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Editorials

News Censorship—A Threat to Liberty

I have read with interest, and a tinge of sadness, the recent account of "censorship" charges by the Michigan Daily concerning the State News and Dean Tom King.

The State News, fortunately enough, has complete freedom to express its own editorial views. In several cases, administrative officers, under direct, sometimes immoderate attack from the State News, have gone to bat for that freedom before threats from outsiders and students.

The unhappy truth is that this is not a local problem. We are the generation which is about to inherit the United States—and we will inherit one far less than that into which our mentors came.

For there has been a steady erosion of freedom. More and more doors have been closed to the press with the result that the people of the United States know less and less about the operations of their government—on every level.

Over the past several years, many of us in journalism have been battering at these doors of suppression and raising a hue and cry.

What victories have been won have been, in the main, little ones. And they will continue to be little ones until we can shake up and wake up every publisher and every editor—and a majority of the students—to the terrible evil that we have been battling.

The current plight of college journalism can, in turn, be integrated into an even broader whole. Throughout the land, the threat to constitutional liberties is greater than ever, simply because conformity has never been so completely sanctioned economically, legally and morally.

A silent press is the manifestation of a silent age, and I have no other honest choice than to set the newspaper that is briefly mine against the tenuous fabric of national, institutional and personal conformity.

The cartoon which appeared on the front page of the State News was not a cry of censorship. It depicted one individual, a powerful element of the administration, whose beliefs of what a college newspaper should and should not be, violate every canon of our basic liberties.

Dean King's finer contributions to Michigan State University will eventually be forgotten—for no man can be honored after imposing the threat to any of our freedoms.

One of the most serious matters confronting newspapers today is protecting the public against such men—who feel they alone have the right to decide what the public should be told about the public's business.

"Covering up" is done to hide mistakes, ineptitude. Administrators, sensitive to adverse criticism, realizing the need of good will for their actions are touchy about anything that smacks of investigative reporting or editorial crusading.

The Michigan Daily says we are unfortunate that "Dean King seems to insist on ruling with so stern a hand and to display such hostility to criticism that students like (Gordon) Smith are afraid to discuss their experiments publicly."

This sadly, is the truth that hurts—for as long as King is permitted to call students as he pleases, threaten them with libel and suspension, we are by all rights dead—victims of an educational hypocrisy worse than treason.

But as long as King's views on the press do not reflect those of the university, the State News will then, and only then, continue to be a free student voice.

What can you or I do? We must first admit that the very serious problem does exist and we cannot fulfill our obligation to our nation, ourselves and our fellowmen without being aware of what is going on about us.

For future enslavement, so greatly feared, may come less from such men than from ignorance.

Mel Reiter, Editor

Crossword Puzzle

Crossword puzzle grid with clues for Across and Down words.

Michigan State News logo and address information.



Czechoslovakian Coup Complete Communists Crush Opposition

EDITOR'S NOTE: This is the final article in a series discussing the Communist overthrow of Czechoslovakia in 1948.

By MILO JAN REBAN

During the coup the most significant steps of the Communists were the creation of the Central Action Committee and the implementation of an earlier design to pack the National Front by admitting the mass organization representatives.

Mobs mobilized by the Communists and their mass organizations changed the street into a Communist fortress. The waves of arrests, rumors, and intimidation created an atmosphere of hopelessness. Only a broken old man in the Hradcany Castle stood in the way and even his resistance was only symbolic because the Communists were in power.

President Benes fought, but probably thought that by consenting to the Communist demands and remaining in his post, he would exert some restraining influence. He feared a fratricidal civil war and he feared the possibility of direct Soviet intervention. He dreaded the possibility of a direct annexation of Czechoslovakia to the Soviet Union. After all, it happened in Rutenia, the eastern-most part of Czechoslovakia in 1945.

Benes had another alternative. He could have gone to the microphone with an appeal to the people. But this was impossible because the Communist Minister of Information declared that he wouldn't allow it. When Gotwald reminded him not to forget that "there is still the Soviet Union," Benes accepted the resignation of the 12 Ministers and approved the Communist Government.

One-sided Struggle

The effective display of Soviet power was one of the decisive elements of the coup. Openly siding with the Communists, the Soviets made the struggle totally one-sided since the democrats did not have any such support on their side.

One way in which the Soviets showed their hand was in the form of Zorin's sudden visit to Czechoslovakia. Zorin, the Soviet Deputy Foreign Minister, came ostensibly to inspect the Soviet grain deliveries, but during the coup he called on many influential people, and in general made his presence in Prague felt. Moreover, Pravda and Pravda carried a line that "200 million Russians support the Communist fight against domestic and international reaction" and their pronouncements were carried by the Czech Communist media.

