mr. Johnson, when he was in the Senate, received one hi-fi set from Bobby Baker, because the story was on the front page of nearly all papers. That's the difference in the treatment of a Republican and Democratic president.

I would say, in conclusion, that by and large we are getting the news in this country, as far as the government is concerned. Sometimes you have to dig rather deeply to get it, but you can get it if you dig. And the government actually is freer with its information, I think, than any other country, and I have visited probably two-thirds or three-quarters of the countries of the world. Now if you're not getting the news, there is a very simple answer—namely that some of the local papers don't particularly want to give it to you. I think they are the exception rather than the rule; I think most of them do.

Now in regard to the student revolt, I do not consider that serious. I consider some phases of it rather healthy, with the exception of some of the revolts such as the one that took place in Columbia University, where a small minority deprived the rights of others to study. I think that what's happening on the campuses around the world is something that is a pretty good sign.

I hope you keep on challenging what's going on in the world and thinking about it, twice, and getting out and doing what some of the youngsters are doing around my part of the nation—ringing doorbells for Senator McCarthy and for the late Senator Kennedy. I had an interview with Khrushchev at the height of the Berlin crisis in August, 1961, when he was not friendly. This took place on the shores of the Black Sea, where he had a summer home. And for about three hours in a very formal interview, he was rather tough and quite critical of the United States. Finally, I thought I'd get him to relax a little bit. I knew he was interested in farming, so I talked to him a little bit about farming and he responded, asking me about some farm methods. We talked for about an hour, and he became quite friendly. And at the end of that time, much to my surprise, he said, "Let's go for a swim and then we'll have dinner."

We went into the Black Sea—the water was warm and quite pleasant—and we swam around for about 20 minutes. Then he got on a little swimming dock, took off his tube and said, "You know, I can swim without a tube." We then put on his little frog dive into the water right next to Mrs. Pearson. He managed to dogpaddle around like my youngest grandson. We went to dinner—by this time it was 9:30 in the evening—and the dinner lasted until almost midnight. I've never partaken of such a capitalistic repast. During the dinner Khrushchev talked about everything under the sun. He has quite a sense of humor, and he likes an argument, and I had occasion to argue with him to some extent.

I told him I didn't think he'd ever get a settlement of the Berlin crisis if he kept hurling critical statements at President Kennedy and the United States because, I said, you have to remember that President Kennedy was elected by a very narrow margin and he's worried about his Republican opposition.

"Well," said Khrushchev, "I know he was elected by a narrow margin. As a matter of fact, just before the election the American Ambassador came to see me and wanted me to release two American RB-47 fliers as a gesture to show that our two countries could get along together. I said 'no'—this would only help Nixon. And we're voting for Kennedy.' Insomuch as Kennedy was elected by a very narrow margin, we figured that we elected him."

Later I told that to President Kennedy. He said, "For God's sake, don't publish that."

*Excerpts from a speech by Mr. Pearson at the University of Montana, June 25, 1968. Mr. Pearson died Sept. 1, 1969.
"Why Are We Learning This?"

The Student Teacher of Journalism

By SUSAN VAN KOTEN BANGS

Mrs. Bangs, a 1971 graduate of the Montana School of Journalism, describes her experiences as a student teacher of journalism and English in a Missoula high school. She found her assignment challenging and frustrating, and she became especially concerned with those students bored by their classes. Mrs. Bangs, a native of Helena, is on the editorial staff of the Montana Historical Society in Helena and serves as assistant to the editor of Montana—The Magazine of Western History. This article is based on a report she submitted for a class in the School of Journalism.

I began preparing for my student-teaching quarter about two years ago by reading Up Against the Law—The Legal Rights of People Under 21. As a student teacher, I expected mini-revolutions or at least a potential revolutionary. But none of my students expected me to quote from Soul On Ice, know the structure of the Black Panther party or discuss Angela Davis. I never mentioned Up Against the Law.

