

eighty-five respondents thought it was a town in Austria and forty-six, a Russian diplomat. The remaining word, "snafu," was easy for four-fifths of the men and two-thirds of the women, yet fifty who took the word test thought it was a town in India and forty-one said it was a Chinese politician.

The question quickly arises on reading the AP survey: How much does the average reader of a modern newspaper really understand? How much does the average listener to a radio or TV broadcast actually absorb of the day's headlines? The answer may well be, alas, a lot less than the professional journalist believes. Clichés of one generation gradually fade, as the foregoing statistics prove beyond doubt, and new clichés take their place. The most difficult thing for a wire-service writer or editor to remember, then, is that some of the older words don't mean much to a new generation, particularly one less and less literate and more and more dependent on sound instead of sight for news.

Another telling point, perhaps the most important one, is that those questioned in the AP survey were all college trained. They were not sixth-grade dropouts or illiterate laborers unused to the daily reading habit, but people for whom the printed word has long been as much a part of their routine as brushing their teeth or driving their automobiles. If these men and women don't know precisely what news words mean, what on earth are we communicating to the great mass of lesser-educated who get most of their information haphazardly by ear? The answer has to be frightening.

The most powerful man in the United States is not the President, the Secretary of State, a member of Congress, a Senator, a Governor, the chairman of the board of AT&T, or the head of Harvard University. The most powerful person in the United States is the key man on the general desk of AP or UPI, by whatever name at whatever hour in the twenty-four. For most rip-and-read radio broadcasters (which is to say virtually all the small stations in this country) depend utterly on the competence and integrity of the wire services and their news tickers, and only the very best of our 1,754 daily papers have available to them anything but wire service copy from out of town. The responsibility is an awful one, though less frightening when one realizes that Sam Blackman, the skilled and competent news boss of AP, is not the exception but the rule, a person of utter integrity and objectivity, and that there are many Sam Blackmans in the wire services. Truth is their religion and an informed democracy their goal, whether they would admit it or not. The nation could not function long without them.

—R.L.T.

Letters to the Communications Editor



Covering Court Opinions

GILBERT CRANBERG's remarks about the helpfulness of the law professor's memoranda distributed to the press on pending Supreme Court opinions were most welcome ["What Did the Supreme Court Say?" SR, Apr. 8]. The praise points up a paradox: The service currently financed by the American Association of Law Schools is falling victim to its own success, and funding for the future is a critical problem.

In a questionnaire distributed by the Supreme Court Decisions Committee of the AALS, which sponsors the service, 90 per cent of the media recipients found the service valuable but only 50 per cent indicated any willingness to pay for it. It is my hope that representative media groups have a sufficient sense of social responsibility to be willing to assume part of the rising costs of this service.

JEROME A. BARRON, Chairman,
Supreme Court Decisions Committee,
AALS,
Associate Professor of Law,
George Washington University
National Law Center.

Washington, D.C.

GILBERT CRANBERG is not alone in his concern about how the "free and responsible press" is inadequately covering or misreading certain far-reaching decisions of the high court. On rulings such as *Gideon* and *Miranda* the press has tuned the public in on the voices of stuck-pig reaction, and faced away from the pattern of subtle abuses and miscarriages of justice which form the background of these decisions. And the public simply does not get enough of the actual texts of important decisions to understand how carefully the Justices are reading the Constitution and fulfilling their responsibility.

To quote from an address by Associate Justice Abe Fortas: "In *Escobedo* and *Miranda*, we have explored the midnight darkness of the events that occur after a man is deprived of his liberty, when generally friendless and usually hopeless he must bear the enormous weight of accusation and interrogation."



It is obvious that a little group of willful men among the membership of the American Bar Association, the lower levels of the American judiciary, and the press in general are out of tune with the basic spirit that made this nation possible and great.

HENRY F. WINSLOW, SR.
New York, N.Y.