During the coup the Communists did not take many steps without justifying them as necessary to eliminate the anti-

Communist elements and the adversaries of the Soviet Union. In other words, one opposing the Czechoslovak Communists automatically opposed the Soviet Union.

In addition, the Communist, including the Minister of Information, spoke of the possibility of Red Army intervention, claiming it was massed on the Czechoslovak borders. Moscow never denied the reports, and anyone familiar with the psychology of rumor can understand why.

This then is the story of how Czechoslovakia was forcibly incorporated into the eastern corridor sanitaire, putting an end to one of the world's finest democracies ten long years ago.

Letters to the Editor

Ayes, Nays Meet No. 44

EDITOR'S NOTE: The two following letters from Congressman Hanley and Lyons comment on Friday's State News editorial which found certain members of Congress to be behaving like geese, sheep, ostriches and stuffed shirts.

To the Editor:

I would like to make the following statement in regard to your editorial dated February 28, 1948, and entitled "AUSG: Rabbit Ears Prevent Progress." Bill No. 44, which proposed to send a congressman to the March 24-31 United Nations Seminar in New York was considered, voted upon, and defeated on its own merits. It is the opinion of this congressman that the statement made by the State News that this bill was defeated because of its possible effect on the above mentioned student newspaper is not based upon factual information.

To take a statement made by one congressman in an open debate on the question at hand, and deliberately assume to your readers that this is the opinion of the majority of the members of congress, is to me without possible justification.

I would like you to consider the following as concrete reasons for the defeat of Bill No. 44:

1. Previously congress had passed Bill No. 33 which allocated \$100 to the YM-YWCA for partial scholarships to the above mentioned seminar.

2. The defeated Bill No. 44 had as its purpose the benefit of a much needed report on the United Nations Seminar. This, it was discovered, could be obtained upon request through our scholarship program (Bill No. 33).

3. It was later discovered that a member of the All-University Student Congress who resides in New York City would be willing to comprise the report as mentioned in Bill No. 44 at a savings of \$75 to the students of this University.

I can only find praise for a newspaper when it chooses to report the facts to its readers. I can not attempt to condemn any factual editorial on the pro's and con's of Student Government. It is also my feeling that such factual observations can only lead to a more responsible and representative student government.

Bill Hanley, Representative, East Lansing

To the Editor:

Well, you've said it, and said it well. Unfortunately, the floor of the Student Congress is not the place to voice as subjective a viewpoint as you have offered, for I am sure there are those of us in the AUSG who echo your opinions.

If it should be pointed out that the last active members of the Student Congress op-

posed the bill, then it must be added that the names which answered "yes" to the bill were those which appear on a disproportionate amount of the legislation. Those who opposed the bill opposed it for personal reasons. The prevalent thought Wednesday night seemed to be, "If I can't go, then no one will." And it should be pointed out that those who were in opposition were the least qualified to make the trip in terms of service to the AUSG.

Earlier in the evening it was said that there is no limit to what can be done if the doors don't care who gets the credit. The statement was met with approval, yet when \$100 was appropriated to aid deserving people in making the UN trip, a member of Congress proposed that it be stipulated in the YM-YWCA post-trip literature that the Student Congress supplied \$100 of the money for the trip.

Oh, kind and glorious benefactor! And worse yet, the proposal was accepted by the same juveniles who nodded so vigorously in agreement to the remark which opens this paragraph.

I could go on, but you said it pretty well yourself. And incidentally, I would like to see an editorial or two concerning the fact that it took a \$4,000 "bribe" to bring the student body to pep rallies this year. Mention also the wastrel who spent the money so he could see his name next to those of celebrities.

Peter Lyon, Representative, Marquette

Advertisement for 'LIFE CAN BE...' featuring a bird and text about bird barter.

Calendar listing various campus events for the week, including Spartans Wives, Evergreen Wives, and various seminars.

Campus Classifieds header with contact information: ED 2-1511, Ext. 2615, Dealine 2 P. M. Every Day.

Large classifieds section containing multiple categories: CLASSIFIED RATES, FOR SALE, HOUSING, EMPLOYMENT, FOR RENT, ATTENTION STUDENTS, FOR SALE, REAL ESTATE, PERSONAL, TRANSPORTATION, and WANTED.

Vertical strip of advertisements on the far right edge of the page, including 'Auto L...', 'An Un...', 'Says Se...', 'Fried...', and 'Lansie...'.