My major is journalism, my minor English. Having taught poetry and creative writing to 26 freshmen and Journalism I to 30 sophomores, juniors and seniors, I now understand why some of my professors appear senile. I had two classes of Journalism I, one right after the other, and often forgot to tell the second class things I had told the first. Or I would proceed through lectures too quickly, eliminating somewhat staid but important material. In discussing the history of journalism, I got us through the Revolution (the one between George and George), but I confused Andrew Hamilton with Alexander Hamilton. My students think Andrew died in a duel when he returned to Pennsylvania.

During a lecture, a young man with one love—his camera—asked: "Why are we learning this?" Normally I would consider this a fair question deserving a thoughtful, courteous answer. On that day, however, I told him to open his notebook, write in it, and listen because I was not up there for my health. Then, guiltily, I told him I would pause for a commercial break in three minutes. Anyone can look attentive for three minutes.

Gradually the students and I came to know one another. One day I assigned an in-class editorial about the student-teaching program—the case for or against it. I received some "good stuff," one of my favorite phrases during that quarter. About 75 per cent of the editorials were wildly in favor of the program, 20 per cent were lukewarmly in favor and 5 per cent opposed it. Here are some of the comments, with the spelling and punctuation unchanged.

The student teacher soon finds out what it is like to try to control a classroom full of students whose only purpose is to get rid of the teacher. If the teacher is smart, the first thing she will do is lay down the law. Immediately, the students break it.

The student teachers are terrific. They have new ideas and are at the students age level almost.

In my opinion, considering all thing I must say that the student teacher doesn't have a place in a operating high school unless it is strictly observation.

A pleasant ripple of interruptions has been taking place at the school. Causing the ripple are the U of M student teachers, or cadetts. I myself like to see the flicker of young faces again. It has been quite some time since they passed in front of my glance.

Student teaching may be good practice for the student teacher, but it is not a good experience for the students.
and went through "Miniver Cheevy" (Miniver Cheevy/born too late/cursed his fate/and kept on drinking) and "War Is Kind" (Do not Weep/War is Kind). We discussed war and the "kingdom of the battle-god—the field where a thousand corpses lie" (from Stephen Crane's "War Is Kind"). A University art student brought some of her paintings to class, and each student wrote a poem about his favorite picture. We did group things, in which each student in a group contributed a line to a common poem.

The best weeks were those devoted to creative writing. We did more group work, each group writing a fairy tale and a legend. Students wrote individual paragraphs on pain, noise and fear. Their final project was a short story. One girl wrote about a meeting between a teen-age heroin pusher and his equally youthful client; another, her little sister's death; another, "The Glurpicks of Kaniff Cliff," another, a budding Edgar Allan Poe, of graveyards and weathered wooden signs hanging from brass chains and swinging in the midnight wind. Many topics were typica—being alone in a creaky house, dying in a car accident, writing a short story. One student, in a quest for sympathy, began: "As I got up at 3 a.m. to do this assignment..."

I learned things about the McLuhan generation. As a rule, they cannot spell or punctuate. They do not read. They are conditioned to the previously mentioned commercial break. I tried to have at least two different projects planned for each class, or at least something students could make noise doing.

The paper work was not overwhelming. It was far more difficult to come up with ideas to occupy 56 minutes three times a day. Textbooks were used sparingly.

Teacher homework included an English course daily lesson plan, which was turned in to the vice principal. The plans call for an objective, a reason and a standard for each lesson. In all honesty, it was a lot of dishonesty. Reason: A further awareness of creativity through words. (Real reason: We're doing it because it's all I can think of.) Objective: An understanding of creativity. (Real objective: It will go for 56 minutes.) Standard: A reasonably organized class. (Real standard: When I say "Let's hold it down," the people in study hall across the hall will not be able to distinguish words but hear only a murmur of voices.) The plans also included an outline of the day, what equipment was used, what methods were used (conference, discussion, lecture, etc.).

**students are bored**

Students often are bored by their classes. They often wrote paragraphs comparing their school with a prison or dungeon—trite but true. I think they felt like Pavlov's dogs, jumping with the bells every hour. I asked my journalism students how many classes they would attend voluntarily. One said he would go to one out of six, another three of four, another two of five. On the average, most students would attend half their classes. That means half of 190 school days are spent in tiresome routine.