I GREATLY APPRECIATE Gilbert Cranberg's article. Through the years I have been alternately incensed, amused, alarmed, and disgusted by the tempest-in-teapot, mountain-out-of-molehill pronouncements and judgments by segments of the press and by national figures, who seem to be playing only the old semantic joke-game, "What Is Life?" The situation would remain at that sophomoric level, were it not for the types of issues involved.

Mr. Cranberg mentioned a case in point: the 1962 public school prayer ruling, which is still misrepresented, especially by Senator Dirksen. Congress as a whole may have "... lost its appetite for a Constitutional amendment to undo the Court ruling"; but how easily desire can return when subjected to the temptations and aromas of Congressional compromise. Our Constitution needs a prayer amendment like our government needs a Cabinet-level Department of Religion; and who knows, one might lead to the other.

W. L. RHODES.
Kansas City, Mo.

Advertising and College Grads

THANK YOU for presenting the Fifteenth Annual Advertising Awards [SR, Apr. 8]. As a college sophomore, however, I feel that William Patterson revealed in that same issue a biased attitude toward college students' attitudes about business. The statement in his article, "To Understand or Not to Understand," that "it is essential that ... our college students, the critics and skeptics of business ... should bridge the understanding gap and thus properly appreciate the extraordinary talents, resources, and dedication that business and advertising leaders bring to the service of our common public interest through public interest advertising," is most unfair and unfounded.

What about the "questioning mind" of today's youth? What about today's business with its machines and computers? Will a young person be able to fit in or will he be replaced by a computer? Could it be that today's business world appears too complex, while a professional lawyer or doctor or teacher is in greater demand and, with a growing population, does not appear to be as vulnerable to being forced out as easily as one might be replaced in the business world? Or has anyone thought of going to the college student for his reasons for favoring or rejecting the business career? It appears that the student has been asked

only where he wants to go in life, not why he wants to go there.

RUSSELL D. RENIKER.

Kansas City, Kan.

YOUR Fifteenth Annual Advertising Awards were particularly interesting to me in that I had selected one of the award-winners—Seagram's WHEN CAN I START TO DRINK, DAD?—last June as a teaching aid in my English composition class. I wrote to the Seagram Distillers Company for reprints of the ad but was told that the laws of my state do not permit sending that kind of advertisement in the mail.

GREG DUNNING,
Graduate Teaching Assistant,
Kansas State University.

Manhattan, Kan.

Quality TV and Bluenoses

IN REGARD TO R.L.T.'s communications editorial, "Closing the TV Quality Gap" [SR, Apr. 8], I have a warning. The bluenoses in this state, if a report from our Capitol is factual, already threaten censorship of NET programs. Operating under a Presidential Commission, one can picture a series of brainwashing programs which, in one week, would result in our suffering from bad breath, upset stomachs, and headaches. I advise that the Carnegie Commission reconsider and recommend that NET operators police their own system.

LOUIS D'ARMAND.

Clearwater, Fla.

IF ALL the members of the FCC think like Lee Loevinger, as quoted in R.L.T.'s editorial, we need not wonder long what is really wrong with TV. Is it really snobbishness when intellectuals are critical? Only the ignorant would attempt to get caviar from a goose! But I know many who enjoy *pâté de foie gras*.

RUTH WILLIAMS.

Coopersburg, Pa.

I WAS SURPRISED and somewhat dismayed to read Mr. Tobin's enthusiastic endorsement of Public Television.

It's very true that there are many people whose taste requires some more sophisticated entertainment than our current TV fare. And it's also true, in general, that they are among the more affluent members of society. But there is no particular reason why the government should feel impelled to lure them back to the television set.

And if we did agree that they should be persuaded to watch more television (instead of reading books, listening to music, or participating in some other such un-American activity), why do we need a government subsidy? We don't ask the federal government to back our off-Broadway shows or city symphonies or opera. So why television? Pay TV has been discussed and there are a lot of competent people ready to try it. But so far, no one has allowed them to get started.

There's no reason why I shouldn't pay to see the shows I like. And when I pay my quarters, I take care of the one concern showed by Mr. Tobin. There's no government interference. No politics. And the programming is good or I don't buy.