I came to believe that a teacher's first responsibility is to
make a class interesting. To me, that is even more important than teaching grammar or punctuation or spelling. Though this sounds like a sweeping endorsement to coddle the kids, I don’t believe it is. The student’s day is long, the chairs are hard and the lunch “hour” for most students is still 22 minutes. Some students hold part-time jobs. The least a teacher can do is keep a class alert.

The discipline problems were exaggerated by the University education instructors. None of my students resembled Sandy Dennis’ students in “Up the Down Staircase.” Still, problems do arise. We were told to send the unmanageable students to the office and talk to the manageable students on a one-to-one basis. Never criticize a student in front of his peers; he immediately has 30 allies.

School systems need help. Classes must be more challenging. Formal lectures should be taped so the teacher has more time to spend with individual students. The potential is limitless. A teacher has 100 minds to work with.

I enjoyed the quarter, and my last day was sentimental. My freshmen discovered my first name is Susan, I’m 21, I’m getting married. (“What’s his name? Where’s he from? When is it?” Applause. “Can we come?”) It would have been impossible not to have enjoyed it.

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**Carrier’s Address to the Patrons of the Virginia City Montana Post**

Jan. 7, 1865

Wake up! Wake up! this New Year’s morn,
The Old Year’s dead—the New is born!
Wake up! ye patrons of the Post,
The Carrier’s coming! clear the coast!
Wake up! the Carrier’s heart is stirred
To emulate the early bird,
This birth-day dawn of ’Sixty-five,
And let you know he’s yet alive,
By waking echoes full of cheer,
His carol bears for this New Year.
He is come to wish you happiness,
And Fortune’s tenderest caress,
For all the twelve month born to-day,
With showers of gold-dust ’long your way.
So listen while he vents his song
With swelling heart, and nimble tongue;
And while you hear him gladly sing,
Toss him your New Year’s offering.
Nuggets are welcome to his hand,
With good fair dust, without much “sand;”
For Greenbacks, too, his fingers itch,
Since Jeff, is nearing that “last ditch.”

What mighty burdens to the Past
Has the Old Year behind him cast;
What wondrous changes mark the way
Since first we saw his natal day.
Good Uncle Sam—the rare old chap—
Has blazoned on his ample map
Another name—MONTANA fair—
And promises his watchful care.

He hopes she’ll be a duteous child
Away from home in this far wild.
She’s done already quite enough
To prove her grit is rare and tough;
She’s put her servants all at work
To find where golden secrets lurk—
They’ve torn the gulches, burrowed far
In mountain, hill and rocky bar;
They’ve bound the waters to their use,
To turn the wheel and run the sluice;
They’ve scoured these rough old mountains hoar,
To find the veins of precious ore.

With smiling farms the valleys fair,
Are made to team with richness rare;
They’ve builded towns with magic art,
Where Traffic holds her humming mart;
They’ve planted schools in many a spot,
Where Education holds her court;
The Church has reared her sacred shrine,
And bids Religion’s light to shine.
The Vigilantes, staunch and true,
Have done a useful thing or two,
By making this, for vice and crime,
A rather insalubrious clime;
For outlaws, if they didn’t slope,
Were apt to take a dose of rope.
Now, Justice holds her even scales,
And Law with calmest reign prevails,
While Order walks her peaceful way—
Welcome! thrice welcome, be their sway!
Mr. Foley is chief of the Lee Newspapers State Bureau in Helena and a visiting lecturer in the Montana School of Journalism. He is a 1965 graduate of the journalism school and a former editor of the University's student daily, the Montana Kaimin. After earning an M.S.J. at Northwestern University in 1966, Mr. Foley served two years as an Army information officer, then joined the Lee Newspapers State Bureau. In 1971 the American Political Science Association honored Mr. Foley for "excellent reporting of public affairs" for a series of stories about Gov. Forrest H. Anderson's land holdings—a series described in this report. This article is based on Mr. Foley's keynote address Sept. 17, 1971, to the annual conference of the Montana Interscholastic Editorial Association at the University of Montana.

An investigative reporter combines some of the talents of a lawyer, an accountant and a private detective. As an investigative reporter, I'm after the stories that aren't announced in press releases or at press conferences. Many contain information that someone doesn't want printed. Investigative reporting is digging out the hidden facts: Misuse of public funds, improper conduct by public officials, influence peddling and that type of activity.

I've been doing investigative reporting on and off for the three years I've worked for the Lee Newspapers. In the past whenever something seemed worth looking into and we had the time, I would do it. But the Lee Newspapers have become so convinced that investigative reporting is important that I'm now devoting almost full time to this kind of assignment. I have some sort of investigation going at all times; sometimes I have several at once. I'm writing only one or two stories a week now, and sometimes I go for several weeks digging out just one. Last year I spent a month on one series.

To understand how Montana government does or does not operate, you should be familiar with what I call the power structures. I spend most of my time examining them.

The political power structure is headed by the governor and the state agencies he controls.

The corporate power structure in this state probably is headed by the Montana Power Co. and its allied friends in the Montana Chamber of Commerce, the Montana Taxpayers Association and various banks. From where I sit, it looks as if the Montana Power Co. wields the greatest power in the corporate area, and I believe that it often wields that influence in ways contrary to the public interest.

Then there's the lawyer power structure. If you don't already know it, lawyers run this country. From the school house to the White House, lawyers—more than any other group—have the clout.

In Montana there are at least two divisions to the lawyer power structure. The first is a group of lawyers, most of whom live in Helena, who are tied to the political power structure and are on retainers to various state agencies. The other is the group tied to the corporate power structure.

These various power structures often interlock. When they do, there is often a good story. Let me give you a few examples. 

Montana Journalism Review
A few months ago I did a story in which I documented the fact that the state has been losing $750,000 to $1 million each year by allowing money to remain idle in non-interest-bearing accounts in banks across the state. No corruption was involved; it was just a matter of the state not running its very large business in a businesslike manner. The governor and the legislature are taking some corrective measures (and had already begun them when I did the story).

The legislature rejected one package of bills that could have added some additional dollars to the state's investment income. That package was blocked at least partially because of the efforts of a dozen bank-connected legislators. The bills would have allowed the state to invest its money in savings and loan and building and loan associations, which pay higher interest rates than banks do. The state now can put its money in a bank, but not in a savings and loan association.

Montana's constitution specifically provides that a legislator shall not vote on a matter in which he has a personal or private interest. Yet my research showed that a dozen bank officials, directors and lawyers did in fact vote—and, not surprisingly, they all voted against the bills. So the state treasurer still cannot put public funds in savings and loan associations. It is a prime example of the corporate structure influencing the political structure to the detriment of the public interest.

**power-structure influence**

Here's an example of the influence of the lawyer power structure, or at least that division tied in with the political power structure in Helena. I've done two stories on this—one two years ago and another last August.

A few Helena law firms with political connections are making large fees doing part-time legal work for the state. The three firms that made the most in the past year—$20,000 to $25,000 each—have some interesting connections. One rents office space from Gov. Forrest H. Anderson. Another handles the governor's property interests. The third is that of Republican House Majority Leader Tom Harrison. I suspect that the state could be getting a lot more for its legal dollar if all those fees were consolidated to hire a few full-time lawyers for the attorney general. I could be wrong, of course, because some of those retained for part-time work are pretty fair lawyers. But there is something about the lawyer retainer system that disturbs me much more than its cost. Many of the lawyers who represent state agencies also handle cases for clients who are opposing the state. Perhaps I'm a nitpicker, but I just don't think it is right to take a fee with your right hand and slap down the state with a law suit with your left.

I mentioned that I spent an entire month working on one series of stories. I'm going to tell you how I did it because I think it is the best-documented example I've seen of influence peddling in this state. I'm not saying it is the most outrageous case, only the best documented.

It involves Forrest Anderson, when he was attorney general, and the Montana Power Co. Again, you see, it is the corporate power structure and the political power structure.