Government subsidies in the general in-

terest are fine. And government subsidies for those who can't take care of themselves are necessary. But government subsidies to cater to the tastes of an admittedly small percentage of the people—and the percentage best able to pay its own way—are ridiculous. I hope the millions of taxpayers who enjoy their evenings of criminals and cowboys and comics have the good sense to object to this expenditure of their tax dollars.

MARY HEINRICH,
Ketchum, MacLeod & Grove, Inc.

Pittsburgh, Pa.

Intelligence from St. Louis

AS AN EMPLOYEE of *The Sporting News*, I would like to point out a glaring error in LETTERS TO THE COMMUNICATIONS EDITOR [Apr. 8]. R.L.T. states that the intentional bases on balls issued by pitchers "ought not to be consigned to the dark dungeon of the league files." Intentional bases on balls issued by *every* pitcher in organized baseball (the two major leagues and nineteen minor leagues) are reported annually in the *Official Baseball Guide* published by *The Sporting News*.

JOHN DUXBURY,
Sports Historian and Statistician.
St. Louis, Mo.

In Favor of Lazarus

I WANT YOU to know how enthusiastically

we view George Lazarus's column, MADISON AVENUE [SR, March 11]. While I certainly can't speak definitively about the contribution this column makes to your magazine, I do know that it contributes significantly to the professionalization and acceptance of the marketing craft. We seem to get more comments about items in this article than we do from almost any other syndicated source.

DAVID K. HARDIN, President,
Market Facts, Inc.

Chicago, Ill.

The Second Sex

WHENEVER I read articles about job opportunities, the image of a horse with blinders always appears before me. For these articles are always addressed to the men in the job market, never the women, despite the fact that women today comprise almost half the job market.

I am specifically referring to John Tebbel's succession of optimistic articles regarding journalism opportunities. This is one of the most caste-conscious of professions, and only recently I read that a prominent news magazine is now preparing to drop many of its women reporters. I only wish that when articles in your magazine point out job opportunities, they would also include women, who also are breadwinners today.

DONNA BARNHILL.

San Francisco, Calif.



"Sacre bleu! It's a new thing. A young fellow comes to the door, sticks his foot in, and before you know it we've bought a full set of Diderot's *Encyclopaedia*!"

"CONTACTS" FOR SALE

By WILLIAM SHELTON

FOR \$50 you can spend an hour with a renowned scientist. The price for talking privately with a pair of space pilots is \$100, but if the spacemen have recently been in orbit and have performed something special—such as “walking” in space—the price has gone as high as \$25,000. For \$8.50 you can obtain a photograph of an Olympic champion, a politician, or a promising artist, and if you wish to take movies of a ballet, this can be arranged for a suggested price of \$2,000 per performance minute. Or would you like to look inside a sacrosanct hall of government? Do you need access to extremely busy people in distant and difficult-to-reach places? What about rental car, plane, and hotel reservations?

These and other services can now be obtained in the Soviet Union—provided you are a press representative and provided you make your check payable in U.S. dollars to Novosti Press Agency, account number 0652029, Bank for Foreign Trade, Moscow, U.S.S.R.

As the newest and most Americanized of Russian press agencies, Novosti (pronounced Nô-vos-ti) said yes—always for a price (a 1966 total of \$185,000 from Stateside journalists)—to some two dozen visiting American journalists last year alone. The *National Geographic's* photographer-writer, Dean Conger, on his sixth visit to the Soviet Union, had his path smoothed by Novosti all the way to Yakutsk in Eastern Russia. His resulting forty-nine-page story on Siberia appeared last March. Peter Young of *Life*, with a delighted Novosti escort, was boisterously winned and dined in several mountain villages of southern Russia while searching out the surprising number of Georgians who have lived well beyond a hundred years. Young's photographer, Valery Shustov, was one of two Russians whom Novosti sent to *Life* for a special six-week course in photography. Novosti also helped *Newsweek's* Robert J. Korengold visit a collective farm; provided to Kansas City *Star* feature editor Dwight Pennington, for \$40 each, two articles on Russia's community theater; and, on twenty-four-hour