It all started in March, 1970, when the state was negotiating to buy a large ranch midway between Helena and Great Falls to set it aside as a wildlife preserve and recreation area. At the time, there were rumors in Helena that Anderson somehow would profit from the transaction. Rumors are cheap in Helena; I have a whole drawerful of folders on rumors that proved false or that I have not been able to document. This particular story about the ranch was one of those that remained idle for several months because nobody could document anything. Another State Bureau reporter originally checked the rumor, but all he learned was that the governor owned a cabin near the ranch. Soon thereafter, the ranch was sold to a private party and the folder went in the drawer.

But several months later, the governor's office announced that the State Fish and Game Department had bought the ranch from an environmental group. Normally such an announcement would come from the Fish and Game Department, but this one did not. Something else was strange about the press release—it didn't announce the purchase price. Then a Helena Independent Record reporter learned that the price was about $700,000, or roughly $100,000 more than the price on which the state was negotiating several months earlier. That's when I got interested.

I spent the next several weeks poring over dozens of Fish and Game documents and hundreds of courthouse records in Helena. What I tell you next might surprise you. As far as I could determine, Forrest Anderson did not gain any direct benefit from the transaction. But I did discover many other things that suggested he may have benefited indirectly. Several of the governor's activities in that area since then have done nothing to convince me otherwise.

What I did discover was this: The cabin the governor owned was on one of two sites totaling about 100 acres of lakefront property bought by a front company set up by Anderson. That occurred in 1965, when Anderson was attorney general. The significance of the purchase was the seller—the Montana Power Co.

The front company purchased one of the chunks of lakefront land—about 30 acres—for $1,800. Within 15 months, Anderson had subdivided the land and resold it for more than $40,000. Even being generous about the cost of subdividing the land and other details, I would estimate that the front company made a profit in excess of $30,000.

That was just one of the stories. The other told about some of the governor's other property transactions in the area and how he apparently had used pressure to see that the state obtained the ranch. I don't question the belief that the public will benefit by the wildlife and recreation area, but I wonder to this day what the governor has in mind for his property in the area. It obviously will increase in value if the area becomes a major recreation spot.

I should emphasize that I am not aware that Anderson ever has returned the favor to the Montana Power Co. But the fact that I can't document it doesn't mean it did not happen. At the very least, the whole transaction has the appear-
formance of evil, as the lawyers and judges would say. I don't think you or I could have bought the lakefront property from Montana Power. It is just not in the real-estate business. I don't think a high state official should be involved in profitable deals with the state's most powerful special-interest group.

Lest it appear that my comments are partisan, let me say that I think Governor Anderson has done some fine things to put state government on a more businesslike basis. He might be surprised if he heard me say that, because he seems to think that several newspaper reporters—myself included—are picking on him. That's just not so. He does have some accomplishments and he deserves credit for them.

This speech was entitled "The Joys and Tribulations of an Investigative Reporter" so perhaps I should mention some of them. I like to do investigative reporting because I think the results have impact. Every once in awhile, someone will mention to me a story I wrote a year or even two years ago. I think the whole field of depth reporting, including investigative work, is the future for the newspaper business. The electronic media, particularly television, have the advantage of immediacy on spot news.

Newspapers are shifting, and rightly so, to that which they do best—the depth story, the interpretive piece, the investigation. The electronic media are telling what is happening, while the print media are telling why it's happening. I think we've got to spend more time digging out the corruptions in big government, big corporations and big labor unions.

The investigative report also fulfills the watchdog role that the Founding Fathers intended for the press when they established press freedom in the First Amendment.

I would be less than candid if I didn't tell you that I enjoy rocking the boat. I like to hear people talking about my stories. So much for the joys.

Now the tribulations: This field can be a time-consuming, frustrating business. I've spent days tracking down tips that I'm convinced are true. But I just can't prove them. I've had stories that I thought would rock the state's political structure, but I haven't been able to persuade witnesses to give me the full story or support it if I print it. I've spent as long as a week chasing down stories that turned out to be based on false leads, bad information or persons out to "grind an ax."

I'm disturbed that you can't convince some bureaucrats that you have a right to look at the public records. I'm amazed at how many think what they do is nobody's business but their own. I asked the Montana Press Association to take a survey recently on problems newspapers are having with secret meetings and closed records. I suspected others were having problems, but I was startled by some of them. The newspaper in my home town of Laurel said city hall officials would not provide copies of city ordinances. Now there's a place where ignorance of the law might be an excuse.

Another newspaper said its reporter was not allowed to see applications for marriage certificates. That problem quickly ended after my story appeared. The reporter involved said the county official stated he had not understood she represented a newspaper. That's the kind of attitude that dismays me. What difference does it make if she is a newspaper reporter? Records are not public for the benefit of newspaper reporters, although they are the ones who make use of them. They are open because the public has a vital interest in knowing what its government is doing. And that means they are open to little old ladies in tennies runners and corporate executives as well as newspaper reporters.

Not the least of my tribulations is the fact that I've made a few enemies with my investigative stories, and the number seems to be increasing of late. I've lost some good sources because of something I've written about them. But that's part of this business. I still recall the words of Dean Rea, one of my professors when I was attending the journalism school at this University: "If you want to be popular, get in some other business." I believed him.

**competition between bureaus**

I'm certainly not the only one doing investigative reporting. I'm glad to report that all the papers I read regularly—and that includes the five largest dailies in Montana—are doing at least occasional pieces. Some of Dale Burk's *Missoulian* articles about the Forest Service and clearcutting have brought about significant policy changes. John Kuglin of the Great Falls Tribune Capitol Bureau has done many investigative articles on state government. In fact, quite a competition exists between the Tribune and Lee bureaus. When I'm working on a story, I often worry that the target of my investigation will find out and a few phone calls later some valuable document will disappear or a prime source will suddenly clam up. But just as often I worry that Kuglin will find out about the same story and beat me into print.

The Montana press has come a long way from the don't-rock-the-boat days when the Anaconda Company owned the newspapers I work for. I think the people of Montana now have a much better idea of what is going on in their government and—more significantly—why. Much more can be done, of course, and I hope it will.

I see the Constitutional Convention as a great hope that Montanans can wrest their government back from the control of special-interest groups. I'm not optimistic that such a document will be written or, if written, that it will pass, because I think those powerful interests will try to block that. But a vigilant press—one that is aggressive but fair, one that probes and does depth reporting—can prevent that from happening. I hope we're up to the task.

*Montana Journalism Review*
Murder and the Prince of Wales
By Waverley Root*

Once upon a time there was a stock character of drama and literature, the hard-drinking newspaperman, who performed prodigies of scoop-collecting and derring-do. It is possible that he still turns up in the movies, many of which are a couple of decades behind the times. In real life this character has gone (or, to be perfectly safe, let us say is going) the way of the great auk and the dodo. Anyone who tries to combine constant drinking and the practice of journalism nowadays risks being trampled to death by the competition.

The competition was less fierce in the old days: Communications were not as swift and relatively more expensive, discouraging home offices from maintaining a tight rein on their correspondents. In 1930, when only three newspapers maintained correspondents on the French Riviera, though it was a good source for colorful copy, the cooperative incumbents got into the habit of meeting frequently on an agreeable cafe terrace in Nice to dream up stories certain to be printed, at space rates. They agreed on some very good pieces indeed, since they were unhampered by the inconveniences of having to deal with facts. After sending them off, in slightly different versions, they were free to return to their drinking, in the comforting assurance of impunity, for they were all confirming one another, and there were no other journalists on hand to raise difficult questions.