William Shelton is a former correspondent for *Time* and former editorial director of news for the World Book Encyclopedia Science Service. He now is a free-lance writer based in Houston. Trident will publish his new book, *Russian Space Exploration: the First Decade*, this fall.

notice, furnished CBS with a movie and sound crew to record an interview with Soviet moon expert, Dr. Alexandre Lebedinsky. After quickly dubbing in the English translation, the agency rushed the tapes to Moscow's airport.

“We have a saying,” a Novosti editor explained, “that because we live in the East we live closer to the sun than you do. Don't worry. It'll get there in time.” The Lebedinsky tapes, as a matter of fact, raced the sun to Hollywood, where they arrived just before a CBS special on the moon went on the air.

In 1963 NBC joined the ranks of *Time* and the *Washington Post* in being temporarily expelled from the U.S.S.R., in this case for two programs the Soviet Foreign Ministry felt had been uncomplimentary to Nikita Khrushchev; now, thanks in part to Novosti's growing influence and perhaps to the Russian penchant for deicide, NBC is back in Moscow. Recently, the efficient head of Novosti's TV department, Georgi Bolshakov, who on his previous assignment in Washington had earned such a reputation for cooperation that President Kennedy once referred to him as “our New Frontier Russian,” unhesitatingly helped NBC prepare three specials. One, on Leningrad, was shown this spring; an elaborate one on Siberia is scheduled for July 20; and Bolshakov is now assembling and screening raw footage for a third, *The Battle of Stalingrad*, for NBC producer Lucy Jarvis, whose credits include an award-winning one-hour special on the Kremlin.

Other American media which have recently paid for Novosti's manifest and varied services include such diverse customers as *Mining World*, the *Houston Chronicle*, *Space World*, Black Star photographic agency, World Book Encyclopedia Science Service, and *The New York Times*.

What is Novosti? Is the influence it peddles a legitimate vendible for members of the Western fourth estate? Is it run primarily by professional journalists interested in improving East-West communications? Or by skillful propagandists who manage to elicit substantial fees at the same time they help export a largely affirmative picture of Soviet life?

These questions occur to most of the expanding cadre of American journalists who go to the new Soviet press agency for help. Last June, when I found myself knocking on Novosti's door in Moscow's



Pushkin Square, I was confronted with the same questions, and had arrived with mixed reports on Novosti's unique qualifications. “A bunch of dollar-mad pirates who are out to skin you with extremely fuzzy billing,” a news-magazine correspondent called them. “Excellent,” said a network producer. “They know how to break down the barriers; they know what the score is. They are worth every kopek.”

MY mission, like that of most Western journalists, could not be consummated, I had been told in Washington, without going through Novosti. For a magazine article, I needed to fly to the “science city” near Novosibirsk, which the Soviet government had not yet opened to foreign visitors. For research for a book on the Soviet space program, I needed to go to Kaluga, the home of Konstantin Tsiolkovsky, the Russian “father of rocketry.” And I wanted interviews with bioastronautics experts, aerospace scientists, and cosmonauts.

When it became apparent that my request to fly to Novosibirsk with a Novosti photographer and interpreter—if granted at all—would take a week or more to process, I asked Novosti's chairman of the board, Boris Burkov, if I could spend the time touring his facilities and interviewing his department heads. To my surprise, Burkov, who looks and acts like any harassed, tousle-headed, chain-smoking American editor, called a meeting of his six key people and announced that during the next three days I was to be received in and briefed on all departments. After a perfunctory exchange of our tie pins, Burkov said, through an interpreter, “We have never developed such a thing as a free-lance writer in Soviet journalism. You're the first one we've seen over here. So welcome to your tour. Ask any questions you like.”

Novosti, I learned, set up shop five years ago, with fees, including Tolstoi