The hard-drinking journalist existed in Paris too in those easy-going days, though he was often less picturesque when encountered in his cups than the fictional versions. There were times when it seemed to me that the essential oil which lubricated the Paris Tribune, of which I was the news editor, was alcohol. We usually had one or two spectacular drunks on the payroll, and there were evenings (payday nights especially) when not a man in the city room could have passed a sobriety test. This did not necessarily affect technical dexterity. At one time the staff included a rewrite man whose evenings of thick fog were betrayed by the circumstance that in this condition he seemed to be attached by an invisible bond to the carriage of his typewriter. As it rattled along, he sweated slowly with it to port, snapping back with it to starboard at the end of the line. The moment inevitably arrived when the groundswell grew too heavy, he did not, but, carried beyond the point of no return by acquired momentum, crashed to the floor, where he rested in peace. The man next to him would then nudge the body aside, occupy the like. Spencer trotted dutifully along the first day and discovered, going, that there was a pleasant cafe near the embassy where he could wile away the hours while waiting for the handout. He wiled them away. Returning to the office armed with his official information, he set to work to tap out his story uneventfully, but when he arrived at the prince's review of the British Boy Scout troops of Paris, the creative urge overcame him. As it was reported to me, for this was before I started to work for the paper, his story then ran something like this: "Stopping before one manly youth, the prince inquired, 'What is your name, my Lad? 'None of your God-damned business, Sir,' the youngster replied. At that time the prince snatched a riding crop from his equerry and beat the boy's brains out."

It is to the credit of the professional skill of the Chicago Tribune staff that this opus was handled with the utmost efficiency. The copyreader corrected conscientiously the placing of commas, rectified a few misspelled words, revised awkward phraseology, and handed the story to the night editor. Realizing its news value, this worthy marked it for a Page One head. The headline writer obliged with: PRINCE OF WALES BASHES BOY'S BRAINS OUT. The Linotype operators set it up and the proofreaders corrected their typographical errors. The makeup editor fitted it into the prominent position on the front page which such news merited. The execution was perfect. The only flaw was that on this particular evening not one among the half-dozen persons who handled the story was sufficiently sober to realize that it couldn't possibly be true.

The next morning the stuff, some of them handicapped by hangovers, succeeded in rounding up most of the copies in Paris before they could stupefy the public, but the papers which had been dispatched to London were beyond reach. For six months the Pars Chicago Tribune could not be distributed in England. Spencer was of course out of a job again, but he lived happily ever after on free booze offered him at Harry's New York Bar by admirers of the man who had written the Prince of Wales story.

Although I heard this tale from a number of witnesses, the more I reflected about it, the more incredible it seemed. One day I set out to track it down. By sifting through the files of other newspapers, I was able to locate the date when the Prince of Wales had visited Paris, and even the exact day when he had reviewed the British Boy Scouts. Armed with this information, I went into the publisher's office, where the bound volumes containing all the issues of the Paris Chicago Tribune since its founding were kept, and looked up the paper for the fateful day. It was not in the file.


Montana Journalism Review
The Journalism Faculty

NATHAN B. BLUMBERG  
B.A., M.A., University of Colorado; Ph.D., Oxford University, England. A Rhodes Scholar, Professor Blumberg is the author of the book *One-Party Press?* and coeditor of the anthology *A Century of Montana Journalism*. He has worked for the Associated Press, the *Denver Post*, as assistant city editor of the *Washington (D.C.) Post*, and associate editor of the *Lincoln (Neb.) Star* and the *Ashland (Neb.) Gazette*. He taught at the University of Nebraska and Michigan State University before coming to the University of Montana in 1956 as dean, a position he held until his resignation in 1968. He has served as a visiting professor at Pennsylvania State University, Northwestern University and the University of California at Berkeley and as an American Specialist for the Department of State in Thailand and in the Caribbean area.

WARREN J. BRIER  
Dean and Professor  
B.A., University of Washington; M.S., Columbia University; Ph.D., University of Iowa. Dean Brier's experience includes work as a newsman for the Associated Press in Los Angeles, Seattle, New York and Helena, a reporter for the *Seattle Post-Intelligencer*, and a copyreader for the *Seattle Times*. He has taught at San Diego State College and the University of Southern California. Dean Brier is the author of the book *The Frightful Punishment*, coauthor with Howard C. Heyn of the text *Writing for Newspapers and News Services* and coeditor of the anthology *A Century of Montana Journalism*.

EDWARD B. DUGAN  
Professor  
B.J., M.A., University of Missouri. Before joining the University of Montana faculty in 1937, Professor Dugan worked as a reporter and editor on dailies and weeklies in Texas, a newsman for the United Press, and as public relations director of Hardin-Simmons University. He teaches public relations in the University's widely known School of Administrative Leadership and serves on staffs of agency in-service training programs. His articles, primarily on advertising, have appeared in several magazines.

DANIEL J. FOLEY  
Visiting Lecturer  
B.A., University of Montana; M.S.J., Northwestern University. Mr. Foley served one summer as editor of the Cut Bank (Mont.) *Pioneer Press*. He was also a visiting lecturer in 1970-71.

PHILIP J. HESS  
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B.A., M.A., University of Iowa. Professor Hess, chairman of the Radio-Television Department, has taught at the University of South Dakota, where he also served as production director of the University's educational television station. He has worked as a producer-director at commercial television stations in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, and Portland, Ore., a broadcaster for educational radio stations in Chicago and Iowa City, Iowa, and as a reporter and copy editor for the Missoula (Mont.) *Missoulian*.

CHARLES E. HOOD JR.  
Instructor  
B.A., M.A., University of Montana. As an undergraduate in the School of Journalism, Mr. Hood worked summers as a reporter for the *Levioutown (Mont.) Daily News* and as a newsman for the Helena bureau of United Press International. He was graduated in 1961 and joined the staff of the Missoula (Mont.) *Missoulian*. After serving in the Navy, he became a reporter for the *Great Falls (Mont.) Tribune*. Since joining the journalism faculty as an assistant in 1967, Mr. Hood has worked summers as a desk editor for the *Missoulian*.

ROBERT C. McGIFFERT  
Professor  
A.B., Princeton University; M.A., Ohio State University. Professor McGiffert taught journalism at Ohio State for four years before joining the University of Montana faculty in 1966. He worked for the *Easton (Pa.) Daily Express* for 16 years as reporter and city editor. During the summer of 1967, he worked in the Sunday department and on the national desk at the *Washington (D.C.) Post*. Professor McGiffert has been active in programs to improve medical and dental writing, serving as a consultant to the American Dental Association and as an instructor at writing seminars sponsored by the ADA and the American Medical Association.

DONALD C. MILLER  
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B.A., M.A., University of South Dakota. Professor Miller has worked as an announcer, newsman and production director at radio and television stations in South Dakota. During his military service, he was in charge of the Writers Branch of the U.S. Army Europe Pictorial Center. He taught for five years at the University of South Dakota, where he also served as film director and program director of KUSD Radio-TV. During the 1963-64 academic year, he studied at Columbia University as the recipient of a CBS News and Public Affairs Fellowship. From 1964-66, he was program director of an educational television station, WDSE-TV, in Duluth, Minn.

SAM REYNOLDS  
Visiting Lecturer  
B.S., M.S., University of Wisconsin; M.S., Columbia University. Mr. Reynolds, editorial-page editor of the *Missoula (Mont.) Missoulian* since 1964, also served as a visiting lecturer at the journalism school in 1966-67 and 1970-71. A former reporter for the *Wisconsin State Journal* at Madison, he has contributed articles to the *Matheild* and to *Montana Journalism Review*.

THOMAS WENDELBURG  
Visiting Lecturer  
B.A., Wisconsin State College, Whitewater. Mr. Wendelburg has worked as a reporter for the Pocatello *Idaho State Journal* and from 1965 to 1969 was a high school teacher in Brookfield, Wis. His articles have appeared in the leading outdoor magazines. During the winter quarter, he taught a course in magazine-article writing.
Since our forefathers first beheld him [the white man], more than seven times ten winters have snowed and melted. . . . His course is destruction: he spoils what the Spirit who gave us this country made beautiful and clean. But that is not enough; he wants us to pay him besides his enslaving our country. Yes, and our people, besides, that degradation of a tribe who never were his enemies. What is he? Who sent him here? We were happy when he first came; since then we often saw him, always heard him and of him. We first thought he came from the light; but he comes like the dusk of the evening now, not like the dawn of the morning. He comes like a day that has passed, and night enters our future with him.

Chief Charlot, 1876